

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 5 July 2007

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.J. Snelling)** took the chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

## APPROPRIATION BILL

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell):** I bring up the report of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

**Ms THOMPSON:** I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

**Ms BREUER (Giles):** I bring up the report of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

**Ms BREUER:** I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer):** I move:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition):** He was wrong, she was wrong and they all were wrong. A two-week stout defence of the budget has turned into a stunning retreat, and in its dying days this budget's defenders have deserted their posts and fled overseas—they are in Paris, London and China. In the past two sitting weeks, the Liberals have pulled a thread on the budget and then watched it unravel piece by piece. First, it was debt—undeniable; then it was school tax—untenable; and then it was the grand hospital plan—unaffordable.

We have shown how this budget is weakest at its core. We have shown how this government taxes too much, borrows too much and spends in all the wrong places. This is Labor's worst budget in six years, and Labor's performance in estimates committees matches it. It was not rolled in gold; it was rolled in plastic, like the newspaper the Treasurer used to thumb his nose at democracy just last week. I repeat what I said at the start of this debate: this is a bad budget. It fails our teachers, our children and our schools. It fails our health system (the sick and the needy), and it fails our doctors, our nurses, our paramedics and the volunteers who support them.

It fails on law and order and community safety. It fails to secure our water and it fails on infrastructure and roads. We deserve better. On 28 June I made the following point in Estimates Committee A:

The Treasurer claims that he is running a surplus budget. His own budget paper reveals that. Although that may be so in regard to net operating surplus, in respect of net lending, borrowing and cash surplus bases (the other two generally recognised measures), the budget is in significant deficit.

The Treasurer's response in the Estimates Committee was to say, 'That is a lie.'

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** It is.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** Well, first, it is an irrefutable fact that, on a cash basis, on net lending borrowing bases (two of the normally used accounting measures), the budget is in deficit. The Treasurer's own documents prove the point and provide the data. Federal Treasurer Peter Costello on 2 June made the following statements about South Australia's deficit budget position when he produced research and data that demonstrated that, on a cash basis from 2006 to 2010, South Australia was in deficit along with other Labor states. The federal Treasurer said:

New South Wales is in deficit right across the forward estimates as is Victoria, as is Queensland, as is South Australia.

The cash deficit that Treasurer Foley is in fact running is combined with a tenfold increase in general government sector net debt. State public sector debt will rise to \$3.4 billion by 2011, with the Treasurer revealing to me in budget estimates that it may grow even further if the new hospital is built and funded by the government rather than the privatised PPP model he is hoping to cobble together. The federal Treasurer also said:

So, we have a situation now where the government has gotten rid of debt, the commonwealth is adding to savings and the states are running up debt. If you want a difference between Labor and Liberal that is it. If it is all so easy to balance the budget and retire debt why aren't the state governments doing it? The truth of the matter is they have had very strong revenue growth since the introduction of the GST. The revenue growth has been entirely consumed by recurrent expenditures and their capital spending is now being funded by debt.

These are the facts: on two of the three normally used accounting measures, including cash basis, the Treasurer's budget is in deficit—full stop. The Treasurer described that as 'a lie', but it is an irrefutable fact that demonstrates his lack of qualifications and experience for the job of Treasurer. A call to any accounting firm or any respected analyst in the nation would prove the facts as they are and show the Treasurer up for his folly. Not only was Treasurer Foley factually incorrect but his personal behaviour during Treasury estimates was offensive to all in the chamber—MPs and public servants alike. It is a privilege for each and every one of us to sit in this chamber to represent our constituents. The people of South Australia deserve better. The Treasurer's outburst was an abuse of that privilege. His outburst was an emotional and immature display by a foolish man unable to confront or accept the facts, and unable to debate them sensibly and calmly.

I read in *The Advertiser* on 30 June that his excuse for the emotional outburst was that he has a secret plan. He is on the hunt. He is Tarzan of the Jungle. He is Kevin Foley, the hunter, and guess what? I am the subject of his affections. I am the hunted, according to *The Advertiser*. It is a secret, cunning plan by the Treasurer to destroy me. Well, I am so petrified that I am shivering in my shoes; I have not been able to sleep for a week. What a stupid proposition! What a stupid thing to say! It is laughable. How can anyone take this man seriously—running a line like that? It is a joke! The Treasurer behaves like a schoolboy and treats the parliament as some sort of bully-ring for his ego. He struts about like a peacock, making threats, delivering abuse and personal attacks, and avoids the substance of debate. His behaviour is such that it deters good people from stepping forward into political life, and it brings parliament into disrepute. It is the sort of

behaviour that makes an ever-despairing public even less encouraged by the standards of public life.

Ministers in government must set the standards and they must set them high. The Treasurer, along with his colleague the Minister for Infrastructure, sets a low standard and then consistently fails to achieve it. The Treasurer's behaviour during budget estimates was unedifying and beneath the office he holds. The Treasurer has been promoted above his ability and skill. He will not survive a tightening economic environment or more difficult budget challenges. Arrogance, ego and a propensity to bully and abuse are not qualifications required for the job of Treasurer. South Australians deserve better.

Apart from Treasurer Foley, two other ministers have been exposed during budget estimates by the opposition's questions. The Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries and Minister for Forests, Rory McEwen, faces dismissal for failure to declare political donations, which may have compromised his ministerial independence. Undeclared interests by so-called Independent members of Labor cabinets are a disgrace. This is now a challenge for the Premier—and I thank him for being here today along with the Treasurer. If he has allowed a minister in receipt of undisclosed payments to make cabinet decisions on matters concerning both his portfolio responsibilities and those undisclosed parties, the Premier's own ministerial code of conduct is crystal clear: not only must the minister go, but serious questions emerge about the integrity of the cabinet process and the leadership of the Premier.

There is another minister under a cloud and whose place in cabinet is now in question. During the budget estimates cycle, the education minister, Jane Lomax-Smith, delivered one of the worst, ill-conceived budget flips in recent years.

**Ms Chapman:** Where is she?

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** She is in Paris—or is it London—sipping champagne at the Tour de France. The future of both ministers is under a cloud, and the Premier has some decisions to make. I will talk about education. The Premier's silly decision to impose \$17 million worth of WorkCover compensation fees upon school communities over three years was fatally flawed from the very outset. The cuts were conceived by the Minister for Education and Children's Services, Jane Lomax-Smith, advanced through the bilateral discussion with the Treasurer in late 2006, and clearly agreed to by him. They were then pushed through cabinet and the Labor Party caucus, which was sheepishly swept along with this mean-spirited idiocy.

The education minister's judgment and her future role in cabinet must surely be in question. Not only that, the Minister for Education and Children's Services failed to answer at least 11 questions during budget estimates about these very matters, as did the Treasurer, about whether the millions of dollars to be raised from schools through these WorkCover levies will still, one way or the other, be required of them under another guise or in another form. It is quite clear that the Treasurer still wants the money out of the education budget. This is an underhanded way of enabling a government to appear to be giving with one hand while taking away with the other.

Minister McEwen's mistakes are profound. Cabinet ministers must declare conflicts of interest to cabinet and must abide by the law—no ifs, no buts. The person responsible for these decisions in regard to both ministers, the person who allowed the failures to proceed, the person who failed to intercept them and the person who, in regard to the

education backflip, ultimately had to back down and admit his failure, was the self-professed education Premier—this Premier, Premier Rann. He must now face minister McEwen on the matter of the conflict of interest. After two weeks of budget estimates we have two ministers whose futures are under a cloud and, frankly, whose credibility is in tatters in the eyes of many South Australians.

The first week of budget estimates revealed flaws in the government's argument that we must build a new hospital at a cost, we are told, of almost \$1.9 billion, when the costs of remediating the rail yards to prepare the site are included, but they will clearly be much more, based on the government's track record for budget blow-outs and infrastructure stuff-ups. Our existing hospitals are falling apart through the failure of this government to reinvest. Doctors, nurses and psychiatrists are on strike, or have resigned in protest at the way this government is failing them. Yesterday alone over 50 emergency patients at Flinders Medical Centre and Lyell McEwin lay in corridors with no bed for them, and government ministers and CEOs of departments say that that is okay; that is all right. Well, it is not all right! So much for Mike Rann's promises at the campaign launch on 3 February 2002 when he said:

People are scared there will not be a hospital bed left for them; they are scared they will end up on a trolley in a hospital corridor, waiting frantically for 24 hours or more to be admitted.

I say to Premier Rann: they are still scared. The situation today is worse than ever, thanks to you—and you have the money to fix it.

The estimates also heard from the Chief Justice, who told the committee, 'My view is the number of cases where there is not a judge or a courtroom available is too high.' Information provided by the Chief Justice in response to opposition questions during estimates signals that more than 1 000 criminal trials are waiting to be heard in the state's courts. South Australians have good cause to be alarmed at this revelation, and the Premier's puerile spat with the Director of Public Prosecutions, Stephen Pallaras, is putting public safety at risk. Parliament heard during estimates that the DPP could hire an additional 30 prosecutors with \$3 million of extra funding per annum to bring file loads per prosecutor in South Australia down from over 50 per officer to the New South Wales standard of between 15 and 25 per officer. Parliament heard during estimates questioning that thieves, vicious criminals, bikies and paedophiles are going unprosecuted through this lack of resources. Premier Rann said that he had found Eliot Ness when he appointed the DPP. Well it did not take Eliot Ness long to work out who the bad guys were!

The truth is that, after the Ralph Clarke/Pringle case and the Ashbourne corruption trial, which went to the very top of the Rann Labor government—in fact, to the inner sanctum of the Premier's office—this government is terrified of an independent office of the DPP. Unable to sack him, they now want to starve him of resources, and the people of South Australia are the ones who will suffer as villains go unprosecuted. It is time for the Premier and the Attorney-General (Michael Atkinson) to put their egos back in their brief case, admit they have been wrong to attack the DPP, the judiciary and the courts, and to properly fund the system that South Australians look to to protect them.

Parliament has heard during these budget estimates that children as young as five years old are being raped and abused in Aboriginal communities but that police have been unable to deal with the issue. Estimates committees have also

heard that the government's plan to significantly increase revenue from speeding fines, cameras and other fines and penalties will take revenue from \$87 million to \$119 million by 2011, a spectacular increase of 37 per cent. Our estimates questions have revealed speed cameras are to be recalibrated, as in Victoria, to give even less leeway for motorists, less leeway for any margins for error. I ask, and many South Australians ask, whether this government's speeding fines agenda is driven by Treasury or by the Minister for Road Safety. Governments must keep faith with people. Governments must convince a sceptical public that they have the best interests of the people at heart and not their own budget bottom line.

On public sector management, the Premier, Treasurer and a range of other ministers all gave conflicting information on the number of public servants, which has grown by over 12 000 in the six years of this government, around 10 000 of which were unplanned. They have no idea how many of these are extra doctors, extra teachers, extra nurses or extra police. They were all giving conflicting information. Ministers do not agree with the Office of Public Employment on the head count and cannot even agree on the average salary costs per person.

With 15 ministers and added levels of bureaucracy, it is increasingly apparent that the government has become fat and lazy. It gets worse. There is no guarantee that this rate of uncontrolled growth in the public sector will not continue in the years ahead. The Treasurer has proven himself incapable of getting this situation under control. Tarzan of the Jungle is very good at hunting the hunted. He is out there, he is on mark. He is out to get us, but he cannot control the Public Service. He cannot get the Public Service numbers under control. When it gets to the practicalities, he cannot manage the equation.

Infrastructure stands out as this government's greatest failure. Claims that this government is engaged in one of the greatest infrastructure spends since the Romans have been exposed as abject nonsense. After six years, apart from completing projects commissioned by the former Liberal government or the commonwealth, all the Rann government has to show the people of South Australia is a Bakewell Bridge replacement, an underpass under Anzac Highway along South Road that will not be finished for many years to come, a possible Northern Expressway (but no funding agreement has yet been done with the commonwealth), and a \$31 million tram to nowhere. What an infrastructure record to be proud of!

The imagery of striking nurses marching to Parliament House just a few days ago seeking better remuneration and having to negotiate their way around the tram constructions along North Terrace and King William Street as they approach the steps of Parliament House shows a potent image of the Rann government's priorities. The community wants more nurses, better remunerated and happy at their work, and the Rann government wants a tram. This modern day state Labor Party has revealed itself under this Premier's leadership and has made its priorities very clear to all.

Let me give the house further examples of Premier Rann's smoke and mirrors on infrastructure revealed during budget estimates. Consider the Northern Expressway: the funding mix is 80:20 commonwealth and state. The state contribution to the \$550 million project on that basis would be around \$110 million, but there is a catch. The money will be spent over five years. In real terms, it is likely that the state

contribution could be as little as \$22 million a year—much less than its No. 1 priority, the tram to nowhere.

In this grand infrastructure plan—more than a \$12 billion budget—there is \$22 million per year to build better roads than the Romans ever built to startle the world with their achievements on infrastructure. It is hardly awe-inspiring. So Mike Rann and his minister for stuff ups, Patrick Conlon, will talk big on the larger figure, in the full knowledge that their own contribution to the Northern Expressway project over the life of the project is minuscule. The Romans, indeed, did better on roads. Estimates questioning further revealed that the government's so-called infrastructure plan is nothing more than a discussion paper, which fails to tell people what will be done, when it will be done, in what sequence it will be done or how much will be spent to do it. I thought a plan did those things. Perhaps South Australians think a plan does those things, but not the Rann Labor government.

Of course, a range of little mistakes were revealed during budget estimates and, of course, little mistakes add up. The Treasurer admitted to the committee that a funds in cash management farrago in the Department of Families and Communities thought to be contained to \$24 million had blown out to \$38 million—more money coming from services to cover financial mismanagement. Cuts for disability advocacy groups were revealed, totalling \$753 000. In 2004, the government announced a \$5.9 million program to reduce the disability equipment waiting list, and again this year it has reannounced the same project, dressing it up as something new, but this time it has been reduced significantly. The Techport project has blown out from \$120 million in May 2005 to an estimated \$243 million in July 2006; and now, as we heard in budget estimates, the cost is \$374 million. It is almost triple what it started out to be.

So much for the Treasurer's ability to manage infrastructure projects. This is one of his babies. Of course, we are told the scope of the project changed. What a lovely term that is—'We rescoped the project.' It is a little like saying to your bank manager, 'I planned to build this wonderful house for \$300 000, but I got carried away and it will now cost \$9 million. I rescoped the project.' Your bank manager might have a point of view on that. The South Australian community who are paying their taxes have a point of view on that as well. The question is: what is to be done?

Budget estimates hearings need to assure the people of South Australia that the government has a vision which it can afford to deliver. Budget estimates have revealed no such thing. They have revealed an arrogant government struggling to deliver results in the best of possible economic times. There could not have been an easier five to six years—six budgets—in which to produce a balanced budget. It could never have been easier. No premier and no treasurer in the history of this state has had an easier challenge in the past six years. They have received \$36 billion in GST revenue. Remember, they did not want it, but they have taken it. There has been a 75 per cent increase in property taxes. It is striking. It could never have been easier. The cash is falling over the counter. It is smothering ministers; they are choking on it. However, they are still having trouble making ends meet.

First, this budget needed to make some tough decisions about making government and the public sector more efficient. It has failed. The size of government, the number of ministers and the weight of bureaucracy have all been ignored. It may not be possible to turn the clock back, but the

unbridled growth in the public sector must be stopped and things must be streamlined.

Secondly, the budget needed to offer new solutions to industry. I heard the Premier and the Treasurer just this week talking down our manufacturing sector: 'We don't care about the manufacturing sector. They're not going to get any money from us. We won't be helping them. We don't care what previous governments did. We are just going to let the economy roll and, if they fall over, they fall over. And besides, if 100 000 people lose their jobs out of manufacturing, they can all go down to Osborne and get a job on the air warfare destroyer project.' Well, it does not work like that. They may not even be able to go up to Roxby Downs and get a job. The way things are looking, the workforce may be flying in from Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane.

This is a two-speed economy. At present, mining exploration and defence are strong. Mining is strong because commodity prices are strong. We welcome the government's PACE program, which builds on earlier programs by previous governments. However, mining exploration is strong for one reason: there is money in digging up that stuff. Commodity prices are high, and China is booming—and defence is strong, because the commonwealth government has been writing contracts. Those contracts, if we get a Labor federal government, will dry up in no time whatsoever. However, as I mentioned, mining is dependent on those commodity prices, which boom and wane: they always have and they always will.

Labor is abandoning manufacturing and our diversified industries. As I mentioned, this week, the Premier and the Deputy Premier were out there saying that they were not interested in helping businesses compete. But, of course, they can help by promoting innovation, science, entrepreneurship and venture capital, so that our industries can compete with China by being smarter. Labor needs to understand, before saying good-bye to local enterprises, what it is that makes companies succeed. We cannot compete on the cost factors of production.

Premier Rann has given up on manufacturing, and he has given up on strategies that add value to our primary industries. That is one of the reasons why our export performance has fallen so abysmally in the life of this government. Questioning during budget estimates hearings has shown that there are few well coordinated and effective strategies for manufacturing, and nothing really new on the table in this budget to help them.

Thirdly, this budget had to address sustainability in a meaningful way, not just with idle symbolism but with meaningful, paid for initiatives, including structural reforms to our economy which will be needed to see us through the next economic downturn, which we all know will eventually come. Water sustainability is paramount. The message for the Premier after this budget estimates cycle is simple. Bill Clinton used the words: 'It's about the infrastructure, stupid.' When it comes to water, it is about the infrastructure. It is about building infrastructure for stormwater and waste water capture and reuse and it is about building desalination infrastructure; it is not about law reviews or sending ministers off overseas while parliament is sitting. It is about delivering a result. Those things have been neglected in the budget in any meaningful way. They have been brushed off with studies and reviews and more glossy brochures. This is yet more evidence of a massive failure to deliver results.

Fourthly, the budget had to build infrastructure. A 20-year infrastructure program and plan is needed. Government needs

to find the headroom for more infrastructure investment by making itself more efficient. The Premier and the Treasurer have simply spent the 48 per cent increase in revenue over the last six budgets as quickly as the money has come in. If they had faced the same economic circumstances that treasurer Baker faced in 1994, 1995 and 1996, when revenues were in decline, they would have had to cope; they would have had to make ends meet. If, instead of getting a 48 per cent increase in taxation revenue, they had only received a 20 per cent, they would have had to make ends meet—and, you know, they would have made ends meet—and they would have had to make some tougher decisions. However, the amount of money they have received has given them the freedom to do far, far more. Instead, what they have done is to spend every cent that has come in. Now that it has gone, what can we see, touch and feel? What results have we had in our hospitals in the way of reduced waiting lists and better services? What outcomes have we had for our children? What tangible things can we see, touch or feel or have received to show for that extra money?

The fact is, no matter how much money this Premier and this Deputy Premier had, they would still be saying that they were having trouble coping. This lot could win Lotto, and they would still be arguing that they could not pay the rent or meet the monthly car payments. It would not matter how much money they received, it would be a struggle. They would be getting up and crying, 'We can't manage the budget.' The problem is sitting opposite. The problem is not the amount of money we have been receiving or our liabilities: the problem is matching the two.

Interestingly, while this 48 per cent increase in revenue has occurred over the last six budgets and while property taxes have gone up 75 per cent, did anyone hear the Treasurer say that there is a formula and that taxes rise by inflation and are factored to allow for public sector wage rises? Well, inflation of public sector wage rises must have gone up 75 per cent, because that is the amount of extra revenue that has come in from property taxes. Inflation over the period has actually been around 14 per cent. It is pretty good when you have inflation of 14 per cent and property taxes have gone up by 75 per cent. I do not know how you dress that up as being a moderate, reasonable increase in revenues, but it does raise questions about the way in which the government is managing its revenues. If you cannot manage your recurrent expenses, you cannot create available funds for infrastructure and you have to rely instead on debt built up in the good times to build that infrastructure.

What happens if things turn down? If the budget needs to reflect a genuine vision for the future, we must have a plan to improve our share of the national economic cake, to grow our share of population and to grow our share of enterprise. If it proceeds, the possible expansion of Roxby Downs, although the Premier vehemently opposed it, will be important. However, we need to do more across a range of industries, and we need to start again on the State Strategic Plan.

Let me turn to the new hospital. Nothing we heard in budget estimates convinces the house that building a new hospital on relocated rail yards in Adelaide's City West precinct at a cost of \$1.9 billion is the best solution for South Australia's health needs. We believe there must be a new hospital, or, certainly a rebuilt hospital, but we believe it must be constructed elsewhere, preferably the Royal Adelaide Hospital site. I want to particularly address ruses raised by the Treasurer during budget estimates about costing of the new hospital. The Treasurer has been beside himself to mispre-

sent, obfuscate and confuse the media and to spin lines to the house on costs. He has claimed to have fully costed the new hospital at \$1.7 billion. Remember, he does not have a design; he has not done any engineering; and he has not done any work. We have had some good imagery, a nice artist's impression, on the front page of *The Advertiser*, and the \$157 million for remediation of the railway site. All that is completely and totally unsubstantiated. We did not hear during budget estimates one scrap of evidence to back his claim that it can be done at anywhere near that price. He would not table yet again, when asked during budget estimates, the costings or the independent review, allegedly carried out by Davis Langdon, nor would he table facts sought, again during budget estimates, to support his claim that the costs of building the RAH would be \$1.4 billion.

Without the facts the Treasurer's claims are unsupported and are nothing but words. In my view, the government is talking down the cost of the new hospital proposal and is talking up the cost of the RAH rebuild. The opposition will conduct its own research and consultation on this matter. We know that, until a few weeks ago, the government was quite happy to spend a mere \$118 million on stage 4 at the RAH and all would be fine and dandy. The government held the view that this level of investment would be adequate, but overnight the world has changed; the price tag became \$1.4 billion. How curious. Let us see the facts; let us see the evidence. Remember that the Treasurer used the same people to develop his costing formula for the hospital that he used when he told the house that the Northern Expressway would cost \$300 million—remember that?—only to have to come in and admit later that it would be twice that—twice that. 'We got it wrong.' He got it wrong; she got it wrong; he got it wrong. It was a bit like the education cuts.

I think he used the same people to cost the hospitals as he used when he told us that the cost of building a tunnel or an underpass along South Road under Anzac Highway would be \$65 million. We found out in estimates it has already gone up another \$28 million to build the tram overpass. The government forgot about that. It has already doubled what the government said it would be. He got it wrong; she got it wrong; they got it wrong. We all got it wrong. It is sounding like the education cuts. Everybody has got it wrong. He has got it wrong; she has got it wrong. When will somebody start getting it right? We are being asked to believe that it will be \$1.9 billion for the hospital. Who has got it right? Who has got it wrong? Have they got it right? Have they got it wrong? What on earth is going on here? This is the taxpayers' money. Will somebody on the government side please start getting it right?

I know he is the hunter; I know he is on the hunt—and I am the hunted and he is going to get me—but I wish he would go and hunt down somebody who can count. I wish he would go and hunt down an accountant; somebody who can scope a project; somebody who can develop a proper costing model and tell the parliament and the people of South Australia what it is. That would be some game I would like to see captured—it really is. There was not one shred of evidence during budget estimates to substantiate any of the costings the government has put forward. In the absence of facts from the government during estimates, the Treasurer decides that a hospital has to be built and that it will cost \$1.9 billion. One wonders whether, if the true facts were known, the cost, for example, of building the RAH into a hospital we could be proud of, might be significantly less.

There are no other facts on the table; none whatsoever. Let us see them.

The Treasurer must either put up or shut up on his claims in regard to the costings for both the new project and the alternatives. The government during estimates has failed to argue its case effectively on the central plank of its budget: the need for a new hospital of the scope and parameters it has explained. The Treasurer has, without consultation or prior notice, used the name of our much-loved Governor, Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson, as a shield to avoid criticism of this project. That is what it has all been about: drag the Governor into it and use her good name as a shield. All this has occurred amidst industrial action and alarm across the health sector about wages, waiting lists, resources, facilities and a lack of consultation on the government's new health plan.

Under this government, as we speak, people are being left in corridors in hospitals all around the state, out of wards and unattended or inadequately provided for, while we argue about monuments being built in 10 years' time. What are we going to do now? What are we going to do tomorrow? What are we going to do next year? These are the questions that the government needs to answer for the people of South Australia.

The Treasurer's pithy efforts to invent backflips from the opposition are the most laughable aspect of the budget estimates, particularly in regard to the hospital. These, I must say, were amusing, light-hearted moments during the estimates process. I have made it very clear that we have different plans for a hospital rebuild and for City West. If contracts are not signed and building work is not commenced then we will not go ahead with this government's hospital but will look at alternative plans. Even if contracts had been signed, on a commercial basis, we may look at renegotiating them. If this can be done on a commercial basis and without a reasonable loss, we might do it.

It was amusing, if embarrassing for the Treasurer, to see him concede and admit during budget estimates that he had done exactly this when he renegotiated the Modbury Hospital privatisation: 'Oh, yes, you can renegotiate these things. I forgot that in fact we just did it and we spent tens of millions'. He was sort of back-peddling at a hundred miles an hour: 'Oh my God, how do I get myself out of this one?' They are over there doing the very thing that they are saying cannot be done. Have they got the slightest idea of what they are doing with the taxpayers' money? I am glad that the Treasurer has learnt something from the opposition during budget estimates about negotiating contracts on a commercial basis, and that he now understands that in certain circumstances arrangements can be negotiated out of, but only if both parties are happy to do so and only if it makes sense to do so.

I doubt whether the Treasurer will be able to sign anything by March 2010, based on past performance. I do not think they will get there in time, but let us see. It would not surprise me if the railyards still have not been moved by 2010. I said what I said, Treasurer, and that is my message for him: that contracts could be negotiated out of. I did not say what the Treasurer attempted to misrepresent, which was that contracts would be negotiated out of regardless of cost or circumstance. Do not reinvent what people say, dress it up as some sort of a backflip and then try to spin it to the media as some sort of a remarkable revelation. That was pure spin from the Treasurer. It was yet another pithy and foolish misrepresentation from a struggling Treasurer, but it was amusing and it

did provide a light-hearted moment in what was otherwise a fairly difficult day, I must say.

It does not get off to a very good start when you present the Treasurer with irrefutable facts, substantiated by a wallet of information, only to be accused of lying—it does not get off to a very good start. Frankly, the people of South Australia deserve better. Our plan is better than the Rann government's plan. Not only do we support the need for a new hospital but we intend to deliver this modern, first-class, world cutting-edge hospital, equal in every respect to the Rann Labor government's proposal but in another location. As I said, our preference is to replace the RAH beside the university. We will also capture the opportunity to transform the rail-yard site west of Morphett Street Bridge into something better and more exciting for South Australia. Let us hear what the people of South Australia say.

I turn now to the issue of tax, because the government was less than forthcoming and less than willing during budget estimates to engage in a discussion about taxation. It is a pressing issue. Estimates have confirmed that over the six budgets of this government's life the Premier has hiked property taxes by 75 per cent, as I mentioned, and that the budget is awash with taxation inconsistency. We state Liberals understand how difficult the tax burden has become for business and for small business in particular, because we listen to them. It is not only about the quantum of tax but about structural reform. It is about eliminating inconsistencies between South Australia and the other states and about our tax competitiveness. Little was forthcoming during estimates about this concern.

We have concerns on this side of the house, as do all South Australians, about the way goodwill and property are treated at sale, about payroll tax thresholds and the impact of property taxes on families and businesses, the burden on motorists, of crushing insurance, stamp duty and other tax imposts. It is becoming overwhelming. I can tell parliament that, flowing from this budget in this two-week budget estimates cycle, we state Liberals will take the lead on the tax issue. In the coming weeks we will instigate a six-month inquiry and consultation period seeking input and guidance from business groups, community organisations and other stakeholders and asking for their recommendations on tax reform. I know it is something that the government wants to brush under the carpet and it just wants to keep raking it in while it can; however, the Liberal opposition will write to key industry groups and will advertise in the state press seeking submissions for our inquiry into tax reform. The results will be used to produce a discussion paper to stimulate wide-spread, across-the-state debate. Early in 2008, after this period of consultation has been effected, the state Liberals will call a summit, which will be held here at Parliament House, to debate and discuss South Australia's options for tax reform.

Our inquiry will also seek views on savings measures to offset tax reforms. We will look at both sides of the ledger, unlike the current state Labor government, whose waste will be a very good place to start cutting. The result of the summit will then be introduced to parliament to stimulate action from the state government on meaningful reform. It cannot wait until March 2010 but it may have to, because I doubt that this government will do anything about it; the state Liberals may have to, when we are elected. However, this government needs to start to take action on it, and we will use the results of our process and of our summit to get that moving.

When I became Liberal leader I said that we would lead on ideas and on policy—and we will—and we will do this with tax reform. I said we would hold the government to account but that we also intended to seize the initiative—and we are seizing the initiative on tax reform because, frankly, the Rann government has, over six budgets, patently failed to do so.

In conclusion, I will say that the budget estimates have confirmed our view that, after five years, the Rann Labor government is a tired government. My shadow ministerial and backbench colleagues on this side will emphasise these points during separate contributions throughout the course of this day, and they will go into detail in respect of information provided or not provided during the budget estimates. However, an overall message from this two-week estimates cycle is that the government is tired, the government is arrogant, and the government is out of touch. It is too tired to reform state taxes and charges; the Premier's government is too tired to secure our water supply for the future; and it is too tired to take action now or tomorrow—it only wants to take action 10 years from now.

This government is too tired to tackle our public transport and infrastructure challenges. It is too tired to address our health problems, and it is therefore seeking expensive and elaborate solutions that could be achieved by simpler, less expensive, more determined efforts. What this state does not need is more debt, more disappointment, and more delay. It needs a new vision for this state; it needs a vision provided by the Liberals, a vision of strength, a vision of stability, and a vision which provides for stability and for a future.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop):** I am disappointed. I thought—

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I rise on a point of order, sir. I have just been invited to respond but that would close off debate, and I am sure that was not the intention.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for MacKillop has the call.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** The Premier has demonstrated yet again why he is not suitable to lead the state. He has been here a damned sight longer than me, but he does not even know who concludes the debate. Interesting. I did think that, after the presentation of the alternatives to the budget that we have just heard from the leader, the Premier would have been keen to respond—and that is why I did not jump to my feet. As anxious as I am to speak, I did want to give the Premier the opportunity to respond. I am sorely disappointed that he has not taken it. I can understand why he may not wish to respond—because I am sure that the Premier is just as embarrassed (as are a lot of his ministers and backbenchers, in particular) by the budget they are trying to sell.

It has been said by many members of this place over the time I have been here that estimates committees are a very painful process, and it is a very painful process when it is not allowed to work as it should. I had not the joy but the discomfort of being told on Tuesday by the chair of one estimates committee:

Some members of the opposition seem to understand estimates and some do not. The issue is that it is not about anything to do with the operation of the department or anything to do with government policy.

That is what the chair said when she was trying to stop me asking questions of the Minister for Water Security—the

minister who is so worried and so concerned about water security that she was not prepared to answer questions in the estimates committee. I was told by the chair of the committee that estimates had nothing to do with the operation of the department or anything to do with government policy. It was an interesting revelation to me, I can assure you, sir. I was told later:

The minister is not equipped to answer any questions about anything to do with the operations of the department.

**An honourable member:** What?

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I will repeat that, as some of my colleagues missed it:

The minister is not equipped to answer any questions about anything to do with the operations of the department.

That is on page 183 of the daily *Hansard* of 3 July, if people want to read it. I was in somewhat of a state of disbelief at the chair's ruling at that point. She said, 'The sorts of questions you want to ask, ask them in question time; you do not ask them here in estimates.' The minister in question happens to be in an aeroplane somewhere on the other side of the globe. She happens to have disdain for question time—so much so that she chooses not to be here today.

So, the questions I want to ask this minister about the misinformation coming forth from the government and the various answers being given and statements being made I am not able to get answers to—and I was not able to ask them the other evening. I am obviously not able to ask them today because the minister has such disdain for her role as a member of this parliament that she decided she would go off on another fling and leave us here wondering what on earth is going on with regard to water security.

I was ruled out of order when I tried to ask certain questions of the minister and told that another minister was responsible for things such as Waterproofing Adelaide. I was a bit gobsmacked by that, because I thought we had pulled together under one ministry all these responsibilities and functions in regard to water security in South Australia so that maybe we would get things happening and maybe we would have one minister responsible and knowing what was going on.

I refer to a press release from the Premier on 6 February this year, when he announced a minor cabinet reshuffle, giving the portfolio of water security and, more particularly, the functionality of SA Water to the member for Chaffey. He said this:

With South Australia facing a serious water crisis, Karlene will take responsibility for water security, including SA Water.

When I asked her what her responsibilities were under the water security portfolio, she said, 'SA Water and nothing else'. The Premier thought it was water security and SA Water. In a statement to the house on 6 February (the same day), he said:

The member for Chaffey will take responsibility for water security, including SA Water, complementing her current management of the River Murray. It makes sense, given the current national water crisis and debate and the challenges we face in South Australia, to bring together ministerial responsibility for both the River Murray and SA Water.

The Minister for Water Security will work in collaboration with the Hon. Gail Gago, the Minister for Environment and Conservation, on managing the environmental aspects of our state's water resources. The administration of SA Water has been transferred from the Minister for Government Enterprises to the new portfolio of water security. I would like to recognise the Minister for Government Enterprises and thank him for his efforts in assisting other ministers to develop and implement Waterproofing Adelaide initiatives.

I misunderstood that absolutely and completely. I was under the misapprehension that the Minister for Water Security had the role of administering things such as Waterproofing Adelaide. The Premier gave me that impression on 6 February this year, yet when I asked questions in the estimates committee about why the government was so upset because the federal government had offered \$34 million towards the Waterproofing the South project, the government said, 'They just diddled us for \$20 million. We want more money. We are \$20 million short.' My understanding is that the \$20 million about which the government is quibbling is money that the state government is trying to get to pay for things which are rightly paid for by SA Water, such as further improvements to Christies Beach waste water treatment plant.

The good citizens of this state who are connected to SA Water sewer mains are levied, and have been levied since the early 1990s, to pay for the Environmental Improvement Program. The levy is still being paid. One of the main things that has happened in the Environmental Improvement Program is that significant works have been done at waste water treatment plants. That is what the levy is about. Now the government has revealed through the estimates committee process that it wants to get more money from the federal government because, notwithstanding that we are levying everyone for this work, if we get more money from the federal government, then we will get even more money out of SA Water.

During last year's estimates committee process, (which was not 12 months ago because we had the fiasco of the budget being handed down in September last year), I asked the former minister whether it is not a fact that SA Water is nothing more than a cash cow for the government. The minister at the time denied it. I did a calculation only yesterday. In the six budgets this government has handed down—and most of the figures I have used are actual figures although the figures for last year's budget are the estimated result and for the current budget they are the budgeted figures—SA Water has contributed, and will be contributing, \$1.99 billion to the government coffers by way of dividend. On top of that, in excess of \$500 million is coming out of SA Water in tax equivalent payments. Over six budgets, this government will be getting over \$1.6 billion out of SA Water, but it wants another \$20 million from the federal government to do some of the work that is the function of SA Water, that is, to make the waste water treatment plants operate properly. I think it is outrageous that SA Water is being used as a cash cow and has been drained of funds—and that was pointed out by Auditor-General two years ago. SA Water is borrowing funds to pay the dividend to Treasury.

One of the reasons I did that calculation was because I read in yesterday's *Advertiser* that the Treasurer has been blaming increasing water prices on the federal government. This government blames everything on someone else, but the Treasurer was quoted in *The Advertiser* yesterday as saying that Malcolm Turnbull (the federal minister) is putting pressure on the South Australian government to increase water prices by 3 per cent above CPI. That is what he said in yesterday's *Advertiser*.

I have a reasonable memory, but I went back through some of the press releases and, on 8 December last year, the then minister responsible for SA Water, the Hon. Michael Wright, put out a press release, and what did he say? He said that the government had taken the decision to increase water prices by—lo and behold—CPI plus 3 per cent. He indicated that there would be 3 per cent on top of a CPI increase in

charges for the next four years. So, that is five years in a row. If the good citizens of South Australia are unfortunate enough to have another dose of this government after 2010 I am sure that will be extended. The levy will stay there, just as the waste water treatment one is still there. How outrageous for the Treasurer of this state to claim—and to be quoted in the daily newspaper—that he has been pressured by Malcolm Turnbull for something which his government took a decision on six months ago and which it announced. It typifies the sort of government that we have here in South Australia.

I have responsibility for a number of portfolio areas on behalf of the opposition, and I want to talk briefly about some of those. However, before I do that, I want to bring to the attention of the house an example of an issue in my electorate in the health area. I noted that again in the press the Minister for Health was lamenting the fact that many people in South Australia who have private health cover use the public health system. First, I missed the point here somewhere, but I did not realise that if you had private health cover that banned you from using the public health system. The minister seems to think that is the case. The minister was lamenting the fact that so many people with private health cover do use the public health system and that it is a cost burden.

At the same time as he is saying this, he is undermining the effectiveness of our country hospitals and their local boards. I have argued against the undermining of the connection that country communities have with their hospital, and that connection is through their local hospital board. The minister's argument is, 'Oh, we've got amateurs running health businesses.' That is his argument. I want to tell the house—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Yes. I hope the minister reads this and takes it on board. Just by way of example, six public hospitals are in my electorate, but I will use the figures of just one. The Bordertown Hospital in my electorate is a small hospital run by a very effective board, and 32 per cent of its budget comes from private patients—32 per cent. If the minister's health bureaucrats, his experts, were 50 per cent as good as the board that runs the Bordertown Hospital they would blow his hopes and aspirations out of the water. They would be up to 15 per cent or 16 per cent.

My message to the minister is: you are totally wrong when you suggest that the boards of country hospitals are amateurs and not fit to manage the country hospitals, and you are totally wrong in breaking the nexus between those hospitals and their communities, because in country health the communities support and underpin their hospitals. All the hospitals in my electorate have a similar story to tell. The other hospitals do just as good work at ensuring that they get adequate funding out of the private health sector—what the minister cannot achieve with his hospital experts. I want to bring that to the attention of the house and, hopefully, the minister will pick that up.

I will run through the other portfolio areas. Energy was the first estimates committee with which I was involved, and a couple of things came out of that. The minister claimed that we now have a fantastic energy delivery system in South Australia and that that is due to the work of this government, yet he still berates the former Liberal government for privatising the old ETSA, as we then knew it. I was able to get on the record that the claims he continues to make are completely wrong. I have quoted from some documents on his agency website which prove that the sorts of things that he claimed did not happen until after the Labor Party came

into government were in fact in train well before that time. The minister finally succumbing to that was an interesting revelation.

Another interesting outcome from that was that the minister was unable to refute some evidence that I brought to the committee with regard to wind power generation. At the time of peak power in South Australia—on those stinking hot, quiet, still days (40° under a waterbag), when everybody has their air-conditioner on—the evidence suggests that the most we can expect from our wind generator capacity is about 7 or 8 per cent. The government keeps talking about how wonderful wind generation is—and it is; it provides a lot of power—but it provides very little security at times of peak power needs. We have to be very careful about this line that we walk. We need other energy sources to be available at times of peak need. That is a challenge for us here in South Australia because of our peak demand. I am fully aware of that. However, I think people need to understand that wind generation is great for supplying power when the wind is blowing; it is not good for South Australia at times of peak power.

The leader was talking about how well the mining sector is going here in South Australia and, of course, the Premier puffs out his chest—anybody would think that it was the Premier out there with the pick and shovel. I do not think the Premier would find his way to a mine in South Australia without a driver. During the estimates committee, the minister responsible for mineral resources was forced to admit that the money going into the PACE program—and we are continually told more money is going in—is in decline. All we are doing is continuing the program in the out years of the budget. So, we got the minister to admit on the record that the amount of dollars going into the PACE program over next three years is declining. We have revenue from resources and from royalties, which are going through the roof. There is a lot of activity out there, but the amount of money that the government is putting into the PACE program is declining.

The government thinks that it has done the hard work, that it has got it up and running, and everything is hunky-dory. The reality is that, again, we got the minister to admit that when the government quotes these figures about the amount of exploration in South Australia, the vast majority of it is not happening on what we call greenfields exploration. It is happening at places like Olympic Dam where a lot drilling has been done on the pre-feasibility of the mine expansion.

I would like to think that I had a lot more time to talk about WorkCover, but it looks like the clock will beat me. The minister responsible for WorkCover has disappointed me greatly. I think he has failed to convince me that the latest review into WorkCover has anything to do but to push out the decision to cut workers' rights beyond the federal election. I have been convinced of that for a long time, and the minister failed miserably to change my opinion. There is no doubt that the only reason we are spending \$1.3 million on yet another review is to ensure that this government does not have to admit that it will cut workers' rights until after the federal election.

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett):** Madam Deputy Speaker, I congratulate you on the way you conducted the estimates committee. The budget has been described by various commentators as being very good and, as I have said in my budget speech, they must have different budget papers to the ones I have. It is absolutely atrocious. There are some good things in the budget, such as in the arts area. However, there



were not enough, and one would always like to see more. You have to get your priorities right, and I will talk about priorities later in relation to the tramline out the front. I can stand here and talk about the tramline because I have a long track record (no pun intended) of supporting the tram extension and the extension of light rail in South Australia, but it is all about priorities. I will talk about industry and trade if I get time, but there are other serious issues to talk about. In the short time I have I will focus on Aboriginal affairs and the other big portfolio in financial terms—transport.

The handling of Aboriginal affairs in South Australia has been described by a number of people as gilding the lily or in even more colourful terms. We remember what Robert Tickner said about the now Premier when he was minister of Aboriginal affairs in 1992: he described the handling of Aboriginal affairs as a sick joke. It is sad that the handling of Aboriginal affairs in South Australia is still being done in a way made for good announcements, for television and to make the government look good.

I refer to a letter to the Premier on 30 May 2004 from a community member in Pukatja in the APY lands. We know the Premier was up there with some of the press entourage—some were not allowed to go because they had said bad things about the government (and we know all about that if we listen to what Amanda Blair says). The letter begins with ‘Dear Premier’ and states:

When you visited the lands at the end of April we were looking forward to meeting with you after we received a fax at the Pukatja community office telling us to expect you. I got council members ready to meet with you and we had the kettle boiling for a cup of tea. When you didn’t arrive I drove across the creek to see where you were and found you outside the TAFE building in front of the newspaper cameras. Unfortunately, I didn’t see you again.

That is absolutely typical of this Premier and the way the government is handling Aboriginal affairs in South Australia. They are a flash in the pan. The other day the Premier went up to Amata and reannounced the school funding and opened the pool for the second time, although I noticed that the kids did not go for a swim as it is too damn cold. The handling of Aboriginal affairs in South Australia needs to be seriously reconsidered.

I criticised the budget for what I saw in the budget papers, and I continually remind the house that I am not an economist or an accountant. In the budget papers I read of an \$11 million reduction in respect of the APY task force. I do not have a good enough memory to tell lies. I am human and occasionally I am wrong, but let us read what the minister told the estimates committee about what happened to the \$11.15 million for the APY task force. According to the Income Statement at page 1.45, it turns out that the \$11.15 million for the APY central task force was there. However, during the course of the year it was decided as follows:

The supplies and services budget description better describes the infrastructure works. Consequently the budget had been reclassified from grants and subsidies to supplies and services. Some of the \$8.757 million of the \$11.15 million is now included in the 2006-07 estimated results in the supplies and services line in the income statement.

I was wrong in that I cannot keep up with the fiddle factor that goes on in these budget papers every year, because the fudge factor, the fiddle factor, the obfuscation, the prestidigitation is there all the time. To give the Treasurer his due, during the estimates when I asked about a number of positions for advisers—I thought there were seven but I was

informed by members of Treasury staff that there were 4.5 full-time equivalents—he said that he would have read it the same way that I had. At least he recognises that in his own budget there is a need for clarity of the way things are being structured and funded. Certainly in the Aboriginal affairs budget I would be more than happy to say that we have enough money or more money going in there.

However, it should not be presented in such a way that it is so difficult to understand. I cannot read minds. I am having trouble reading the black and white budget, never mind reading the minds of the people who put this budget together and the minds of the ministers and their advisers on the other side. It is atrocious that we need to have this continual battle in estimates committees over the way the budget is presented.

The main issue I focused on in the Aboriginal Affairs estimates committee was the issue of Aboriginal safety and policing, and I used the example not of the APY lands in this case but the Ceduna safe houses. Everyone has heard me talk about the corner street units in Ceduna. Five units have been funded by the federal government, which put in a lot of money: I am not sure how many million it was—I think the figure was \$1.65 million. Those units were originally destined to be used as transitional units where people come from the lands, do homemaker courses, learn a bit about managing themselves and their budgets, and then transit into Housing Trust houses or other houses.

Unfortunately, the waiting list is about five years. The most unfortunate part of that, however, is that we have a horrendous situation on the West Coast where there are the most outrageous and despicable cases of domestic violence and child abuse. The police, the community, the council and the Aboriginal community want those corner street units to be used as safe housing. We keep hearing this minister say, ‘We are going to build some more units over there.’ In fact, on radio the other day the minister said he accepts there are serious problems and that that is why the government is building facilities, including a new safe house, for the region.

Minister, you do not need to build a new safe house. You do not need to buy one. There are five units there in a cluster development similar to the development in Sturt Street, which has a proven track record of the way you can handle these difficult situations. It is already there. I spoke to minister Brough’s office and the head of FaCSIA this morning. The federal government is more than happy for the state government to use these transitional units as safe housing. So, instead of spending the money on building or buying other houses, which are already there, spend it on that. Stop the two extra cases of domestic violence that will happen this week, and stop those people being pushed to hotels and motels all over the place or being forced back into the community. Every week there are two more horrendous cases over there. Here is the opportunity, minister. It will not cost you anything to take over those units. Save the money on buying other properties and put it into saving people’s lives and giving these kids what they deserve, that is, a safe house in times of tragedy and crisis.

This is a real issue that will not go away, and certainly I am not going to go away, minister, until those corner street units are used and until the community over there is given some answers. Do not let the bureaucrats in your office give you any more rubbish on this, because I will be happy to name those bureaucrats in this place if we get any more obfuscation on this issue. It is too dangerous and dire, and it needs to happen right now.

There should be no more hocus-pocus on Aboriginal affairs in this place. The other day the Premier described some of the things the Prime Minister was doing as hocus-pocus. Let me tell members that there is a lot of hocus-pocus going on in Aboriginal affairs in this state. Money was promised for a multipurpose communal facility in Yalata. A joint press release by the Premier and the federal Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs states:

The funding was to be used to construct a multipurpose community learning and cultural centre to tackle family violence and child abuse.

They said it. This is back in June 2005, two years ago. What have we got? How many more cases of family violence and child abuse have occurred which should not have occurred but which probably have occurred because of this government's lack of determination and lack of will?

The policing situation at Yalata is an issue I have mentioned to the Police Commissioner. I had the opportunity in estimates to ask him about that, and I know the Police Commissioner is doing his very best with APY policing. It is a serious issue and will not go away. I refer to the Hon. Kate Reynolds' speech in the other place on 20 September 2005 when she mentioned the stashed cash affair, which has not gone away. I think ministers in this place would hope that it would go away, but it has not. In her speech, the Hon. Kate Reynolds said:

... when the stashed cash affair first blew up, Kate Lennon explained to the media that some of the money that had not been returned to Treasury was money for additional policing on the APY lands.

The reason Kate Lennon had to stash that cash—if she had stashed the cash—was that she was not able to spend it on policing. The money should have been held over for policing but, more importantly, it should have been spent. Kate Lennon was doing what she thought was right, but we know the consequences of her action.

The housing issues on the APY lands are an absolute tragedy. I spoke to the federal minister's office this morning. They have put \$25 million on the table but, quite justifiably, they are hesitant to give it to the state. We have seen very little significant improvement in housing on the lands. It amazes me how much it costs to construct a house on the lands. It costs about \$400 000 to construct a three-bedroom house. You do not need three-bedroom homes with the facilities that are being put in them. Many young couples on the lands would love a one-bedroom place. Many families would just love to get into a proper facility without having to share a house with 19 or 20 others. It is really quite sad that the government is not able to cooperate with the federal government and consult with the communities. We know that the most important thing that any government, federal or state, can do is to consult with the communities on the way forward, particularly in Aboriginal affairs. We do not get consultation from this government: we get an information session and then they say, 'Well, this is what we're going to do.'

I will move on to transport, although the minister has left the chamber. I will read from a press release that the Premier (Hon. Mike Rann), Hon. Jay Weatherill and the Minister for Tourism (Hon. Jane Lomax-Smith) put out on 24 June when they were up there reannouncing the opening of the school and the pool area—and we know how good they are. I think they have announced the red tape reduction 10 times in this place. They reannounced some issues up there. Let us see what the Premier said. Mike Rann said, 'Infrastructure is one

of the most important keys to prosperity for any community'—whether that is a community in the APY lands, a community in metropolitan Adelaide or the rural and regional areas of South Australia. I will read it again to ensure that everyone heard it: 'Infrastructure is one of the most important keys to prosperity for any community.'

What have we got from this government when it comes to infrastructure? We have blow-outs and delays. It is really quite sad. I remind the house, people reading this and the media that this year alone \$409 million in motor vehicle taxes will be paid into the coffers. We heard that over \$100 million is coming from fines. We know the Treasurer once said that that is all going to road safety. We do not see that. Of the \$409 million this year, \$426 million next year, \$441 million in 2009-10 and \$458 million in 2010-11, that is about \$1.74 billion, I think, if my mental maths is correct. That money is not going into road safety or road repairs.

We are seeing a lousy \$14 million going into road maintenance—not this year, but over four years. It is an absolute disgrace. It is an absolute scandal what is happening to the money that is rolling into this government's coffers. There is \$157 million over four years for the relocation of the Adelaide railway yards. How many millions will it cost to build the refuelling centre at Lonsdale? There are some shunting yards at the Dry Creek triangle area and the maintenance section is to be put out there, I am told—\$157 million. You can double that. It is like Mike Rann's weir. He said \$20 million when we started on that. I said straightaway to add a zero. I understand the cost of the weir is about \$130 million—that is, after they work out how to get through the 30 metres of mud! It is an absolute tragedy.

We should look at the Hon. Pat Conlon's response to me during estimates, when he said he heard the opposition spokesperson describe the \$115 million resleepering of the railway lines as 'routine maintenance'. It is not rebuilding, and it is not replacing. He tried to compare it with the rebuilding of the *Advertiser* building. They knocked the old building down, as I understand it, and built a brand new one: they did not just carry out some maintenance on it and refurbish it. I admit that it is much cheaper, but if you are going to do it you should do it properly. The following is a telling quote from estimates which appears in *Hansard*. The minister said, 'and it is routine maintenance that has not happened on some of those lines since the 1970s'. Well, Bannon was there. Okay, the Liberal government was there for eight years, but the problem is that we had very little money. We had to build a reversible expressway because of the conditions that prevailed at that time; that is all we could do. We struggled to carry out other maintenance.

In six years, this government has done absolutely nothing. It is a tragedy to see that everything it touches and everything it plans just blows out. I will tell the house what the planning, consulting and construction community is calling the \$28 million tram bridge: 'Paddy's Irish underpass'. It is an absolute disgrace. The tram crossing on South Road should have been included in the scoping of the original project. I must not digress with respect to the trams, but they really bought the wrong trams, and they know it. I love the light rail extensions in South Australia, but it is the wrong priority, when nurses are having to strike and when schools are being taxed and there are 25 per cent cuts in their power and water allowances: it is just so wrong. The government's priorities are wrong. Build the light rail, build the tramline; that is fantastic. But the Premier should get his priorities right.

During the estimates committees, the Minister for Transport said, 'What use is a long-term plan when they have no intention of abiding by any item in it?' He was talking about the Libs there, but it reflects exactly what this government is thinking. What use is a long-term plan when you have no intention of abiding by it? This government has no idea what it should be doing and no idea where it should be going. The sad part about it is that it has billions of dollars to do things that would benefit the hardworking taxpayers of South Australia. The other sad thing is that they have had about 5½ years now to do some of these things: they have had a golden opportunity to do them. Rann gets results! Well, the results are: health—fail; education—fail; and transport—fail. In every area that one looks at in this state, one will see that this is a government that is underperforming and underwhelming in its attitude to the hardworking taxpayers and, certainly, I expect to see it sitting on this side of the house in March 2010, because of the way it is mismanaging a golden opportunity. It is an opportunity lost, and it is just a tragedy.

I would be more than happy to come in here and support the good things that are happening—and there are some fantastic, good things going on. I refer, for instance, to science and information economy. Minister Caica, who is a good minister, has gone overseas (and I am happy for him to go) to further the industry and his portfolios. However, let us recognise the fact that there is an opportunity here. Let us recognise the good things, but let us never forget the mismanagement by the Premier and his ministers. It is a disgrace. There are Aboriginal affairs, transport and many other areas that we see across the portfolios. I ask the government to take a cold shower and to look at the opportunities that are there and, at least in the next couple of years that it has, to do something positive for South Australia.

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen):** I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak on the budget for 20 minutes, because one of my big gripes about this budget is the lack of time appropriate to the areas about which I wanted to ask questions. Some members may have seen a report in *The Advertiser* about the fact that, on the Attorney-General's line, which is a budget of over \$50 million, I had precisely 33 minutes to address all the questions that I wanted to have answered by the Attorney over a range of issues. Of course, 33 minutes was totally insufficient. I say again, as I have said every year in this place, it seems to me that there must be a better way to manage the estimates process than the way it is done at the moment. With only 33 minutes in the Attorney-General's line, I had the opportunity to ask some questions about the DPP—and I thoroughly endorse the comments of the leader that it is clear that this government does not like the idea of having an independent DPP, and the more independent he becomes the less they like him.

However, I did not have the opportunity to ask questions about legal aid, and there are some significant questions to be asked about legal aid. For instance, I know that the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement is on its knees and virtually about to close down. No doubt, the Attorney would respond that Aboriginal Legal Rights is entirely federally funded. However, the reality is that the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement has had to write to, for instance, the Magistrates Court at Christies Beach to indicate that it will no longer be able to provide services at that court. The obvious question that then rises is: if the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement cannot provide the service, who will

provide the service? Will it be provided under state-funded legal aid?

The reality of Aboriginal legal aid is that, although it is funded by the federal parliament and the federal government, in fact, the funding is largely spent providing legal aid to indigenous people who come before our state courts under state laws. In therefore follows that, if it does collapse, those people will need to get help from somewhere else. I would dearly have loved to ask some questions about that whole issue, and, indeed, funding generally in the legal aid sector, given the delays that are occurring in our courts, but I did not have the opportunity to do that. We did ask for an extra hour for the Attorney-General's budget, but we did not get it.

I had half an hour to ask about the State Electoral Office. So, we had 33 minutes for the Attorney-General's budget, which is over \$50 million, and 30 minutes for the State Electoral Office, which basically takes up a double page in the whole of the budget papers and which has a budget of about \$2.3 million and which is, I would have to say, not an area which is subject to any great controversy or need for questions, although I actually had more than half an hour in which to ask questions in that area. I would also have liked to be asked about the Public Trustee's Office and the Forensic Science Centre. For instance, in relation to the Forensic Science Centre, I have anecdotal evidence of significant delays in that area (which now comes under the Attorney-General's portfolio), and I would like to have had the opportunity to ask questions about that. I will, no doubt, be putting some questions on notice to the Attorney in relation to a number of these things.

I want to make it quite clear that I have no quibble with the government's right to determine its budget. The government clearly has a majority. It is the government's job and its prerogative to decide how it is going to spend its money, but surely it is reasonable to allow the opposition and, indeed, the Independents, a reasonable opportunity to question and to clarify what is clearly a very bulky and complex document and often one which is written in terms which are not evident to the casual reader. For instance, I found out only this year, in questioning the Minister for Disability, that what I had read as estimated result meaning the actual money spent as compared to the budget for a year, that is not what it means at all. What it means is the revised budget, apparently, at least in that particular portfolio.

It seems to me that there must be some reasonable middle ground to how we manage this whole estimates process. I am not suggesting we should go to the federal system of Senate estimates, which are interminable, cost extraordinary amounts of money, and tie up resources unnecessarily, regardless of who is in government and who is in opposition. It seems to me that there must be a better way than the process we have at the moment. I know from contact with various departments and organisations that come within this budget process that inordinate numbers of hours are spent by senior bureaucrats preparing for budget estimates in case a question is asked.

Certainly, quite senior people come down here and spend time waiting, and then sitting in on the budget estimates. Given that all that work has been done, in readiness to answer any potential question that might be asked by an opposition member, it seems to me that we could do things more efficiently. We could allow a reasonable time for the asking of questions and we could even, in fact, make it so that we do not just use the chamber of the House of Assembly for budget estimates A and the opposite chamber for budget estimates B.

I also appreciate that, if you were to allow everyone as long as they wanted, we would never get through the budget estimates, so there has to be some sort of reasonable line. However, there is no reason why several committees could not be running at the same time, instead of just the two committees. We could still do it over a couple of weeks and I am sure, with a bit of neat timetabling, we could manage to get through a whole lot more than we achieve over the two weeks. As I said, I find it an extremely frustrating process and, ultimately, largely a waste of taxpayers' money.

I have already mentioned a number of the issues that I would have liked to address to the Attorney-General. One of the interesting responses I did get from the Attorney-General was in respect of the Courts Administration Authority when, in effect, the Attorney-General conceded that work does need to be done on the courts. Indeed, I remember quoting significantly from a comment that the Chief Justice had made during 2006 about the need for improvements. The Attorney-General seemed to indicate that, although he conceded that the comments made may have been correct, no funding was being allowed.

I then asked the Attorney-General why it was that this government was able to put money towards a hospital, budget for it and arrange for it to be built (in theory at least, but not until 2016, so you have costings going out for the hospital until 2016 and, indeed, I suspect, until about 2021), but it has not been prepared to put anything into the forward estimates to even begin to address what the Attorney-General acknowledges are problems regarding the superior courts. To paraphrase the response I received from the Attorney-General it was, in essence, 'The public are not clamouring for things like this; they are clamouring for hospitals.' That is a telling response because it reveals this government's thinking. It does not act according to what is right and proper but acts according to where it will get the headlines. I am not suggesting for a moment that it is not entirely proper for this government to heavily prioritise health and education. They already get about half the budget; roughly a quarter each. I absolutely endorse the government's right to do that and, indeed, the fact that that is where its absolute priorities should lie.

However, it does not follow on, therefore, to say that we cannot even start to think about what we might do, at some time in the future, to address the issue of the problems in the courts, which have been acknowledged by the Attorney-General. It is an interesting technique. Of course, another approach that this government uses is what I call the *mea culpa* technique. It is something I think it has copied from Peter Beattie in Queensland, who has become an expert at it. I think the government here has realised it is quite a good technique: when you have made a mistake, you do the *mea culpa* and beg forgiveness and it really puts an end to the discussion.

That is what the government here did, for instance, over the issue of WorkCover payments by schools. First of all it tried to sneak it through by hiding it in a single line of a document that was about six inches thick and, when it became apparent (because it had to tell the schools eventually what it was going to do), it did react to the public's clamouring. That is certainly something that this government is renowned for: recognising when there is enough public clamouring.

Sadly for my other portfolios, there is difficulty for the disability sector, in particular, to do the sort of clamouring that it needs to do. It has been decimated by the government

in this budget. I am cynical enough to believe that this government made all sorts of promises about the disability sector—

*The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:*

**Mrs REDMOND:** Madam Deputy Speaker, could I ask that I be permitted to continue my remarks without interference by the Attorney-General?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Heysen is quite entitled to ask that, and I ask the Attorney-General to observe standing orders and not interject.

**Mrs REDMOND:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. As I was saying, the disability sector has been very badly done by in this budget, and I am cynical enough to believe that in the year leading up to our election in 2006 the disability sector was misled into believing that this government did care about it and would be trying to help, but the reality of what has happened in this budget is that the government is showing its true colours, that is, a complete disregard for the reality of most people who have to deal with the disability sector, particularly for the parents and carers of those with a disability and for the people with a disability who are trying to cope with the system.

Most particularly, what this government has done is, first, it has decimated the funding in the area of advocacy and information services. It has taken that funding away from something like 10 or 11 different organisations, notably: the Down Syndrome Society of South Australia, ParaQuad, Deaf SA, Muscular Dystrophy, Families SA, neurological and physiological problems, the Brain Injury Network, a whole range of them which, in fact, I named in a question to the minister. I asked him specifically where the money was being taken from each of those organisations, because what we do know at the moment is that the government has reduced what was a \$1.3 million budget to merely \$550 000. That is a reduction of \$753 000 across those 10 or 11 agencies.

Obviously, that amount has been determined—and the minister has undertaken to give me a table indicating how much is being taken from each of those agencies—but the minister does not seem to realise that, first of all, in relation to information services, these organisations provide an amazingly efficient and cost-effective service and have a degree of knowledge and understanding of their particular problems that the government is never going to be able to match. It all comes down to the problem that this minister in particular, who is very much to the left of the Labor group, believes that everything is better done by government rather than by NGOs. So, all these information services, theoretically, are now going to be paid for and supplied directly by government.

However, the reality is that no bureaucrat is going to know enough about all of these different disabilities and their management. I have had several letters from people whose children have Down syndrome or who have suffered from muscular dystrophy and so on. There are many examples within that range of organisations of the sorts of specialist knowledge that this government is now going to put into decline, because once these organisations are not funded any more the reality is that we are going to lose the specialist knowledge that these organisations have generated and with which they are able to better support, as well as inform, people in the community.

One couple wrote to me about their difficulties when they found out that their child had Down syndrome and the support that they were able to get from the Down Syndrome Society of South Australia. What is going to disappear is that

level of support and understanding which is so important, particularly to people who are newly faced with these problems, whether it be a brain injury they have got by way of an accident or whether they have a child who has been born with a particular disability. It is of no consequence to the government but it will be of enormous consequence to the people in the sector. As I said, I do not wish to denigrate public servants but there is just no way they will have the depth and breadth of knowledge of the individual disabilities to provide the necessary assistance to people who are suddenly confronted with the impact of a particular disability. So that is the first part of it, the information.

Advocacy is the other side of that. The government has removed advocacy and said, 'We will do that from the government.' That is a nonsense because, theoretically, someone in the government will end up advocating to the government on behalf of the person with a disability. That will simply never work. We need the exact opposite, we need independence in advocacy, but that is not what this government sees, what it sees is an opportunity to reduce costs.

I know from comments the minister has made in this place that he perceives these little organisations as nothing more than parent groups. Now, it is true that a number of these organisations have originated from groups of parents who have come together because they shared the common bond of a disability within their family. They have come together to try to get more information and so on, but, over generations, they have actually become experts in the field and they know what is needed. That is why they are good advocates. They do not just advocate on an individual basis, they advocate systemically, and not just to the federal or state government but across a whole range of areas. However, as I said, \$753 000 has been taken out and it is a huge cost to the community both in actual dollars and in the loss of expertise that will inevitably flow from that significant reduction in funding.

Another thing I did not have a chance to ask the government about was the companion card in the disability sector. My understanding is that some three years ago the government allocated nearly a quarter of a million dollars—something in the order of \$245 000—for what is called a companion card that is to be introduced on a national basis—in fact, Victoria has already introduced it. In this state we have a travel companion card, so, if you have a disability, are travelling on public transport and need someone to travel with you to assist with that, you can get a companion travel card for that purpose. However, the aim of the national scheme (for which we started to budget three years ago but on which we have not spent any money) is that you can go to football or to any range of things.

Most people do not like going to things by themselves in the first place; it feels a little unusual. I do it fairly regularly but a lot of people find it uncomfortable. Can you imagine how very isolating it would be, if you had a disability, to go to a function alone—whether it be the football, the theatre, or any number of other things that are happening around the community? So, three years ago the government put aside \$245 000 for this state to move to the same national system that Victoria has already gone to, but it has done nothing with it. It has not happened.

A number of people have contacted me to ask what is going on. It is one of the things about which I would have liked to ask the minister during the budget estimates but, again, because of the limit on the amount of time allowed for the asking of reasonable questions during the budget esti-

mates process, I was denied the opportunity. Once again, I will go to the bother of putting the question on notice, but it is not the same as having the advisers there and having the opportunity for more of a discussion about what is going on, about whether there is an explanation. A written question will never produce the same sorts of answers as you are able to get when senior people are there to advise in response to questions.

Time expired.

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher):** First, I would like to question the desirability of continuing with the current format of estimates. It has been a hobbyhorse of mine for a long time, to question the validity and the value of the process where members sit around for a long period of time and get to ask the occasional question. We have excluded members of the other place from that process, and I do not see that as being appropriate. I think that maybe we have come to a point where, instead of continuing with the current format, we have a system where heads of government agencies and the minister (that is probably desirable) are present and there is a full briefing opportunity for all members of parliament of both houses to hear what the head of a department has to say about their projects and activities, and there could be opportunity for questioning by any of the members. That would be a better format than the very restrictive and structured current approach to estimates. In talking informally with heads of government agencies, many have said that they would prefer to come here and tell MPs the information they have accumulated for estimates but are rarely asked about. They would be happy to put that in front of MPs, rather going through the current cat and mouse game of estimates which has been going for probably over 20 years and which is due for major reform.

In terms of specific issues, as to the question of intervention in Aboriginal traditional lands, I have said publicly before that I think that the measure taken by the Prime Minister is welcome. It is belated and should have happened 20 years ago; nevertheless, it is underway and being supported by the state government and the opposition, and I commend them both on that. I know that people are arguing about some aspects of the intervention; however, a community, a government and all governments have a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable.

I return to a point which I raised before but which does not seem to have been raised in the current debate about intervention in Aboriginal communities; that is, what is the long-term economic base for those communities? Sure, you have to establish law and order first, and protect children, but ultimately those communities must have an economic reason for existence, whether it be pastoral (raising cattle, sheep or other livestock), producing craft items, or tourism. Most communities are not in a situation where they can take advantage of modern-day communications. As we know, nowadays people do not have to live in big cities to participate in electronic commerce and related activities. However, most of these communities would not be anywhere near that point, but it is something we could aim towards.

Unless you address the long-term issues of economic viability and survival, given that the people in these communities do not live a traditional lifestyle, except in part (they do a little hunting and gathering but, in the main, they live a westernised style of life), you will never provide them with the opportunity to attain full dignity and develop their talents to the fullest possible extent. That is why I think that issues

such as land tenure and title must be addressed in order to create a sense of ownership (maybe in a different format from the wider community), but you must provide some sort of incentive. I think that people such as Noel Pearson are on the right track in that regard.

We have heard a lot about hospitals and medical issues through estimates. I believe that the minister is trying to update the infrastructure. It is a huge task, and we have an ageing population. I have recently written to the Minister for Health and to the Premier, as well as to the Speaker of this chamber, urging a focus on preventive health so that public servants and, in this place, MPs and staff can have access to health checks in situ, when professionals come to the workplace and check people for blood pressure, blood sugar and so on.

That sort of focus on preventative health is good for the individual and the community (in terms of wellbeing) and will save the government a lot of money in the long run. In that regard I commend the City of Marion, which has been doing this for a long time—I suspect driven by the good sense of the Mayor of the City of Marion. It has been doing health checks of its staff for a long time. They help staff who need to address a particular health issue; and I commend them for it. I would like to see health checks applied throughout the Public Service, in the parliament and in local government, as well. Many corporations are doing it. I know the ANZ Bank is doing it; and I commend them and other private sector organisations that are doing it. Preventative health is the way to go.

One of the issues which did not get canvassed in the estimates committee process relates to food labelling (which comes under the aegis of the Minister for Health). There is a move afoot by some food manufacturers to have the labelling of foods changed, via the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Organisation, which would allow them to make health claims about their manufactured food product. I disagree with that approach, and I trust the minister—and I have written to him—does not subscribe to the view that manufacturers can make a health claim about their manufactured food products. I think the approach should be that there is adequate comprehensive labelling in order to allow customers to make a choice. If ‘reduced fat’ or ‘eating this product could lower your blood cholesterol’ become legitimised as a health message, we are getting into a risky area. The better approach would be to have full and adequate labelling in order to allow people to make up their own mind. It could be that infrequently eating a product with more fat in it is better than eating a reduced fat product frequently. I urge the minister to resist the attempt by some food manufacturers to claim health benefits for foods, because I think it is a very relative type of claim that will be made and it is not the best way to go.

Clearly, water got coverage in the estimates committee. I agree with the Minister for Water Security that the government needs to hasten slowly on the issue of desalination. We know that water is an important issue, but I do not believe that the government or the minister should rush into making a decision about a desalination plant for Adelaide and South Australia. It could well be that its strategy might be to have a small plant, basically running continuously (preferably supplied with green energy), rather than a big plant costing a lot of money, which may become partially redundant if other less costly measures, such as water capture reuse and aquifer storage, are adopted. South Australia has a particular situation with a shallow gulf and, therefore, we need to be

very careful about the discharge of highly saline by-products from a desalination plant. We have a very different coastline and water depth profile from some other states.

The study done by NRM in relation to Brownhill Creek, and other creeks, has indicated that Victoria Park would be an ideal location for water storage capture, wetlands, and so on. I make that point being aware of the proposal to continue horseracing at Victoria Park. It could well be that the reconstruction of Victoria Park—not for car racing but, rather, horseracing—might compromise the ability of water authorities to provide for water capture and reuse and wetlands in part of Victoria Park. I caution the government to be very careful that it does not remove the options for water capture, water storage and wetlands in part of Victoria Park—at least the southern part—in any attempt to redesign the horseracing track, in particular.

Likewise, I am aware of the options at Cheltenham. I believe that that is an ideal site for water capture and then water reuse as part of an overall water-savings plan. I reiterate my concern about the proposal to raise the height of the spillway or to build a new spillway at Mount Bold. I have indicated previously—but I do not think the government has realised this yet—that what is being proposed would result in the total destruction of probably the best and the most pristine native vegetation in this state. Rather than rush in and spend \$8 million on a feasibility study, I think that a few discussions with people such as Dr David Paton at Adelaide University and Dr Bob Sharrad at the Nature Foundation, and so on, could tell the government in 10 minutes that it is not a good thing to be doing, and it could save \$8 million by not having to spend it on a so-called feasibility study for Mount Bold.

I raise the issue of crime in the community. I acknowledge that, in some aspects, there has been a reduction in certain types of crime. Some relating to motor vehicles is probably the result of improved electronic protection on motor vehicles; nevertheless, in Adelaide in particular, we still have a very worrying serious crime problem at night. I have started keeping records now from *The Advertiser* and, in the three months April, May and June something happened virtually every night of the week.

I will just read some out for the benefit of members: 20 April, indecent exposure; 21 April, car chase; 22 April, man beaten to death; 23 April, two women indecently assaulted, armed robbery with a broken bottle, bottles thrown at police, dual copper raid; 25 April, man shot at home, stolen car chase; 27 April, car chase, serious criminal trespass, shot fired and roadside mugging, and so it goes on. Virtually every day over the three months there were armed robberies, sexual assaults and car chases, and this is in Adelaide with a population of 1 million people.

Adelaide has an ageing population so we should have less of this sort of behaviour. We still have a very serious night time crime problem in Adelaide. I know that the government is under pressure to accommodate some of the worst offenders. It should lock them up, but it does not have the facilities to do it. I know the government is looking at building more conventional gaols, and I keep saying that there is a place for some alternative-type incarceration, such as work camps and environmental camps rather than providing more cages of the traditional gaol type.

We cannot allow this sort of behaviour to go on unchecked. I know the government ultimately is responsible for law and order, but the courts must play their part. When you look at the sentences given here they seem very lenient

compared to what happens interstate. If members look in the newspaper today they will see a report of a 12-year old girl in Perth who went on a car spree. I think she was given a one-year incarceration. I cannot imagine that would ever happen here in Adelaide. I do not believe our courts take these matters that seriously.

There must be accountability. There must be a tougher approach to vandalism and graffiti. I caught the train again this morning, and virtually every glass panel of the Coromandel station shelter had been smashed—11 panels of two metres by 1½ metres were all smashed. If those characters get caught (and I hope they do), we know the consequences will not be very severe. Whilst that happens in our community and continues to happen we will continue to get not only that sort of behaviour but it will also be translated into more serious behaviour as evident in the statistics to which I just referred.

Some of the people who are out and about have had 90 prior convictions. If you are in that category you should not be allowed out: you should be locked up. We know that gaols do not solve all our problems, but you cannot have people out and about engaging in serious crime, such as car-jackings, stabbings, murder and so on, which is what happens nearly every night in Adelaide. I challenge anyone—and I am happy to provide the statistics—to show that Adelaide is not as crime free as we are often told.

The tram upgrade is nearing completion, and I am delighted with that. Members would be aware that the issue of the O-Bahn has recently been canvassed. It is coming up to the 30-year point where, in the original report, it was predicted that it would need major maintenance. We have a problem in obtaining articulated buses (concertina buses) for the O-Bahn. I find it hard to believe that in this day and age we cannot construct articulated buses not only for the O-Bahn but also to replace those that do the Noarlunga run. We can build submarines here, so I do not think it is past us to be able to build articulated buses.

If we do not have articulated buses on the O-Bahn, Grenfell Street will become much more congested and costs on the Noarlunga run will escalate dramatically, because the buses will be carrying a lot fewer passengers. So, I urge the government to have a bit of lateral thinking on that. Originally, the O-Bahn buses were assembled at Mitsubishi, but I am sure we have enough engineering skills in Adelaide to build articulated buses. We used to build our own trams here—all the old so-called rattlers were built at Edwardstown—so I am sure we can do the same with articulated buses.

I am not surprised that the member for Stuart raised the issue of firebreaks and his obsession with native vegetation. There is obviously a problem in regard to country people and the administration of the Native Vegetation Act. I have just written to the *Stock Journal*, because someone wrote last week saying that we live in a communist society. Well, we do not. It is sad that farmers, who ultimately are the custodians of much of the native vegetation, are so angry. I am not sure whether it is because of a refusal for any clearance or because of the way they are treated, but that issue needs to be sorted out. In my view, the overwhelming majority of farmers are keen conservers of native vegetation, but there is clearly a problem there that needs to be sorted out. As I say, I am not sure whether it involves the specifics of not being able to clear or the way in which the bureaucracy is interacting with farmers, but something needs to be done as soon as possible. I do not support the argument that there is a need to remove native vegetation willy-nilly. I think firebreaks need to be big

enough for access. I think they are more important as access tracks rather than as firebreaks per se, because fires tend to jump the breaks at the speed of the wind in any event.

One thing I would have liked to have seen in the budget and canvassed during the estimates is a provision for some off-road cycleways in Adelaide. This is an ideal city for off-road cycleways, yet we do not have many. We have some along the Torrens Linear Park. The city council, to its credit, has put some excellent ones in the south Parklands, but we need a lot more so that people can cycle into the city and back.

There are many other points that I could comment on. Overall, I think this budget has been quite a good one. You will never please everyone. Health is a bottomless pit when it comes to money. However, if we focus, as I said, on preventative health, that will help to reduce overall health costs in the long-run. People should not abuse their health and then expect the state to pick up the pieces at the end of the day.

**Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder):** It is a pleasure to make a few brief comments today about the estimates process. I think I am one of the few people who sat in on all six days across committees A and B. I had the same opportunity last year, too.

*Mr Pederick interjecting:*

**Mr GRIFFITHS:** It appears as though one member, in particular, has some sympathy for me doing that, but I enjoyed it, although it was very tiring by the end of the day.

*Mr Kenyon interjecting:*

**Mr GRIFFITHS:** The member for Newland comments that it was self-inflicted. I must admit that he did come to me with a suggestion to reduce the time limits, but I wanted to stay and actually listen to the ministers' answers. I came into this place on the basis that I had a lot to learn, and I think that the best way to do that is to become involved. That is why I chose to be involved on all six days in areas of particular interest to me. I hope that my small contribution will actually help the parliament in some way.

For me estimates began last Wednesday with questions of the Premier, which was interesting. The Premier was quite open with most of the questions asked by the Leader of the Opposition. I went on to minister Conlon—again an interesting session—but in the evening it became frustrating for me in attending as part the team with the opposition's shadow minister for education and children's services. The Minister for Education and Children's Services, Jane Lomax-Smith (or as the media often maliciously refers to her: Jane 'school tax' Smith) was in attendance. On that morning the minister and the Premier had made the backflip on the decision to impose a \$17 million penalty on public schools via the workers compensation levy over the next four years. The decision they made that day had to be made—there is no doubt about it. It is disappointing that it took so long for the realisation to come to the government that communities would not accept it. The government clearly has no idea about people, real people, because parents out there work hard to raise money for schools and they want to make sure their efforts go into playgrounds, desks, chairs, landscaping, supporting school trips and so on. They do not want to raise money to go back to government coffers.

*Mr Pederick interjecting:*

**Mr GRIFFITHS:** As the member for Hammond says, you have to sell a lot of lamingtons to raised \$17 million. The government came to the realisation that a decision it made—a

policy decision that been in place since September last year—was wrong, and it has altered its position. Still, the Treasurer has not actually said that the \$17 million that was to come from that over four years does not have to be made up in some way. That is the challenge for us on this side of the house, to ensure that education does not miss out on \$17 million in some other area, because it is too important to us.

It was obvious the minister had had a bad day. She had started early no doubt with media questions. By the time we got to her, about 8 p.m. that evening, she was slouched in her chair and was not answering questions. I think Iain Evans asked one question 11 times before he got anything close to an answer. We asked questions we thought were relevant in relation to the on-costs of employing teachers, but, no, that did not come into the calculations at all. It demonstrates to me that too many members opposite do not understand the true costs of doing business.

The South Australian public—and we have to recognise they are the voters—want to know where the money is being spent as it is their money. We have to ensure it is spent appropriately. We asked questions about the future of the aquatics program. I have spoken here about that because it is a key issue in my electorate with one of the 11 centres being based in Goyder, but those questions were not answered adequately. The minister has come out and clarified it in some way and reviews are still being held. Let us hope that the 200 people who work—not necessarily full-time—as part of the aquatics program have a future that will allow them to continue to provide important skills and life development for the young people who attend them.

The next two days were with the Treasurer. Thursday morning was very interesting. Anybody who was here that day would have stood in amazement and wondered what was going on. The very brief comment from the Treasurer was inflammatory. He said he would not say anything, but then said a few words directed specifically to the Leader of the Opposition, which could not do anything but get him upset. The Leader of the Opposition stood up, made his opening comment and truthfully stated that, in two out of the three indices that measure whether the budget is in deficit or surplus, this government's budget is in deficit. One is shown as a \$30 million surplus, but the Treasurer chose to accuse the Leader of the Opposition of lying. The leader was not happy about that and sought the protection of the chair, who then chose to offer the Treasurer the opportunity to apologise and withdraw the statement. Initially the Treasurer refused and we had a degree of chaos, with people standing up. The chair of the committee decided to call a five-minute recess and the Treasurer left the chamber. By the time we returned to the chamber—more like eight minutes later—the Treasurer apologised and withdrew the statement, but amazingly in the next five minutes he chose to use the word 'lie' again twice. After each occasion he immediately withdrew it, but in my eyes that made a complete mockery of the process.

It shows his arrogance that he chose to use a word that he had to come into the chamber and apologise for and immediately withdraw. Let us make sure that the parliamentary process is an accountable and honest one. Recently I have been reading a book about Sir Thomas Playford, and it talks about parliament when it was a different place, and there is no doubt about that. The altercation that occurred last Thursday would never have happened in past days, and let us hope it does not happen again. Some staff members in the house I have spoken to, who have been here for the full

28 years when estimates committees started, thought it was one of the worst exhibitions they had witnessed.

*The Hon. S.W. Key interjecting:*

**Mr GRIFFITHS:** Yes, they do. In consideration of that day, the Leader of the Opposition this morning used the term Tarzan of the Jungle when referring to the Treasurer. I have watched a few movies in my time. I find it quite relaxing—

**Mr Pederick:** Where's Jane?

**Mr GRIFFITHS:** Not Jane, but there is one funny one I like that is called George of the Jungle, where this silly fellow swings amongst trees and he hits them all the time. I think the Treasurer's performance was a bit more like George of the Jungle last week, and let us hope it does not happen again.

An interesting point that I identified when asking questions of the Treasurer that day related to the number of staff and full-time equivalent staff who work for the state government. I know that the full-time equivalent numbers are a fraction under 79 000 people. The issue the opposition makes all the time is the fact that, in the past six budgets, while 12 000 new public servants have been employed, only 2 000 have been within the budget papers. Our estimate is that those extra 10 000 people probably equate to an ongoing liability of \$650 million a year. I acknowledge the hard work of public servants and I am not about to knock them, but I am disappointed with the financial controls that are in place when departments over five consecutive governments get it so wrong and suddenly they have 10 000 more people working for them than were budgeted for. However, in commenting, the Treasurer confirmed that, while there are 79 000 full-time equivalents, that is actually 98 000 people working for the state in some capacity. Given that we have 760 000 people working in South Australia, in round figures, that is 12.2 per cent of the working population; or, one in every eight people working in South Australia works for the state. I was amazed at that statistic. It certainly shows a bureaucracy that is very large.

Another comment I can make in relation to the Treasurer's question is that in the 2006-07 financial year the economic growth in the state was an estimated result of only 1 per cent, where initially it had been predicted to be 2.5 per cent. I made the comment to the Treasurer that, even accounting for a lower economic turnover (and we know that transactions create the revenue that comes to the state government), how do we suddenly find that we have \$400 million more than was budgeted for coming into revenue? I am not sure how that works. I am intrigued also by the fact that the Treasurer has chosen to predict 4 per cent growth over the 2007-08 financial year which, according to his measurement of the cash surplus situation, will result in a \$30 million cash surplus. What if it does not rain, Treasurer? What if we do not get 4 per cent growth? What is our cash surplus going to be then? Is it going to be \$30 million, as you predict, or are we going to be in deficit up to hundreds of millions of dollars? I think he has taken an enormous risk there.

I must commend the Treasurer: on Friday his behaviour was exemplary. He answered all the questions put by the member for Morphett in questioning and gave great detail, and at the sort of level the public of South Australia would expect. Also, I thank him for the invitations to lunch on the Thursday and Friday that he issued; it was very hospitable of him. So, I will commend him at all times when he does the right thing.

On Monday, I had the pleasure of sitting with minister Caica (Minister for Employment, Training and Education),



who I know works very hard. He did a good job in answering the questions and provided detailed answers, but one area that concerned me and those of us in opposition related to the development of Adelaide as a university city. It is a focus of government. We currently have about 21 000 overseas students within universities. The Strategic Plan identifies that we want to increase that to 30 000 people. When you consider the number of overseas students in our schools and TAFE network, it is over 30 000, I think, but the potential is to grow it enormously. The future vision, according to the minister, is to try to restrict that to 42 000 but, given the targets in the budget, if we set the level that the government wants in relation to the numbers in Australia from overseas who are studying here, we could get up to 67 000.

The minister thinks that is a little inappropriate. He thinks that is too many. The state and the city cannot handle that. We say that the challenge for him is to make it happen. Let us try to get those extra 25 000 people here. Let us try to ensure that they are studying, living, working (when available) and spending their money here, because the number of overseas students already living in this state brings approximately \$553 million into the economy. We did focus on TAFE cuts, too. I know the pressure that has been put on staff across all levels of TAFE to reduce costs. The support staff, in many cases, have had their hours reduced or they have gone. The lecturers are taking on more responsibility which is taking away the time that they have to focus on the skill demands that we need to put in place now and over the next 10 years for our younger people and those needing retraining to ensure that we can meet the skill demands of the future.

I have people from all levels of TAFE coming to see me all the time concerned about the pressure that TAFE is being put under. Minister, let us get the priorities right. I know that you know what needs to happen. Make sure that you do not listen to others who are influencing you in the wrong way. Tuesday was a shorter day for me. It started off with a brief 30 minutes on population. We all know that South Australia has 1.57 million people at the moment. The desire, as part of the Strategic Plan, is to try to get that to 2 million people by 2050. The housing needs will be a critical issue. That led into my next session which was with minister Holloway and Planning SA. A major component of our questioning during that evening session was on housing affordability. The homes required is an interesting one.

With 1.57 million people in South Australia, we use 600 000 homes to house everyone. With the prediction of growing the population to 2 million people, instead of needing one-third more (or 200 000 homes), we will require one half more (or 300 000 more homes). We need 900 000 homes to house 2 million people. That is based on the fact that—and these are official figures—while there is a current occupation level of between 2.2 and 2.3 persons per household, the prediction is that, by 2050, that will drop to 1.78 persons per household. Compounding all that are several issues. One of those is land availability and the review that needs to be undertaken of the urban growth boundary.

From the figures I have been able to ascertain, currently there is 12 years supply of vacant land within the urban growth boundary for Adelaide to ensure that the population can continue to grow. However, in the New South Wales and Victorian capitals, it is between 20 and 30 years respectively. South Australia has marketed itself on its housing affordability, some lower costs and its being more competitive when it comes to industries establishing here. However, let us recognise that, at the moment, it is becoming harder and

harder. Younger people are finding it very difficult to get into real estate. A significant component of that is the fact that land prices are growing exponentially. While building a home has remained reasonably constant, other than CPI and material cost increases, it is the land cost that will make people start to hurt.

It is important that the government is proactive and that it develops policies that allow for more land to become available to ensure that young South Australians and people who want to move to South Australia have the opportunity of purchasing a home. One other question we have asked is: where does water come from? Water security is absolutely crucial for the future of South Australia. We need to get it right and we need to get it right very soon. It is my belief (and it might not be held by everyone) that we need to invest in infrastructure that will ensure that we have some degree of independence from the River Murray system. For too long, it has been our sole supplier of water, in the main.

We need to ensure that we use some technology to ensure that water is available not only for our current needs but our future needs. We also need to ensure that we remain a state in which people want to live. No-one wants to live in a place where the parklands are dried up and where gardens have gone brown. We want to ensure that we have green gardens and that we attract people to come here. Yesterday was the big day for me, and I want to focus my last few minutes on that area. It was one for which I had been preparing—not because it was my portfolio area, but because I had the responsibility of being the lead speaker with minister Gago.

After having experienced last year's estimates session with her, I had to ensure that I was ready for this one. You have to psych yourself up a bit. The first line of questioning I had, though, was on the natural resource management levies issue. The particular questions I asked related to my electorate and the Northern and Yorke NRM Board. Within that area in the 2006-07 year, the levies were \$760 000. This year the Northern and Yorke NRM Board has predicted a required \$2.5 million to come from levies; that is, a 333 per cent increase. The minister in trying to provide an answer for the justification for that level of increase talked about the areas in which she and the government assessed requests for such significant increases. She talked about the level of CPI and that any projected levy increase which was above CPI had to be reviewed to which I immediately responded, 'This is 100 times what CPI is.'

Surely that is an important factor for her, but it did not appear to be. Then she talked about equity and the fact that equity is not necessarily the same as equal. I understand that and I took some offence to the fact that she thought that I did not understand that. I told her that, before I came into this place, I had—

**The SPEAKER:** We are just about to suspend for lunch. I suggest that the honourable member seeks leave to conclude his remarks.

**Mr GRIFFITHS:** I seek leave to conclude my remarks. Leave granted; debate adjourned.

*[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]*

#### MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport):** Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege. I believe that the Minister for Education and Children's Services has deliberately misled the

parliament. On 21 June this year, I asked the minister the following question:

Why is the government considering a workers compensation levy on all public schools and preschools of up to 1 per cent on salaries, and how does the minister expect schools and preschools to cope with this and other new costs on schools being considered?

Then, by way of explanation, I quoted from an email from Mr Doug Moyle, Principal of Hamilton Secondary College. The email states:

Please find attached a partial copy of an email sent to all Hamilton staff on Wednesday 30 May 2007. It outlines the estimated reduced funding the Hamilton Secondary College will receive in 2008. It amounts to some \$228 000—much worse than I initially reported to the last Council meeting. The only discretionary funding that schools receive from the government is the school support grant—all other funds are tied (legally) to other purposes. Our support grant is around \$170 000. The cuts would wipe this out. We simply cannot run the College without this school support grant and it means we will have to make cuts to staffing. This will increase class sizes, reduce individual attention to students and ultimately negatively on learning outcomes. For us \$220 000 is around three teachers or 33 semester courses we would have to shed.

The minister's response included the following statement:

To pretend, as the member for Davenport does, that any adjustments in school funding will affect staffing is clearly wrong. She further stated, 'So to pretend that there will be a reduction in teachers is just plain wrong.' During estimates on 27 June this year, I asked the minister:

Does the minister now accept that the nearly \$17 million in savings proposed through workers compensation reform would have to come from schools budgets for curriculum resources and student services that are used to employ extra staff, SSOs and teachers?

I repeated the same question. The minister's response included the following statement:

The other issue is that it is pure nonsense to suggest that staff would have to be sacked because of this levy, even if it had been at the maximum level of 1 per cent.

She also stated:

So the idea that there would be a reduction in staffing is a nonsense—the staffing is set.

On the morning of 27 June 2007, which was the estimates committee day on which the Minister for Education and Children's Services was to appear, the Premier and the minister announced that the government would not proceed with the proposed workers compensation reforms and the levy on schools. On that day, ABC journalist Matthew Abraham received the following message on his phone from Ms Jill Bottrall from the Premier's office:

The decision to impose on schools' discretionary funds \$16.9 million over four years on the workers compensation scheme was made by Cabinet in the lead-up to the last budget. So it was a budgetary decision by Cabinet that this is what they were going to do. What they have actually decided now to overturn is imposing it on what would have come out of the discretionary fund on schools and so there is a better way of finding savings in the workers compensation scheme. So, the government is to try and cut back the number of teachers that are going on workers compensation and trying to get schools to make it an incentive for schools not to have so many teachers going out on stress leave or becoming injured in the workers compensation or whatever it is they go out on workers compensation for. And so, principals, teachers, union groups have all said there is a better way of doing it, [and] we are committed with you to reform the workers compensation system, we are sure we can find different ways of making savings in that area without having to impose discretionary funds. The actual model for how they were going to impose discretionary funds hadn't actually been finalised but the decision to impose on those discretionary funds, however it was going to be modelled, has now been overturned.

This message went to air on Thursday 28 June and was read verbatim by Mr Abraham. This statement by the government

makes the point some five times that the cost imposed of the proposed workers compensation reform would have had an impact on schools' discretionary budgets. This statement makes it clear that it is for this reason (that is, the impact on schools' discretionary budgets) that the proposed workers compensation reforms were not proceeded with.

This statement is in conflict with the minister's statement. The discretionary budgets that were going to be impacted on by the workers compensation reforms are the same discretionary budgets used by schools to purchase extra staff, such as SSOs and teachers. Further, documents from the department's own website make it clear that schools can pay for extra staff out of their own budgets. Under the heading 'Employment of staff by governing councils', it is stated:

Governing Councils have two options to employ other categories of staff. Either the council can be the direct employer or staff can be employed through the Department but the Council will be on charged for the salary and costs.

Another document, under the heading 'Employment of additional teaching and ancillary staff', states:

Governing Councils proposing to employ staff, other than those employed in the canteen, grounds and OSHC centres, should do so through DECS on a recharge basis rather than employ directly.

Another document entitled 'School budget: developing and approving a school annual budget', under the heading 'Site Learning Plan', states:

One of the stages in the development of a site learning plan is to cost the strategies to achieve the targets of the plan. These costs may be for additional staff or Leadership positions to lead training and development or the purchase of sets of teachers and learning materials.

It is clear from the department's own documents that schools can purchase extra staff from their discretionary budget. I am not saying that schools use the whole of their discretionary budget to purchase extra staffing, but they certainly use some of it to purchase extra staffing.

As part of the protest against the government's proposed reforms, many schools wrote to the opposition or their school community making the claim that the proposed changes would impact on staffing. I quoted earlier Hamilton Senior College Principal, Doug Moyle, who wrote in response to the proposed cuts, 'We would have to reduce staffing.' This conflicts with the minister's statements to the house. Hawker Area School's governing council chairperson wrote that the cuts equated to '0.5 FTE teacher time or 40 hours SSO time per week'. This conflicts with the minister's statements to the house. Glenunga International High School's governing council chairperson, Bruce Guerin, wrote, 'Losing a quarter of a million dollars is the equivalent of nearly 3.5 teachers.' This conflicts with the minister's statements to the house.

Macclesfield Primary School's governing council chairperson wrote, 'This funding cut could mean a cut of 16 hours of SSO time or a teacher's salary for a day.' This statement conflicts with the minister's statement to the house. McLaren Flat Primary School representatives wrote, 'We have no other option than to take money budgeted to other areas such as ICT, SSO hours.' This conflicts with the minister's statements to the house. This list is by no means exclusive. Many other schools have made the same point that the proposed budget cuts would affect staffing by impacting on the school's discretionary budget. These statements also conflict with what the minister has told the house.

Further, the minister was aware that the proposed changes would have an impact on schools' budgets; it was the very reason the Premier and the minister gave for not proceeding

with the proposed workers compensation reforms. Further, the minister has had many meetings with lobby groups where the impact on school discretionary budgets and staffing was raised with the minister. I will provide you, Mr Speaker, with a set of notes from one such meeting on 17 May 2007 when the South Australian Secondary Principals Association met with the minister and advised her that school budgets were being targeted as the source of savings, that the school support grant was the only source of discretionary funding, and that the schools did not have the capacity to meet these targets.

Finally, the minister herself admitted that there would be an impact on school budgets when she responded by email to a constituent on 26 June 2007. She said:

While the finer details are being worked out with stakeholders, the impact on school budgets will be reduced through effective management of occupational health and safety at the local level.

Mr Speaker, given the above, I ask you to rule that a prima facie case of misleading the house has been made.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** On a point of order, sir, I can understand the tactic of wanting to upstage the leader, but it is hypothetical in the sense that there have been no cuts to school budgets. There will be no cuts, as outlined, as a WorkCover levy.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The house will come to order. I will have a look at the issues raised by the member for Davenport. I will report back to the house at the earliest opportunity with a ruling. I take it that the member for Davenport is seeking precedence to move a motion. I will report back to the house.

### EDUCATION FUNDING

A petition signed by 40 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to reject cuts to public school and preschool budgets and ensure funding of public education to enable each student to achieve their full potential was presented by Mr Griffiths.

Petition received.

*Members interjecting:*

**Ms CHAPMAN:** Point of order, Mr Speaker: I cannot hear the reading of the petitions.

**The SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order. I cannot hear him either.

### CENTRAL STANDARD TIME

A petition signed by 411 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to move South Australia to true central standard time, being one hour behind the Eastern States and one hour ahead of Western Australia was presented by Mrs Penfold.

Petition received.

### BUS SERVICE

A petition signed by 292 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to provide an alternative service for the residents of Rangeview Drive, previously serviced by Transitplus Bus 820 was presented by Mr Goldsworthy.

Petition received.

### HOSPITAL NAMING

A petition signed by 259 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to invite the people of South Australia to have their say regarding the renaming and relocation of the Royal Adelaide Hospital was presented by Ms Chapman.

Petition received.

### COUNTRY HOSPITALS

A petition signed by 422 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to reverse its decision to close maternity services in Cleve and other country hospitals was presented by Ms Chapman.

Petition received.

### MODBURY HOSPITAL

A petition signed by 330 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government not to proceed with the closure of Modbury Hospital's obstetrics department was presented by Ms Chapman.

Petition received.

### PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker—

Pursuant to section 131 of the Local Government Act 1999 the following 2005-06 annual reports of Local Councils:

Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council  
Grant, District Council of  
Mount Barker, District Council of

By the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (Hon. R.J. McEwen)—

Aquaculture Act 2001, Operation of the—Report 2007.

### MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Members of the Liberal Party have, in the past few days, claimed that the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries and Minister for Forests has breached the Members of Parliament (Register of Interests) Act 1983, by allegedly failing to declare electoral donations as gifts.

If accepted by this parliament, it sets a whole new benchmark for members of this house. If it is to be the new benchmark, according to the Leader of the Opposition, then he must declare today why it is that not one member of the Liberal Party in this house, including the Leader of the Opposition, has declared any electoral donations as gifts—not one. According to their own records, not one single donation has been declared. Are we being told that they do not have fundraisers? Are we being told that they do not have—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** We know they do not get a lot of donations, but are they telling us that they do not receive any at all? If they claim (and we have been through every one of their statements), as the leader has done so publicly, that they are in a different position because of their membership of the Liberal Party, then the Leader of the Opposition must

explain why there is a double standard. The law applies equally to all members of parliament, irrespective of party affiliation. There can be no double standards. The law applies to every single one of us.

I also note that the member for MacKillop, who contested the 1997 election as an Independent before being welcomed back into the Liberal government fold, did not declare in his 1998 return any electoral donations as gifts. Either the member for MacKillop received no financial or in-kind support—

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for MacKillop will come to order.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** The member says it is a scurrilous implication.

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** So, why didn't you declare?

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Okay. Maybe I can help you. Either the member for MacKillop received no financial or in-kind support for his successful campaign—and that may well be the fact—or, like the member for Mount Gambier, he formed the view that he did not need to declare electoral donations as gifts. No-one can convince me that individual members opposite did not receive donations valued at more than \$750 for their specific electorates, even if it was first laundered through the Liberal Party. Of course, we all remember Catch Tim. We all remember, and I am sure members in the press gallery remember, the Catch Tim affair where money for the Liberal Party was being laundered through Hong Kong in order to assist campaigns.

It has long been understood that the act did not apply to electoral donations but to sources of income and benefits for the private and personal use of members and their families. Let me repeat that—

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** It has long been understood that the act did not apply to electoral donations, but it did apply to sources of income and benefits for the private and personal use of members and their families. To be absolutely clear about this point, the government sought a legal opinion from the Deputy Crown Solicitor, Mr Greg Parker, who has today provided comprehensive advice. There is no requirement on any government to release such a crown law opinion but, because this advice goes to the heart of the obligations and requirements of all members of this house, I will today break a longstanding convention and I now table this crown law opinion. Mr Parker states:

A donation to a campaign fund is implicitly subject to a condition that it may only be spent on campaign costs. In those circumstances the money is not received by the member for his own use or benefit, although he or she may have a discretion as to which campaign costs it is used to meet. Thus. . . I do not consider that section 4(2)(d) requires a member to disclose gifts made to a campaign fund.

In the opinion, Mr Parker summarises his advice as follows:

(a) . . . there are two possible readings of the obligation of members to disclose campaign assistance;

(b) on a wide reading any assistance whatsoever received by a member that has a monetary value greater than \$750 must be declared regardless of whether it comes from a party or from private sources and also regardless of whether the member belongs to a political party or not;

(c) it seems unlikely that such a wide reading was intended and thus a narrower reading ought to be adopted;

(d) on a narrower reading only money or benefits given for the member's own personal use must be disclosed. On this narrower view, donations to a campaign fund need not be disclosed. Once again whether the member belongs to a political party or not is irrelevant provided that the money was given to a campaign fund or for campaign purposes and not for the member's own private benefit.

In terms of the issue of the Ministerial Code of Conduct which this government strengthened after some outrageous loopholes were utilised by at least one minister in the previous Liberal government (do you remember when the minister for IT was buying and selling IT shares?), I have been assured that there has been no breach of the code by the Minister for Agriculture. Indeed, the honourable member has today given me a written assurance that to the best of his knowledge he has always fully complied with this strict code. I find it amazing that you would be levelling charges against an independent member of this house without first examining your own records.

## DEFENCE SA

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** In 2003 the South Australian government established the Defence Industry Advisory Board and a dedicated defence unit within the Department of Trade and Economic Development to position South Australia as the defence capital of this nation. The main focus of the Defence Industry Advisory Board—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** The main focus of the Defence Industry Advisory Board and defence unit was originally to attract the Royal Australian Navy's air warfare destroyer project to Adelaide—a project worth almost \$8 billion—and, to quote the Premier, 'mission accomplished'. We succeeded in doing this and, as a result, established the Port Adelaide Maritime Corporation and its own board in 2005 to focus on delivering the state's substantial commitments to the air warfare destroyer project and to ensure development of a sustainable naval and defence industry hub, Techport Australia. Clearly, successful delivery of the air warfare destroyer project and the development of Techport Australia is a priority for this government and, following second pass approval and the selection of the Navantia F100 air warfare destroyer, there is no doubt that the air warfare destroyer project is now well underway.

The state has been extremely successful in developing its defence industry and attracting major projects over the past few years. While developing key support for the air warfare destroyer project, a project of major importance to this state and the nation, we also recognise the need to ensure that we continue to attract other major defence programs and support the army in relocating a new mechanised battalion to Edinburgh in the north of our city. Successful implementation of these major defence programs is critical in establishing a long-term global defence industry in this state, and the time has therefore come for this government to elevate its defence strategy to the next level and ensure that we cement our position as the defence capital of Australia.

Today I can announce the establishment of a new administrative entity, Defence SA, which will subsume the existing operations of the Port Adelaide Maritime Corporation and the defence unit. Defence SA will enable us to reinvigorate, refocus and integrate the state's defence industry develop-

ment efforts. We will maximise efficiencies, avoid duplication of resources and ensure a responsive, dynamic organisation that is capable of taking the state's defence strategy forward in the future. This single entity will facilitate the development and growth of a sustainable defence industry in South Australia based on existing, created and new market opportunities in accordance with South Australia's Strategic Plan objectives. It will advise and deliver strategy, policy and programs required to further defence industry growth in the state.

Resources and skills within the Port Adelaide Maritime Corporation are ideal to support those within the defence unit in delivery of the wider range of defence projects and growth opportunities in the state. In particular, Port Adelaide Maritime Corporation staff have experience and skills in the areas of property development, infrastructure, planning, and establishment of commercial and education institutes and have strong links with both defence and private enterprise.

Under the new entity, a holistic approach to the state's defence industry will be taken, including the linking of major defence precincts such as Techport Australia, technology parks, and the Edinburgh defence precinct. Defence SA will be established as a new administrative unit of the government of South Australia, pursuant to section 7 of the Public Sector Management Act 1995. The Premier, and Minister for Economic Development, would be the minister responsible for Defence SA, with delegated authority provided to me as Deputy Premier and Minister for Industry and Trade. A new advisory board will be created, with a number of existing Defence Industry Advisory Board and Port Adelaide Maritime Corporation board members invited for membership. It is intended that General Peter Cosgrove, former chief of the Defence Force, remain as chair of the new board.

Defence SA will be headed up by Mr Andrew Fletcher, current chief executive of the Port Adelaide Maritime Corporation, who will work with key stakeholders Roxley McLennan and Raymond Garrand to develop a full implementation plan. The government aims to have Defence SA established by 1 September 2007, with transition arrangements to be concluded by 31 October 2007.

### VISITORS TO PARLIAMENT

**The SPEAKER:** I draw to members' attention the presence in the chamber today of students from Modbury High School, who are guests of the member for Florey, and students from Marrayville High School, who are guests of the member for Bragg.

### QUESTION TIME

#### MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition):** When did the Premier become aware of the fact that a principal financial supporter of the Minister for Forests is the major forestry industry company, Auspine?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier):** I have already informed the Leader of the Opposition in the clearest terms, with crown law opinion, that he has, in fact, not breached the Ministerial Code of Conduct. If you have substantive evidence that the minister has in any way breached the Ministerial Code of Conduct—

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the question was not about the Ministerial Code

of Conduct; it was about when the Premier became aware of certain information.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! As I have explained before, it is not for the Speaker to second-guess how a minister chooses to answer a question.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** The Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, who is also the Minister for Forests, has been exemplary over the years he has been in cabinet in exempting himself on matters where he believes that there has been a perceived conflict of interest; in fact, on a number of occasions when I did not think it was necessary for him to leave the cabinet room, he has done so. He has been assiduous in alerting other members of cabinet to what he believes to be potential conflicts of interest. That is exactly the kind of conduct you would expect, as opposed to what happened in your government, when the minister for IT was buying and selling shares while he was in the middle of negotiations. That is the difference in the standards.

It is absolutely incumbent on any minister, at any stage where there is a potential conflict of interest, to then inform the Premier and, indeed, to inform cabinet colleagues. As I say, on a whole series of occasions the honourable minister has alerted me to any potential conflict of interest and has left the cabinet room during deliberation, discussion and debate.

### RURAL HEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

**Ms BREUER (Giles):** My question is to the Minister for Health. How can country communities have a greater connection to students on state government medical scholarships?

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health):** I thank the member for Giles for her question and for her great advocacy for country communities. Each year, the government awards rural health scholarships to students in rural areas. Decisions about who receives the scholarships are made centrally. What happens is that we have a number of scholarships that are available. We advertise nationally, and students from all around Australia apply for them. They are then committed to working in country South Australia for a period of time. Of course, some are not from South Australia and will leave the state after they have done their time; others will pay money to get out of that obligation.

Today I am announcing a new system that will give communities a greater say in awarding rural health scholarships. The aim of the new scheme is for communities themselves to have a greater opportunity to retain their home-grown health talent and strengthen their rural health workforce. The state government's \$300 000 SA Rural Health Undergraduate Scholarship Scheme provides up to 25 \$5 000 per annum scholarships each year to undergraduates, with the successful applicants agreeing to work in a country health service for a term equal to the length of their scholarship. The length of the scholarship varies from applicant to applicant.

Starting this year, representatives from local communities will award the scholarships to local applicants. For instance, it might be that Minlaton needs an extra physiotherapist. Under the new scheme the Yorke Peninsula community can sponsor a student who will then return to the town after their studies are completed—we will pay the money and they get to choose the person. Ideally, we would like to have someone who is a resident of Yorke Peninsula. It may be that they cannot find someone from there and they get someone from another place who will identify with that local community.

Across Australia there is a shortage of health workers in country areas.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the deputy leader!

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** We hope that this new scheme will give greater incentive to students to work in rural centres in the longer term. Ultimately, we hope country communities will embrace this scholarship, make it their own and perhaps even raise their own funds to expand the scholarship. In 2007-08 the scholarships will be awarded—

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If the deputy leader wants to talk to any other member of the house, she can go there and talk to the member; she does not need to shout across the chamber.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Speaker. In 2007-08 the scholarships will be awarded by local health boards, and in subsequent years local communities can supplement these scholarships by fundraising on a dollar-for-dollar basis, if they wish. For example, on Eyre Peninsula the Cummins District Community Bank funds two scholarships. The partnership between the bank and the Cummins and District Memorial Hospital is a great example of community participation.

The SA Rural Health Undergraduate Scholarships are offered to full-time students already studying or about to commence an undergraduate degree in disciplines such as medicine, nursing, allied health, Aboriginal health or dentistry. Later this month undergraduate scholarships will be advertised through *The Advertiser*, country newspapers, universities and rural school counsellors. Applicants who are not awarded a scholarship by the local process may be considered for a whole of country scholarship.

#### MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite):** Does the Premier believe that he should have been informed that a principal financial supporter of the Minister for Forests is a major forestry industry company, namely, Auspine?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier):** If there is ever a conflict of interest in terms of a minister's responsibilities then it is incumbent on all ministers to inform their colleagues, just as I am sure the Leader of the Opposition informed his party room that he had shares in mining companies before he voted on the climate change bill and then reversed his position.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

#### AUSLINK

**Mr PICCOLO (Light):** Will the Minister for Transport update the house on the status of the AusLink corridor studies?

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Transport):** The AusLink corridors are a terribly important subject matter. The AusLink national strategy is the basis on which the commonwealth plans and funds all roads in Australia for which they perceive—

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** I think you should listen to this one, Vickie, because it does not reflect very well on the Liberal Party of South Australia—but we will come to that in a moment. Perhaps you should listen to this.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** The commonwealth itself describes these corridor strategies, these corridors studies, as a statement of shared objectives and strategic priorities of the commonwealth-state-territory governments for the long-term 20-year development of the AusLink network. It is terribly important when these strategies are put together that you get in and have something to say at that point, because it is a 20-year strategy. It is terribly important.

On that basis, as a measure of how important the AusLink process is, the Leader of the Opposition himself—back when he was the transport minister (but also as the Leader of the Opposition)—has been highly critical of the South Australian government for the way it has dealt with the commonwealth. He has said things like:

Clearly, the government has been failing to compete with other states in its AusLink bids to the commonwealth. We are being roundly beaten by New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, to name a few, who are clearly putting up better arguments with better justifications for funding.

He also went on to say—which is not true—that industry groups have publicly complained that the government has left him to argue the case. As you would know, Mr Speaker, very recently we all signed a letter together with the industry groups, and the industry groups are off in Canberra arguing on exactly the same basis as this state government. There has never been greater cooperation, but that is all right. The leader went on to say:

Industry feels there has been a lack of leadership from the state government in the battle for commonwealth funding.

'The squeaky wheel gets oiled', according to the Leader of the Opposition. Do not forget that this is an opposition that talks about 20-year infrastructure plans. Submissions are now closed. The commonwealth is dealing with the comments that have been made, and it will release those final strategies for the next 20 years very soon. The squeaky wheel getting oiled?

What did we hear from the opposition on these corridor studies? For example, in the Adelaide Urban Study, the RAA, the University of Wollongong, the Maritime Union of Australia and the Local Government Association made similar sorts of submissions on the Melbourne-Adelaide corridor, the Perth-Adelaide corridor, the Adelaide-Darwin and the Sydney-Adelaide corridors. The industry and local government know how important these are, but did the opposition make a submission? Well, on one corridor study the opposition did make a submission. One of them recognised the importance of this work. We were very grateful that Liz Penfold, the member for Flinders, made a submission on the Perth-Adelaide study. We got a bit of a squeak from the member for Flinders, but not a squeak out of the Leader of the Opposition. That wheel will not get oiled, I can tell members.

We have a 20-year study and we have a bloke who says we need a 20-year infrastructure plan and who says we do not argue strongly enough with the commonwealth. We have a bloke who says he can do much better than that who did not notice that we are setting corridor studies for 20 years. That is because at the time this was going on he was not interested in this, he was interested in bringing down the former Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Iain Evans, and we can at least say he was successful at that. But when next time this bloke gets up and talks about the need for planning and 20-year studies, can I say that it is all empty rhetoric.

## MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition):**

Is the Minister for Forests a signatory to the Rory McEwen campaign fund account? Who are the signatories, and how does the minister deal with money given to him in person by donors as distinct from money given to him for his campaign fund?

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN (Minister for Forests):** Mr Speaker, you would appreciate that this question is just not relevant, because we have all now been advised, as I have previously indicated was the view of former speakers Lewis and Such, that, like everyone else, I do not have to declare a donation, so how I deal with that matter is totally private.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN:** Having said that, can I reassure the leader that I told all members—although I did have not to—in 2002 that Auspine was a financial—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN:** The question is totally irrelevant, but it is important to put on the record, as members would have read in *The Advertiser* yesterday, that I told all members in 2002 who my donors were. I did not need to. No-one else did. It is sheer hypocrisy that members would suggest that I should do something that they do not need to do. I did it 1997 and I did it in 2002. I then received some advice which said, 'You don't need to' and, on that advice, I did not do it this year and, lo and behold, members have just had that advice confirmed.

## SOUTHERN EXPRESSWAY

**Mr BIGNELL (Mawson):** My question is to the Minister for Transport. Have representations been made to the minister regarding the duplication of the Southern Expressway and, if so, what was the minister's response?

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Transport):** I am more than happy to provide—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If the Deputy Premier and the deputy leader have a discussion, they should not have it over the minister's answer.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Please do; and take her outside. It is true; we have had a number of approaches about duplicating the Southern Expressway. Oddly enough, all of them it seems, are from the people who decided not to duplicate it when they built it, but we will come to that in a moment. No issue better displays the South Australian Liberal Party's confusion and lack of direction on road funding than the Southern Expressway. People have written to me. Iain Evans wrote to me—members would recall Iain Evans, the former leader of the opposition. Before that, when the opposition was last in government, he was the minister for transport, I think, coming up to the election, was he not?

**An honourable member:** No, environment.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Environment? I am wrong. He has written to me wanting to know why we will not duplicate the Southern Expressway. The Leader of the Opposition has been publicly saying that when they built it, they decided not to duplicate it at the time because they did not have enough money but that they would duplicate it when they got the money.

**Mr Hamilton-Smith:** Why not?

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Why not he says. I am about to tell you. If you want a signed confession that they have no idea what they are doing when they build projects, it is the statement from the Leader of the Opposition, 'We'll duplicate it later when we get money.' This is from the same people who gave them advice on costing. When they built the road, it cost \$162 million, and they could have duplicated it for an extra \$73 million. If you did not do it right the first time and you had to go back to fix it, what would happen is that the duplication would not now cost another \$73 million: it would cost \$275 million.

In making that decision the opposition was quite happy to say it would waste \$200 million—but who cares? It is absolutely astonishing. It did not build anything else. Laurie Brereton built the tunnels in the Hills for it. It did not build anything else. It is astonishing that members opposite would now come and say, 'Duplicate it, because we made a mistake.'

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Morphett!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** The member for Morphett refers to the Northern Expressway. No-one has done anything to make it cost more; the estimate was wrong. We will return to this, because nothing displays their confusion and desperation more.

*Dr McFetridge interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Sir, I have a race-caller yelling at me. Please; I am sure that is not parliamentary.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Morphett will contain himself.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** He does not know much about roads, but at least I know who won the third at Gawler now. Nothing displays the opposition's confusion on roads more than the AusLink corridor study and the issue of the Southern Expressway. A third person—not even one of us, but the member for Kingston, Kym Richardson—has not asked us; he has written asking the commonwealth to fund the duplication of the Southern Expressway under AusLink. That is something that not even the South Australian opposition has asked for. He has asked them but he has not asked us, except that he said he would like us to chip in \$50 million and get \$100 million from the commonwealth, but he has not told us where the other \$125 million will come from. He wants to put it on AusLink.

Here is the confusion. The Minister for Finance, Senator Nick Minchin, wrote an article last week criticising the South Australian government for asking for new extensions on the AusLink network, despite the fact that all the industry groups have asked—as we have asked—for the Riddoch Highway to be put on there. The Leader of the Opposition agreed that we should ask and said that he would support adding it to the AusLink network. However, Nick Minchin said we should not add anything to the AusLink network. Then Kym Richardson said that we should add something to the AusLink network that no-one wants, including the industry groups. Nothing could better display how utterly confused they are about road funding. They have no idea. If in fact it is true—and the only benefit I can give them is that I think the Leader of the Opposition is making it up as he goes along—that they consciously decided that they would duplicate it later when they got money, they owe the people of South Australia \$200 million.

## MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite):** My question is to the Premier. The crown law advice tabled by the Premier states:

On a wide reading any assistance whatsoever received by a member that has a monetary value greater than \$750 must be declared regardless.

Has the admitted failure of the Minister for Forests to comply with the register of interest legislation been reported or, in the Premier's view, should it be reported to the police Anti-Corruption Branch?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier):** One member of parliament did list his campaign donations from Auspine, and that was the member for Mount Gambier. I have gone through all your records and I do not see any of your donations. Are you all going to sit there and tell us that you do not get any single donations at all? Are you going to sit there and say that, no, you do not get any donations but also that you do not have any fundraisers? We keep reading in the paper that you are having trouble getting funds. I do not believe that none of you has ever received a campaign donation. You have a responsibility by the close of business today—to use the famous phrase of the Leader of the Opposition—to reveal whether or not any member of the Liberal Party has ever received a campaign donation.

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Schubert needs to calm down.

**Mr Venning:** Hypocrisy—your own back bench.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Schubert is trying my patience. He is warned.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** This is the same Liberal Party that laundered tens of thousands of dollars through a series of shelf companies in Hong Kong. Who was the president of the Liberal Party at that time? I remember that, when the Deputy Premier was in opposition, he went to Hong Kong and spent several days queuing, one by one (because you can do only one company inquiry at a time), to find out that the Liberal Party was laundering money through Hong Kong. They keep saying that we should look to Hong Kong to get our guide on anti-corruption activities. Clearly the Liberal Party got something going in Hong Kong.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Will you let me finish? You asked the question. This is the same Liberal Party that increased the threshold for donations from \$1 500 to \$10 000 because it did not want some of its donations to be revealed. So now we have a question about Mr Parker's advice. My advice to the Leader of the Opposition is to read carefully because the message he got from his shadow ministers recently, when he walked out and slammed the door, was to get his facts right. You have asked the question. Mr Parker said:

A donation to a campaign fund is implicitly subject to a condition that it may only be spent on campaign costs. In those circumstances the money is not received by the member for his own use or benefit, although he or she may have a discretion as to which campaign costs it is used to meet. Thus. . . I do not consider that section 4(2)(d) requires a member to disclose gifts made to a campaign fund.

So the difference is, if you were to receive a donation from a mining company which was for, perhaps, a new car, you are required to disclose that donation, but you are not required to disclose it in terms of a campaign donation under the particular pecuniary interest act to which the member refers.

He summarises his advice on page 2 as follows, and I will go through this again because clearly the opposition does not read or listen:

(a) there are two possible readings of the obligation of members to disclose campaign assistance;

(b) on a wide reading, any assistance whatsoever received by a member that has a monetary value greater than \$750 must be declared regardless of whether it comes from a party or from private sources and also regardless of whether the member belongs to a political party or not;

That is the bit that the member just read. It goes on to say:

(c) it seems unlikely that such a wide reading was intended and thus a narrower reading ought to be adopted;

(d) on a narrower reading only money or benefits given for the member's own personal use must be disclosed—

that is, for their own personal use—

On this narrower view, donations to a campaign fund need not be disclosed. Once again whether the member belongs to a political party or not is irrelevant provided that the money was given to a campaign fund or for campaign purposes and not for the member's own private benefit.

There is the difference, because this is the member for Mount Gambier who disclosed Auspine in his member's registry, but we could find no such disclosure in any of the opposition's most recent returns.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** You don't have any! Then, of course, the Leader of the Opposition talks about his mining shares and that he has already disclosed. Well, I promise members this, and I make this pledge today: if any of the shares that I own are in any way impacted upon by any measure in this parliament or in this government, or by any other matter through a parliamentary committee, I will not rely on people having a knowledge of the register but I will disclose them in the parliament. However, I think that my shares in the Charlton Athletic Football Club in South London are unlikely to be compromised, because the club has been relegated.

So, the opposition seriously believes that all campaign donations must be in the registry, but I think it is very strange that no Liberal member of parliament has ever attended a fundraiser and has never received a campaign contribution. I do not believe them.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** I have a supplementary question to the Premier. How will he ensure that the matter is properly and independently investigated?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I think the Leader of the Opposition is implicitly asking me to get the Crown Solicitor to make an examination of every member of parliament opposite to see whether they receive a campaign donation at the next election. If that is what he is saying, come and see me afterwards and I will get you to sign a declaration, as the minister did. If opposition members are prepared to individually sign a declaration that they receive no donation whatsoever—no fundraising—I will believe them.

## ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATION FUND

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell):** Can the Premier update the house on the ANZAC Day Commemoration Fund?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier):** In April 2005, parliament passed the ANZAC Day Education and Commemoration Act 2005. The act enshrines in law our responsi-



bilities to the memory of our service men and women and to give legal protection to AnZAC Day traditions. The act also provided for the establishment of the ANZAC Day Education and Commemoration Council. The fundamental role of the council is to keep and administer the ANZAC Day Commemoration Fund, consider the long-term needs for the commemoration of ANZAC Day, and carry out any other duties as assigned by the Premier.

Following extensive consultation between this government and the RSL, Her Excellency the Governor appointed nine dynamic members (representing an outstanding cross-section of our community) to the council for a period of three years. Included on the council is Patrick Wald Beale, one of our state's most decorated living servicemen, having won the Military Cross and the Distinguished Service Order for his service in Borneo and Vietnam—an extraordinary military record. ANZAC Peace prize winner, Jan Ruff-O'Herne, who has been honoured internationally, is another esteemed member of the committee. Her tireless campaign to gain justice for female prisoners of war who were repeatedly raped by Japanese soldiers has been remarkable, and it continues today, 65 years after she was taken prisoner. I hope I speak for all members of this house in commending her in this latest struggle where the truth is again being denied by Japanese authorities—it is absolutely shameful.

The council held its inaugural meeting on Monday 23 April 2007. On 7 June 2007, the Treasurer announced in the budget that a sum of \$100 000 would be allocated to the ANZAC Day Commemoration Fund from the 2007-08 financial year. Many of our veterans, once strong and able, are becoming aged and frail and face different battles. Their needs in homes or to remain in their own homes are ever increasing. The fund may be applied by the council to provide payments for aged veterans to maintain, alter and improve their own homes, or to maintain and care for aged veterans in homes. This government will never forget those who made the supreme sacrifice—those who lost their lives defending our ideals and values. Neither will we forget those who served, those who defended our liberty and those who helped save Australia. Neither will we forget the spouses and children of deceased veterans left behind to fend for themselves. The fund may also include payments for their welfare.

I am delighted that, at the next meeting of the council, members will consider the application of the ANZAC Day Commemoration Fund, with a particular focus on projects specifically aimed at educating the community about the significance of ANZAC Day. The ANZAC Day Commemoration Fund will help to ensure that we never forget the sacrifices made by our servicemen and women so that we can all live in peace, safe in the knowledge that the ANZAC spirit lives on.

#### MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is again to the Premier. Given that the Minister for Forests admitted on radio this morning that at least one proposal came before cabinet when he absented himself from discussions, and the Premier has added that there were other occasions, did the Premier at that time seek an explanation as to the reasons for the minister's inability to participate in those discussions?

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General):** There is no question of that. The cabinet has always obeyed its pecuniary interest disclosure requirements; its conflict of

interest requirements. The Leader of the Opposition has not a jot or tittle of evidence that there has been any breach of the requirements.

#### HOUSING

**The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Taylor):** My question is to the Minister for Housing. What were the outcomes of yesterday's housing ministers' conference held in Darwin?

**An honourable member:** At least you're here, Jay.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Housing):** Yes, that is right.

**The Hon. M.J. Wright:** And happy to be here!

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** That is right—courtesy of a 1 a.m. flight out of Darwin—I am very pleased to be here, and it has been a very disappointing question time, I must say. The answer to the question is: very little was the outcome. That is what you would expect when the federal minister does not turn up to the ministerial council meeting.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** No, he did not front. He is off in the middle of the Territory leading some troops, apparently, on some expedition. I think what needs to be borne in mind is the history of what the state and territory ministers have been attempting to do to drag the commonwealth to the table on affordable housing. This has gone back some time; certainly, in the three or so years that I have been housing minister, and before that as planning minister. One poor old housing minister, Bob Schwarten, the minister in Queensland, has been a minister for 10 years and has been going to these meetings with the commonwealth. Those were in the days when they used to serve up Wilson Tuckey as what passed for a housing minister—

**The Hon. P.F. Conlon:** He doesn't write to me; he never calls.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** That is right: he never writes, or never calls the Minister for Transport. That really demonstrates the lack of regard the commonwealth pays to housing policy—no national housing minister, no urban and housing policy and no affordable housing policy. One would be hard-pressed to find any nation on the planet that does not run an affordable housing policy. So, it is no surprise that the federal government, 11 years into its term, finds itself facing an affordable housing crisis.

The causes of the affordable housing crisis have been well documented. The Productivity Commission and the Reserve Bank Governor have made it clear—and, indeed, the Prime Minister himself, before the four most recent interest rate rises, was trumpeting house price inflation as being one of the great victories of his government. When he was questioned, I think, on Alan Jones' radio program a few years ago, he said, 'Look, Alan, nobody comes up to me in the street and complains about the fact that their house prices have doubled. They like it.' Four interest rate rises later, and all of a sudden it is the states that are the cause of asset price inflation in relation to housing. We saw yesterday in the *Financial Review* that very honest and forthright public servant, the Secretary to the Treasury, Dr Henry, has said that, indeed—

**The Hon. P.F. Conlon:** He'll keep his job.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** That is right. He is looking very good. He has made it very clear that the shifting of the blame to the states and territories, by suggesting that it is land release policies and stamp duties, is a very minor part of the issue, and something that we have been saying for a long time. It is clear that any authority at a federal level

agrees with that proposition. However, it does not mean to say that the solutions do not involve the states. They do (and we have always acknowledged that), as they involve local government. However, crucially, they also involve the commonwealth, and there is an empty seat at the table in these negotiations. The commonwealth refuses to participate. Poor old Nigel Scullion, the stand-in minister, was attempting to play the role of the minister at this meeting—

*Mr Pengilly interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** He is a good bloke. He tried to do the right thing.

*Mr Pengilly interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** That is right. I think he is a much better fisherman than he is a housing minister, with all due respect to him, and he was only standing in. But he was trying very hard to give an explanation for why the commonwealth could not even do something that it agreed to do at the last meeting, that is, agree on what the scope of the next commonwealth-state housing agreement would be. We had this research that was meant to be carried out. The next phase was to agree on one of four options. These were the groups that the states and territories lined up with: the ACTU (probably not surprisingly); ACOSS (not surprisingly); the HIA; the Property Council of Australia; the Australian Local Government Association; and Superannuation Funds Australia.

There is almost no sector of the housing industry that is not calling for a national affordable housing agreement, and there is one partner absent at the table, and that is the federal government. After 11 years, it must acknowledge that its role in affordable housing is more than just suggesting that it run a good economy and keep interest rates low. That interest rate point is getting a hammering, because we know that, after four of the most recent interest rate hikes, many families are beginning to hurt seriously. Those who have casually glanced at the ABS statistics will see that there are a lot of people out there now who are experiencing the pain of trying to pay off houses with ever-increasing mortgages. We need the commonwealth at the table. We are promised a response in December, but we will not be holding our breath.

#### MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition):** Has the Minister for Forests made representations to the department or to the minister responsible for the Regional Development Infrastructure Fund on behalf of Whiteheads Timber or its principals regarding an application for a \$55 595 grant it has received?

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN (Minister for Forests):** What we are seeing this afternoon, of course, is nothing short of abject hypocrisy on the part of the leader and his team. They have two choices here. They can take a narrow view of the Members of Parliament (Register of Interests) Act 1983, as we have now seen in terms of the independent interpretation, or they can choose to take a wide view and, if they take a wide view, we are all in. You cannot take a view that says that some people are in and some people are not: either we are all out or we are all in. This is where, this afternoon, the leader can show he is a true leader. What he can do now is stand up and say, 'I'm going to take the broad view. We're all in. Let's hear from all of you.'

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN:** I chose in 1997 to declare the gifts to me, although it is obvious under the act that I did not need to; I chose in 2002 to declare the gifts to me, although I did not need to; and, under some pressure from a young *Advertiser* journalist, I chose to reveal my gifts this year. So, on two occasions I have done it voluntarily and on one occasion I have done it under a bit of pressure. Notwithstanding that, I can proudly stand here and say, 'You all know and the public knows exactly who supported me.' Does the public know who supported any of you? The member for Unley, for example, is always out there saying how proud he is and what he stands for. I lay down a challenge to the member for Unley: walk out of here this afternoon and tell everyone.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN:** The member for Hammond is going to do the same thing. Isn't that fantastic? Now we are going to see the true opposition. We are going to see members opposite standing behind their values. This is the big chance for the forward scout. The last two times the team leader sent him out, he sent him out on his own and he faced fire from the front and the rear—and I think he has revealed to the Attorney-General that he is not going to face any more fire. Well, I will put him under fire. I will put a challenge to him: get out there this afternoon and do what you think is morally right, otherwise you are just a hypocrite—but you are not on your own. Have a look around you.

I put a challenge here and now to the member for Schubert. I have put on the record every gift I received—voluntarily on two occasions and under some duress on the third occasion. So, every gift I have received is on the register and it is out there for the public. I ask this afternoon: will the member for Schubert do the same thing? I think we are going to be sadly disappointed. Going back to the detail of the question: would I lobby a minister on behalf of someone who had assisted me in some way? That would be totally inappropriate and, no, I would not.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** My question is to the Premier. In light of revelations today about undisclosed financial payments to members of his cabinet, why does the Premier maintain—

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: not only does the question contain comment but inflammatory comment. There is no issue of undisclosed payments.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Mr Speaker, if they want an orderly question time then they have to make their questions in order.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! We can sit here and wait, or I can give a ruling. What is debate and what is not debate is sometimes almost a question of: how long is a piece of string? I heard the Leader of the Opposition's question. It probably did stray. He needs to phrase it carefully. I make the point that I have made previously: if a member, in asking a question, inserts debate or makes a contention, then the minister, in responding to that question, is free to put an alternative point of view, and I would give a lot more latitude to the minister in answering the question. The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** I will repeat my question to the Premier: in light of revelations today about undisclosed

financial payments to a cabinet minister, why does the Premier maintain his fervent opposition to the establishment of an independent commission against corruption?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier):** None of you has disclosed your financial campaign donations, not one of you, so I am sure that tomorrow *The Advertiser* is going to have a picture of all of you with your zipped lips. Also, when I talked about Catch Tim I saw members opposite saying it was not true. I have here a letter, Catch Tim Ltd, GPO Box 3104, Hong Kong, addressed to the President of the Liberal Party of Australia. I will not embarrass any member here. It says:

We refer to the public debate and speculation in recent days about Catch Tim Ltd and a donation of \$A100 000 by the company to the South Australian division of the Liberal Party.

I table this letter. So for anyone who tried to deny that occurred, as people are shouting across the chamber: \$100 000 laundered through Hong Kong. There are members opposite who were members of the previous government who have shares in Santos. First of all, I challenge them to reveal today, by the close of business, whether or not they walked out of the cabinet room during the discussion on the lifting of the cap. I also challenge members opposite who have shares in ABB or various other companies, whether they disclosed to either the cabinet or, indeed, to this house, their shares in those businesses. The key point that we have learnt today is that the register of interests are about for the personal benefit of members of parliament or their families, as opposed to campaign donations. The very fact that none of you—not one single one of you—declared any campaign donation at the last election (no fundraisers apparently) shows that there are lots of lips opposite that are taped over. You are like the Harper Valley PTA.

#### TOW TRUCKS, SOUTH-EAST

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett):** My questions are to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I did not hear who the questions were directed to.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** To the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. My questions are:

1. Did the minister receive a petition from his constituents regarding concerns about the practices of tow truck drivers in the South-East?

2. Did he table it in parliament and, if not, why not?

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries):** I am happy to come back to the house with an answer to that but, off the top of my head, I do not have an answer.

#### MODBURY HOSPITAL NURSE

**Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Will the Minister for Health explain why an experienced nurse has received notice that she will not be transferred from Healthscope to the government at the Modbury Hospital and assure the house that it is not as a result of her having taken on the government and won? This nurse has been employed at the Modbury Hospital since 2003 and is the only one of over 400 nurses to receive a notice on 28 June 2007 that she will not be offered employment in a transfer of the hospital to the government, even though she initially received a letter on 7 June offering her a position and which she accepted. She

has been a nurse since 1988 and her performance review on 6 November 2006 describes her work as follows:

Constantly delivers high level of nursing care to her patients. Her knowledge and clinical skills are a very high standard.

In relation to the government action she has taken in 2005 she received a judgment from the Workers Compensation Tribunal against the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and won her claim, and on 23 February 2005 the Ombudsman made a finding against the QEH and the Central Northern Adelaide Health Service for failing to investigate allegations of bullying and harassment by their staff. He also made findings where he said, 'records pertaining to the investigation were destroyed'; and, 'confidentiality was not maintained either during the investigation'—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I know what the minister's point of order is. I withdraw leave.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health):** The member asked a similar question, although not to the same level of detail, during estimates and I was able to point out to her that, of the 433-odd nurses who worked at the Modbury Hospital, all but one was offered a job. Of those 433, 17 said no—presumably they had other things that they wanted to do—12 did not respond and one person was not offered a job. I think the member not only embarrasses herself by asking this question but she considerably embarrasses the person whom the department chose not to offer that job.

I assure the house that I have had nothing to do with any of these employment processes, other than to authorise the bringing back into the public health system the Modbury Hospital. We all know that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is the one person still carrying the flag for the privatisation of Modbury, and no doubt if she were the minister for health would embark upon a privatisation of all of our public hospitals because she feels so passionate about it. The one person who was not offered a job was not offered a job because the departmental people believed she was not appropriate to have employed in our hospital system.

#### SUPPLY SA

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport):** Can the Treasurer rule out the closure of Supply SA? The leader's office has been advised that a cabinet submission from Treasury will be going to cabinet on 23 July recommending the closure of Supply SA.

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Finance):** No decision has been made about the closure of Supply SA.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** Treasury and Finance have put options to me, but no decision has been made.

#### LAW AND ORDER

**Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood):** Can the Minister for Justice inform the house how the government is supporting community-based organisations who work to prevent crime and increase public safety?

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Minister for Justice):** Community-based organisations can play an important part in identifying crime prevention priorities and carrying out locally based solutions. To sustain community crime prevention programs the government continues to support the

Attorney-General's Crime Prevention Unit as the lead agency responsible for developing, implementing and managing community crime prevention initiatives throughout the state.

The government also actively promotes partnerships between government and non-government agencies to deliver solutions in crime prevention and community safety through the Crime Prevention and Community Safety Grants Program. This year's round of grants attracted 43 applications from local councils, Neighbourhood Watch, and church, migrant, environmental and youth groups. I was pleased to see the quality of the applications and their innovative approaches. The activities targeted by the groups provide an insight into the crimes of most concern to communities, and the methods proposed to target those activities highlight how low-cost initiatives have the potential to make a big difference in some local communities.

I am pleased to report that grants totalling more than half a million dollars were this week awarded to 14 programs, with the value of each grant being between \$10 000 and \$50 000. Many of the successful programs focused on engaging youth in artistic and creative programs, providing them with mentors, and developing their life skills—thus steering them away from drugs and crime. The Legal Services Commission was awarded a grant to develop a legal education program for African youth from refugee and migrant backgrounds to reduce the risks of their engaging in antisocial behaviour and crime. The Baptist Community Services Tau Pathun program targets at-risk indigenous and non-indigenous youth through wilderness adventure camps, practical work programs, mentoring and cultural learning to prevent crime in the inner-city and northern Adelaide.

This comes on top of a massive increase in the grant from the government to Operation Flinders—which, members will recall, was a program targeted by former justice chief executive Kate Lennon for extermination but which was saved when the change of government occurred in 2002. Youth substance abuse in the Limestone Coast region will be targeted by the City of Mount Gambier Youth Advisory Committee's Save A Mate program. The committee will adopt a program developed by Red Cross Adelaide to educate and minimise harm surrounding the use of drugs and alcohol by young people in the region. I commend the committee for its leadership and for the initiative it has shown in making this application.

Applications were assessed by a panel which included representatives from the Crime Prevention Unit, the Local Government Association, SAPOL, Indigenous Community Watch SA, and the Flinders University Faculty of Law. I thank all applicants for their efforts and look forward to hearing about the progress of these programs.

### DISABILITY SERVICES

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen):** My question is to the Premier. The Disability Services Act requires the Minister for Disability to consult with the disability services sector regarding all matters concerning disability, but he failed to do so—in particular, regarding funding cuts to disability advocacy and information services in the 2007-08 budget. Will the Premier now reinstate the funding? The act provides:

(1) Before making any major decisions relating to the development, funding or discontinuance of disability services or research or development activities, the minister must, to the extent that is practicable, consult with persons with disabilities or carers likely to be affected by the decision.

(2) The minister should encourage the informed participation of persons with disabilities and carers in the design, development, management and evaluation of disability services.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Disability):** I am a little disappointed with the member for Heysen; she is a much better lawyer than that. Clearly, it is the case that we will be consulting with the disability services—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** What government in the history of this parliament has gone out and consulted on every element of its budget before budget day? What absolute nonsense. If the member was correctly quoting from the act I think she mentioned the phrase, 'to the extent that is practicable'. It is absolute nonsense to suggest that, in a budget where we massively increased funding—

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for MacKillop is warned.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** —to disability services, and took the difficult step of trying to put even further money into disability services by redirecting some existing resources, somehow we should have spoken to those organisations before budget day. Of course, what we have done is ensure that their funding continues for three months.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** No; they received the letter on budget day. They received a communication and a briefing from us, as has been the consistent pattern with major announcements at every budget lock-up, where people are brought in and given information. There was a three-month notice period of the change in arrangements and a commitment to discuss those with the relevant officers. That is precisely what is happening. We are also discussing alternatives about the way in which these services can potentially be delivered in the future in a different way.

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### MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport):** I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** During his response to a question, the Premier made reference to cabinet members of the former government who had held shares in Santos and queried whether they had disclosed that when making decisions. I am one of only three members on this side of the house who fall into the category of being a past cabinet member of the previous government. I hold shares in Santos in trust for my son, which I purchased (\$1 000 worth at the time) on his birth 21 years ago. On every occasion it went before cabinet, I disclosed them, and my shadow cabinet colleagues will tell you that, when the current matter has come before shadow cabinet, I have also disclosed them and left the room.

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop):** I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I will. By way of a ministerial statement, an implication was made that I had received donations I had not put on my register. It is interesting, sir—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Whatever is interesting is irrelevant.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** You are dead right, sir. I can inform the house that, prior to the 1997 election, during my campaign I did receive a donation or a gift of the sum of \$2 000. It was from my dear aged mother.

## GRIEVANCE DEBATE

### MacPHERSON, Mr K.

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen):** I refer to recent information that has made me even more certain than ever before that the previous auditor-general of this state had an overinflated view of himself, his ability and the nature of his position. In doing so, let me make it quite clear that I have no personal beef with this man. I have never met him, and I have never even had a conversation with him. I noticed an article in *The Advertiser* of Thursday 28 June, entitled 'Huge Legal Fees Bill'. It was the answer to a question I had asked the Auditor-General.

Essentially, the Auditor-General is a bean counter, and the previous auditor-general had, as well as his bean-counting qualifications, a law degree—a useful qualification and one held by lots of people who never practise as lawyers. However, Mr MacPherson seemed to think that his law degree qualified him to be not only the Auditor-General but also the chief legal adviser to this government. In a report to the parliament in November 2006, the Auditor-General made the assertion that the DPP had acted unlawfully. That is a big call, and an allegation that someone has acted unlawfully is a very serious allegation indeed.

It is abundantly clear that the DPP, or any other statutory officer against whom such an allegation is made, could not just leave it unchallenged or unanswered. I am sure the DPP had better things to do with his time, but in response he had to prepare a report to the parliament. As I understand it, as a matter of courtesy he forwarded a copy of that response to the Auditor-General, advising that he was about to provide that report to the parliament. As I understand it, that is the only mechanism by which the DPP can let the parliament know a response. Upon receiving that report the Auditor-General then did something which, to my mind, remains quite bizarre and completely unjustifiable. Members should remember that what we have at this point is an allegation by the Auditor-General that the DPP—a senior statutory officer of this parliament—had acted unlawfully, followed by a report in which the DPP intended to provide to the parliament a response to that allegation.

What happened next was bizarre, extraordinary, unbelievable, not to say completely unwarranted and unjustifiable. The Auditor-General sought to prevent the DPP from providing his report to the parliament. If his legal qualification was worth anything, it should have given him pause for thought about the nature of that application. For anyone to seek to prevent a statutory officer of this parliament from providing a report to the parliament, I am sure speaker Lewis, for instance, would have considered such an action potentially a contempt of the parliament. In any event, in order to attempt to prevent the DPP from filing his report, the Auditor-General took an ex parte application in the Supreme Court for an interim injunction—an ex parte application in

the Supreme Court for an interim injunction! It was unsuccessful—and there is no surprise in the fact that it was unsuccessful. It was always going to be unsuccessful. In his judgment Justice Perry says:

Counsel for the Auditor-General has put everything which can be said in favour of his client's case. However, at the end of the day I am not satisfied that it is reasonably arguable that the principles relating to affording procedural fairness are involved. The fact that the somewhat intemperately expressed report now in question [the DPP's report] includes severe personal criticism of the Auditor-General does not result in a situation where the rules of natural justice come into play. The holders of high office must be prepared to take such criticism in their stride. It is not for the court to censor or edit or filter a report delivered pursuant to statutory provisions such as those now in question.

Within a day or so of that judgment being delivered, I heard from members of the legal profession that a whole team of lawyers—solicitors, junior counsel and senior counsel—had been engaged all night preparing that ex parte application. What did it cost? Who authorised it? I sent an FOI application to the Auditor-General, but he wrote back and said, 'I'm exempt.' It was not until this week that I found out that this little exercise cost the taxpayers of this state, in completely unjustifiable expenditure by the Auditor-General, no less than \$100 000. The Auditor-General spent \$100 000 with no accountability. He has now left the office, but there was no accountability whatsoever for his having wasted our money in this absurd way.

Time expired.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

**Mr PICCOLO (Light):** Today I wish to raise some concerns about the operation of the consultation provisions—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:**—thank you—contained in the Local Government Act in relation to the annual business plan and budget process. I am not sure whether my concerns are about the act itself or the way councils—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs Redmond:** You did not intervene when I was speaking.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I could hear when you were speaking; I cannot hear now.

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The clock is being held. It will resume when the house comes to order.

**Mr PICCOLO:** I thank members opposite for their attention.

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Light will proceed and try to ignore interjections.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Today I wish to raise some concerns about the operation of the consultation provisions contained in the Local Government Act—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** Madam Deputy Speaker, if this is the standard of members, I am happy to adopt it any day.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr PICCOLO:** If this is the standard they set, I will match it, don't worry about that.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Light will come to order!

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** I'll match it.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! There is so much noise, the member for Light cannot even hear my calling him to order in order to give him some protection. I think the member for Giles has a point of order.

**Ms BREUER:** That is my point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker: I cannot hear anything, and I am really interested in what the member for Light has got to say.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The point of order is upheld. I am well aware of what the member for Heysen had to say, I could hear it. I have no idea what the member for Light is trying to say, as I have not been able to hear it. The clock is being held again for the member for Light.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Today I wish to raise some concerns about the operation of consultation provisions contained—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I am very disappointed by the member for Heysen's behaviour at the moment. She is usually an orderly member. Please come to order.

**Mrs REDMOND:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I am being really difficult at the moment and for a very good reason. When I was speaking the member for Light continually interjected in the loudest voice so that I could hardly hear myself think. You did nothing to protect me, yet when I do the same thing back to him you suddenly come into line and start protecting the member.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Heysen will come to order. I will need to warn the member for Heysen next time. The Chair has been totally unable to hear the member for Light. I was able to hear the member for Heysen. That is my standard.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Today I wish to raise some concerns about the operation of the consultation provisions contained in the Local Government Act related to the annual business plan and budget process. I am not sure whether my concerns are about the act itself or the way that local councils and their advisers are seeking to interpret and implement the relevant laws. To illustrate my concerns, I wish to use the council I live in—the town of Gawler—as a case study. My concerns are not limited to the town of Gawler as I am advised that its consultation material is based on model documentation prepared by the Local Government Association and that the draft annual business plan and budget has been certified by the council's auditors, Dean Newberry & Associates.

At this point, it would be appropriate for me to acknowledge and congratulate the Minister for State/Local Government Relations on her submissions to Estimates Committee A yesterday when she indicated her support for increasing the scope of local government audits and foreshadowing a different and, perhaps, greater role for the Auditor-General. Getting back to the issue of community consultation, the current practice adopted by some councils—perhaps many local councils—means that either existing laws are inadequate or they have been implemented in a manner to minimise community scrutiny.

The Local Government Act requires local councils to prepare an annual business plan and budget. Prior to adopting the business plan and budget, councils must prepare a draft and invite the communities to comment on such a plan. The act requires as a minimum that at least 21 days notice must be given of any public meeting held to enable the community to comment. The Gawler council adopted its annual business plan and budget at the conclusion of a special council meeting held on 14 June 2007 commencing at 6.30 p.m. Accordingly, a public meeting could not be held until at least either

Wednesday 4 July or Thursday 5 July based on a narrow interpretation of the 21 days' notice.

Gawler held a meeting as part of a council meeting on Tuesday 3 July. Putting that minor issue aside, the story gets more interesting. To meet the 21 days' minimum notice, the council has relied on a notice published in the local newspapers of 13 and 14 June on pages 47 and 48, respectively. The council gave notice of its plan before it actually had met to adopt the plan. This raises concerns as to whether the meeting was a genuine one which allowed proper discussion and debate or whether it was the outcome more or less predetermined to ensure that it met the requirements of the notices already published.

Alternatively, if the council is not relying on those notices, the next public notice given on 27 June requires a public meeting no earlier than Wednesday 18 July. The public consultation process has two components: first, giving the community notice to comment and, secondly, providing sufficient information for them to make an informed judgment. In my view, if the reasonableness test is applied to the Gawler council notices and other documentation provided to the community, they certainly fail.

The council has a right, subject to law, to adopt the rating policy it wishes. The act requires it to, inter alia, set out the rate structure and policies for the financial year. This year, Gawler council is proposing to:

- adopt a single general rate;
- abolish a differential rate applied to primary producer ratepayers;
- abolish the general rebates available to tenancy;
- abolish the general rebate available to tenancy apportionments that assisted affordable housing;
- introduce a new service charge for waste management;
- apply a raft of new tenancy apportionments to persons living in residential parks.

Its community information is silent on these issues, bar two. The average ratepayer has to infer the other changes from the advice that council will impose a single general rate for all land use categories. That appears on page 23 of the draft annual plan and budget papers. The introduction of the service charge does get more attention. However, in a fact sheet to affected ratepayers, the council states that the average ratepayer will pay no more in general rates and service charges. This statement is, in my view, misleading by omission. Rural ratepayers are not told directly that they will lose their differential or rebate, as the case may be. Based on council's own preliminary calculations, the average rural ratepayer will pay \$104, or 10 per cent more.

Time expired.

#### FULLARTON LUTHERAN HOMES

**Mr PISONI (Unley):** On 3 June, I had the great pleasure to be invited to the opening in Unley of the Fullarton Lutheran Homes new Jacaranda Acacia ward. Although attending as the local member of parliament, the long tradition of unpaid work by Lutheran Homes and its supporters is also of special interest to me as the shadow minister for volunteering. From its inception in 1928, the Australian Lutheran Aid Society had a clear aim of establishing a home to provide quality care for the aged and infirm in a Christian atmosphere. The timing of the founding members could not have been more opportune as, just over a year later, in October 1929, the Great Depression struck, affecting thousands of South Australians.

As we are all aware, not for profit organisations rely heavily upon the assistance of volunteers, and the Fullarton Nursing Home is no exception. In fact, for the first 35 years until 1963 the administration of the society was undertaken by members of the board of management who were themselves volunteers. An organisation of voluntary workers, Friends of the Home, plays an integral supporting role in the life of Fullarton Homes. They attend to floral arrangements, wheel residents unable to walk, visit the lonely, serve refreshments at functions, conduct singing lessons and help with craft activities. They also assist on bus trips and excursions. One of my constituents, now aged 90, is a neighbour of Fullarton Homes. She makes her way across the road to do volunteer work several times a week. She has done this for decades, and not even the need to use a walking frame has diminished her enthusiasm or dedication. She is a truly remarkable volunteer.

The initial property at 54 Fisher Street, Fullarton was purchased in 1931 as a base for the Lutheran Aid Society. The aftermath of the Second World War put further strains upon the society's resources and plans to establish a children's home and a convalescent home at the Fisher Street property. A shortage of funds and physical space unfortunately stood in the way of fulfilling plans for these further good works. However, good news arrived in 1954 when it was announced that the government of Sir Thomas Playford had offered financial assistance to aged care providers on a pound for pound basis. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the Lutheran Aid Society raised £6 000, enabling it to purchase the block next door at 56 Fisher Street and achieve its aim of increasing accommodation for residents.

Over the past 20 years, I have been involved with many committees in a volunteer capacity and witnessed first hand the qualities, such as kindness, charity and putting the welfare of others first, which motivates many volunteers to work so tirelessly. We should be most thankful that they do as, without them, the viability of institutions such as the Fullarton Lutheran Homes would be threatened. The opening of the Jacaranda-Acacia ward of the Fullarton Lutheran Homes is a testament to the generous bequest of Mr H.W. Hartman and the dedication and resolve of the board of directors.

It was great to see that a descendant of Mr Hartman was there for the opening of this ward. The management and vision of the board of directors has provided best possible care for the elderly residents and continues to give peace of mind to their children. Importantly, volunteers have always played, and continue to play, a vital role in the success of this venture. Today it is an outstanding facility, providing a safe and spiritual environment for its 20 residents. I commend the Fullarton Lutheran Homes for its contribution to the South Australian community and the community in Unley over the past 80 years. It has been a wonderful community facility, of which Unley is justifiably proud.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Norwood. The member for Norwood has already warned me that she will be speaking with rapid tongue, but that she will provide an exact copy to Hansard.

#### GARIBALDI BICENTENARY

**Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood):** I rise today to remember the adventurous life of the most famous and admired man in modern Italian history, as yesterday marked the 200th anni-

versary of his birth. That man is Giuseppe Garibaldi, the Italian patron and hero, who personally led many of the military campaigns that led to the unification of Italy. His exploits were many and complex, and it would be impossible for me to chronicle them all today.

I have long been inspired by Garibaldi, as have millions of people around the world, not just Italians, who remember this man with patriotism and pride as his travels took him to all five continents, including Australia. I was interested to read that Daniel Radcliffe (famous as Harry Potter) in a recent interview with an Italian paper said that 'Garibaldi was amazing and my favourite hero'. I was delighted for, while Garibaldi may not have possessed magical powers or been able to play a spectacular match of quidditch, undoubtedly he would be the captain of the House of Gryffindor, which is famed for its qualities of valour and courage.

Giuseppe Garibaldi was born on 4 July 1807 in Nice to a family involved in coastal trade and was reared to a life on the sea. In 1832 he acquired his master's certificate as a merchant captain. The following year Garibaldi joined Young Italy, the movement organised by the Italian revolutionary, Giuseppe Mazzini, to attain the freedom of the Italian people and their unification into a self-governing republic. Garibaldi participated in an unsuccessful mutiny in Piemonte, was sentenced to death in absentia by a Genoese court, and fled to Marseilles. Subsequently he lived in South America for 12 years, where he displayed remarkable qualities of military leadership while participating in the revolt of the state of Rio Grande do Sul against Brazil, as well as later in a civil war in Uruguay against Manuel de Rosas, the dictator of Argentina.

It was during the civil war that Garibaldi raised an Italian legion, which adopted a black flag representing Italy in mourning, with a volcano at the centre symbolising the dormant power in their homeland. It was also in Uruguay that the legion first wore the red shirts, which were to become the symbol of Garibaldi and his followers. Garibaldi returned to Italy in 1848 and again took part in the movement for Italian freedom and unification, thereafter known as the Risorgimento. In 1849 he led his volunteers to Rome, where he successfully defended the city against superior French forces for 30 days but was finally overcome. In the pursuit that followed from French and Austrian forces Garibaldi lost many of his men as well as his beloved wife Anita, and he fled to the United States.

He settled in Staten Island, New York, working as a candlemaker, living with Antonio Meucci who invented the telephone long before Graham Bell—but that is a story for another day. In 1854 he returned to Italy and bought half of the island of Caprera, north-east of Sardinia, devoting his life to agriculture. Notwithstanding that, Garibaldi remained deeply involved in the complicated military and political struggles that occurred over the following years. In 1859 he led a successful expedition against the Austrian forces in the Alps.

In 1860 he led a force of 1 000 red shirts from Genoa to Sicily, then ruled by the king of Naples. Between May and August Garibaldi conquered Sicily and set up a provisional insular government. He crossed the Italian mainland, took Napoli and was successful in a decisive engagement on the banks of the Volturno on 26 October. Later that year, in the famous meeting with Vittorio Emanuele II at Teano on 26 October 1860, Garibaldi shook the king's hand and handed over the control of southern Italy. A series of plebiscites in the occupied lands resulted in the proclamation of Vittorio

Emmanuele as the first king of Italy by the new parliament of a unified Italy on 17 March 1861.

In the following year, Garibaldi, however, organised the Society for the Emancipation of Italy which had as its motto 'Free from the Alps to the Adriatic'. Once again, Garibaldi set his sights on Rome and Venice—and a truly unified Italy. In trying to take Rome, however, Garibaldi was opposed by Vittorio Emmanuele, who defeated him at the Battle of Aspromonte on 29 August 1862.

In 1866, Garibaldi again raised a volunteer force of about 40 000 with the aim of taking Rome. After a number of initial engagements, he was defeated by the combined papal and French forces at the Battle of Mentana. Not being able to stay away from battles for long, in 1870 he offered his services to the French government and fought with his two sons in the Franco-Prussian War. After the French garrison was recalled from Rome to help defend France, the Italian army captured the papal states.

Rome was annexed to Italy in October 1870. Italy was finally unified and Garibaldi was elected a member of the Italian parliament in 1874. Garibaldi died on Caprera on 2 June 1882 which, coincidentally, was the date when, 64 years later, the Republic of Italy was proclaimed. His contribution to the unification of Italy is legendary. His popularity, his skill at rousing the hearts and minds of common people and his masterly skill at military exploits serve as a global example of mid-19th century revolutionary nationalism and liberalism.

#### WESTMINSTER SCHOOL SEA RESCUE

**Mr PENGILLY (Finniss):** Today, I would like to spend a short time talking about the efforts of the volunteers in Victor Harbor and surrounds who swung into action on Monday and averted a catastrophe, something that could have had tragic consequences. In particular, I recognise the enormous efforts of the Victor Harbor & Goolwa Sea Rescue Squadron. There were nine boats deployed in the area, including two public boats, as I understand it. SAPOL directed the on-ground operations, and there were rescue helicopters, local Victor Harbor police officers, the SES, SA Ambulance Service and the staff of South Coast District Hospital. This incident came so close to being a catastrophe of unimaginable proportions that I believe it is worth noting in the house and placing on the record just what occurred. What we could be doing now is quite different had the outcome been different.

What occurred on Monday never should have occurred. As an islander and someone who has lived and worked with the sea all my life, I am very aware of sea conditions and, for the life of me, I would not have gone out on Monday. Indeed, the bureau issued two wind warnings and, unfortunately, the activity still took place, and that will be sorted out, I am sure, by Westminster School in its reviewing of the situation and the events of the day.

Let me say on the record also that I believe some very strict protocols need to be put in place not only by that school but also others involved in these activities in the water around Fleurieu Peninsula where they go to enjoy what is there—but, quite clearly, they should not have been out on that day. They were very lucky to get back in. The Rumbelow family, which was heavily involved in the rescue, knows those waters. Indeed, the Rumbelow family over the years has lost any number of members of their family in fishing and sea activities, so they are very well versed and skilled in the ways

of the waters around Fleurieu Peninsula, Encounter Bay and Victor Harbor.

On Monday, one of the rescuers, Mr David Hall from Victor Harbor, who was in one of the private boats and picked the last person out of the water, said he has never seen such a look of fear as on the face of the person being rescued. They were eight kilometres out to sea by that stage, in a kayak and in strong winds. As I say, the rescue helicopter had identified them and was hovering overhead with a flare until they could be reached. Mr Hall commented that that person was frightened out of their life and, when they found out all the others had been rescued and taken to shore, was mightily relieved.

I think that members of parliament need to recognise—and I am sure they do—the efforts of those volunteers. The people down south, the people of the Victor Harbor rescue services and the South Coast rescue services performed an outstanding job on Monday. I pay tribute to them. I also recognise that the school is forever grateful. I also point out that the editorial in *The Times* this week picked up on many of the issues. We take many of these things for granted, whether it be disasters on the sea, fire or wherever. I appreciate the opportunity to talk about them.

Time expired.

#### READER, Mrs O.

**Mr BIGNELL (Mawson):** I rise today to pay tribute to a wonderful member of our southern community, Mrs Olive Reader. On Saturday, you, Madam Deputy Speaker as the member for Reynell, the member for Karna, John Hill, the former member for Mawson, Robert Brokenshire, and I gathered at Centennial Park to celebrate Olive Reader's life at her funeral. You and many others who knew Olive well wore bright clothes, just as she would have liked, for Olive Reader brought so much colour into so many lives. She was artistic, a leader, a fighter and one of those rare people in the community who put her hand up for so many jobs in the area because she believed passionately about getting in and getting things done the right way.

Olive Frances Reader was born in Lincolnshire, England on 28 January 1936. She emigrated to Australia in 1971 and lost her battle with cancer on 24 June this year. Like me, Olive spent many of her early years on a dairy farm. She went on to own and single-handedly run a poultry farm—and we heard some funny stories about those times at Saturday's funeral service. Olive was also the chairperson of the Young Conservatives Gainsborough Branch in Lincolnshire. After arriving in South Australia, she wasted little time in getting involved in helping others in the south of Adelaide. From 1972 to 1975, Olive Reader was a part-time drug educator; and from 1974 to 1996 she was a school assistant at Christies Beach Junior School and Hackham South Primary School.

From the 1970s until her death, Olive was a member of so many organisations in the south. They included being a founding member of Zonta Southern Vales chapter, a founding member of EXCEL Women's Service Group, the Noarlunga City Council Consultative Group, the local sesquicentenary organising committee and the local bicentennial organising committee. In 1989, Olive Reader founded and became the first chairperson of the Friends of the Noarlunga College Theatre. This theatre was a wonderful legacy of the Dunstan era, when governments funded arts at all levels, including at the very important local community



level. I am glad to say that, through the Premier and the Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts (Hon. John Hill), those days have returned: this Rann government is supporting the arts at every conceivable level.

The Noarlunga College Theatre was built to bring outstanding theatrical and musical performances to the people of the south and to allow theatre craft to be taught in the local area. The ASO and national troupes regularly played to packed houses at the theatre. When the Brown Liberal government came to power in late 1993, it decided to outsource the management of the theatre. This wonderful place that brought so much joy to so many people soon slid into a state of disrepair. It was dirty, unused and largely unloved. It was Olive Reader who led the fight against the Liberal government of the day. I know John Hill and Mike Rann held a campaign launch in front of the theatre in 1997 and received a huge roar of approval when they announced that a Rann Labor government would return the theatre to government control.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as you know, Olive Reader and her group won the day and we are very grateful to be able to attend many great performances at our local theatre. On Australia Day last year it was fantastic to be in that very theatre that Olive Reader had done so much to save and to see her presented with the Australia Day Citizen Award of 2006. Olive Reader also did an amazing job with the Southern Theatre and Arts Supporters group (STARS) that was based at Waverley Homestead at Willunga. She was the founder and president of that organisation from 1995 to 2007 and, like you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and the member for Kaurna, I was always happy to go along to see performances at Waverley Homestead and in the local area.

It was not just about conducting performances inside: a lot of street theatre and other performances were out in the community. And that was what Olive Reader was all about: taking music and theatre to people who might not normally have been interested in seeing theatre or music groups, whether it be at the local market or, as I said, at Waverley Homestead. We will greatly miss Olive Reader in our local area, but I am sure that her many friends at STARS and in the wider southern community will carry on her good work. I pass on my condolences to Olive's husband, Brian, and their sons Stuart, David and Karl.

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### MODBURY HOSPITAL

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** During question time today, the deputy leader asked a question about the one nurse at Modbury Hospital whom the government chose not to employ when the hospital returned to public hands on the weekend. As part of the contract to return the hospital to the public system, the government maintained a right of refusal for any staff member under current performance management. I am informed that only one nurse fell into this category, and the Central Northern Adelaide Health Service decided not to offer a contract to that person.

I am also advised that this person previously worked as a casual staff member at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, where

she had a large number of behavioural issues in addition to the workers compensation issues raised by the deputy leader. Because of these behavioural issues, the hospital stopped rostering this casual employee for shifts. The person then objected to the Industrial Relations Commission, which upheld the decision of the hospital. She then started working at the Modbury Hospital, where similar behavioural issues emerged. In July 2006, a formal warning was issued by Healthscope (the manager of Modbury Hospital) for abusive language, bullying and harassment. In June 2007, a second complaint was made by an agency nurse for bullying and abusive language. Healthscope advised prior to the handover that a final warning would be issued to the staff member.

Under the terms of the handover, the staff member has a right to lodge a written grievance, which I understand she has signalled she will do. She will soon have a meeting with executives from the Central Northern Adelaide Health Service. Since this person was not recruited into the public system, she is still an employee of Healthscope.

### CORRECTIONAL SERVICES (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill arises out of allegations that prisoner Bevan Spencer von Einem was receiving special treatment at Yatala Labour Prison and that prison staff had engaged in inappropriate behaviour in their dealings with him. The resultant departmental report, which was completed in January 2007, confirmed some of the allegations. The department has carried out recommendations contained in the investigation report to prevent the circumstances that have occurred in this situation from happening again. We now think it necessary to introduce supporting legislation and regulations to:

- prevent money to which a prisoner may not be entitled or where the identity of the person making the payment is not known being placed in the prisoner's trust account;
- prevent prisoners being prescribed some prescription drugs;
- prevent prisoners from entering into contracts with correctional staff or other designated people who frequent prisons; and
- prevent prisoners from removing goods that they may have made whilst in prison for sale without the authority of the Chief Executive.

The government has pledged to prevent prisoners profiting from goods made in prison, such as in the case of greeting cards and paintings drawn by prisoner von Einem. I seek leave to have the remainder of the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

#### Prisoner allowance and other money

Prisoners constantly receive money from outside sources to enable them to purchase items from prison canteens and to make telephone calls. This money is in addition to the money that a prisoner may earn by working in prison based industries. In some cases, the identity of the person providing the money is not known and the prisoner's entitlement to the money is brought into question.

The proposed legislation will enable prison staff to require prisoners and the person making the payment to establish the entitlement of the prisoner to the money being received and, where necessary, the identity of the person making the payment. Where these matters are established, the money will be placed in the

prisoner's accounts which can be accessed for the purposes described above or for any other approved reason. Where a prisoner is unable to identify the person making the payment or the prisoner's entitlement to the money, the Chief Executive has several options available, including the payment of the money to the Treasurer under the *Unclaimed Moneys Act 1891*.

Were this legislation in force prior to the Von Einem situation, it would not have been possible for anonymous monetary transactions to be placed in his prison accounts. He would have also had to explain the reasons for the money.

#### **Unauthorised contracts with prisoners**

The Bill will make it an offence for prisoners to enter into a contract with staff or other persons of a class prescribed by the regulations for that purpose. Such persons may include persons who, although not departmental staff, work in the State's prisons. Examples include Visiting Inspectors, Visiting Tribunals, volunteers, Chaplains and maintenance workers. To emphasise the seriousness of the offence, it will carry a penalty of \$10 000 or 2 years imprisonment.

#### **Prisoner's goods**

It is apparent that if prisoners are prevented from selling their goods within the prison, they will revert to sending them outside of the prison to be sold by relatives or friends in the community. The proposed amendment to section 33A will prevent this from happening without the approval of the Chief Executive or his delegate. Thus, the Chief Executive will have the discretion to allow items to be sent from the prison that prisoners have made for close relatives in the community, for birthdays or other special occasions, or for any other reason that he considers appropriate. The amendment also makes provision for the disposal of goods that have been sent, supplied or given contrary to section 33A.

#### **Regulations to prohibit, restrict or regulate the supply of drugs to prisoners**

During the investigations relating to prisoner Von Einem, it was found that medical staff had prescribed for his use a drug to address erectile dysfunction, Cialas. It is not appropriate for drugs of this nature to be prescribed to prisoners and the proposed amendment to the regulation making power will prevent this occurring again. By inserting a power to make regulations prohibiting, restricting or regulating the supply of drugs (including prescription drugs), regulations may be made, from time to time, in response to any new drugs that may be marketed by pharmaceutical companies that may similarly be inappropriate to be supplied to prisoners.

#### **Other amendments to the regulation making power**

The opportunity has been taken to include a power to impose a penalty (not exceeding \$2 500) for an offence committed against the regulations and to make provision for the regulations to be more flexible.

I commend the Bill to Members.

#### **EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES**

##### **Part 1—Preliminary**

###### **1—Short title**

###### **2—Commencement**

###### **3—Amendment provisions**

These clauses are formal.

##### **Part 2—Amendment of *Correctional Services Act 1982***

###### **4—Amendment of section 31—Prisoner allowances and other money**

The proposed amendment to this section deals with how money must be dealt with if a prisoner receives any money other than an allowance paid under section 31. It is proposed to delete current subsection (5a) and replace it with a subsection that mirrors the procedure that must be followed by the manager of a correctional institution if money is sent to a prisoner in a letter.

###### **5—Amendment of section 33A—Prisoners' goods**

Current section 33A makes provision for dealing with goods sent to or given by a prisoner from or to persons outside the prison. Subsection (1) currently provides that a prisoner is not entitled to receive goods from outside the prison without the permission of the manager. It is proposed to amend this so that this action requires the permission of the Chief Executive Officer. There are other amendments proposed throughout the section consequential on this change.

New subsection (2) provides that a prisoner is not entitled to send, supply or give any goods to another person (whether inside or outside of the prison) unless the prisoner has the permission of the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer has complete discretion to dispose of any

goods that consist of prohibited items or goods sent, supplied or given by a prisoner without permission as he or she thinks fit.

Prohibited items under the principal Act or goods that are prohibited under some other Act or law must be destroyed unless they are to be kept as evidence of an offence.

#### **6—Insertion of section 82**

New section 82 is to be inserted at the beginning of Part 8 (Miscellaneous).

#### **82—Unauthorised contracts with prisoners prohibited**

This new section makes it an offence for a person to whom this section applies to enter into a contract with a prisoner without the permission of the Chief Executive Officer. The penalty proposed is a fine of \$10 000 or imprisonment for 2 years. Any contract entered into in contravention of this prohibition is void and of no effect. This new section will apply to the following persons:

- (a) officers or employees of the Department;
- (b) members of the police force employed in a correctional institution;
- (c) persons of a class prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this section.

#### **7—Amendment of section 89—Regulations**

It is proposed to clarify section 89 by adding an express power for regulations to be made prohibiting, restricting or regulating the supply or administration to prisoners of drugs (including prescription drugs under the *Controlled Substances Act 1984*). It is also proposed to include a power to impose fines (not exceeding \$2 500) for offences against the regulations and make provision for the regulations to—

- be of general application or limited application;
- make different provision according to the matters or circumstances to which they are expressed to apply;
- provide that a matter or thing in respect of which regulations may be made is to be determined according to the discretion of the Minister or the Chief Executive Officer;
- include evidentiary provisions to facilitate proof of contraventions of the regulations for the purposes of proceedings for offences.

Mr GRIFFITHS secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### **APPROPRIATION BILL**

Adjourned debate on motion:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

(Continued from page 570.)

**Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder):** Before the adjournment of the debate, I was talking about equity versus equality when it came to the implementation of natural resource management levies as they apply in several areas of the state. Property owners in certain local government areas are very concerned about the significant impost, and I know that in some areas there has been up to a 330 per cent increase. The minister did not seem to pick up on the point I was making when I said that, of the 15 council areas within the Northern and Yorke Peninsula NRM board areas, four of those councils are paying 50 per cent of the total board income (\$1.25 million), and I asked how that could be equitable.

Because the coastal areas of Yorke Peninsula, the Copper Coast, Burunga West and the Wakefield Regional Council have a higher value, there is a perception out there that people in these areas can afford to pay more in property tax. These communities are predominantly made up of older residents who have seen significant capital value increases in their properties over the past 10 years. However, we cannot afford to forget that they also have low incomes.

In my previous life in local government, I was always facing the challenge of determining a property rate that would

allow these people to remain in their properties and still live comfortably. I have had pensioners come to me and say that they were faced with the dilemma that, if property tax in all its forms kept increasing the way it was, they would be forced to sell their homes, which I think would be an absolute disgrace. That is why we took up the battle quite strongly during the estimates committee with minister Gago that NRM boards, which she has control over and the power to determine NRM boards levies, must set a more equitable rate, but she did not adhere to it.

My real frustration, though, over the six days of estimates, came yesterday, late in the day when I innocently asked minister Gago about the rebate scheme for rainwater tank connections to homes. That is a policy that has been trumpeted by the government, and there are financial incentives in place for property owners who make the effort to install rainwater tanks on their properties to help reduce our reliance on the River Murray and the reticulated water supply. We had attempted to ask the question of minister Maywald the previous day in estimates committee A, but she told us that it was actually minister Gago's responsibility. Therefore, we fronted up the next day and asked minister Gago the same question, and I was told that it is not her responsibility but the responsibility of minister Maywald. That has left the opposition in a quandary.

We want to know who has the responsibility. It may be seen as a relatively small policy area, but it certainly features in the budget lines. We asked the question of one minister, and she said it was not her responsibility but the responsibility of another minister. We then asked the question of that minister, and she also played that game. The question I posed to the minister was: What are South Australians to do then? We were there trying to ask questions in order to determine whether the forms to apply for the rebate could be available at the point of sale. However, neither minister wants to accept responsibility for it. South Australians deserve a lot better. I want to know who is right and who is wrong—and so does the South Australian community. In closing, I want to say that I enjoyed the estimates process but, after six days of it, I will be glad to get home to Yorke Peninsula tonight.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport):** I want to make a short contribution in relation to the estimates committees process, in particular the Education and Children's Services line. I have had the pleasure of enjoying the estimates committees process both as a minister on the receiving end of the questions and as a member of the opposition asking the questions and, indeed, as a government backbencher asking questions. Regardless of their tedious nature, I think estimates in their current form are still a worthy exercise, because you can actually squeeze out one or two bits of information over a four or five-hour period which occasionally becomes useful for someone.

The big issue in the lead-up to the education estimates committee was the outrageous \$170 million worth of savings or budget cuts that were being demanded of the education portfolio by minister Lomax-Smith. It was interesting that, in fact, I managed to get on the front page on the estimates day by predicting that the government would dump the very unpopular WorkCover levy, or WorkCover tax, on schools. One really would have to question what the government was doing for nine months, putting that through two budgets. It obviously went through cabinet because Jill Bottrall, the Premier's staffer, tells us it did. One would have to wonder where the government's political antenna was to have not

picked up that that particular matter was going to be so unpopular.

The interesting question now about this is: what is the current budget saving target for the education portfolio? Originally the budget target savings was \$170 million over four years. At about 8.30 on the morning of estimates, the minister and the Premier announced that they would not be proceeding with the WorkCover levy on schools. That, in effect, meant that schools, at least, would not be asked to find that \$17 million over three years.

However, in estimates, when we said to the minister on no less than 11 occasions, Madam Deputy Speaker (and I know you enjoyed it because you were the chair at the time) words to the effect of, 'Your budget saving was \$170 million; you have dumped the WorkCover levy of \$17 million; what is your budget saving target now—is it \$153 million?', she could not answer that question.

There were 20 officers of the department (or ministerial staffers) sitting around the minister offering help. We even asked whether the minister was prepared to ask her chief executive what his understanding was of the new saving target, but she would not do that. To take 11 questions on the simple arithmetic of whether the department's target is \$170 million or \$153 million, and refuse to answer them, is an abuse of process, in my view. Obviously, the minister would have known the answer. The Premier and the minister would not have gone out that morning and said, 'We are dropping the \$17 million worth of WorkCover levy,' without knowing whether the target for education was still going to be \$170 million or \$153 million over four years.

However, there are some hints as to what the answer might be. Unbelievable as it is, the Australian Education Union sent out an email newsletter at 1.30 that day (nearly three hours before the estimate committee for education had even started) saying that the budget saving was not \$170 million but \$153 million. Even a school had been tipped off by the department. That school had actually written, printed and distributed a newsletter saying that the budget saving had reduced from \$170 million to \$153 million before we walked into estimates.

The union knew what the target was, schools had been advised by the department of what the target was but, when we asked the minister on 11 different occasions what the target was, all we got was the stone wall. The minister did not do us the courtesy of saying, 'Actually, it is \$153 million or \$170 million'—or whatever the figure is. Until I hear it from the minister or the Premier, I am not going to believe what the union or the school wrote—that it is \$153 million. Reading between the lines, there is still concern that it may be \$170 million worth of savings.

This is the point I want to make: a lot of parents are very cynical about the government's decision to drop the WorkCover levy. Why are they cynical? They are cynical because the issue that the Australian Education Union took up most strongly was the WorkCover levy. So to appease the union the government dropped the WorkCover levy. What is left in place is at least \$153 million worth of savings, and possibly \$170 million. The WorkCover levy was only 10 per cent of the \$170 million—\$17 million over three years. So, far from being happy, the parent community is still very angry that this large saving is still to be taken out of education. The cash grab by government of the interest in the SASIF accounts, I think, will come back to haunt the government.

Another issue I wish to raise is the presentation of the budget papers. Here is a government on its knees over the

WorkCover levy, to the point where the Premier and the minister had to duck out at 8.30 in the morning and try and calm the waters by backing off the proposal to charge schools the WorkCover levy. They said they were going to introduce the WorkCover levy, and that they are still going to reform workers compensation in the education department because there are too many injuries and the cost of workers compensation in the department is too high. We tried to tackle that issue in the estimates committee, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I am sure you remember the exchange, because nowhere in the budget papers for the education department does it have under 'Expenses' a line separating out the workers compensation expense. So people reading the budget papers do not know whether workers compensation costs in education went up or down compared to last year, the year before or the year before that or, indeed, what the forward estimates are.

We discovered that the government was running this outrageous line—in my view simply trying to stifle the committee—that because the words 'WorkCover' or 'workers compensation' did not occur in the expense column, we could not ask a question on workers compensation. That, frankly, was an absolute joke. I will be writing to the Treasurer asking him to put a separate line in expenses for workers compensation in future budget papers. I think this is important because in reality we know that in the education sector the cost of workers compensation is \$22 million to \$23 million every year, and there are 25 per cent fewer open claims this year compared to last year, according to the minister. The government was proposing to levy schools up to \$7 million a year to help offset that cost, so virtually a 30 per cent levy, that is, 30 per cent of the annual cost was going to be levied against the schools—\$7 million of the \$22 million cost.

In the annual report we find that the liability for the education department has dropped from \$40 million to \$19 million in the last two years. So the amount of liability it has is \$19 million, its annual cost is \$22 million and the government is going to levy the schools \$7 million. The reason I think it is important there be a separate line for workers compensation in the expenses lines of the budget is that it is important that we put the blowtorch on that area of government so that we can compare improvements in workers compensation. As I said in the estimates committee, I do not think education will be the worst. It will be amongst the worst but it will not be the worst. I think the worst departments for workers compensation are probably health, police and corrections. I think they would be in front of education.

The interesting thing is that the government has made a huge backdown, in the face of public pressure, on the workers compensation reforms to schools. What is unclear is whether the education budget will have to find that \$17 million worth of savings from somewhere else in the education line, and I think the parent community will be watching this government with bated breath to see what other cost imposts will be forced onto their school communities.

I cannot quite work out the government's philosophy in relation to education. It seems to me that it is pushing all the costs onto schools but little of the decision-making—certainly, when it is putting extra costs onto the schools it is not giving them extra money to cover those costs. It seems to me that Treasury is running education, and Treasury has decided that it can milk some of the schools' budgets for money to prop up the savings targets for education. I believe parents and students will pay a heavy price as a result.

I think that, given the events of the past month or two when the WorkCover levy on schools has been front and

centre of the political debate, there has been a breach of trust between the school communities and this government. I believe that school communities no longer trust this government—and nor should they. The proposals the government was putting to schools in relation to the WorkCover levy were, frankly, an absolute disgrace. Why did Labor members sit so silent about it for all that time (remembering that it went through two budgets)? This was not a mistake; it was deliberate. It went through two budgets before the government finally picked up the message that it would cause it some political grief.

That was what we found out in estimates in the education section. I can mention other things. For example, in my view the presentation of papers was designed to stymie the committee, and I will give members an illustration of what I mean. The minister took the line (and I think this says something about the minister) that this government announced \$170 million worth of savings in last year's budget. Those were dot point entries. Those dot point entries did not appear in this year's budget, so we could not ask any questions on budget savings, because there was no line called 'budget savings' or 'savings targets' or 'efficiencies' in the papers. All the figures reflected those budget savings, but it seemed to escape the notice of the minister that we could not ask questions on them, and we had some debate in the committee about on what we could and could not ask questions.

If that ruling was to stand, a government could announce all its budget savings in the budget straight after an election, not mention them in any future budget, and you would never be able to question it on them. That is clearly a nonsense, because the savings are in the figures that make up the budget, so clearly you can ask questions on the budget savings. I believe that for the minister, with the support of her colleagues, to run that line simply showed that this government was trying to stymie the operation of the committee.

Another issue is in relation to things such as Education Works. In last year's budget, savings were predicted for this and out years for operational efficiencies from the Education Works program. Those operational savings have disappeared in this year's budget; they are not line itemed. They are somewhere within the figures, but we do not know where. The minister argued that we could not even ask questions on that, because they did not appear as a separate line item. That is clearly also a nonsense, and it disappointed me that the minister took up so much of the committee's time arguing such nonsense.

In closing, I would also make this point. When Rob Lucas was education minister, the estimates committee for education went for eight hours, eight hours, and eight hours—and I might say that it was a full day in front of the full media, starting in the morning at 11 a.m. Under this minister, the issues were duck-shoved to about 4 p.m., when the media stories were largely set for the day, and we got only 4.75 hours—nearly half the amount of time the previous Liberal government used to give for questioning on education. I think that says something about the government. It says that the minister is embarrassed by some of the savings targets she has been forced to try to find, so why wouldn't you try to hide her?

**Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Estimates was an extra interesting exercise this year because we had the benefit of being able to see our new members of parliament in full flight. It was a joy to behold, and I

acknowledge their good contribution and questioning. They have learnt well from the grandfather of the house, and they have certainly made sure that, as new members for their districts, they are dishing it up to the government. I thank the member for Finnis for most graciously allowing me to precede him in this debate today.

The areas on which I had the opportunity to ask questions of government ministers on this occasion varied in their responses, their reliability and the usefulness of the information they provided. The Minister for Health, whose portfolio covers a very significant portion of the state budget, provided his outline of what, if it were all to come true, would be, at best, aspirational and would certainly solve a lot of the problems in health. However, the reality is that, over the past few weeks, the government has been repeatedly exposed not only by the shallowness of and lack of consultation on the health plan it announced on 6 June but also by the hostility it has invoked in the community because of the proposed loss of services and what I think is the quite cruel exclusion of persons in the consultation process of its big plan.

No-one disputes the fact that we have a health system that is unsustainable if we are all to proceed along the same course without some reform. Everyone agrees that workforce and demand are major issues. What the government announced in its plan on how to reform and remedy that situation certainly provides no delivery or relief for the patients and people of South Australia for today; indeed, they will not see any relief for 10 years.

I turn to the government's announcement to build a new hospital—that is, to take the North Terrace campus of the Royal Adelaide Hospital to a new hospital down the road. Although the Minister for Health was quick to quote the new President of the Australian Medical Association as being supportive of his great plan, this is what the President had to say when he wrote on 27 June 2007 to members of the AMA about the government's announcement on health:

For the record, the AMA (SA) has not called for the building of a new hospital. . .

He goes on to compliment both the government and the Liberal Party for at least making commitments to infrastructure. However, it is absolutely clear in his letter to his members that it is not the AMA's recommendation upon which a new hospital would be built. He raises a number of concerns, and these have been floated at length in the media, including the lack of consultation with clinicians, and he points out to his members how dismayed the AMA is in relation to that. He raises the issue of the transition period and states that, although there may be a plan forward:

. . . the AMA (SA) remains acutely concerned about the immediate and ongoing needs. We must make sure that services are maintained in the transition period. . .

In this letter to his members, he states that so concerned is the AMA about this transition period and the delivery of health services that, on 7 June 2007, he reports to his membership that the AMA (SA) Council passed the following resolution:

The AMA (SA) is supportive of the significant infrastructure investment announced in the June 2007 SA Budget. However, we express our deep reservations about the state's ability to recruit and retain the medical, nursing and allied health service staff needs to meet the state's current and future health needs.

Well, the council's resolution and message to the government is that it is deeply concerned. It is also concerned and fears are expounded about the infrastructure investment versus the investment in human resources.

In relation to the specific concerns raised in the letter, it wants answers to questions such as what a \$30 million budget cut over four years will do for country health and the people trying to run these services. It wants to know the rationale behind the proposed transfer of the renal transplant unit at this juncture. It wants further details around the rationale for ending the obstetric and paediatric services at Modbury Hospital and the arrangements to accommodate the 10 000 emergency department paediatric presentations and the 700 births a year.

It also wants to know whether the SA Health Care Plan is intended to be a springboard for other detrimental health delivery changes, such as home births, role substitution, and so on. It wants to know whether there is scope for the Women's and Children's Hospital to be included in plans for the new hospital site, as is the case in other Australian states. That is what it wants to know and that is what it told its members they want to know; and that is what the opposition wants to know. None of these answers has been identified by the government in relation to its plan.

We know the truth of it. The truth is that people are waiting in corridors in major hospitals. There are claims of an infrastructure breakdown in the Women's and Children's Hospital, with no funding allowed in this budget. As to consultation, I want to add a final paragraph on the Ray Grigg chapter. He issued a special edition *Regional News* of 29 June in which he explains to the readers his decision to resign as chairman. He says:

The basic reason for this is that, as a board member and chair, I do not fully agree with the proposed changes to the governance structure for health and I do not feel that I could provide the same commitment as I have over the past three years, where I have been dedicated to reforming the public health system and the Central Northern Adelaide Health Service in particular, and trying through my past experience in the private sector to change the way the public health system operates.

That is the position. The government has already spent \$33 million on buying back and deprivatising Modbury Hospital. The government made that policy decision. I think the truth has been exposed as to why that has happened. It may be ideological zealotry, but the truth is that it will cut services in this hospital. We have heard about the Royal Adelaide Hospital and the country cuts, but all the answers outlined by the AMA remain a concern.

Glenside Hospital was an interesting chapter in the time we had with the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse (Hon. Gail Gago). We have had questions for six months about what the government will do with the Glenside Hospital site. It wants to keep secret what it intends to do in the redevelopment of Drug and Alcohol Services and the forensic mental health facility. It will not even elaborate on that, yet it is in the budget. It wants to keep secret its big new initiative and its big new announcement; and that is fine. All we want to know, question after question, is what pieces it intends to slice off and what pieces it intends to sell.

The government has acknowledged that there is land that is surplus to supply at Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre and at St Margaret's Rehabilitation Hospital at Semaphore. Glenside Hospital certainly has vast areas which it considers to be surplus to supply—but it will not tell us. It wants to keep it secret. Well, the population does want to know.

As for the Minister for Housing and Minister for Families and Communities, much has been said and much will be said—even by the Treasurer—about the \$38 million blow-out on the 2006-07 budget for Families and Communities. As if

that was not shameful enough, the Treasurer's department is crawling all over that disaster area. But I still want to know why the Treasurer did not tell the people of South Australia, when he gave his speech on 6 June, the truth in relation to the blow-out on this budget. He left unanswered and unexplained the information that was published in the budget papers at \$24 million. He did not mention the fact that it had blown out to \$38 million—which he claimed in the Estimates Committee has been provisioned for. Yet he had an opportunity—there is always an explanation, and quite a reasonable explanation for a treasurer—to say, 'When we got the information it was accurate at the time.'

In April and May we are compiling the budget papers, and that is fine. However, he had an obligation to be full and frank to the people of South Australia so that when he came in here on 7 June he could at least advise the public of what was different in this budget that he knew about and, clearly, he did not do that. I think that is shameful. He might be trying to crawl all over the department to get excuses as to why it has blown out, but the people of South Australia should be given some answers.

Then we come to the homeless. I especially want to mention the homeless this year because, coinciding with estimates, was the publication of Australian Bureau of Statistics figures on a number of issues arising out of the 2006 census. One of the most alarming was the homeless figure. South Australia had nearly 900 homeless. These are rough sleepers. These are not the people sleeping in a boarding house at night, but rough sleepers on the street, in a tent or in the Parklands—men, women and children sleeping without any accommodation. They have no fixed address. The figure was nearly 900 in 2001 and there are 45 fewer in 2006. In five years of this government, on average, nine people a year have been taken off the street.

Commissioner Cappo was given another \$100 000 to enable him to work for the government in relation to the homeless in addition to his social inclusion role. He was given \$100 000 a year. Imagine what that money could do to subsidise the rent alone for some of the people we are talking about who are sleeping on the streets. The government's target, when it came into office and set up the Strategic Plan, was that by 2010 it would halve the number of rough sleepers and homeless in this state. Well, the government has not only failed to do that but at nine a year it will take it 50 years to achieve that target. Not only is the government way off beam but also it has failed the homeless in this state.

All the representatives who are advocates for this severely disenfranchised group in the community have no voice and they certainly have no influence. This minister and this government in particular are failing to deal with it. The government has a Minister for Housing, a Minister for Health, a Minister for Mental Health, a Premier, a social inclusion chair and a social inclusion commissioner. I mean, how many more people do we need who have a responsibility to look after these people? They are failing miserably.

Lastly, I raise the question of population. South Australia's population growth was exposed this year; we are still losing over 2 500 to 2 600 people a year. We have the Amanda Vanstone policy, which brings people into South Australia because South Australia gets a preference over other states. That is fantastic. God love her! She is off helping the Australians in Italy, but we want to thank her for bringing these people to our country, and we get a big lick of them. That is great. The problem is that when they get here they do

not stay, or if they are born here they get educated and they leave. That is the problem.

What do we get from the minister when she is asked, 'How many people have come here under your program?' She says, 'Well, I don't know. That is too hard to work out', even though, of course, she knew the answer last year. 'How many people have left the state who have come here?' She says, 'Well, we don't know that. The federal people might be doing some surveying, but we don't know.' Well, why does she not know? She should be finding out why these people are leaving our state instead of simply refusing to give any answers during estimates with respect to the population.

In relation to women, the ministers have all been given a target by the government to appoint a number of female representatives to boards. That is an important initiative; it is an important target. What was clear from the estimates on women was that minister Rankine had to tell us that only five ministers had achieved the target. For the successful ones that is fantastic, but the other nine or 10 have not, and they include the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Transport and the Attorney-General. So, the most senior people have not even achieved the target.

The government should have addressed this issue. At the very least, if the Attorney-General wanted to get up to a qualifying and acceptable level, he could have appointed an eminent woman, such as Wendy Abraham, to a board. He could have employed her as the DPP but, no, he did not want to do that. He excluded her even from consideration. That is how much the government cares about promoting good women in this state; so much so that she is now in New South Wales very successfully prosecuting for the commonwealth. They love her and no doubt they want to keep her. We have lost her, because not only did the Attorney-General not appoint her to anything but he refused even to consider her application for an appointment, which I think is quite scandalous.

Wendy Abraham was the one person—a strong woman—who was prepared to stand up to this government and say, 'You failed the people of South Australia over the Randall Ashbourne affair. You should have reported that to the police before the case got cold, but you didn't do it.' She had the audacity to say that this government had failed, so she was excluded. That is how this government really treats women, and I think it is scandalous. For as long as the government has that attitude, it will never achieve the target that it has set for itself.

**Mr PENGILLY (Finniss):** I have to say that the estimates committee process this year was a bit of a wonder to behold. I am most concerned about the tourism area, which has been exacerbated by the concerns of people in the industry to whom I have spoken in the last couple of days. They are worried about where the government is taking tourism, and the resources they are putting into it.

On Tuesday, I spoke at a lunch with 80 or 90 people from the tourism industry. There were some very strong former supporters of the Minister for Tourism, and they expressed to me their opinion that the government seems to have its hand well and truly off the wheel. They are gravely concerned about the fact that the marketing budget, and the whole tourism budget, has been cut back year by year, and they wonder where the effort will go in the future. They commented that tourism needs a lot more put into it than lip service, and you can make of that what you like. They are

very much on the front foot in trying to promote tourism in South Australia.

More importantly, people are most concerned about the issue that I have been picking up on, that is, the great hiatus in visitation to South Australia. Not a lot of activity takes place after the end of March through to October or November. We have this period through the year where the weather is quite spectacular—not like it was yesterday. I do not believe—and neither do these people—that the government is investing anywhere near enough resources and ‘oomph’ into tourism. Indeed, during estimates, the minister failed on a number of occasions to provide answers to questions. In fairness to the minister, she did say that she would take some on notice—as is her right—and bring answers back to me.

I was pleased about the activities at the Entertainment Centre and the Convention Centre, and I endorse those activities. I praise the staff involved on the way they go about their business. It is good to see that the Entertainment Centre had a gross profit of \$3.2 million in the last financial year, and it is a great asset for South Australia. However, I was unable to get much of an idea of whether the government plans to look at increasing the size of the Convention Centre. Indeed, the minister really could not answer that either and, despite some fairly searching questions, we did not get a lot out of that one.

I am concerned about the estimates process. The Premier and the Treasurer set the tone in the first couple of days. I did not like what I heard from the Treasurer. I was listening in other areas of the building and I thought that we do not need that behaviour thrown around the place as it reflects on all of us. It has translated across the broad spectrum and has been picked up in the community. I do not want to be tarred with that sort of brush, but you have to wear it. It is childish and silly. I hope everyone learns a lesson from that behaviour and we move on quickly, because it is beholden on us to act in the best interests of South Australia and not sit here like a mob of petulant schoolchildren and carry on quite stupidly.

Once we moved through that, I also had the pleasure of estimates with the Minister for the Southern Suburbs. I question how far we can go with the Office of the Southern Suburbs. I recognise that the graffiti program has been most successful and is being progressed by the councils in the southern suburbs. I would like to think that the minister will keep a close eye on that and, if possible, get some more resources into it, as it has been successful. Although it has been cut out of the equation this year, it needs to be watched. As the minister says, his staff are there to provide coordination and collaboration with the councils and to listen. I hope they are listening. The officer who works for Mr Hill, Penny Crocker, is a particularly good officer and I commend her efforts: I have a good relationship with her. As the minister says, they do not have a lot of money to throw around in this area of government, but it is there. Whether it is justified is something we can talk about at another time. The \$20 000 set aside to facilitate the implementation of the southern suburbs wave investment attraction strategy is a pittance in the scheme of things, but we will wait to see what comes out of it.

I now turn my attention to the proceedings in the local government estimates yesterday and with the Minister for Environment and Conservation yesterday afternoon. I was quite astounded and confounded by some of the statements that came from the Minister for State/Local Government Relations yesterday morning. They have caused a great deal

of angst, concern and anger in the local government sector. In discussing the waste levies that have been put on councils to collect for the state government, an orchestrated campaign took place with the Minister for State/Local Government Relations, and again in the afternoon with the Minister for Environment and Conservation, trying to equate the waste levy with the level of council allowances. For the life of me I do not know where the Minister for State/Local Government Relations is coming from in the first instance when she tried to put together some sort of relationship between the two. Yesterday morning the minister stated:

... the near vicinity of the increase of council allowances across South Australia, but we have not heard from local councils quite as much about the impact of [comparing the allowances with the waste levy].

She then went on to compare the waste levy rates in Alexandria and Victor Harbor—two councils in my area—and stated:

... the impact of the waste levy on their rates in Alexandria is about 0.19 per cent, but the impact of their council allowances is about 0.74 per cent of rate revenue. The impact for Victor Harbor: the waste levy is 0.16 per cent on rates, but their allowance is 0.69 per cent. I use these figures to give you a couple of illustrations of the impact of the waste levy.

I remind the house and the parliament that the minister is the one who set the levels of limitations on council allowances. The minister is the one who did it! I have one mayor in my area—the Mayor of Alexandria—who receives the maximum allowance of \$60 000, and that is what they have chosen to do; that is the limit of the allowance. I have two on \$48 000. The mayor of Kangaroo Island is on \$14 000. The minister set these limits, not the councils.

The minister also refused to have an independent panel look at them to make an adjudication of what local elected council members' allowances should be. So, for the minister to slam dunk the councils in the estimates committee and try to compare it with the waste levy that is disappearing into general revenue for the government I think is absolutely appalling, and I do not think anyone in their right mind would think it is the right thing to do. But, lo and behold, in the afternoon in Estimates Committee B, the Minister for the Environment, when she had a question thrown at her about the waste levy, pulled out a bit of paper that was passed to her by the CEO, Mr Allan Holmes, and said:

In terms of Kangaroo Island, the waste levy percentage increase is .2 per cent, whereby the increased council allowance is .2 per cent, so one needs to keep it in perspective.

For heaven's sake, there seems to be an orchestrated campaign and an attempt by the government to destabilise local government and throw it into some imbalance.

As sure as night follows day, following the estimates committees with both the minister for local government and the Minister for the Environment, I think Joy Baluch, who has come in as the President of the Local Government Association, will go absolutely ballistic. If it was a fair and reasonable thing to equate the two, it would be okay; but how can you equate the two when you have the minister setting the allowance limits and then saying they compare favourably with the increase in the waste levy? It is a nonsense—an absolute arrant nonsense—and they will be caught out, found out and exposed; and, believe me, the local government sector is absolutely furious over the whole thing.

I think the government has an agenda in regard to local government that worries me deeply, and I am sure it will worry the minister. The portfolio is state/local government

relations, but it wants to develop some relations, and it wants to do it pretty quickly, too, I can tell the house, because the local government sector across South Australia is grass roots government and, for them to be belted up in the parliament and the estimates committee by two ministers of the Crown, the Rann government, I think is highly improper, totally uncalled for and most unfair.

I will be watching with interest what comes out of the estimates committees in relation to local government and the waste levy, and we will wait with bated breath for Mrs Baluch to come out swinging, I suggest some time in the next week. I think she will be hardly able to contain herself. With those few remarks, I conclude.

**Mr PISONI (Unley):** I, too, would like to make a contribution on the process of estimates committees. I find them a valuable experience and process in determining for taxpayers of South Australia how their money is being spent by the government—or misspent, in this instance. It enables us to spend some time drilling into the questions. It is not very long before you hit rock.

**Mr Pederick:** Rock bottom.

**Mr PISONI:** Yes, and that could easily happen quite quickly when it comes to the budget. We could quite easily hit rock bottom as this Treasurer continues to spend the money in recurrent spending and borrow at times when we are seeing the federal government putting money aside and paying off debt. But that is another story.

This process allows not only for the government's past and current performances to be scrutinised but also enables its forward planning and its ability to invest in our future to be scrutinised. Of course, in this regard, the Rann government has, as has been noted in this place by previous speakers and by many commentators in the media, failed dismally.

It should not be forgotten that the GST was bitterly opposed by this government. The worst thing that could possibly happen in South Australia was the introduction of the GST. Of course, the GST has brought in enormous over budget revenues. It is a very efficient and effective way of creating revenue for government. It taxes growth in the economy, rather than taxpayers directly through income tax, which is a regressive way of taxing people. With the introduction of the GST, we have seen the top marginal tax rate of 47¢ reduced. Under the Labor Party, the Medicare levy used to cut in at \$50 000. Now, of course, the top marginal tax rate, with the reforms put in place by the Howard government, has been reduced to 45¢ in the dollar and does not cut in until \$150 000—more than a catch-up in bracket creep. Of course, taxpayers in the \$20 000 to \$40 000 bracket are enjoying the latest round of tax cuts for the first time this week. They will be receiving tax cuts of up to \$16.

**Mr Bignell:** What about payroll tax—a big thumbs up.

**Mr PISONI:** The member for Mawson talks about payroll tax. What a disgrace that is in this state. We have the worst payroll tax regime in the country, kicking in at \$504 000. I will speak more about that later. One of the good things that has happened is the air warfare destroyer contract—a federal government contract given to South Australia simply because of the good lobbying skills of South Australian senators and the South Australian members of the federal cabinet, and I thank them for that.

**Mr Bignell:** *The Advertiser* went over in an amphibious vehicle.

**Mr PISONI:** That's right, of course, *The Advertiser* contributed to that as well—and I thank *The Advertiser* for

that. This government—and I think our leader used this description—attaches itself like a suckerfish to the success of others and tries to claim it for itself. What we do have is a state debt tipped to hit \$3.4 billion by 2011. Long-term planning has obviously gone out the window, unless the Treasurer is planning to re-enact the State Bank collapse of the 1990s.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health):** I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the house be extended beyond 5 p.m.

Motion carried.

**Mr PISONI:** As we know, there is no forward planning to deal with a \$6 billion deficit in super pay-outs in the longer term and the \$1 billion unfunded WorkCover liability that will blow-out before the end of the year. We are having another review of WorkCover. Recommendations have already been put in place by the WorkCover board on how to deal with this, but this government does not want to deal with it because it will have to make some tough decision and decisions that will affect workers' benefits. The WorkCover system in South Australia is the most generous in the country. We cannot afford it and this minister cannot manage it under the current system.

I point out to the parliament that, when the Liberal Party was last in government, the unfunded liability was only \$67 million—and that was achieved without cutting workers' benefits. This government has run WorkCover so badly that the only way it will fix it is to reduce workers' benefits. It is holding off from doing that until after the federal election—a purely cynical political exercise by this government. This Premier aspires to lead the Labor Party nationally by nominating as president of the federal Labor Party. He is working for the federal Labor Party, not for South Australia and South Australians.

What has the federal Liberal government done in times of a booming economy? Not only has it generated the conditions to allow that to happen, but it has also paid off \$96 billion worth of debt which was left by the former Keating government, which was costing \$8.5 billion a year in interest. So, what is it doing now? It is putting that money in the bank for the future, so that our children will be let off the hook and will not have to pay for the extravagances of irresponsible governments that have simply continued to put things on the credit card. Of course, it is easy to imagine that you can put things on the credit card and not have to worry about them and just keep paying the interest. That is the way Labor does business: it has form on this issue, and it continues to do it.

Treasurer Foley is very happy to risk other people's money and their future by going into debt at a time of prosperity for this country. This government has \$4 billion more in extra revenue than was available five years ago: a budget that has gone from about \$8 billion to over \$12 billion in just five years. It is an enormous amount of revenue. He is happy to risk that by increasing recurrent spending and borrowing for infrastructure. Of course, he was given an opportunity to risk his own money. I read an interesting article in the *Sunday Mail*, in which he said:

'It was really going to be a 50-50 cut whether my wife, Cathy, and I bought a steel business and mortgaged the family home, or whether I worked as a political adviser,' he says. 'And my guess is that I didn't quite have the courage to take on the challenge of a small business, to be brutally honest.'



This is the Treasurer saying that he did not have the courage to take on a small business. He did not want to risk his assets, such as his house, like all small business people do; they put up their house for security—

**Mr Pederick:** And the farmers.

**Mr PISONI:** And the farmers as well, as the member for Hammond said. The whole asset base that they have worked towards backs up the decisions they make with respect to their business or their farms. However, of course, the Treasurer did not have the ticker to do that. He decided to go on the government payroll instead and work for, I believe, Lynn Arnold at the time.

Let us get back to the process of estimates. No value at all can be seen for South Australians in the Dorothy Dixers asked by government members and their ministers, who proceed to read out prepared responses arranged in neat folders for them by their numerous staff members. They do not even hide it: we can see a red tab for an answer to a question that is asked by the member for Morialta and a green tab for an answer to a question that is asked by the member for Taylor. It is so obvious. Those Dorothy Dixers are often just a repeat of a press release that we have seen earlier in the year or a rehashed ministerial statement. There is no benefit from those Dorothy Dixers other than to filibuster and stop the opposition from analysing the budget line by line, as the estimates were set up to do.

The biggest farce in all this was the delay in and obstruction of the proper analysis of estimates attempted by the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General filibustered for 12 minutes on an opening statement before being interrupted and asked to finish and, after that, a ridiculously short period was allowed for questions on the Attorney-General's Department. It is a large and very controversial department, and it needs some drilling down: we need to get down to the bedrock in asking questions with respect to the Attorney-General's Department.

The Attorney-General has bragged about the apparently generous budget allocation to law and order by this government, but then allowed only 30 minutes after his filibustering, after refusing the shadow attorney-general's request for more time in negotiating the time allocated for the estimates process. If I had not brought his address of self-congratulation to an end after the 12-minute mark, there is no doubt that the Attorney-General would have attempted to go for the full 45 minutes and, thereby, stop any questioning. I ask the question: what does he have to hide?

One question the shadow attorney-general did manage to ask in the 30 minutes allocated for questions was about the relationship between the Attorney-General and the DPP, which continues to be dysfunctional. They cannot talk to each other. The Attorney-General keeps referring to Mr Kourakis for advice, and the DPP gets his own independent advice. I think that is what they do before they decide on a location to meet for coffee! It is unbelievable how dysfunctional their relationship is. Of course, the DPP was the Premier's own choice—and it is good to see that he stands by his choices and the decisions he has made.

What became evident during the estimates committees process was this government's lack of real world experience. That was illustrated when the Minister for Youth was questioned about how ridiculous it was that a grant of \$2 000 to a youth network had been reduced to about \$1 400 after an insurance payment of \$700. What we managed to establish was that each group that receives a grant from the Minister for Youth has to find money for its own insurance coverage.

We all know there would be enormous savings if the resources available to the Minister for Youth could be used to pool essential insurance for youth organisations. Not only would enormous savings be made by reducing the amount of red tape and bureaucracy but also there would be more bang for the buck those organisations receive by way of grants, donations and fundraising.

With these grants, or any money spent by the government, taxpayers expect to get maximum bang for their buck. What you get for your money is what counts, not how much you are spending. We hear a lot from this government about how much more it is putting into health and education, but we want to hear about the outcomes. Anyone who is in business wants to know about outcomes. In the private sector, if you ask for more staff or more money for your department, the question would be what outcomes would that achieve. Ask them out there in the electorate about outcomes. Are we \$4 billion better off in community services and value for taxes than we were five years ago? That is the question we ask, and people out there are telling me that they do not believe we are. We still have the situation in hospitals where patients are having to be accommodated in hospital corridors—and that is with a budget that is \$4 billion bigger than it was five years ago.

We have seen ministers and departments employing staff by the thousands, while the private sector is finding it hard to find qualified people. Why is it that the government is competing with the private sector for staff? Because of the fine economic management of the Howard government, we are in a situation where we virtually have full employment, and the government is competing with the private sector for staff. The government has employed over 10 000 more public servants than it budgeted for. The government budgeted for an extra 2 000 public servants, and it employed 12 000—and it cannot even tell us where they have been employed or the exact numbers. Are they with the police or in hospitals? My guess is that they are being employed in the bureaucracy. When I visited a hospital last year, I spoke to the head of one of its departments, and he told me that any problems he has need to go through six layers of bureaucracy before they reach the minister.

What does each layer do? Each layer changes the story to suit its own means. It filters the information. Where the original information might be there is a gaping hole in the corridor, and we are losing patients down a drain. By the time it gets to the minister it is described as 'a leak in the window'. No wonder we are not getting value for money from the billions of extra dollars that this government has to spend. The budget delivers us the promise of a 'Marj Mahal.' This is a brand new big hospital (10 years away, of course) but what will it deliver? Will it deliver longer queues and a new and larger waiting room for those waiting to get in?

Estimates for consumer affairs confirmed that, despite a pressing desire for the real estate reform bill up to last year, the government continues to obstruct mild and judicious amendments from the upper house, leaving consumers and the industry in limbo. I hope the minister takes up the invitation in this morning's paper (on page 2, I think) to meet with industry leaders in the real estate industry. A number of them said that they believe the minister does not understand the industry and she does not understand business. They are more than happy to spend some time giving her some business experience but, of course, the minister is more interested in getting media headlines describing business people as 'robber barons'. What the Liberal Party and Mr

Xenophon are trying to do with this legislation is to make it fair and to stick to the principles of free enterprise and business.

The opening statement by the Minister for Small Business revealed the problem for South Australian small businesses: dealing with a business experience free zone in the cabinet. The minister admits that taxation is, overall, the biggest concern for small business. Taxation is the biggest concern for small business. In the minister's own survey business taxes—

**Mr Bignell:** Payroll tax is second-lowest in Australia.

**Mr PISONI:** No; you should say it is the lowest threshold in Australia. The situation five years ago was that you needed 11 or 12 employees before you hit the payroll tax threshold, but now it is about eight. It is even lower than that if you are in a high-tech business or a business that requires higher skills, where you are paying large salaries. At \$504 000 it does not take many \$90 000 or \$100 000 salaries before you are paying payroll tax.

I have a classic example of this in my own electorate. We heard from the Premier and the Treasurer yesterday, who said, 'We are not going to be propping up traditional manufacturing; we want to encourage new and innovative manufacturing.' In my electorate is a company which employs electrical engineers and electricians. It is only a small company, and its growth is being stifled because it does not want to pay payroll tax. It does not want that extra bureaucracy. It has only half a dozen staff but, with one more staff member, it will have to start paying payroll tax.

The government is punishing small businesses, whereas increasing that threshold would encourage them to grow. The threshold at \$504 000 is unrealistic. The smallest of businesses and family businesses are now caught in the loop of payroll tax. Payroll tax was never designed to be paid by businesses that are that small. I am aware of a bakery chain that is now going to cut short the time that it was going to give one of its new businesses to become profitable, because it has reached the payroll tax threshold and it does not want to pay payroll tax. Why would it struggle with one of its shops which is establishing itself? It has decided not to do that, and it is going to close that shop, which means that three or four people will lose their jobs.

Time expired.

**Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel):** I, too, am pleased to be able to make a contribution to the debate concerning the estimates committees. I have had the pleasure of attending a number of those committees over the preceding two weeks. I would like to make some comments in relation to the committees that I was a member of, in particular the very first one that I sat on in relation to examining the budget papers concerning the portfolio responsibilities of Treasury and Finance. Over the previous five years (the previous five estimates committees) I have sat on that same Treasury and Finance committee and, obviously, the Treasurer and Deputy Premier has been the minister who has had the responsibility within that committee for answering questions put to him by opposition members and government members alike, and I have got to say that this year's estimates committee in relation to the Department of Treasury and Finance, in terms of the Treasurer and Deputy Premier's behaviour, was the worst that I have witnessed since I have been a member in this place.

*The Hon. J.M. Rankine interjecting:*

**Mr GOLDSWORTHY:** The worst that I have witnessed since I have been in this place. The Deputy Premier's behaviour was an absolute abhorrence. What I would like to say is that the Treasurer, as we all know, is the Deputy Premier and he actually holds the second highest position in public life in South Australia. One would expect—not just us, opposition members or members of parliament, but I think the community expects—that the person who has been elected to this place and holds the office of Deputy Premier would show some maturity and decency and act in a manner that attracts and earns some respect in holding that office.

The Leader of the Opposition when he spoke earlier today on these matters related to that too, that the Deputy Premier really needs to show some maturity in the way he conducts himself in this place and in estimates committees. In doing that, he might earn some respect. You do not get respect, you actually earn respect—and it is good to see the Deputy Premier coming into the house. He is not a backbencher scrapping, sometimes misdirecting his aggression or criticism of members on this side of the house; he is the Deputy Premier in this parliament.

*The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:*

**Mr GOLDSWORTHY:** You are the Deputy Premier, Kevin, of this parliament and there is some maturity that is required in holding that office.

*The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Deputy Premier is out of his seat.

**Mr GOLDSWORTHY:** I do not think it was five times, actually. So, the Deputy Premier is not a backbencher scrapping with the opposition; he is the Treasurer holding the second most important position in public life. To call anybody in this place a liar, or to say that they are actually lying, is one of the very worst descriptions that a member can use to describe another member. We all saw the performance that took place after that: the committee had to be suspended, the chair of the committee had to go out and seek advice and the Deputy Premier went out. Then he tried to make the excuse that it was a bit of theatre, that he likes a bit of theatre in the place because it livens things up. That might be okay, but to actually call the Leader of the Opposition a liar is disgraceful, to say the least.

If the Deputy Premier wants a bit of theatre he is in the wrong place. He should be in the complex immediately to the north of Parliament House; he should be on centre stage at the Festival Theatre, acting out his charades and theatrics. If the Deputy Premier wants theatre then that is where he should be: in the Festival Theatre playing his games and calling people names and the like. The Deputy Premier can choose what he does in this place, but he certainly does not engender any respect in doing that.

I made a couple of other observations during the course of that estimates committee. The Deputy Premier does not care who he attacks. He attacks the opposition, he tries to belittle, bully and berate opposition members—and he can do that until the cows come home because it has no effect; it washes straight over us—but he also attacks anyone who criticises him, any journalist or member of the media. He even identified a particular journalist who, in his opinion, had the temerity to write some articles that were slightly critical (although I read the articles and I did not think they were too critical at all) and that raised some quite pertinent questions in relation to the budget. He hurled some abuse at that journalist, who was in the gallery at the time. So, the Deputy Premier does not care where he goes, what he does, what he

says, or who he attacks as long as it makes him feel better. And he thinks he is scoring some political points.

Notwithstanding those issues, I would like to focus my comments on the budget itself. We have seen, progressively over the 5½ or 6 years of this government, that it is the highest taxing, highest spending government in the history of South Australia. Members on this side of the house have made some comments about that, and I think the leader very well articulated our stance on this current budget, but if you look back over at least the past three decades (and probably further in the history of Australian politics) you will see that all Labor governments have form on this matter. They have all been high taxing, high spending governments. Look at the Whitlam government, which spent money like none before it, and when Hawke and Keating were prime minister their governments were high taxing and high spending. We see the same thing here in South Australia—high taxing and high spending.

Where has all that money gone? Where are all those billions of additional dollars that the state has gained from the GST? Where has all that money been spent? We know where it has been spent; it has been spent on an additional 10 000-odd public servants. What has been highlighted today and through the estimates committee process (and it would be amusing if it were not so serious) is that none of the ministers of this government can actually identify where these people are located. A number of ministers were asked a series of questions regarding where these public servants are employed. They cannot tell us. They cannot identify where these 10 000 people are. Are they employed in the health system? Are they additional doctors and nurses? Are they more police? In the government, nobody knows where they are.

It is a serious issue when the government does not even know where these people are employed. I think that the average cost of these public servants was put at \$72 000 or \$75 000. So, that is \$720 million or \$750 million a year going on the wages of people the government cannot even identify where they are. If that is not mismanagement, I do not know what is. It is spending almost \$750 million per annum on employees, but it does not know where they are.

I now turn to the committees where I was involved in asking questions of the government and, specifically, the area of emergency services. I was pleased to be the opposition member leading the questioning on behalf of the shadow minister for emergency services (Hon. Stephen Wade in the other place). There have been and continue to be some quite astounding revelations about the emergency services area. One issue, which was identified previously in this house, concerned a priority recommendation in the report by Dr Bob Smith as a consequence of the tragedies resulting from the Wangary fires in 2005.

The major recommendation was that some formal agreement had to be reached between the emergency services sector (the CFS, in particular) and local government so that, in an emergency situation, the CFS could utilise specific pieces of plant and equipment owned by the local councils. That was a major recommendation and a priority of the Smith report on the January 2005 fires 18 months ago. We asked the minister: how many of those agreements have been entered into, or is there a memorandum of understanding? What is the progress of those agreements? Unfortunately for the South Australian community, which faces the very real threat of bushfires every year, a formal agreement has not been reached.

The minister deferred to the Chief Officer of the CFS, for whom I have quite high regard; I think he does a good job under difficult circumstances. However, the memorandum of understanding has not been formally agreed or signed off by local government. I asked an additional question: what is the likelihood of its being formalised before the 2007-08 fire season? To the surprise of opposition members, we got a blank look from the minister, which really showed that she was quite uncomfortable with the question, and she deferred again to the Chief Officer. It is quite clear that a big question mark hangs over whether the memorandum of understanding will be signed before this coming fire season.

Members of the government have had two years to get off their backside and negotiate with local government. The Minister for State/Local Government Relations is in the chamber at present and no doubt she is concerned about it. They have had over two years to act on this extremely important issue, yet nothing has been done. I am not saying that the CFS has not been talking to the LGA and the local government sector, but we are facing another fire season and no formal arrangements across the emergency services sector have been made with the local government sector. That is another area of serious concern.

I now refer to correctional services. The member for Hammond raised quite a number of issues and asked insightful questions of the minister in relation to the proposed new prison to be built in his electorate. Obviously, it is an extremely important issue for the member and his local community. One matter in terms of correctional services was quite glaring, and that is a secure facility being constructed on the APY lands. Planning for this facility has gone on for years. It seems that, every time there is an issue relating to the lands, it is extremely difficult for this government to come to any formal decision. Planning for this facility has been occurring for many years but there has been no action. Nothing has been built and these communities still struggle with a range of quite deplorable law and order issues.

To its credit, the federal government is taking action and has made firm decisions. It is trying to assist people in these communities who want a better life for their children and relatives, and other members of the communities who choose to reside there. All that has taken place is that the planning for this facility has been transferred to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation. It has gone from the Minister for Correctional Services to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation for him and his office to deal with. They are pushing things around and not making a decision. These communities are struggling and they are under severe pressure. One only needs to talk to someone who has visited the lands. The members for Morphett and Stuart, and other members on this side of the house, have visited them on a number of occasions. When the member for Morphett initially visited the lands he was quite shaken. The activity he witnessed in the lands had a significant effect on him.

The other issue that arose from the correctional services estimates committee was community service orders. In some regions 20 per cent of the orders—one in five orders—are not administered within departmental guidelines. If the department, the minister and the government are not keeping a close watch on and monitoring these orders, how on earth will they be carried out properly? One in five is not being administered within the departmental guidelines. That is a real indictment on how poorly the government is dealing with that situation.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond):** I want to make a few comments on the estimates experience this year. I found it a little more fulfilling than last year when I thought, 'What have I stepped into?' Hopefully, I will witness many more. I do find that it is the time to get some insightful answers from the government. A fair bit of ducking and weaving is done at times. I commend the Chairs of the committees. Certainly, Estimates Committee B was a much more informal place in which to ask questions, and I think we might have got more answers because of that. We had an excellent Chair in that committee. I want to make some comments about parliamentary standards and ministerial responsibilities.

I note that there is a mix of anger and disappointment in the behaviour of some government ministers during estimates. Their efforts to disrupt this vital function of government by feigning disinterest, using unparliamentary language and walking out shows great disrespect not only to fellow MPs on both sides of the house but, more importantly, to the South Australian public. These members should keep in mind that we all represent the people of this great state. When we, the opposition, ask questions we do so on behalf of the South Australian taxpayers. To show such impetuous contempt is to insult them gravely.

It is the taxpayers who ask for answers. They pay for those answers and they deserve these answers. It may be clever to deflect, defer, avoid or confuse answers in an attempt to thwart the opposition but, in reality, it is the taxpayer who is being cheated. Not being present at the Leader of the Opposition's budget reply in effect is ignoring the taxpaying public. It is unprofessional, unparliamentary and insults them. No doubt they will see this contempt for what it is. One thing that really upsets everyone is getting the feeling you are being pushed from pillar to post in your search for answers. Being constantly referred on from one person to another is a source of deep frustration, yet it happens constantly with this government.

The lines of responsibility are often blurred, with one seemingly single topic being the domain of many ministers. An example of this occurred on Tuesday when I asked the Minister for Water Security about the rainwater tank rebate scheme. I was duly informed by the minister that the Waterproofing Adelaide strategy in that line was in the portfolio of the environment minister. This was followed by the subtle suggestion that I should do a little research on ministerial responsibilities. My point is that the delineation of responsibilities ought to be clearer and follow a more logical pattern.

The Waterproofing Adelaide strategy should surely be under the heading of water security, not fragmented across various loosely related portfolios. An even more striking example of this came to light at a recent meeting to discuss policies for the ongoing management of water resources in the Peake-Roby-Sherlock prescribed wells area. Correspondence was presented in which it was stated that the Water Allocation Plan must be adopted by the Minister for the River Murray while the responsibility for water allocations comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Environment and Conservation, who determines the capacity of the resource.

The Minister for Water Security does not determine the capacity of the resource. It is about as confusing as having a Minister for Water Security when we have no water security. I wish to quote from a group of questions asked by the Peake Water Security Group in an effort to get some answers about which minister is responsible for what. Under natural resources management, the Hon. Gail Gago is responsible for

most of the areas. However, the Minister for the River Murray is responsible for the Murray-Darling Basin, and this is where the confusion really sets in. This is the question:

What are the respective roles of minister Gago and minister Maywald within the water allocation planning process? In particular, who is responsible for signing off the water allocation plan? Where do the respective ministers fit—Gail Gago and Karlene Maywald—with respect to signing off on the water allocation plan?

The answer is as follows:

In the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin NRM region, the responsibility for different sections of the NRM Act is divided between the Minister for the River Murray and the Minister for Environment and Conservation under the Administrative Arrangements (Conferral of Ministerial Functions and Powers) (Natural Resources Management) Proclamation 2005.

The Minister for the River Murray is the minister responsible for the adoption of the water allocation plan. The water allocation plan will provide the policies for any new allocations of water and for the transfer of water allocations.

Allocations are made to existing users under section 155 of the NRM Act. Allocations are made based on an existing user's reasonable water requirements, subject to any reductions needed if the level of allocations would otherwise exceed capacity of the resource. The Minister for Environment and Conservation is the minister responsible for determining the capacity of the resource and for the allocation of water to existing users. In practice this will be guided by the capacity of the resource as determined through the water allocation planning process undertaken by the board.

I will let everyone study *Hansard* about eight times to see whether they can work out who is responsible for what. That was the big issue during estimates: we asked a question of the water security minister, who just handballed it straight off to the minister for environment. I can remember asking a question about environmental flows for the Murray—the word 'environmental' was in the question—and the minister for the environment just handballed it. I think it is outrageous.

Another issue is climate change. Time restraints and dorothy dixers denied me the opportunity to examine a number of matters on the subject of sustainability and climate change. This is a subject that the whole world is keenly interested in, but most of what we got was spin. Questions about real costs, real savings, actual plans, alternatives and methodology, etc., need to be carefully examined, because we really need to get it right.

The member for Kavel mentioned the prisons to be built at Mobilong. From my reading of the answers I received during estimates, there may be some cost blow-out above the \$400 million—which includes the building of the prisons (the women's prison as well) and the management—over the 25 years. So, we will be keeping a very close eye on the new prison development to make sure we get the best outcomes for the community.

In relation to education, in the wake of the budget, South Australians are reluctant to applaud anything held up as a bold initiative, or presented as investing in our future. The voting public has grown wary of this government and its habit of stuffing a \$10 note in your hip pocket with one hand while sliding your wallet out of your back pocket with the other. Promises of new spending—which are often re-announcements—are invariably followed soon after by news of a corresponding cut elsewhere. The government's treatment of education personnel is cruel and arrogant.

The public outcry that followed the dumping of the aquatics and music programs last September clearly caused the government to rethink its position. Given that it took nine months to come up with a new plan, we must assume that it had not thought it through carefully first. After leaving hundreds of staff, students and centre operators completely

in the dark for that nine months, the announcement about retaining the programs was quietly slipped in under the shadow of a much bigger backflip. And what a backflip it was—three weeks out from the budget, the workers compensation levy on schools had to be pulled.

To add insult to injury, the government then claimed that the programs and staff jobs were never in doubt. What an insult to the intelligence of everyone involved. The public is entitled to doubt that this government is the benevolent, considerate government it purports to be. It was evident in its statements that these funding reversals would be at the expense of something else in the system, so now everyone else in the education system is left anxious that they will be the ultimate loser. The government boasts that it is spending \$3 600 on each child's education, but we are all left wondering how much of that money directly benefits students, and how much is splashed on departmental administration and building monuments to themselves.

The public is getting used to the underhand way this government does business and will not forget. Memories of the State Bank train wreck will come flooding back. Speaking of announcements, the orchestrated circus referred to at a press conference last Wednesday morning was typical of ringmaster Rann, also known as 'good news Mike'. In announcing the government's backflip on passing on the 1 per cent workers compensation levy to schools, the Premier took centre stage and painted this embarrassing blunder as a measure of the government's goodwill and grace, but that is where the humility stopped. When it came to fielding questions on the matter, the ringmaster slipped back out of the spotlight, which then fell squarely on his tightrope walker, the Minister for Education and Children's Services. It was left to her to clean up the mess and cop the flak from the press.

I refer to a couple of ministers who happen to be absent without leave today—the Minister for Water Security and the Minister for Education and Children's Services. That is not good enough when we are finalising the budget today. The Labor government's health program seems to have upset almost everyone in the system: doctors, nurses, administrators, hospital boards, ambulance personnel, and even the patients, who are waiting interminably and then being told to bring their own pillows.

Mr Hill insists it is all part of a grand plan—the product of a close and thorough consultation with one other person. The idea must have looked good on paper! Let us rationalise and reorganise the health system, get rid of a host of capable and willing management personnel in the field, save the country hospitals the bother of having to manage a range of health scenarios by taking health services away from them, reduce the country hospitals appeal to doctors practising their skills and subsequently passing them on to others, and spend the money we save on building another monument to ourselves.

One of the side effects of these changes relates to patient transfer costs. At the moment the system is that, when a patient presents at a hospital, the medical staff determine whether they can deal with the patient at that hospital. If they decide to send on the patient they call SA Ambulance for an emergency patient transfer. The cost of this transfer is borne by the hospital and it cannot pass it on. I understand that it is quite common for this budget item in hospitals' finances to be overspent, causing some difficulty at the local level.

The rationalisation of hospital services will have the effect of increasing the number of these emergency patient transfers

as hospitals lose the medical staff, expertise and facilities to deal with a broad range of conditions. It is inevitable that their emergency patient transfer costs will blow out even further. As I understand it, the government has not yet figured out how it will deal with this problem.

I wish to discuss a few local issues in the budget in regard to the electorate of Hammond. It is a great thing that the government is looking at a new police station complex in Murray Bridge, although I notice that it has a \$9.5 million figure. However, we are not sure where we are going to put it, so that might put a few bollocks on it. When the member for Heysen asked the Hon. Paul Holloway whether the \$9.5 million was just for the police station, the answer was yes, so I hope the court facilities are included as part of the move in future. It was a good response about whether we had a new prison coming to Mobilong.

I asked a question about a children's centre being set up at Fraser Park School in Murray Bridge. It seems that it is to be shifted to Murray Bridge South School, which may be a good thing in the longer term, but it seems that it was promised to another school in the short term. The minister wanted to save \$2 million, so he pulled the idea and is moving on. I was offered a briefing by the minister a couple of weeks ago, but, when I indicated that I would have the opposition shadow spokesperson, the Hon. Iain Evans, in attendance, the meeting was pulled. We hope that that goes ahead and we get the right location.

I have mentioned aquatics. We still do not know how good will be the system when we get to the final announcement of what will be left of aquatics. We know that the minister is still admitting there will be some reform, which she said in answer to a question from me about her having already reviewed the report on the renewal or reform of aquatics. I asked whether she can guarantee that in some way, shape or form the aquatics and music program will survive, and she answered:

I can guarantee that we will have some reform, but it would be unthinkable to imagine education in South Australia without music, and it would be unthinkable that we would not have some form of aquatics program.

So, at least the government is thinking about it, but I think it needs to be a bit smarter when it is dealing with real live people—200 instructors alone in aquatics—and starts putting out announcements that it is reviewing programs.

I refer to questions I asked about maintenance of fire plugs. I wrote to the minister some time last year on behalf of various constituents about maintenance of fire plugs. I have had personal experience where people have not been able to access water in time, and there seems to be a bit of a standoff between emergency services and SA Water over who is responsible for keeping them clean. I know CFS crews use them for training, but I will be chasing up that issue even further.

Aerial firefighting is another hobby horse of mine. I believe fixed wing aircraft ought to be used more often the day after a fire in scrubland—where there are no CFS personnel present, so there is no danger of dropping water on them—to extinguish fires the morning after a big fire so they can get on with the job. I am not sure whether that will go on, but it is good to see \$4 million allocated for aerial firefighting.

I have some concerns with the branched broom rape program in the Murraylands. I am concerned that, out of the \$3 250 000 savings budgeted over four years, last year the government saved an extra \$300 000, and it is obvious from

estimates answers that that is not being ploughed back into the system. I congratulate John Berger on his new role chairing the community focus group. He is an ex-Mallee farmer, and he is on the ball. I will certainly be keeping my eye on the branched broom rape program for the sake of our horticulture and cropping industries.

I want to bring up an issue connected with the CFS which bothers me greatly, and that is the contracting of new fire trucks and fire tenders. Information has reached me that normally these tenders are closed off at 30 June but that they have been pushed off for an extra month. The information I have is that a local manufacturer in South Australia—in fact, in my electorate—has probably lost a contract for about 29 vehicles, I believe. It is outrageous that we have a Premier who advocates keeping work in South Australia when it looks like this one is going out the window.

I wonder whether the Premier is aware that there have been 10 three-four appliances manufactured by a company in Queensland, but I do not believe they are in service yet and they should have been in service at least six months ago. About 150 faults per truck have had to be rectified, and I think the government needs to have a good hard look. It might be cutting the guts out of the contract and working on price alone, but it wants to work out whether it will have any warranty success with the contractor that I believe will get the contract for building these fire trucks.

I think it shows a great disregard for a company that has been classified by the CFS as a priority client, which potentially will have to put off 10 to 13 positions when it looked like they would improve their employment by another six staff; and there are 10 staff in another organisation linked to the contract that could be disappearing as well. So, it will be a sad day in my electorate and a sad day for the manufacturer if he has lost the contract.

I think this government will find that it will come back to bite it when it ends up with another batch of second-rate fire trucks and emergency vehicles in the system which will not have any warranty because the company no longer exists. I am not saying that it will fall over, but there is every chance that it has cut this contract to the bone and it probably will not survive to the warranty stage. Anyway, that is my brief outline of the estimates.

**The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Minister for State/Local Government Relations):** I move:

That the sitting of the house be extended beyond 6 p.m.

Motion carried.

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** As always, we save the best to last. This is my 17th estimates. I have to say that it is time that we had a very good look at the system and the way we do things. I think it is high time that both houses should be fully involved with estimates. I cannot understand why we can have a minister from the other house appearing as a witness in the estimates committees, yet we are unable to and do not use the upper house members who sit on the benches. I do not know why. I know there have always been various theories why we do not, but I think we have grown past that time and they should be used. I believe the system of booking in and out is archaic. The system needs to be much more flexible than that. A great deal of bookwork goes into doing that, that is, the signing in and off. I believe that we should be more flexible and anyone who wants to sit on the estimates committees should be allowed, unless it comes to a vote—and

we never had a vote in my time, except for the election of the chair, of course. I believe that it ought to be more flexible right across the board. Let us hope that, in future, we can reform this process and make it more accountable and more relevant, particularly to the whole parliament, not just half of it.

I think the most prominent and controversial matter in the 2007 budget was the announcement of a new super hospital to be built at the railway yard; that is, the Marjorie Jackson-Nelson hospital. I have read the Generational Health Review, the national reform agenda documents for mental health and the Cappo social inclusion report. All these reports are about change and provide a vision and direction for reform of the South Australian health system. The most predominant theme in all these documents is consultation, and the documents provide recommendations relating to consultation with community, health professionals and all other relevant key stakeholders.

For example, I refer to the Generational Health Review, chapter 4, 'Accountability and Transparency', part 4.1, which states:

DHS implement and evaluate strategies that effectively involve the community in ongoing priority setting decisions of the health system, including the use of deliberative polling.

The question is: does the government consider the relocating of an international icon, the Royal Adelaide Hospital (a name known and respected around the world for its cutting-edge medical practice and research) at a cost of \$1.7 billion, a priority decision for the health system? The answer is: of course, it is. The question is: did the government do any deliberative polling on this matter? The answer is: if you did, let us see the results. Part 4.2 of the report states:

DHS establish appropriate community involvement strategies of the implementation of any major review, substantial system change or decision-making process around new priorities of significance at the statewide level.

The question again is: did the government consider this recommendation when deciding to relocate the Royal Adelaide Hospital at a cost of \$1.7 billion? My answer: I very much doubt it. Part 4.7 states:

Each regional health service establish, on the commencement of the proposed reform process, a regional community council to provide a mechanism for community participation. The council's role and function will be incorporated into the proposed legislation.

The question is: once again, did the government consider setting up a regional community council to provide a mechanism for community participation in this venture? The answer is: if it has, we certainly have not heard about it. And who has heard about it? Part 4.8 of the document states:

DHS to establish a state-wide community council to provide a mechanism for community participation. The council's role and function will be incorporated in the proposed legislation.

The question is: once again, minister, did the government consider setting up a state-wide community council to allow for community participation? The answer is: I do not think so. I did not hear of it. Do not say you are going to do all that now because, if you are, it is too late: you have done it all the wrong way around—and they wonder why there is opposition out there. The question is: whose idea was this to relocate the RAH and create a new, unknown, untried entity? My answer is: it is called a 'cleanskin', where I come from. The question is: whose vision is this? The answer is: obviously someone or some group within the government who has not read the Generational Health Review or else clearly does not understand its content—that is to say, they just do not get it; or, if

they do, clearly, this plan is the epitome of government arrogance. And are we not getting used to that?

This plan is another example of this government's incompetence and ineffectiveness in managing the state's health care system. It is already at war on most fronts—for example, the doctors, the nurses, the ambos and the dentists, not to mention other areas such as education and the DPP, and the list goes on. The Minister for Health (Hon. Mr Hill), when defending the government's decision to create the Marjorie Jackson-Nelson Hospital (what a mouthful) said on the radio the other day, 'People don't like change.' I find this statement offensive. It belongs in a 'blaming culture' and it demeans and negates the commitment and contribution made by our community and our health professionals.

Perhaps it is the way that the minister manages change. If you pick up any book on management, it will tell you that change is a very difficult process. It must be meaningful, it takes time and you must have 'buy-in'. You must sell your vision. Buy-in requires consultation with those involved in and those affected by the change process. The question is: does the government have buy-in for the Marjorie Jackson-Nelson Hospital? The answer is: it does not sound like it to me. You can tell by the content of the speech where the innovation has come from: it has come from inside the system.

Such a project will require the support of the minister's public health professionals. However, he immediately got many of them off side with his 'hospital out of the hat' budget stunt. People from inside the system are rebelling at the government's management of the health care system across the board. Key people are resigning. For example, Ray Griggs has left—we were told for family reasons. I have a letter here that explains exactly why he left. The reason given by the government was family issues. However, on the radio and in his letter Ray Griggs stated that the board was not consulted on the issue and was unaware of the government's decision to relocate the RAH. One just cannot believe that that could be the case. This was the chairman of the board of directors of the Central Northern Adelaide Health Service (commonly known as CNAHS).

I quote from Mr Griggs' letter informing staff of his resignation. He stated:

Regrettably, I have now taken the decision to resign as Chairman and a member of the Board of CNAHS effective [from] Saturday 30 June 2007. The basic reason for this is that as a Board member and Chair, I do not fully agree with the proposed changes to the governance structure for Health and so do not feel that I could provide the same commitment as I have over the past three years where I have been dedicated to reforming the public health system and Central Northern Adelaide Health Service, in particular, and trying to add through my past experiences in the private sector to change the way the public health system operates.

Although this is disappointing to me, I feel very honoured to have worked with the Board, Regional Management team and staff of CNAHS, and when I look back at the Strategic Plan we, as a Board formulated during our first six months, we have achieved many, many successes which I believe have formed the foundation for change for future planning.

I found it quite moving to realise that a person with such integrity and with such support within the system and a person who people looked up to would put his job on the line and resign. I really cannot make comment; it is above any comment I as a politician could make. As I have said, this information has come from within the system.

In my time in this place, I can say that I have never seen a situation quite like what we have now. Senior and junior officers are speaking out, and senior doctors and 41 (it was

48) consultant psychiatrists out of the 60 employed across the state have now resigned. Nurses and ambulance officers are on strike, and the dentists are rebelling as well. What a mess. You cannot manage what you already have, minister, and you certainly do not have the runs on the board to manage such an ambitious project such as a new hospital like this one. It is naive to think that relocating the RAH in 10 years will fix today's health system programs and problems. You say that the Marj will cost \$1.7 billion, but we all know that all government projects of recent days are notorious for blowing out. I suggest that \$1.7 billion will not go half way to doing it, especially in 10 years.

The government tells us daily how much money it has spent on health, yet we do not seem to see value for money. So, where is the money being spent? This question was asked yesterday morning when the member for Fisher, Bob Such, was talking to the illustrious Matt and Dave on the ABC. 'Where is all the money going in health? 'Nine thousand new public servants,' someone said. 'Are these bureaucratic positions or people on the ground doing the work?' The answer is that no-one knew. Bob Such said that he had been asking the Auditor-General for some time for a breakdown of these positions, or words to that effect.

So, minister, my question to you is: if we in the parliament do not know where the money is going, what hope does the community have? I can make an educated guess, minister, just by reading the Career One section in any Saturday's *Advertiser* and noting the number of advertisements for highly paid bureaucrats in health, ASO7 and above, with salaries of \$80 000 plus. It is clear that a large proportion of the money is being used to prop up an increasingly expanding bureaucracy—a bureaucracy the government has no control over; it has completely lost control.

Doctors and nurses are told they cannot have any more money. They are health workers, and they are also users of the system and taxpayers. Minister Hill, I strongly suggest to you that the community is sick of an ailing and depleted health system. The government's view is that a burgeoning Public Service bureaucracy is a panacea to the problems it has created. Within the Public Service, the bureaucracy has gone mad. One example of this is the mental health bureaucracy. You cannot get a current phone list because the bureaucracy is expanding so rapidly the list is always out of date as soon as it is printed because there are new names to be added. I could not believe that when I heard it. This government has said that the relocation of the RAH and the rationalisation of services in other hospitals is all about rationalising services. Here we go again! The government is embarking on another cycle of change—the cycle of centralising and then decentralising, creating confusion for everyone in its wake. Yes, minister, we have seen it all before.

Another example is the Department of Human Services. A few years ago, the Labor government split health and family and community services into separate departments. I was told, as we all were, that the department was too big and therefore unmanageable. At that time, big was no good. Now, with 'the Marj', it suggests that big is good, and around we go again but this time in reverse.

The decision to relocate and rename the RAH is the antithesis of the commitment by the government to implement the recommendations of the Generational Health Review. This is about consultation. This government must learn to consult and listen to the community it serves. People want hands-on care by skilled health professionals and value for their ever-increasing health dollar, rather than a top-heavy

bureaucracy that spends its time at meetings, in a silo, far removed from the front line and planning its own expansion.

One thing I have learnt is just how highly the people of South Australia value the Royal Adelaide Hospital. It is an iconic institution that not only are we proud of but that Australia is proud of; indeed, it has a very high reputation around the world. Why would the government want to change the name of a place like that? What is an iconic brand name like the Royal Adelaide Hospital worth in the world of health? I cannot understand how the government can make a decision to walk away from an iconic institution such as the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

I cannot think of a single issue that has upset so many people at all levels in respect of the Department of Health, and I am referring to mental health, which is a severe problem. Many people, including professionals, are very upset, and a lot of them are leaving and going interstate. Some have resigned. The way the government does things in the way people are promoted, the amount of people who are popping up in the system with extra wages popping up—they are not at the hands-on end; no, it is always at the bureaucratic end, in the office. Yes, minister, we can all justify our position. We all do it, even in this place. We can always justify having more people about—empire-building. It is going on and on. I believe that modern governments of today should be aware of it and should be keeping a handle on it at all times.

I am absolutely disgusted at the way this government is wasting money in two areas, and one is the money it spends on promoting itself within the system—that is, the spin teams, the ministerial staffers who do nothing but public relations. I am told it is over \$100 million over four years. That is a lot of money: \$25 million or \$26 million a year. The Treasurer has just walked in and I am happy to bare all in relation to this because I know his is not the only government that has done it. All governments have done it, and it is high time to say, 'Hang on; enough.'

I do not believe any government should be spending money promoting itself. If you are worth your salt people will know how good you are and you should not need to spend this sort of money on self-promotion. It is a huge amount of government expenditure for which the average taxpayer sees nothing. The other area is the taxpayer-funded advertising on this budget. I know before the Treasurer opens his mouth what he is going to say: 'If it is good enough for the feds to do it, it is good enough for us.' Two wrongs do not make a right. The amount of money spent on promoting this state budget, particularly the country health part, has been absolutely obscene. I am guessing that the campaign now would be running into millions of dollars—\$3 million or \$4 million.

I would like to know how much it costs for the quality of the material being produced, both electronic and paper, and for the time it circulates both on paper and in the electronic media? It is still going on many weeks after the budget. Nobody asked that question in the estimates program. I do not know why it was not asked. I can hear the criticism that, 'It's good enough for the feds; it's good enough for us', but that does not make it right.

In a state like South Australia, where we do have finite resources, I believe that we just cannot indulge in a program like that. Premier Rann, when he was opposition leader, said that if he became premier there would be no such thing as government funded advertising. I am very disappointed in all that. The amount of money that we are blowing on things like

this that the average taxpayer cannot understand, cannot utilise, cannot agree to, I think we should be doing something about that. It ought to be illegal for all governments, not just this one, any government, to spend that sort of money on self-promotion.

I also refer to the running of the committees. I served on both committees. I have to say that one committee ran a lot better than the other. Why? I said to the chair, who is in the house at the moment, that I was concerned at the style of chairing. I have done this job myself over many years. I believe that when you have got a competent minister there you let the minister take the points of order, you let the minister ask the chair: 'Well, I think one is out of order.' I do not believe the chair should be giving that instruction before the minister even opens his or her mouth.

The two chairs were quite different. One committee was quiet and orderly and the other one was always in a fair bit of angst. So, I would like to say to that member who is in here: I took exception to that. I was not being political; I just believe that if things are running smoothly, leave it to the minister, he is holding the floor. The member for Giles did a very good job. She ran it extremely smoothly. When I was out of order I was told to behave and I did. So, that is a comment I would make. Finally, it is time that we did look at an anti-corruption body here in South Australia.

Time expired.

**Mr PICCOLO (Light):** The member for Schubert said that the last speaker is the best speaker, so I am standing. I would like to commend the government on its great budget. Thank you.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer):** I move:

That the remainder of the bill be agreed to.

I do not want to speak for very long at all. There has been a fair spray, a vicious and personal attack on me by the Leader of the Opposition, but that is his style. I received an absolute savaging and blistering assault from the member for Kavel. What I thought was extraordinary was that he was making reference to what he perceives to be my lack of dignity in my role of Deputy Premier. All I can say is that I was in this house at a time when I was able to observe his father. I modelled a lot of my style on Roger Goldsworthy senior in his role as deputy leader, although I am yet to emulate his famous day when he had a point of difference with speaker Trainer, two or three times, and went for about a nine-day holiday.

There was a lot of nonsense, as you would expect, spoken by the opposition. They were really not able to put a decent critique on the budget except: debt, delay and dishonesty, or something like that. Cliches are not a substitute for good economic policy. I am proud to be delivering a budget with strong operating surpluses, surpluses of the 200 to 300 order going out. There was this nonsense about cash reporting. Rob Lucas, or was it Stephen Baker, did away with that a decade ago. Accrual accounting is the appropriate measure. We have a net lending deficit which is sustaining prudent levels of borrowing to fund our capital program. You cannot spend the order of money that we are spending on capital works in a budget of our size without taking on appropriate debt.

It is good debt. The silly remarks by the Leader of the Opposition that no debt is good is a nonsense. He ran a business, so he tells us. I bet you they had debt in the



business. There would be barely a person in this house who would not have a mortgage of some sort. Businesses grow because they gear their balance sheets and use their borrowing capacity to expand activity. Ivan Venning, come on—

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** This is the exact time you should be borrowing, when you can afford to borrow and structure your finances accordingly.

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** No, you don't borrow money to run your current account, you do not borrow to pay your wages; you do borrow, as I am sure the Venning family has done, to buy farms, to build farms, to grow assets. That is exactly what we are borrowing the money for: to build the asset base of the state. I had plenty of people telling me to borrow. I had a lot on my own side, I had the trade union movement, business, bankers—everyone was telling me. You people were out there saying it. Members opposite have a different story for each day.

Regarding the new hospital, my colleague the Minister for Health has more than adequately covered this, and he will do it from time to time as he sells the benefits of this hospital. It is a simple equation: you would spend nearly the same amount of money on the existing site. I am not going to be silly like the Leader of the Opposition and pluck numbers out of the air and say that it might be this or it might be that. Do you honestly think we would be doing a service to the workforce of the Adelaide hospital, not to mention the poor patients, if for the next decade plus (and probably closer to 15 years) they were working, and being cared for, on a construction site? It is just not practical sense.

The reason this government is building a new hospital is that successive governments, both Labor and Liberal, have not reinvested in the fabric of the Royal Adelaide Hospital anywhere near what they should have. We could have taken the easy decision and baulked at rebuilding the Royal Adelaide, not worried about it and let it decay for another government to worry about in a decade's time, or three years' time, or however long we have left in government, but that would be reprehensible behaviour by government. This is the exact time to borrow and structure finances to build a new hospital.

The Leader of the Opposition, in a nonsense article in the paper, said that with modern technology and modern medicine you do not have people in hospitals. Well, you do have people in hospitals. The Leader of the Opposition is right to the extent that we have to keep them out of hospital, but there will always be the need for a good quality, state-of-the-art hospital in our state. To suggest otherwise is arrant nonsense.

The budget has been given a tick by the credit rating agencies, and it has maintained the state's AAA credit rating. We will have higher debt levels for a period of time as we digest the Marjorie Jackson-Nelson hospital. It is yet to be determined how much of the hospital will be from recurrent funding and how much from borrowings but, yes, the debt profile will increase for a few years as we digest this very big project but our capital budget will then settle back to more normal levels. That is the right thing to do. I will not allow what we spend on the new hospital to be the new benchmark for capital spending; there will be a bell curve, there will be a lump, but it will be digested and we will then take the capital spend of the budget back down to more appropriate, sustainable, long-term levels. This is the time to borrow the

money, this is the time to digest that debt, and once it is done the capital budget will be brought back to a more—

**Mr Venning:** Who did you consult with?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** About what?

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Mr Speaker, we consulted and did a lot of detailed analysis, but it is a simple equation. There are three options. We could do nothing and let the thing rot (and that is what we have done, what you did, and what previous governments have done, we have neglected that hospital); we could rebuild on the existing site (but all the expert advice we have received tells us that, barring about \$200 million or \$300 million, it is about the same price, and with the recurrent savings we will get from the new, more efficient hospital we will get those savings back); or we can build a new hospital. The sensible choice is to build a new hospital.

The Leader of the Opposition has not done his homework, so he is out there saying, 'Oh well, we will put a commercial development on the railway yards.' How will he pay for it? We have allocated, I think, \$157 million for track removal and some remediation work but, because we are building a hospital and digging down, there are also substantial remediation costs in the \$1.7 billion. The Leader of the Opposition has to be a little careful if he is saying that you just have to put a slab of concrete over it or whatever. It is a good site for a hospital; it is a big, open, centrally-located site, excellently serviced by public infrastructure, by road, rail and tram—

**The Hon. J.D. Hill:** And Popeye.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** And by Popeye! I could wax lyrical. I thank members opposite, and I will never tire of hearing the member for Schubert. He is getting a bit aggressive in his old age. He should take a leaf out of my book and be calm, relaxed and in control in this place. He will have no hair left on his head if he keeps behaving like he did in question time today.

Motion carried.

Bill read a third time and passed.

#### MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

**The SPEAKER:** I make the following statement in regard to the matter of privilege raised by the member for Davenport in the house earlier today. First, I remind members that privilege is not a device by which members can seek to pursue matters that can be addressed by debate or settled by a vote of the house on the substantive motion. McGee, in *Parliamentary Practice in New Zealand*, sets the test of whether or not a matter is a matter of privilege by defining it as a matter that can 'genuinely be regarded as tending to impede or obstruct the house in the discharge of its duties'.

I refer specifically to the matter raised by the member for Davenport in relation to the answers of the Minister for Education and Children's Services about the effect on school budgets of the decision to hold them partly financially responsible by way of a levy for workers compensation coverage. The member for Davenport alleges that the minister has misled the house in her answers. He states that she answered the questions in the face of representations made to her predicting different outcomes to the policy that she was proposing. Such a difference does not constitute misleading. It may be a valid point for the member to make in the course of a debate, but it would not, as McGee states, 'impede or obstruct the house in the discharge of its duties'. Any member

is free to examine the rival claims and make up his or her own mind.

Accordingly, I do not propose to give the precedence which would enable any member to pursue this matter immediately as a matter of privilege. This decision does not prevent the member for Davenport or any other member from

proceeding with a motion on this specific matter by giving notice in the normal way.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 6.26 p.m. the house adjourned until Tuesday 24 July at 11 a.m.