

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 14 October 2010

The **SPEAKER (Hon. L.R. Breuer)** took the chair at 10:30 and read prayers.

**The SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of this land upon which this parliament is assembled and the custodians of the sacred lands of our state.

**HUNT, MR D.**

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Lee—Minister for Police, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (10:31):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** Last Sunday saw the sad passing of a fine servant of this state. The commissioner for police for 13½ years, from June 1982 to December 1996, David Hunt AO, QPM, C St John, died peacefully at Mary Potter Hospice, North Adelaide; he was 76 years old. Commissioner Hunt served this state with distinction for 42 years, and he was greatly respected as a man of integrity and as a thorough gentleman. I can say this with authority as commissioner Hunt served under my father, Jack Wright, from 1984 to 1985, and I know Dad held him in very high regard.

Born in Adelaide in 1934, he became a cadet in 1954 and, at the time of appointment, was both the youngest inspector, at the age of 36, and police commissioner, at the age of 49. He drove significant changes for the benefit of the state, not just as commissioner but throughout his career. In the mid-1970s, he was officer in charge of the research and development group, where he prepared legislation for sweeping changes to the Firearms Act. These changes brought about marked tightening in gun control, contributing strongly to a safer South Australia.

Commissioner Hunt also worked on national bodies, improving community safety for all Australians. He was one of a three-man interstate team reporting on the feasibility of the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence. He also lectured and was a co-director at the Australian Police College. Internationally, his experience as a member of a delegation to a United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention led to him initiating action to introduce the national code of ethics for police in Australia.

As police commissioner, David was the key driver in introducing community policing to South Australia. In his words, 'Simply, community policing means applying a more professional, understanding, concerned and sympathetic touch to police dealings with the wider community.' He introduced Neighbourhood Watch in early 1985 and was a strong supporter of the program throughout his time. This showed his commitment to improving community safety, by reducing crime and alleviating the fear of crime by empowering entire communities to undertake a collaborative approach to crime prevention.

David showed great compassion for and understanding of the needs and desires of the community. He was committed to victims' rights, and he established the Police Victims of Crime Branch and the appointment of victim contact officers and the victim impact statement coordinator. He was described by many of his contemporaries as ahead of his time. Ultimately, he believed reducing the number of victims through crime prevention should be the central tenet of policing. A true leader, Commissioner Hunt earned and deserved the respect of the public and, throughout his term, police in the state enjoyed very high levels of community respect and confidence.

On behalf of this house, I would like to express my sincere condolences to his wife Joy, son David, daughter Michele, family, friends and colleagues. David's personal commitment, loyalty and dedication to the South Australian community did not go unnoticed. A state funeral service to acknowledge his dedication to South Australia will be held tomorrow at St. Joseph's Church, Kensington Gardens.

**The SPEAKER (10:35):** Thank you. I also pass on my sincere sympathies to his family; he was much admired.

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Ms FOX (Bright) (10:36):** I bring up the report of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

**Ms FOX:** 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.

**Mr KENYON (Newland) (10:37):** I bring up the report of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

**Mr KENYON:** 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 (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Federal/State Relations, Minister for Defence Industries) (10:37):** I move:

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

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (10:37):** Here we are at the end of another enlightening estimates process.

**The Hon. M.J. Atkinson:** It was what you made of it.

**Mrs REDMOND:** No, it is not what we made of it. More than ever, what it exposes is that we in this state have every reason to be concerned about what the budget and the estimates processes reveal, about the lies told by this government, about the things kept hidden from the parliament, the people and the PSA about its poor economic management and about this government's priorities or lack thereof.

I will just let the house know at this stage, Madam Speaker, that I am the lead speaker on this budget response. The estimates process itself, I think, is an appalling waste of money and time for far too many people. I do not think I commented on it in my first year because I was sitting there somewhat gobsmacked through my first estimates; indeed, I still remember going home and trying to read the budget and being bewildered. The estimates process was certainly a learning curve that year but after that, I think virtually every year, I have made comments about the estimates process and its failings.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** Let's get rid of it.

**Mrs REDMOND:** The Treasurer says, 'Let's get rid of it.' No, let's not get rid of it; let's improve it so that it actually becomes a better process. It seems to me that we have made it clear that it is the government's budget and that, except in the most extraordinary circumstances, we are going to pass the government's budget. They are, after all, the government, and they have the right to make the decisions about the running of this state: no question about that. Equally, we, as the opposition, have the right to understand, to question and to hold them to account. That should be what estimates committees are about.

What happens instead is that we are given very limited time in which to ask questions; we are required to read the omnibus questions in as part of the record; we go through this farcical business of signing people in and out, taking unnecessary time; we go through Dorothy Dixers. I defy anyone to provide a good explanation for why there should be any Dorothy Dixers in this process. What is more, shadow ministers who happen to be members of the Legislative Council are not allowed to come in and ask questions on their own part. Probably the most important and appalling thing about the estimates process, however—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mrs REDMOND:** Madam Speaker, I would ask that you keep members of the government under control whilst I am—

**The SPEAKER:** They are being very rude; I will ask them to control their comments.

**Mrs REDMOND:** The most appalling thing is the incredible waste of time involved for very senior (mostly) public servants in this process. I know from things I did before coming into this place as a member of parliament the sort of urgency and anxiety that attaches to people at the head of departments and agencies, and so on, when it is budget estimates time. They have to prepare so comprehensively for budget estimates, and then they come and sit in the chamber in case a question is asked. I might ask for a response from this side of the chamber whether anyone here asked any questions during estimates to which a minister said, 'I will bring back a report' or 'I don't know the answer to that.' Did anyone get that sort of response?

**Mr Williams:** Many.

**Mrs REDMOND:** On some occasions, there were up to three dozen public servants here. So, not only did they have to spend an inordinate amount of time preparing for budget estimates, but they had to come and sit in the chamber for the very purpose of being called on for an answer in case a question was asked by someone on this side to which the minister did not happen to know the answer. But, instead of getting an answer, what did we get? We got, 'I'll bring back a report' or 'I'll find out the answer,' or whatever. The whole purpose of having those people in the chamber is so that an answer can be provided during the estimates committee process.

I do not know what the appropriate mechanisms are. However, I just want to make the point that I cannot see that it is a sensible use of the time of our public servants, who no doubt have much more important things to do than sit here in case a question is asked and they are possibly asked to give an answer. There must be a better way to manage this whole process. As I said, we absolutely acknowledge the right of the government to bring down its budget, but the government, surely, must acknowledge the right of the opposition, on behalf of the people of South Australia, to question the government and to hold it to account about the decisions it is making on the spending of their money.

I think that is sufficient to make the point as I make every year in relation to this process. I will also make a couple of points about where this government has got us with this budget. We have had confirmed through the estimates process some of the horror stories that this government has tried to keep hidden simply by the Treasurer getting up every little while and saying, 'We're good economic managers,' when the reality is that this government has had almost a doubling of its income over the time it has been in office.

When the government came in, there was about an \$8.5 billion budget. It is now a \$16 billion budget and, therefore, the government should be in a pretty sound financial situation. Instead, we remain the highest taxed state. Taxes have gone up under this government by 76 per cent and we have a debt level which is just extraordinary. Our debt level overall—the absolute debt of the government—is about \$7.5 billion in the forward estimates but, when you add on the unfunded liability for WorkCover and the unfunded superannuation liability, it is about \$20 billion, or about \$11,000 for every individual in this state. That is an appalling record, yet the Treasurer keeps saying, 'We're good economic managers.' They are anything but good economic managers. We are now paying close to \$2 million a day in interest, and I invite all those on the other side to contemplate what any of the communities they represent would be able to do with \$2 million a day were it not being wasted on interest.

The government wants to have its cake and eat it too. The government wants to be able to say, 'We're good economic managers and look how we survived the global financial crisis,' but in the next breath blame the global financial crisis for all the woes of their financial mismanagement. The fact is: South Australia has the second-worst budget of all the states, and our budget deficit this year is due to be \$389 million. We are not doing as well as the other states on a whole range of factors. This government cannot have it both ways. It cannot say, 'We're good economic managers and it's all the fault of the global financial crisis, and look at all the other states and how they're going.'

Most importantly, today I want to talk about the broken promises of this government in response to its economic situation. We are all aware, of course, that the Premier gave a written promise before the March state election that there would be no forced public sector redundancies. He gave it, I suspect, only under sufferance and only because the Liberal Party gave one before the Labor Party did. The PSA had the letter from us and, therefore, was able to leverage the letter out of the government. However, it did not worry this government because members have to bear in mind, of course, that this is a government whose Treasurer was very proud to stand in his place

in their first year and say, 'Your trouble is you don't have the moral fibre to break your promise. I have.' Anyone who can, with a straight face, stand up and deliver that message as something to boast about is just the most extraordinary person to hold public office in this state.

Of course, he may not hold public office much longer, because we know that the PSA and the AWU, and a number of other people, think that Jay Weatherill and a whole lot of people should move up.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs REDMOND:** They are sitting there pretending nothing is going on behind closed doors, but we all know.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs REDMOND:** To be fair, is it any surprise? Mind you, it has taken them seven years after the Treasurer said, 'You don't have the moral fibre to go back on your promise. I have,' for them to figure out that, 'Maybe this is a guy who shouldn't be in a leadership position on our side.' One might worry about the ethics of the group on the other side but, anyway, the PSA and the AWU have certainly figured out that they do not want certain people in the leadership any more; and there is a significant degree of turmoil on the other side. So they have had the moral fibre yet again—and it has been quite frequent, really—to go back on their promise.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs REDMOND:** It seems to be a regular occurrence. The PSA perhaps should have known that it was not a good thing to rely on a written promise from this government about what it proposed to do because, of course, having guaranteed no forced redundancies, right up front in the budget speech itself, what do we find but, 'We may need to revisit that promise.'

I put it to you that the only possible reason for including a statement like that in the budget speech is the sure and certain knowledge of this government that they will have to revisit that promise. If they thought for an instant that they could skate through without revisiting that promise, and breaking it, they would not have put that statement into the budget speech. But they did, and it signals a firm intention on the government's part to change its mind about what it promised in writing before the election.

Of course, also leading up to the election, they had been negotiating new enterprise bargaining agreements and did not say anything to the PSA during those negotiations about an intention to cut the annual leave loading by 17½ per cent or long service leave entitlements from 15 days to nine days per year. They kept all that hidden. It was not actually a broken promise: it was just kept hidden.

They also kept from the public, as well as from the parliament, the \$1.7 billion hospital. Anyone remember us going to an election with a \$1.7 billion hospital? Of course, during the estimates process, but through the Auditor-General's Report, we found out that this cabinet had actually approved back in November last year an increase of at least \$100 million on that figure. They knew about it for months and months before the election, but went right through, not just—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs REDMOND:** It is not that they just did not mention it, however; it is that they actually went out and positively described the figure as \$1.7 billion, not just once accidentally but incessantly in the lead-up to the election. They kept using that figure of \$1.7 billion when they all knew—they all knew—that it was a lie. It was a deliberate lie and deception on the part of this government in the lead-up.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mrs REDMOND:** Of course, they also did go to the election—

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

**Mr PENGILLY:** Point of order, standing order 131, in respect of the member for Croydon. I cannot hear the leader.

**The SPEAKER:** I am sorry, I missed that, but I presume you are bringing a point of order about the member for Croydon and his interjections, and I will uphold that point of order.

**Mrs REDMOND:** I do thank you for your protection, Madam Speaker. Of course, that was not the only lie they took to the election. We would all remember the oval and the \$450 million, 'not a penny more', and then we had to slightly increase it by the odd \$85 million, and then we have to take out some of the works that were going to be included and they will be funded under a different line.

There was a promise—and this is probably more important to many of the people out there—I do not know if anyone on that side remembers it, but certainly on this side we remember it: the promise not to absorb the one-off pension increase. Anyone remember that? That's right. There was a one-off pension increase, and the government promised that they would not actually increase the rentals, but what did they do? They had the rent assistance cancelled. So they are going to rip another \$28 million over three years out of the pensioners, after making a promise.

**An honourable member:** The member for Croydon smiles.

**Mrs REDMOND:** Yes, the member for Croydon always smiles at what they do to the poor, the destitute, the homeless, the pensioners, the disadvantaged. The member for Croydon thinks he is a protected species because he works so hard going to all these multicultural functions, but he does not care about what their decisions do to the poor and the most vulnerable in our community.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Kave!

**Mrs REDMOND:** Did you notice also that in the lead-up to the election they did not happen to mention anything about mining royalties about to increase? They just neglected to say that. I am sure that they had approaches from the South Australian Council of Mines and Energy—as we did—and they asked specifically about proposals to increase mining royalties. Government did not mention it—no mention whatsoever until after the election.

Remember when the Gillard government brought down their original 40 per cent tax that they were going to impose? What did Kevin Foley say at that point? The Treasurer said, 'We are about to introduce increased royalties. We can show that for months and months we had been proposing and working on a significant increase to the royalties regime in this state.'

**Mr van Holst Pellekaan:** Just forgot to tell the public.

**Mrs REDMOND:** Just forgot to tell the public, as the member for Stuart points out. But then, of course, they do tell the public all sorts of things about the mining industry and what a boon it is for this state. The only thing is the mining exploration sector—we have not even got to the mining boom that they have been living on for the last eight years—has lost jobs and lost its portion of the income that it had in this state under the government's watch. They are just extraordinary, and Jan McMahon—now, there is someone I like to quote—stood on the front steps of this parliament a week or two ago and said, 'You can't trust this government,' and that is exactly the case.

So, what else have we found out during estimates? We found that only 10 per cent of the air warfare destroyer defence contracts will actually be spent in South Australia. I do not know how many times I have heard Mike Rann talk about the \$40 billion of defence contracts in this state. In fact, he gave an extraordinary speech at the Town Hall for Francis Wong. Francis and Suzie were celebrating being in this city for 20 years, and the Premier got up and made the most extraordinary speech that had everything to do with air warfare destroyer contracts. Watch your back, Kevin, watch your back!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs REDMOND:** Now, that is a pretty picture.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The leader will sit down until there is some quiet. I did not know the leader thought so fondly of our Treasurer—such acclamation! Also, someone in the gallery is taking photos. Could they please put that camera away.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Point of order, Madam Speaker. The member for Morialta—

**The SPEAKER:** Just a moment, member for Light. The person up there taking photos, can you not take photos in the gallery, please. The member for Light.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Point of order, Madam Speaker. If the member for Morialta is taking photographs, does that mean that we can take photographs of them as well?

**The SPEAKER:** Is the member for Morialta taking photographs? If he is, he is in serious trouble. I did not see that.

**Mr PICCOLO:** The member for Morialta took a photograph.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! All right. Yes, it is against the rules to take photographs from the gallery—it is against standing orders—or in the chamber. Please, if anyone has cameras, put them away before I see them. Now, have we got some quiet? The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mrs REDMOND:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I do apologise for the uproarious behaviour of those members on my side, but they just cannot help thinking that what we see across there may well be something that we see on a more permanent basis in the near future. The Treasurer, no doubt, has heard that wonderful saying that in politics one should keep the friends close but the enemies closer. I am sure that he is choosing to demonstrate that this morning for the benefit of those of us sitting on this side.

**Dr McFetridge:** What do we see over there?

**Mrs REDMOND:** What do we see over there? We see all sorts of possible permutations as to what this government might look like before too long.

**Mr Pengilly:** A clapped-out sheep dog and a young pup!

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Finniss will behave himself.

**Mrs REDMOND:** I will call on the member for Finniss to behave himself, but I do note that comment about a clapped-out sheep dog and a young pup. I think that there is a great deal to be said for it, so I have now made sure that it is on the record.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! We do have standing rules.

**Mrs REDMOND:** I was talking about what was hidden from the public before the budget and the estimates process. Most extraordinary of all, and perhaps relevant for the honourable member opposite, is the Parks Community Centre, because, of course, the Parks Community Centre in the north-western suburbs serves some 20,000 people a month, yet this government chose through its budget to decide that it was no longer worth keeping.

It helps the disadvantaged, the poor and the vulnerable. It is in the heart of a Housing Trust area. It is an area where there are lots of refugees and lots of disadvantaged people. I thought that I would read into the record something that the government chose not to look at from the Sustainable Budget Commission. Of course, the Sustainable Budget Commission gave its report, and the government looked at that report; and, you would remember, Madam Speaker, that, the day before the budget came out, there was the disaster of the leaked report.

The government chose, it said, to take on board some of those things and not take on board others, but, obviously, it did not take on board this the bit—this is bit in the beginning of the Sustainable Budget Commission's report. There was a letter to the Treasurer from the members of the Sustainable Budget Commission, and it said this:

The commission would like to bring to your notice, and that of the government more generally, the particular perspective of Monsignor Cappo on the savings available to the government. Monsignor Cappo is very concerned that the decisions of the government regarding the savings choices do not negatively impact on individuals, families and community social cohesion.

He cannot support decisions that reduce or diminish services available to vulnerable and disadvantaged people or that diminish the social fabric of South Australia. So to that end Monsignor Cappo urges that a social and community needs filter be applied to the government's decisions on all savings measures.

That was what the letter from the Sustainable Budget Commission said to this government in delivering its report. This government clearly chose to take no notice whatsoever of that and to proceed instead with an announcement that it would completely dismantle the Parks Community Centre. They then said that it will not dismantle it after all, and after several attempts they decided to be fairly firm about that. They could even give you a letter, I suppose, but what value would a letter be in circumstances where, before the election, they had given a letter to the PSA?

*Mr Gardner interjecting:*

**Mrs REDMOND:** As the member for Morialta says, we could ask the PSA whether a letter from the government guaranteeing that it would not close the Parks is any comfort whatsoever to anyone who uses that facility. We know that people out there have had their contracts renewed until mid-March. Strangely, that is when they were planning to close the centre. Funny thing that! Yet, apparently the entire cabinet applauded and endorsed the decision of the Treasurer—

**Mr Williams:** Unanimous!

**Mrs REDMOND:** Yes, a unanimous decision. They all stand proudly by that decision, and then they managed to do a backflip and a double pike. That is what they did—with twist and spin.

**Mr Williams:** In unison.

**Mrs REDMOND:** Yes. They should go into the synchronised swimming and diving. They could probably take out a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games if they get over there quickly, because they are certainly the best team I know at synchronised twisting, spinning and double backflips.

When you look at the detail of the budget, there is a funny thing about the proposals in terms of how much the government will earn from fines. They need for everyone to be breaking the law as often as possible so that they can get the money they intend to get from fines. They actually have built into their own budget a disincentive for people to respond to road safety measures. They want us to pay; the budget will be out of kilter if not enough people break the law. There are some bizarre things in this document.

They talk about wanting to be an education state and they set up all sorts of committees and commissions that cost a lot of money, but by removing the adult re-entry process they are depriving people over the age of 21 years from being able to do their South Australian Certificate of Education. That is a most telling indictment of this government's priorities or lack thereof.

They have massive cuts in industry and trade. One wonders where they think the future of this state might be coming from. They are cutting the industry and trade portfolio: 78 of the 200 jobs are to go. They will increase payroll tax for exporters. They are getting rid of a lot of business enterprise centres and migration programs. One wonders where their heads are at in terms of their proposals for the future of this state and trade and industry.

As to the regions, this government ignored them for eight years—absolutely ignored them. Since becoming leader I have made at least four trips to Mount Gambier, a few over to Eyre Peninsula and up to Port Augusta on several occasions, and to the Riverland on half a dozen occasions. I have travelled as extensively as I can through the regions of this state, and constantly the people in those regions are bemoaning the fact that they believe this government focuses only on the area from Gepps Cross down to the Southern Vales—and it is trying to make more landfill down there, with more housing in all those areas.

The regions are copping a particular battering from this government in its budget. When you look at just the increase in country petrol prices, going up by 3.3¢ a litre—and of course country people have to travel longer distances—that alone is an imposition. Then you add things like the paltry cuts, but cuts that mean so much, to country hospitals. Now I am sure that the deputy leader and others will talk about these cuts and the importance of them to those country hospitals. They say, 'It's a private hospital, it's not our problem. We are the government, we are not here to fund private hospitals.'

Minister, let me tell you that you are not funding private hospitals. These are community hospitals which are run by community-based boards, genuine local boards, and those people give of their time as volunteers—they do not get paid to do that. They get a very small amount of money from the government and that helps them to provide things like accident and emergency services in the country.

When you remove that little bit of funding, it could be that some of these hospitals are forced to close. That will mean, surprise, surprise, that the people currently using those hospitals will go to public hospitals. What this government is going to do by taking away that little bit of funding that keeps these hospitals alive is save a penny to lose a pound. It makes no sense whatsoever, but this government is too short-sighted and it has got itself into such a financial dilemma that it sees this as the way out.

It is not the way out: it is the way to disaster and, most especially, it is the way to deprive our regional people in this state of even more services they have every right expect. Do not forget that the regions comprise a fair bit of the income of this state, with agriculture, mining, aquaculture, and all the things that go on out in the regions. That is where a lot of the money for this state comes from. The people who live there have every right to expect some level of equity in the provision of the services that come to them, but they get nothing.

This government continues to perpetuate the myth that Shared Services is somehow going to be some sort of reform: it is not. It is a Shared Services disaster; it is well behind any budget estimates that were originally given. It will never, in my view, achieve the savings that were promised and what it is going to do is further rip jobs and money out of our regions—and add that to the increases for the fishing and agricultural services and less support for the wine industry. In fact, for the first time in years, there was no regional Budget Paper. That is how strong the evidence is that this government has chosen to ignore the regions.

I know that, when I went to the Riverland on a previous occasion, the cameraman, a young guy, said he had been working in the Riverland for two years and he had never seen the Premier. That is how keen our Premier is to be a premier for the whole state. He actually just scurries from his office to his home in Norwood, or wherever it is; it is certainly not out in his electorate. Then we come to what they are going to do with water. The government plans to increase water prices by a further 32 per cent. We have already had a massive increase. Isn't that about 32 per cent, deputy leader?

**Mr Williams:** Yes.

**Mrs REDMOND:** Yes, the deputy leader confirms that we have already had an increase of about 32 per cent, but now, on top of that, we are going to get another 32 per cent. An increase, on average, of \$252 over three years above the prices that people paid last year. Wait until those bills start to come home. In fact, under this government, since it came to office, the cost of water in South Australia has already trebled, and I cannot wait to see what happens once we get this desalination plant going. I do not know that it is going to make much difference at all to what is happening to our water supply or our reliance on the Murray. In fact, we know it will not make any difference to the reliance on the Murray.

What it will make a difference to is how much people are going to have to pay. In the meantime, as if all of that was not enough, they have managed to get us to the highest unemployment rate in the nation. All that good economic management by this Treasurer, we have the highest unemployment rate in the nation. The question which is constantly asked is: what would we do? As I said when I opened my response to this debate on the budget, we came to the election with an entirely different agenda from what the government presented.

I will not go through all the details of that again, suffice to say, Liberals always prefer smaller government, putting more money out in the community, providing more front-line services. Be it health, education, law and order, whatever you want, we always believe in putting more of our money into the community because it is not anything but their money. At the end of the day, it is the community's money. They deserve having it spent on providing services for them. Of course, we also have the belief that an individual knows how to spend their money better than government. If any government ever amply demonstrated that fact, it is this government—it has certainly done it.

How we would be different also, in a more philosophical sense, is that I do not make promises I do not intend to keep—and that is what this government did. That is what this government did over a number of issues through this budget and estimates process. They made promises that they knew they had no intention of keeping, and they kept from the public of South Australia information about a range of issues that they knew might very well affect the way those people would vote in the election. They kept that information from them quite deliberately, and that is an indictable attitude to the people of this state.

Of course, they also did things in bad faith, in my view. They were negotiating with the PSA, and it was on the radio this morning that the PSA really thinks that it could have been in bad



faith. That is something I can promise I will never do: I will never intentionally make a promise I do not intend to keep or negotiate in other than good faith. This government stands indicted for its behaviour.

The budget and estimates process have exposed the failures of this government. They are dishonest, disingenuous and untrustworthy. They are still not listening to the people they purport to represent. They said after the election, having had such a close shave, 'We are going to reconnect.' So, they went out and reconnected with the people in the Parks, and the people in the Parks said, 'What we want is for you to close our community centre.' No, they did not really say that.

They did not actually listen at all. They still do not listen. They still have no idea of what the people out there might be saying, and they still make decisions. The member for Cheltenham gave that famous address in which he said—

**An honourable member:** The pagans.

**Mrs REDMOND:** Yes, he made an address to the pagans at the winter solstice dinner in the western suburbs. It was funny how it was reported so comprehensively. I suspect it might have been part of his manoeuvring. In that speech, he said, 'We have got to move from this "announce and defend". We have got to move away from this "announce and defend".' Obviously, the government has not learnt any lessons from the election or from Jay's indictment of them in a speech he gave. I wonder what the party room walls were doing that day. I would love to have been a fly on the party room wall the next day he came in.

**Mr Goldsworthy:** Atko was a sacrifice.

**Mrs REDMOND:** If only Atko was a sacrifice at that pagan feast. I will close now. I do not think it is important for me to say much more than I have already said; that is, this government should hang its head in shame. They are pathetic economic managers. They have absolutely the wrong priorities. They fail to listen to the people of this state on a continuing basis. They continue to make decisions which are simply indefensible, and they continue to waste the money of the people of this state. They are not to be trusted. They should never be trusted, and they should really be hanging their heads in shame for the rest of this year and probably the rest of their term.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (11:13):** This grievance debate in response to the estimates committees gives everyone a chance to make some observations about the budget, following the estimates committees. What do the estimates committees tell us after nine Labor budgets? The estimates committees tell us that we have more debt, more taxes, less services and less jobs as a result of nine Labor budgets.

It is my observation, having gone through these estimates committees, that there are two issues that the public should be concerned about with this government. There are essentially two key issues; one issue is what this government tells you, and the other issue is what this government does not tell you. It goes to the element of trust—the issue of trust.

What the government tells you, and I think the estimates committees show, is that that you just cannot believe this government anymore. We are going to have a rally out the front today by the various union movements. Janet Giles, from the union movement, is in the press saying that this government is untrustworthy and that this government is dishonest.

For the union movement, the funders of the Labor Party, to come out and say that about this government I think shows the level of frustration in the community about the total dishonesty, arrogance and contempt that this government treats the community with. They think they can simply say anything and people will not remember in four years' time. That is the strategy in this budget: they were hoping to deliver the bad news now so that in four years' time people would simply forget what they tell them. Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not think that will happen on this occasion.

You cannot believe what this government tell you. They talked about the Adelaide Oval before the election being a \$450 million project; we now know they knew before the election it was going closer to \$535 million. Before the election they were running around telling everyone the Adelaide hospital was going to be a \$1.7 billion project; we now know that before the election they had already increased the public sector comparator capital figure to \$1.8 billion. They knew it was likely to be a higher cost.

They told all the Housing Trust pensioners, 'Don't worry, your rents won't go up before the election because of the increase in federal money.' After the election, of course, they have put the rents up and are collecting another \$24 million, I think was the figure the leader used, over three or four years. They said to the Public Service before the election, 'Don't worry about your redundancy; we'll give you a letter guaranteeing your redundancy,' and, of course, after the election they threatened to take away redundancy. On the saving measures, they said \$750 million worth of savings before the election; after the election they are talking about \$2.5 billion in savings and taxes.

The estimates committees show that the first problem you have with this government is you cannot believe what they tell you, and the second problem is what this government does not tell you. This government did not go to the election saying to all those small school communities they were going to slash their funding by \$12 million over three or four years. They did not go to the small country hospitals saying they were going to take away the funding for the Keith, Moonta, Ardrossan and Glenelg hospitals. They did not say that during the election.

There are a whole range of things where this government have announced massive cuts to programs after the election that they refused to outline before the election. So, on the fundamental question of trust, the estimates committee process shows that the South Australian community have two major problems: that is, what this government tell you cannot be believed and, of course, what the government do not tell you—what baseball bat is around the corner for this government to come and crush the community in their next announcement?

So, when we go to the next election, the public have a real right to ask the government, 'Why will we believe what you are saying now and what are you hiding at the 2014 election that you are going to deliver to us in 2015, 2016 and 2017 if re-elected?' Because what the government has done in this budget is not only shown that you cannot trust what they say before the election but watch out for what they are going to deliver after the election. Watch out for what they are hiding.

Let us get this absolutely crystal clear: the Treasurer let the cat out of the bag when he said that all of the cabinet decisions were unanimous on the budget. They were all unanimous on the budget. So, if they do their shuffle over there; if the union movement get their way and decide that the Labor leadership needs to change—interesting question, Madam Deputy Speaker, who is running the state, the unions or the Premier? We will come to that later. However, if the unions get their way and shuffle the Premier and the Deputy Premier, do not forget, whoever the new person is, they all signed off on this. They all signed off on this unanimously. It is the same ship. It is the same Labor ship.

It may well have a different skipper come 2014, but it is the same ship, the same policy, the same cabinet decision and the same saving cuts. So, whoever goes into the chair, if the Premier happens to go, they supported the cuts to small schools, the cuts to the Parks, the cuts to the Public Service, the slashing of the redundancy. These were all unanimous, according to the Treasurer, in cabinet and it is an issue the public should not forget.

There are some other examples of things that were not even announced during the election. Another issue of trust are the things that were not even in the budget. The good work of my other shadows have raised such things as other savings measures in the department of environment that not even the department of environment could actually explain to the Budget and Finance Committee in another place. The department of environment could not even explain why they were not in the budget papers. So, we even have the situation where savings measures that are not in the budget that has been presented will ultimately have to be found by the departments concerned.

Playford Capital is getting cut, but that is not in the budget. The member for Waite did some excellent work on this activity and put out a press release. It goes to this issue of trust. If the government is putting its cuts in the budget, then why not put all the cuts in the budget? We have the estimates committees so that we can ask about the cuts. If you hide the cuts, how do you get to ask about them? Ultimately, you need a leak from the Public Service, or whatever. It goes to this issue of trust. This budget and these estimates committees show that you cannot trust the government.

There was one grand admission from the Treasurer during the estimates committees. If anyone goes back over the last eight years of *Hansard*, they will see lots of statements from opposition members to the effect that the government does not have a revenue problem, it has an expenses problem. The reality is that this government, over nearly nine years, has collected

\$5 billion in unbudgeted revenue. So, it had \$5 billion more in its pocket than it ever expected in its budgets—\$625 million a year extra revenue.

What have they done with it? That is the question that we have posed for eight years. You are getting all this extra revenue; what are you actually doing with it? We kept on saying to the Treasurer that he had an expenses problem and, lo and behold, in his ninth budget, as a result of questions, the Treasurer finally admitted that he had a budget problem. In fact, when we asked him if he should have controlled his expenditure far earlier in the budget process, the Treasurer said, 'Well, yes, you are absolutely correct.' When we put to him that he could have taken action in 2008 or 2009 to address some of his expenditure issues, he said again, 'You are absolutely correct.'

So, we are here today, with this level of cuts to expenditure and this level of taxation required over the next four years—a taxation increase of \$1 billion—because, essentially, the government has admitted during the estimates process that it was too lazy to take action in the earlier years. I can tell you what the Treasurer will say: his line will be, 'The health expenditure is growing at 9 per cent every year.' There is an element of truth in that, but we are talking about whole of government expenditure increasing at between 7 and 9 per cent, not just the health expenditure. The Treasurer has taken his eye off the ball for eight years and, as a result of that, has had to take some action, ultimately, in this budget.

There are some other issues that I want to touch on—some key topics. I refer, first of all, to one of my favourites, Adelaide Oval, details of which the Treasurer forgot had occurred before the election. The question for the government now concerning Adelaide Oval is this: the Treasurer has told this house that if they get any money from the federal government it would be netted off against the state government's \$535 million.

We know that the project was taken off the Treasurer, because he was going so well with it, and given to the Minister for Infrastructure. The Minister for Infrastructure and others have been in contact with Canberra saying, 'Julia, Julia, can you bail us out? We've got a capital hole in our Adelaide Oval project. We suspect it's at least \$105 million.' So, the question comes, and I ask this question of the Treasurer: is it still the government's position that if it gets money from the federal government towards Adelaide Oval it will be netted off against the \$535 million?

The Treasurer went right around that issue and was uncertain, and essentially he said, 'That will be a matter for cabinet.' So, the question then becomes: are they changing their position? The Labor backbench, I know, has an interest in this because the Labor backbench moved the motion capping the state expenditure at \$535 million. It was quite extraordinary that the backbench of the Labor Party had to move a motion to control its own cabinet because cabinet could not control itself, but that is what they did. The question now arises: is cabinet starting to change ground on the issue of netting off the federal funds against the \$535 million?

The second issue is that there is another pool of money the government is seeking. It is seeking money towards the \$105 million blowout in capital funds. The question now is: if it gets money towards the \$105 million capital blowout, will that money be netted off against the \$535 million? When I asked the Treasurer that he said, 'That's a matter for minister Conlon; ask him.' So, the ground is still moving in relation to the federal money. There are two lots of federal money the government is chasing and it will be interesting to see where that lands. We will certainly be tracking that as we go through question time and the process in parliament over future months.

Another issue I want to raise is the Parks. I think the Parks issue symbolises this government in so many ways. The arrogance of this government to think it could get away with closing the Parks Community Centre because it was in a safe Labor seat. It was simply taking those voters for granted: it will not matter, they always vote Labor down in that area and it simply will not matter. Close the Parks and it will save us \$4 million a year and bring in \$17 million through the sale of the land. The arrogance of the government on the issue of the Parks tells so many stories. It goes to the issue of: what do you believe about this government? That issue did not last two weeks.

This government delayed the budget until September (in the middle of the footy finals) so that it could consider the Sustainable Budget Commission report and, having considered it carefully, having read the letter about Monsignor Cappo's view, as part of that submission, it is a unanimous decision of cabinet to sign off. Even the local member who represents the Parks area

and who is in cabinet signed off on it, because if you believe the Treasurer—and you do that at your peril—it was unanimous.

Then what happens? Two weeks of protest, two weeks of complaint and the government backflips. The government calls in, not the local member to save it, they do not call in a cabinet minister to save it—no, they bring in the political shield, Monsignor Cappelletti, to save it. How can a cabinet be so out of touch that, having delayed the budget until September, it announces the cuts to the Parks and within two weeks it has backflipped. It says a lot about this government and its commitment to projects.

We are still waiting for the Mount Bold reservoir expansion; we know about the prison project that was abandoned; the tunnel down South Road/Port Road, that big tunnel has gone; the WorkCover levy on schools, that was popular, until we asked three questions in the house and Jane Lomax-Smith rolled over on it, so that budget measure went. This particular issue of the Parks says so much about this government: it is not listening to the electorate; it is taking its own electorate for granted; cabinet does not listen; and, when it gets into trouble, you do not see a minister front it—no, you see a political shield and Monsignor Cappelletti goes out.

Monsignor Cappelletti, for goodness sake, was on the committee that dealt up the original submission. Admittedly, he expressed his view. The government did not listen to the letter where he expressed his view, why is it listening now? It is listening now because the community quite rightly became outraged about that particular issue. The Parks issue is now going to be that the government is listening; it is going to spin this to say that the government is now listening. It is synchronised spinning and the public should not fall for it at all.

Another issue I want to raise is in relation to Shared Services. Shared Services has ripped a lot of jobs out of regional communities and plonked them into the city. We were promised \$60 million a year in savings but, after six years, we are \$100 million short in savings. That process has caused a lot of upheaval in the public sector and regional communities and, again, that program needs to be well scrutinised.

The last issue I want to touch on is the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Of course, the Royal Adelaide Hospital essentially is not in the budget. It is going to be a public-private partnership, assuming that cabinet signs off that the tenders (which the Treasurer seems very confident about) are below the public sector comparator, which we now know is \$1.8 billion. The Royal Adelaide Hospital was a key element of the election.

There were at least three key elements of the election—one was about trust, one was about the Adelaide Oval, and one was about the Royal Adelaide Hospital—and the government has been found out on all three elements. Trust, I dealt with earlier; with the Adelaide Oval, we had a motion of no confidence in the Treasurer about his misleading the house and his handling of the project; and, with the Royal Adelaide Hospital, we now know that the government has known all along that the cost it should have been talking about was \$1.8 billion before the election, not \$1.7 billion. Of course, they were running around saying that our costings on the hospital could not be believed, all the time knowing that its costings could not be believed either.

The government had actually signed off in cabinet in November, before the state election, for a higher public sector comparative cost of \$1.8 billion, not \$1.7 billion. So, regardless of all the individual issues—whether it is the Parks, shared services, the hospital, Adelaide Oval—these budget estimates committees showed me one thing about this government; if you like, it crystallised it in my mind and I think in the public's mind. The public has had a gutful of this government because the public knows that it can no longer trust this government. This government does not tell the truth. This government misleads the people.

The government may well try to change the captain of the ship, but the ship will still be called Labor, and every single one of its members is the public face of that misleading; every one of the members is the public face of that distrust. After nine budgets, South Australia is left with more debt, more taxes, fewer services, and fewer jobs, and a government no-one can believe and no-one can trust.

**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg) (11:32):** One of the most important privileges of government is to have the opportunity each year to make a decision about who they get the money from and who they distribute it to. That is the purpose of the budget. It is approved by this parliament and, by tradition and precedent, we approve the government's decision on that matter.

One of the most important responsibilities of the government is to protect and provide for the vulnerable, and that includes the disadvantaged and disabled. There are many aspects of this budget which indicate to me—and I am sure to other members—that this government has failed to take that responsibility. The Parks, rental increases for pensioners, breaches of promise by the Premier in respect of the latter, the closure of services to the most needy and poor in the community of the Parks, etc., are all clear examples.

However, today I wish to address the issue of the disabled, and the equipment which this government has been so ready to rush to the public with headline announcements about but has not delivered. Even more concerning is what has been disclosed through this budget process, during which we have received the Auditor-General's Report, a most serious matter.

It is important to remember who we are providing for. One of the finest examples of someone in this state who was born with disadvantage and who had an acquired disability was Mr Garnett Wilson OAM, who passed away in the Lyell McEwin Hospital in the early hours of yesterday morning. I mention him because he not only made an outstanding contribution to the state but he also had a life which was extraordinary and which ought remind us why we are in the house—to recognise the importance of those for whom we are providing.

Garnett Wilson was the first baby born at Point McLeay hospital on 7 January 1928. His father was a good shearer and, had Garney not fallen out of a tree at 12 years of age, suffering horrific injuries and pain for life, he would have been as well. Six and a half years of operations and hospitals left him with one leg shorter than the other, but it did not stop him from a career in the shearing sheds.

Many will know—and I am sure there will be discussion about this over the forthcoming week—that Garney was the first professional Indigenous wool classer in South Australia, and our family consider it a privilege that he worked on Kangaroo Island for my father for many years. He was acknowledged with an Order of Australia medal on 26 January 1984 for his services to Aboriginal welfare, and his work as chairman of the Aboriginal Lands Trust is well known.

Garney had one leg shorter than the other. He had built up shoe to be able to work. He lived in pain throughout his over 80 years of life, and he made an outstanding contribution to the state. And, yet, only two years ago, I had to plead, on his behalf, while he was living in the Aboriginal aged care service, for an electric wheelchair to be provided for him. The importance for South Australians with a disability to have access to equipment is well known to all of us and ought to be well known to the government.

What they have chosen to do, however, is instead of making an adequate annual provision in their budgets for equipment to provide people like Garney with an opportunity to have a life in employment—voluntary or otherwise—which is absolutely critical, no, the government's decision, in the lifetime of this government, has been to make this fantastic big one-off announcement for funding for disability equipment.

Preceding the 2006 election, I recall there was major outcry from the disability advocacy community, and the government responded by saying that they were going to make a contribution. Again, in 2010; but what do we find? One-off, pathetic announcements. In 2010, just over \$7 million was going to be applied, and we have seen how that has been drip fed out to the people who are most needy.

We have Kelly Vincent in the Legislative Council, a member of the Parliament of South Australia, representing the disabled and calling for the government's contribution in this regard, but it falls on deaf ears. What is stunningly, I think, shameful of the government is that not only are they prepared to drip feed this out to the people most in need, but the way in which they have done it over the last few years ought to remind us about how sneaky they are about pretending to actually give a damn about these people.

What has occurred in the Auditor-General's Report recently revealed—and it has been confirmed by statements made by the minister Rankin during the course of estimates—is that money was deliberately stashed to avoid carryover policy as funding given too late in the year to be spent. I want to refer to the Auditor-General's Report and to quote:

The Cabinet approved funding for disability equipment was received too late in each of the financial years to provide the manageable opportunity for the orderly purchase of disability equipment before the end of the year. It is understood that this factor, together with the risks either of not receiving the funds or not retaining the funds through an approved carryover process, were the motivating factors for the practice of one-off grants to JFA and their subsequent recovery.

Members would be aware that JFA is the Julia Farr Association, which provides public policy services to the state, and it also has a housing association, which assists in housing, and it is a very important association. It had a very much more expanded role prior to this government cutting up its areas of responsibility but, nevertheless, it continues to provide very good services to South Australia.

What is important to understand, though, is that the Auditor-General disclosed in his report that a total of \$5.1 million in two separate parcels—that is, \$2.92 million in June 2007 and \$2.15 million in June 2008, when, I might mention, minister Weatherill was the minister in charge—had been given to the Julia Farr Association for disability equipment at a time when the Julia Farr Association did not provide that service. Money was handed over to an NGO that had no responsibility to provide disability equipment to people on the list.

It was put to minister Rankine last Friday that she had told the estimates committee in the preceding year (2009) that \$2.1 million went to the Julia Farr Association, which she claimed had been for disability equipment at that time. She looked rather puzzled last week, but the reality is it is there in *Hansard*. She made it absolutely clear in 2009 that that had gone to the Julia Farr Association. So either she is completely clueless or she knew about it and did not tell us the full truth during estimates in 2009.

When you transfer money into another entity, you lose control of it—that is the reality—and that is why it is so important that we have rules and that, when we set a budget, it is to be applied according to the budget approved by the parliament. It is important that the application of those funds and the responsibility therefore are supervised under the strict rules and very clear guidelines set by the Treasurer. Stashing money in the accounts of a non-government organisation is a disgrace and undermines the accountability of government.

You do not have to believe me on that; again, the Auditor-General makes it very clear. He identified, on quizzing the department about these matters, that the money ultimately did go to organisations that provided disability. He said that the practice, however:

...did not meet the principles and responsibilities expected of the public sector agencies in relation to the financial administration and accountability process.

This is particularly important, because I want to outline what the rules are. Grant payments over \$1.1 million must be authorised by a minister. That is in a published written Treasurer's Instruction. If we were standing here in May 2002 with the government's first budget, you would expect that if they made a mistake on this and did not actually understand it they might have had some reason; they had not been in government very long. But this is a government that has now been in office for eight years, and some ministers have been there for years.

The Treasurer's Instruction is very clear. In fact, last week I asked minister Rankine what is the position in relation to approving grants, and she confirmed it again; she knew what the rules were. The rules were that, if it is over \$1.1 million, the Treasurer's Instruction specifically provides that any purchase or contract between \$1.1 million and \$11 million must be approved by cabinet or the minister, and there are some delegation powers—but they are the rules.

The other interesting aspect of this involves another Treasurer's Instruction, Treasurer's Instruction 15, which makes provision as to what happens with money in the appropriation of funds and who has authority for the payment of grants. That is also an instruction that must be considered, as I am sure the Auditor-General did when he referred to a failure on the part of the department relating to the financial administration and accountability process.

But the other matter, I think, is even more telling; it is the Treasurer's Instruction with which the government is very familiar and which states that, if the department does not spend its money on a particular project before the end of the financial year, it has to give it back. Of course, they can make an application to the Treasurer to explain why they have not spent it, and in some circumstances the Treasurer can and does allow those funds to be retained, notwithstanding the Treasurer's Instruction. It is a pretty simple rule, one which has been made abundantly clear to this government, because they, of course, have been through the stashed cash affair number one.

We are now up to the stashed cash affair number two. Members will be very familiar with the Kate Lennon case that involved the application of funds by Ms Lennon as CEO of the Attorney-General's department. Ms Lennon placed those funds in the Crown Solicitor's Trust Account with the intention of ensuring that they would be quarantined from the Treasurer's Instruction and be able to be applied to the original purpose of those funds just before the end of the financial year.

Not only was that matter given enormous public coverage, which the government members, particularly the Treasurer, condemned Ms Lennon for, but it raised a number of questions about the competence of the then attorney-general and whether he was even awake during the time he was having briefings with Ms Lennon as his chief of staff on this issue or whether he was too busy reading the TAB guide. We have heard all about that huge debacle, but what was clear from that exercise was that the Treasurer was outraged that this should have happened. In fact, he made that very clear in this parliament. He was hot to trot to come into this parliament and express his condemnation of what had occurred.

On 23 November 2005, in respect of the CEO's action and in reference to whether the attorney-general had been aware of what had happened, he said:

The Auditor-General was informed, investigations were being put in place, actions followed, a CEO was dismissed, and I make no apology for that. It is a message to any CEO under this government's administration that, if they want to fiddle the books, if they want to falsify documents, if they want to shift money around, they will be dismissed.

That is what he said. That is what the Treasurer said when he found out about this issue and was answering questions in the parliament about why this had happened, why there had been a defiance of his Treasurer's Instruction. I ask now, why is it, having received the Auditor-General's Report, that we have had stunning silence from the Treasurer on this issue? I have not heard a squeak out of him on this issue. He has not come rushing in to say, 'I've read the Auditor-General's Report. What's going on here? We have another stashing of cash here. What's going on?'

It may be that some clue is exposed by the fact that the man who was in charge, the minister who was in charge as at June 2007 and as at June 2008, and who is referred to as a minister who had discussions about this matter in the Auditor-General's Report, is none other than minister Jay Weatherill. He was the contender for the deputy leader's position after the 2010 election. He is the man who challenged the Treasurer for his job.

I have never known the Treasurer of this state to be a scaredy-cat. I have known him to be difficult, I have known him to be outspoken, I have known him to make statements in this parliament which I think have been inappropriate and in which I think he has gone too far in his expression and his, I think, abuse of the parliamentary process in his description of others in the community. That is my view; it may not be shared by others. But I have never known him to be a scaredy-cat; I have never known him to walk away from what is a clear breach of his own instruction which is been paraded for the world to know in South Australia as an unacceptable practice.

Yet he is absolutely mute; not a word. Minister Weatherill, of course, is the person who has a lot to answer for. He was the minister in charge at that time. We need to know when he signed these authorisations and if he did not, why he did not, because we know what the Treasurer's Instruction clearly says. We need to know why that money was stashed.

The Auditor-General clearly says it is because it was to avoid having to pay it back under this instruction. The Auditor-General makes it very clear about the government practice of throwing money in at the end of the financial year and expecting anybody to be able to apply those funds to the needy people of the community who are waiting for disability equipment—some for months, some for years. We know that, and the Treasurer knows what the rules are. The minister could not have escaped the scandal that surrounded his government during 2007-08, and he needs to come into this house and give us an explanation as to what went on and why and whether all the money was recovered.

Who got the interest on this money while it was stashed over there in an NGO? That is just one question I have. When you have \$5.1 million, there is a hell of a lot of interest on that. We have a lot of questions to be answered by minister Weatherill, and I have a few for the Treasurer as to why he has been mute and silent, which is clearly out of character for him.

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (11:52):** I speak in support of the motion before the house. I would just like to make a few comments about the process itself and I would just like to echo, before I go into a bit more detail, the comments made by minister Caica, whose views I share and who made these comments during the estimates committee process, and I quote him from *Hansard*:

People might say from time to time that estimates are a waste of time, but they quite rightly give an opportunity for the opposition to scrutinise the budget and to ask questions about the budget. I also say that, whilst it occupies the time of the officers within my office and those within the department for a period of time in the preparation and lead-up to this, it is a valuable exercise for them to make sure that they understand exactly what is going on but, more importantly, to make sure the minister understands exactly what is going on.

I do support the estimates process and I think it is important, though, that for the process to work you also need a good opposition. That is where perhaps the process does fall down.

What I would like, while endorsing that, to indicate is that during the whole estimates period, the whole estimates committees hearing, we heard member after member of the Liberal opposition saying how much more they wanted to spend in this particular area. They wanted to spend a few million here and a few million more there. They opposed cuts, which is understandable, but nowhere—not once—did they say where the extra income would come from.

In the budget response, the Leader of the Opposition provided two—two—major savings: the Thinker in Residence and a couple ministries. They were going to fund their whole new program with these savings.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** I will get to that in a second. This opposition says it is ready for government, but there is no evidence that they are ready for government because they cannot even be honest with the people and say, 'This is the alternative budget.' They have not put up an alternative budget. What they have tried to do is pick up on some community discontent—which is understandable—but they have not actually been honest at all.

This gets to the issue of trust, which the member for Davenport raised. He asks us whether we can be trusted on this side. The Leader of the Opposition states today that she can be trusted. Let us see how far we can trust the Leader of the Opposition; this is what she said today:

Then you add things like the paltry cuts, but cuts that mean so much, to country hospitals.

And I quote further:

Minister, let me tell you that you are not funding private hospitals. These are community hospitals which are run by community-based boards, genuine local boards, and those people give of their time as volunteers—they do not get paid to do that.

That is what the Leader of the Opposition said today, probably an hour or so ago. We should be able to trust her when she says that. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of last month, this is what the Leader of the Opposition said in response to the budget, 'How about the removal of the money from private hospitals?' These are her words, 'This is a really paltry amount. It is a saving of \$1.2 million per year, and the government—'

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Pengilly):** Order!

*Mr Pisoni interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Unley, you are testing our patience.

**Mr PICCOLO:** The member for Unley is obviously not keen on the community hearing this because they cannot be trusted and they can get caught by their own words. This is what the leader said:

...and the government is going to take away the money from little country private hospitals, such as Keith, Ardrossan, Moonta and Glenelg.

Two weeks ago, they were private hospitals. That did not quite work for the Liberal Party spin machine, so it had to change that. So, she comes into this place today—

*Mr Griffiths interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** No, she did not say that today at all.

**An honourable member:** She said they are not private hospitals.

**Mr PICCOLO:** She said they are not private hospitals.

**Mr Griffiths:** You don't understand it.

**Mr PICCOLO:** I do understand it.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The house will come to order. If the member for Light continues to goad, he will only get a reaction from the other side. So, if we can all just calm down and get on with the proceedings, we will end up being in time for lunch at 1 o'clock.



**Mr PICCOLO:** We have a leader here who wants to be trusted. The member for Davenport said that it is a bit of a synchronised spin. On the Liberal side, they cannot even synchronise their spin; it is ad hoc spin, it is all over the place, because they do not have a coherent response to the budget at all. One week, they are not private; the next week, they are private. It suits their argument.

On one occasion, the leader said she could be trusted, she would not spin, she would not mislead the people. Well, she speaks for herself, does she not? She did that very clearly today when she had to spin her argument because it was not quite right, and it was not getting out the message she wanted. This is a leader who cannot be trusted at all, but we will get to that a bit later—there is more to be said.

This opposition has not accepted the responsibility it has in terms of providing an alternative budget. All it did was whine its way all through the process. It put up no ideas and no alternatives. It is going to cut a couple of ministries and the Thinkers in Residence—that is its bold vision for this state. That is what the opposition said. That is all it has put up so far.

The opposition has not suggested any expenditure cuts, so I am not sure how it is going to fund the multimillion dollars worth of things that it talked about in the estimates committees. I have to agree: a lot of those things are laudable, but you need to balance a budget. In not one area did the opposition actually say, 'We're going to cut here to make savings there to fund this program.' It has just added on. This is an opposition that is not ready—and never will be—to lead this state.

There are a couple of other things I would like to mention. This is an important point, and I am sure that this will get the member for Unley going. This is what the Leader of the Opposition said in the same response, and this is important, because it symbolises what this Liberal Party is about; it symbolises what this Liberal Party would do to working-class areas if it got into government; it symbolises how it will actually attack those in traditional Labor areas who cannot defend themselves. This comment goes to the heart of what this Liberal Party means:

The government builds so-called super schools, which cost a lot of money. Education is about teachers and students; it is not about having flash new buildings.

I repeat:

...it is not about having flash new buildings. My view is that you can actually have a good education sitting under a gum tree, provided you have good teachers.

This is the education policy of this Liberal Party. Had they been elected in 2010, there would be no new schools.

**Mr Bignell:** There would be lots of gum trees.

**Mr PICCOLO:** There would be a lot of gum trees.

*Mr Bignell interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** That's right. So, rather than have super schools in my electorate, the John Hartley and Mark Oliphant schools, we would have the John Hartley forest and the Mark Oliphant reserve, probably.

**Mr Bignell:** Gumnut high.

**Mr PICCOLO:** That's right. But it is interesting that they only target the super schools. New facilities are okay for country schools. In fact, the member is quite right: a few weeks ago he stood up and supported a report I put on behalf of the Public Works Committee about new schools and new facilities being built in country areas—and rightly so. This government supports it and is funding those areas. Despite what the member—

**Mr Odenwalder:** Burnside.

**Mr PICCOLO:** That's right, including Burnside. Yes: we have to help Burnside as well. Burnside needs a lot of help at the moment. The reality is that they support schools in country areas and in the eastern suburbs but, when it comes to the northern suburbs, what do they say? They say, 'These super schools cost too much money. We should only plant out a few trees. The kids out in the northern suburbs could actually learn under some trees.' That is their education policy. Talk about a disgraceful policy! The Leader of the Opposition stood in here and said that the kids in the northern suburbs in my electorate, or the kids north of Gepps Cross, only deserve a few gum trees and they can play with gumnuts. They can get a few sticks that they can fly around at lunch time.

**Mrs Vlahos:** It's a quaint idea.

**Mr PICCOLO:** It is a quaint idea. I suppose the Leader of the Opposition does come from a quaint part of Adelaide. This is what she is saying.

**Mr Odenwalder:** The leafy parts.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Right. Well, I am trying to make ours leafy as well. So, this is the policy. We have to take the Leader of the Opposition at her word because she said today, 'This is what we would do.' She actually said that. She said that they would not build any new schools in my electorate or Napier or Taylor or Little Para—of course not—because those areas do not warrant new facilities.

**Mr Griffiths:** That's not true.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Well, that is what she said. Read what she said. The Leader of the Opposition went on to say today that the Liberal Party has a different agenda to ours. Well, she is quite right. She has a different agenda. We are going to build schools in my electorate. We are going to build new schools and fund new areas. They will not, and she said that. So, when it comes to a question of trust, to which the member for Davenport referred, I am not sure if even the members for Waite, Goyder, Bragg and Davenport actually would trust their own leader. Why would they?

**Mr Griffiths:** I certainly do.

**Mr PICCOLO:** I am glad you do. That is the issue. Rather than have tens of millions of dollars invested in public education in my electorate, the Liberals will give us a few trees. Then they have the audacity to stand up in here and try to take the Parks issue as their own. When you talk about working-class areas, this is what these people would do to us and people in my electorate. I am going to be much more balanced than the Liberal opposition in response to this estimates process. I have to say that I have concerns about some parts of this budget, which I will touch upon. I can understand the government's decision to—

**Mr Griffiths:** You could have done that during the budget reply speech opportunity.

**Mr PICCOLO:** I am doing it now.

**Mr Griffiths:** Nobody wanted to talk on behalf of the Treasurer two weeks ago.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Well, I do it now.

*Mr Griffiths interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Pengilly):** Order! I will give the member for Goyder ample opportunity to respond with a full salvo after the member for Light has finished, chapter and verse.

**Mr PICCOLO:** And I hope—

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Go on, member for Light. You are wasting your time.

**Mr Pederick:** He's wasting our time.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Yes, member for Hammond. The schools re-entry issue is a major issue in my electorate: there is no denying that, and it has to be addressed. We cannot have a school, which is a normal school, but to which most of the students are not going for their SACE. That is just a reality, unfortunately. That does not mean that you close it down or you do nothing, because the programs at those schools still are important programs.

The answer is not that the minister would say, 'We will use a standard school to do that.' I have already discussed this with the Minister for Education and he agrees that there is a range of programs that are run in those schools that are important, and over the next 12 months we need to make sure those people are not disadvantaged. That is important because there are a number of people who, if not for that centre, would be doing nothing much meaningful with their life. I am committed—and I have no doubt that this government is committed—to making sure that the government responds in an appropriate way. That is one area of concern.

The other concern is the area of money for business organisations. This government has quite rightly announced that we are going to establish a commission for small business to help small business protect themselves in their dealings with other businesses, particularly larger businesses which is important and which I support. I am hoping that the opposition would support

that as well. That is one of the key recommendations to come through one of the committees which the member for Goyder and I sat on in terms of franchising law reform. It is important.

Last week I went to the annual dinner of the NABEC Women in Business. I was one of the guest speakers at that dinner. That was after the announcement of the BEC, so members can appreciate that a few people there were less than pleased with the government announcement. Again, it is a decision which I understand, because when you are in government you have to make the tough decisions. We do not have the luxury of being in opposition where you do not actually have to commit to anything, let alone be consistent within a two-week period.

My concern with that decision—which is a uniform decision—is that I think there is probably a good case for a review because there are a number of social and development objectives that can be met by retaining some of those funded BECs. I will have those discussions with the minister.

**Mr Griffiths:** Some or all of the BECs?

**Mr PICCOLO:** I can speak only for my patch, and I make no apology for that; my primary responsibility is to my electorate and to my region.

*Mr Griffiths interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** Well, I am not as familiar with the issues across all the state. The member for Goyder may be, but I am not; I accept that, but I know my patch quite well. There are a couple of BECs which, I think, could mount a case for some funding to achieve not only economic objectives but also, and more importantly, some social objectives which this government is committed to, and I will be having those discussions with the relevant ministers.

The member for Goyder and others have quite rightly raised questions about the DPA process, and that is a proper line of questioning to scrutinise the process. What is interesting, though (and this is not a reflection on the member for Goyder because they were not his comments, but generally Liberal Party comments), is that, while they criticise all these processes, they do not offer an alternative. It is a really lazy opposition; it did not offer an alternative.

They nitpick. When it came to Gawler East, they stood on the fence. Right through the whole election period they stood on the fence. They were scared to have a position—except for the Hon. David Ridgway, who did say in the other house that they support it. However, when it came to local politics and local issues, they sat on the fence a bit. They did not actually state a position, because they are not prepared to make the decisions which are required for the welfare of this state.

They criticised the Gawler East DPA process—and there is some scope for criticism there, and I accept that. What they have not done, interestingly enough, is raise any questions. The Liberal Party—and in this case also the Greens—has raised no questions about a DPA raised by the Gawler Council for the southern parts of Gawler. The honourable member stood up and talked about infrastructure, but members opposite did not raise the issue about the DPA process itself.

The council has had to admit to me that it did not actually follow the process. It broke section 25 of the Development Act and section 41 of the Local Government Act in its process, but not one Liberal raised a question about that. Not one Greens member raised a question about that. Now, it could be a coincidence.

**Ms Bedford:** I am shocked.

**Mr PICCOLO:** You are shocked? So am I, because they have been so focused on the ministerial DPAs that, obviously, the councils can do no wrong. I thought, 'Why would the Liberals and the Greens not raise any questions about the Gawler Council DPA?' I thought about it. Well, it is obvious: because both the Greens and the Liberals have candidates who sit on that council. Why would you expose your own candidates to public criticism? Why would you do the right thing by the community when there is a Liberal federal member and a state Greens member on that council?

Both are parties to this decision. Why would the Liberal Party and the Greens not raise it? If they are going to be consistent, if they are going to be an alternative and if they are to be trusted, they would actually have to be fair and look at it all. But, no, this is about spin; this about creating a climate where the government is seen not to be effective. So, while the town of Gawler goes on its merry way breaking the law, the Liberal opposition sleeps, lets them do it and does not raise it.

*Mr Griffiths interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** I have. This is what the council said, 'Yes, we admit we got it wrong, but it is only a small thing, only minor and we didn't know about it, and our lawyers say it's not a major issue.' The council said that it was not a major issue. It did not know about two things: first, it said that the law about DPA was too complex and that it was hard to know what it was doing—that was its answer, I have it in front of me—and, having said that, they said it was actually minor.

*Mr Griffiths interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** Oh, no, the culture has changed since I was there—don't blame me. I can start at Wakefield with your council, too, if you like, but we will not go there, member for Goyder. So what do they say? Here, this council is prepared to risk \$300,000 of ratepayers' money in a Supreme Court challenge to a ministerial DPA, and is prepared to make that decision, but claims that it does not understand the process.

Who is to be believed or trusted? All I can say is that the Liberal Party cannot be trusted—we found that out today—and certainly their mates and their Greens mates on the council cannot be trusted either, which leaves us in government, and that is why we were elected: because we can do the job.

**Mr Pisoni:** Because you lied.

**Mr PICCOLO:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker, he said I am a liar. He did say that. Will he withdraw it?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I did not hear the member. If indeed he did say it, I suggest he withdraw it.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr PISONI:** I was making comment to the member for Goyder sitting next to me.

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Everyone will sit down for a minute, please. Member for Unley, I did not hear it, but if you used the terminology, whether directed at the member for Light or anyone else, it is unparliamentary in the chamber. Apparently, it was audible. Although I did not hear it, I suggest that perhaps you withdraw it.

**Mr PISONI (Unley) (12:12):** I withdraw. Give me a moment or two so that I can dry myself off after the wet lettuce leaf attack from the member for Light on the opposition in that tirade we have just heard. It was interesting that the Leader of the Opposition in her response today spoke about the pagan festival at Semaphore, where we heard the education minister say that this government was making decisions, announcing them and defending them, and that is not good enough. At the pagan festival, they were celebrating the winter solstice, but I wonder which member of the right wing of the ALP they were thinking they could roast on the spit for the sacrificial lamb.

We already know that the member for Croydon stuck himself on his own fork for the spit by stepping down from the ministry after the election. Obviously Don Farrell and Peter Malinauskas said, 'Mick, you've had your time. It's time to step down and let some other right-wing mate of yours have a go.' At that time he also announced that he would resign at the next election, but then we read in *The Australian* on 19 June this year that he will do what Malcolm Turnbull did: he changed his mind and will run again in 2014. I suppose we are all very pleased to hear that.

I am certainly very pleased to hear that the member for Croydon will not be resigning and will be here for another term. I would miss the correction of my grammar in this place if the member for Croydon were no longer here, and I would also miss the involvement he has in politics in Unley. He has told colleagues of mine that he is participating in the council elections in Unley, and I will be very pleased to see him supporting candidates in Unley because we know then that that will be the kiss of death for those mayoral candidates in Unley.

The interesting point about the estimates process is that it is a time of scrutiny. I was very interested in the points made by the member for Light who was so scared and frightened of the scrutiny that we would be putting the education minister under that he even insisted that a supplementary question of mine be counted as a question—three for each side. I was so surprised that, with everything we hear about the education minister and the future that he is holding for the Labor Party in South Australia, he loaded up the estimates committee with more than 50 per cent of the questions (that is Dorothy Dixers) to stop scrutiny from the opposition and transparency.

I had so many questions I wanted to ask at the estimates committee but I was not able to because the chairman of that committee was very strict—three questions on our side; three questions on the government side. What was interesting was that there were written answers to every government question—and they went on and on. I was very surprised that that was happening, because I tend to judge a minister's ability by the fact that they do not need Dorothy Dixers to protect them from opposition questioning.

It was interesting that the further education minister did not require a single Dorothy Dixer. I had free range, 2¼ hours of asking questions of the further education minister—another person who the member for Croydon says is a potential leader of the Labor Party. The member for Croydon, in *The Australian* article, went on to say that Treasurer Foley could be the premier if Rann stepped aside. He also nominates education minister, Jay Weatherill, from the party's left; trade minister, Tom Koutsantonis (that will be interesting), a right power broker, as a contender for the job; and Jack Snelling, former speaker and now employment minister, as a contender for the job.

It is interesting when you compare the contenders from the left with the contenders from right for the Labor Party leadership; that is, those who are positioning themselves for the push or the retirement of the Premier. When Don says, 'That's it, Mike, you've got to go. That's it, you've had your time,' that is what Mike will do—'Yes, Don, whatever you say.' Wasn't it interesting that the unions had such a strong presence when Stephen Howard was being interviewed live on ABC television as the unions were sticking the knife into Kevin Rudd just before the federal election? It was all about what the unions wanted.

We now see the unions talking about who it is they want in South Australia. We know that it has been reported that the talent is on the left but the numbers are on the right. According to *The Advertiser* article yesterday, we have the sparkle and charisma with Mr Weatherill and we have the ability with Mr Snelling, the further education minister, but he does not have the sparkle or charisma. The unions have some real decisions to make about the Labor Party.

It is interesting that all these people are putting their hands up for the job on the Labor Party side and we have the unions, the financial backers of the party, out on the steps, out there now. My brother is one of them. He said, 'Come down and say g'day, David. I'll be there at 12.30 from the CEPU.' I will be down to say g'day, Simon. The unions, the very funders of the Labor Party, telling the Labor Party, 'Get rid of Rann; get rid of Foley; get rid of that mob who are running the state at the moment. They have lost touch with their grassroots in South Australia'—

*Mr Piccolo interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** The member for Light has given us 20 minutes of his expertise, it is now the member for Unley's turn.

**Mr PISONI:** They remember who put them there. Those who are there have achieved where they want to go through the Amway pyramid that happens throughout the union movement and the ALP. Remember, the more members you have at the base of the pyramid, the more chance you have to get a seat in parliament.

**Mrs Geraghty:** You know nothing about unions, let me tell you—this is all drivell.

**Mr PISONI:** The member for Torrens says I know nothing about unions. I was a union member when I was a very young man. I was forced to join a union, without my choice. I could see that this is nothing more than a multilevel marketing campaign. This is not about what is good for workers or members: this is all about how I, as a union official, can get myself a seat in parliament. If I can control a bloc of votes bigger than the next bloke, I will get that seat.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Point of order.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Pengilly):** Point of order: the member for Unley will resume his seat. What number, thank you?

**Mr PICCOLO:** Relevance.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** And the number?

**Mr PICCOLO:** I am sure you know the number. It has been used with you a number of times.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Light, I think that the member for Unley has probably strayed a little bit, but then you had that lenience as well, so I will continue to listen with interest.

**Mr PISONI:** The member for Light might not like what I am saying, but he should be defending my right to say it. This is a country of free speech. We sent men to two world wars for free speech, but he does not like it. If he does not like it, he wants to shut it down.

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr PISONI:** When looking at this budget, I started talking about the government's style of announcing and defending. We saw that with Glenside in my electorate, and we have seen that with so many of the decisions that were handed down in the budget on 16 September.

Yesterday, I was at the adult re-entry rally at 4.30 on the steps of Parliament House. There were several hundred students and teachers of adult entry who knew their time as students in the education system was limited. Since the budget has been announced, I have been trying to determine just where these students will be able to achieve their SACE, and it has been a very, very difficult task to get that information out of the education minister, who made the decision.

He announced that decision, and is now defending it, to cut \$20.3 million out of adult re-entry programs. He told radio that he did not expect TAFE to offer SACE. Then he told the estimates committee, 'with the changes we have made to SACE the lion's share of SACE can be completed at TAFE'. When I tried to confirm that with the minister for further education—another leadership contender—I was not able to get an answer. The minister insisted that VET was the pathway to university through TAFE, not SACE.

We need to go back to the history of adult education here in South Australia. It started in the 1990s, and it is interesting that Mike Rann should sit as the Premier of a cabinet that has taken this facility away because he was a member of the same cabinet that made the decision to introduce it. There were very good reasons for introducing it at the time, and it is not right for the government to say—as a matter of fact, it would be a lie—that this is bringing South Australia into line with other states.

The fact is that adults in other states use the resources of their education department to go to school and get their secondary education certificate. The difference is they have a number of schools, in the Eastern States in particular, that participate with the senior high schools, so adults can go to school with 16, 17 and 18-year-olds—it is not a problem. The problem we have in South Australia is that kids start going to our high schools at the ages of 12 and 13, and it is not appropriate for someone in their mid-20s or their 30s to be going to a school with those students.

That was one of the major reasons why these adult education centres were set up by the former Bannon government. It is why they survived the cuts that were forced on the government in South Australia when it came to office in 1993 and when it only had a budget of \$5.3 billion to save the state from the collapse of the State Bank and being on the verge of bankruptcy. This program survived those cuts; not only did it survive those cuts, it thrived under the Brown-Olsen years in government.

We saw more and more students pulling themselves out of the situation they were in, getting qualifications, getting engaged in education, learning how to learn—I think that is an important point here: learning how to learn—then going on to university, contribute to society and be taxpayers, rather than those who consume welfare in the state. It is a great program. As someone who is a strong supporter of empowering the individual, I for one am very sorry to see the government make this decision for some of the most vulnerable in our society.

My colleague the member for Davenport raised the issue of the small schools and the school amalgamations. There was no talk of that in the lead-up to the election, but now we learn that 68 schools will be amalgamated into 34 schools. We have learned that seven of those amalgamations will be the amalgamation of high schools and primary schools.

Parafield Gardens Primary School, for example—another one in safe Labor territory so that the government can kick those people without any fear that they are going to lose that seat—will have 1,400 students in a single school. Do not forget that this super school model was rejected in the Iron Triangle by an overwhelming majority when there was a huge push before the last election to introduce super schools into our regions.

There were 171 schools in regional South Australia targeted for mergers and super school status before the last election. They failed to convince parents that this was a move in favour of education, and parents rejected it. They rejected it because they wanted their children to be known

by the principal. They wanted their children to have a connection with the school. They wanted a connection with the school. Overseas experience tells us that the bigger the school, the bigger the bureaucracy, and the further the distance between parents and their children's education. There are plenty of studies out there.

We were told when the super schools were first introduced that this was a great education measure, but this budget tells the truth. The real reason that super schools were introduced was simply as a cost-cutting measure because we are saving tens of millions of dollars with the amalgamation of schools in the forward estimates. So, we see the truth of the motivation for the government in a super school program: it was driven by Treasury not by education.

An interesting point to raise in the department for further education is that it seems to be an absolute dog's breakfast when it comes to management and administration. We heard about a restructure that was happening within one of the employment areas of the further education department. I was told by the minister that my sources were wrong, and the minister corrected my sources. We did not go from three ASO8s to 13 ASO8s; the minister said we went from 10 ASO7s to 21 ASO7s—maybe the detail was not quite there. I must say this is still only in draft form, so maybe what I received was the first draft.

The minister told us that four staff were moving up from ASO6 to ASO7, but we were seeing a reduction of ASO6s from 18 to 13, but do not forget that we saw four of those moving up to ASO7. We are seeing what is known affectionately as 'classification creep' by those who find it hard to understand why this is happening within the department of further education.

There seem to be review panels reviewing the way things are done, and the major outcome from those review panels is to re-classify a certain number of people another classification up—in other words, a pay rise. So, I think we can see that the cuts that have been introduced in this budget that affect people deeply, the most vulnerable in this state, many of them could have been avoided if ministers were capable of managing their own ministries.

I think it is fair to say that the education department is an absolute disaster, a bureaucratic mess, where there is a 'them and us' attitude between Flinders Street and schools. The damage that has been done to teachers with the prolonged dispute with the former minister and the current Premier is still not resolved; there is still a lot of animosity there. We have also seen cuts in the area of further education that affect frontline services, but we have seen no attempt to fix the classification creep and poor management practices that we know are rife in both of those departments.

**Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (12:31):** I rise today for my first opportunity for an estimates address. As a new member to this house, it has certainly been an educative experience sitting through full days of the estimates hearings. The thing that I took away from the process, apart from it being a longstanding tradition that we go through the process, is that people's characters are very much on display during the estimates procedure and the way they conduct themselves during the questioning and answering is quite revealing about how they, potentially, may behave if they ever form government in this state.

On the first day of the hearing I certainly saw some bad temper that I thought was particularly petulant on some sides, and I saw some exceptionally good behaviour, on both sides, about being forward thinking in trying to gather information for useful productive directions for this state. So, I will restrict my comments to that.

#### VISITORS

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Pengilly):** Excuse me, member for Taylor. I draw to the attention of the house the presence in the gallery of a former Speaker. I welcome him.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL

Debate resumed.

**Mrs VLAHOS:** I also wish to speak on the Wat Khmer Santipheap Association of South Australia and its recent celebration of the Pchum Ben Festival, otherwise known as Ancestors Day. Last Sunday I was honoured to be a guest at this important religious event at the Paralowie monastery. The president of the community, Mr Savoon Ly, and community worker, Sambath Yunc, and Neang Yunc, kindly acted as my guides and explained the Buddhist traditions being observed during my visit.

Over 200 people attended the Sunday event, with the Northern Cambodian community numbering around 1,000 people. Pchum Ben is a Cambodian religious festival, culminating in celebrations on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month in the Khmer calendar. Pchum Ben, or Ancestors Day or Spirits Day, is observed in the memory of ancestors and Cambodian Buddhists pay their respects to the dead by celebrations and making offerings—a 'ben' is an offering.

In Cambodia, residents visit pagodas over two weeks, with gifts of food, flowers and rice, gifts that are given to the monks to convey to the afterlife so that the dead do not haunt the living in this life. In temples adhering to canonical protocol, the offering of food itself is made by laypeople to the (living) Buddhist monks, thus generating merit that indirectly benefits the dead.

Monks chant 'Pali' overnight (continuously, without sleeping) in prelude to the gates of hell opening, an event that is presumed to occur once a year. During the period of the gates of hell being opened it is assumed that the ghosts of the dead are extremely active, thus food offerings may benefit them. Some of these ghosts have the opportunity to end their period of purgation, others are imagined to leave hell temporarily only to then return to further suffering. Relatives who are not in hell—they may be in heaven or otherwise reincarnated—are also imagined to receive benefits from these ceremonies.

It was wonderful to see so many young families and grandparents interacting at this event. The visiting monk, Lang Puth, from Cambodia, clearly engaged his audience and was a humorous and popular speaker and educator during my visit. The community completed the morning's festivities with a delightful shared banquet.

The monastery currently has three monks in residence and it has an associated Home and Community Care (HACC) program that is operating two days a week to assist elderly Cambodians in the community to remain active and supported within their homes and families, under the guidance of Mrs Sambath Yunc and her colleague.

The community has also been gradually building a new community hall space for young people and families to use—from their own resources and hard labour outside of their working hours—adjacent to the monastery. The monks also conduct weekly visits to spiritually support elderly community members no longer able to attend the HACC program at Paralowie, and this has occurred since the association's establishment almost five years ago.

I commend to the house the hard work and care undertaken by this community, and I look forward to assisting the community over the coming years and attending more ceremonies with this Buddhist group in the near future.

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (12:35):** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker; it is very good to see you in the chair. I am glad the Minister for Health is in the chamber using his iPad, because I understand that his chief executive has banned the purchase of iPads by health staff. I see in Victoria they are allowing them to buy 400.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Is that wrong? Are you allowing them to buy them? That is good, if you are allowing it. Can we have it on the record that the minister is allowing health staff to buy iPads out of the health budget, which is great. I see the latest app for iPads is an application for radiologists and radiographers to look at X-rays on iPads—a good move.

The health estimates were all about what is wrong with the health system. We saw a minister who padded out his answers. I will give him his due: he had only a couple of Dorothy Dixers, and a 10-minute intro. One of the issues that is wrong with health is that you start to believe your own propaganda and then you are in real strife. That is what this minister is doing: he is believing his own propaganda. We are seeing time and time again the disaster that is the South Australian health system—and South Australians deserve much better.

We start with emergency departments. If this minister can deliver the four-hour target by the due date, I think it is in 2013 or 2014, I will put a case of Grange on it—that the minister will not be able to do it. He will not deliver that because it is impossible without the fiddle factor. We have seen the Brits pull this but, without the fiddle factor, it has come nowhere near it. The Western Australians have come nowhere near it. It is just impossible to do without the fiddle factor, and that is what is going to happen here because the minister does not understand what is going on in our hospitals.



We have wonderful hospitals and they are getting better by the day because money is being spent on them—and I am happy to admit that—but a lot more needs to be done. The staff are working extremely hard. The other day I was out at the Lyell McEwin Hospital, which is a great facility. My brother was born there many years ago, and Mum was there not long ago. She lives not far from there so I know that area well. The staff there are great and work very hard but, like every public hospital in South Australia, it is at 100 per cent capacity. We know that 85 per cent capacity is the safe standard accepted by the National Health Care Agreement, but this minister is on the record as saying that 90 per cent is okay.

We know that delays in emergency departments, because of bed block, are the biggest issue. We saw just yesterday in the New South Wales estimates that they have serious issues there. We know we have long-term issues here that have not been corrected by this government. There is nothing on the horizon to provide answers for people who are turning up at hospital EDs and having to be admitted—but where will they go—2014 or 2015 is a long way away when you have had a serious accident today?

To compound this, the chief executive of health should be right on to this because six years ago, on 13 August 2004, he did an interview with the ABC in Canberra. Canberra's hospitals were in crisis when Dr Sherbon was the CE of ACT Health. There was a claim of a serious bed shortage and bed block then but Dr Sherbon said there was no problem. However, a letter and a report to the health minister by 13 senior emergency department doctors stated that due to hospital overcrowding and staff shortages:

...conditions have deteriorated so profoundly over the last five years that we are unable to adequately guide patients through what is one of the most stressful experiences of their lives.

The interview continued and it was stated:

Bed-block is when we can't get a patient from the emergency department up into an appropriate ward bed.

The emergency doctor said, 'Lives are being endangered.' We have seen the quotes and we have heard the reports from the AMA, from the College of Emergency Medicine and other doctors that people are dying unfortunately because of delays in our emergency departments. It is just not good enough.

Just this morning my office had a phone call from a relative of somebody who had died, and they think it is due to delays in EDs. I hope not. Let us hope that if there is an issue there it is looked into by the coroner. The quote of the day, though, goes back to the minister from 24 October 2007 when he said, 'The buck stops with me.' Minister, you really do need to do something about the emergency departments.

We heard time and again that it was \$1.7 billion for the new Royal Adelaide Hospital. Even just the day before the election, the health minister told Leon Byner that it was \$1.7 billion; and he said it a few days earlier. He said on 10 March that it was \$1.7 billion and he repeated that again. He knew it was not that, and the Auditor-General's Report shows it.

I would also like to know whether he told his chief of staff, whether he told his chief executive, whether he told Dr David Panter, who is in charge of the project. If he did not, then why not? Does he not trust them? Does he not have any faith in their ability to be part of his confidences? The evidence is that either they did not tell the truth to the Budget and Finance Committee and ABC Radio, or they did not know.

The fact is that Dr Sherbon told the Budget and Finance Committee that the cost of the hospital was \$1.7 billion. He told the committee that in August, so either he was not telling the truth—and I do not know about that—or the minister did not tell him that it was not \$1.7 billion but \$1.8 billion. Dr Panter told the ABC in July, '\$1.7 billion; we are sure of that.' Did he not know, or was he not telling the truth? I am not accusing him of not telling the truth, but the alternative is that he did not know. Why did he not know? Dr Sherbon is on the steering committee and Dr Panter is one of the lead people in the new hospital; you would think they would know where we are going with this hospital and how much it will cost. Obviously, they did not know that, because I do not think they are the sort of people who would tell untruths.

The other thing we heard about was not only the cost blowout from \$1.7 billion to \$1.8 billion—it is 'only \$100 million', according to the Treasurer; what is a \$100 million here or there, according to the Treasurer—but if you go onto the new health website it says that the completion date for the hospital is 2016. If you go to the old website there are changes to construction dates and completion dates, but we are hearing 2016 all the time—2016, 2016, 2016.

What did Dr Sherbon tell the Budget and Finance Committee on 9 August 2010 when he was asked by the chairperson when construction would commence? The transcript states:

Dr SHERBON: The railway yards will be cleared in 2011. The access to the site will be attainable at that point and construction will commence in terms of site preparation in late 2011.

The CHAIRPERSON: Construction of the project will commence in late 2011?

Dr SHERBON: Site preparation will commence in 2011.

The CHAIRPERSON: Late 2011.

Dr SHERBON: Yes.

The CHAIRPERSON: The actual construction of the hospital will not commence until 2012.

Now, this is the very important part. Dr Sherbon replied:

No; in fact, it will take some time after that because, once we have reached financial close in February 2011, we will then have an intense process of hospital design which will take a considerable period of months (18 months, from memory), so hospital construction will not commence until early 2013...

Now, let us go to what the minister said to the estimates committee in answer to the member for Goyder's question regarding the time for the PPP. We all thought it was a 30-year PPP, but no, it is a 35-year PPP. So the non-clinical support contract is not 30 years but is now 35 years; on an 800-bed hospital (judging by what is being spent at the Fiona Stanley in Western Australia) it is about a \$6 billion non-clinical support contract.

However, listen to this; this is the thing. The construction date was 2016 and the cost was \$1.7 billion, and we know that the cost is \$1.8 billion, that is what they were saying then, escalated to 2016. What did the minister say? He said, when talking about the PPP:

No, 35 total and construction five, six years; probably five years, but it could be six.

If you start construction in 2013 and add five years of construction on top of that it is 2018; add six years and it would be 2019. So, we are not getting a hospital in 2016; we are getting a hospital in 2018 or 2019. If you escalate the cost to 2016, you have to escalate the cost to 2018 or 2019. It is not a \$1.8 billion hospital. What is the cost of the hospital, minister, and when will we get it? What size is the hospital? We just do not know anymore. You just cannot trust anything this government says. This is absolutely disgraceful. They have just tried to bluff and bluster their way through.

The other thing they did during the election campaign was slam us over costings, and we had them done by a very reputable firm called WT Partnership. I understood there were some legal concerns about some of the things the Treasurer said about WT Partnership—he slammed them. What do we find now? The government is using WT Partnership, who they know is a very reputable firm, to do some of its analysis of the PPPs. How hypocritical of this government!

It goes on and on and on about this hospital. We do not know what we are getting, we do not know how much it is going to cost, and we do not know whether it is going to be finished. In the meantime, what do they do down at the Royal Adelaide site? They just keep spending less and less on repairs and maintenance, trying to get everybody to agree that we are going to have a hospital, but we do not know how much.

We remember what Jim Wright, the Under Treasurer, told the Budget and Finance Committee: if it does not stack up, it is not going to go ahead. I asked the minister at what price would it not stack up—\$5 billion, \$10 billion? He would not answer, but then I asked him if he would rule out rebuilding down at the Royal Adelaide. He was noncommittal; he would not rule out rebuilding at Frome Road.

So, my bet is that we are not going to get that hospital down at the rail yards because it is going too cost too much and is too late and too little. We are going to end up with a rebuilt Royal Adelaide at Frome Road, and that is the best thing that could happen to South Australia; it should be happening now, and not be delayed. I am conscious of the time, so I will hand over to my colleague the member for MacKillop.

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12:47):** I thank my colleague the member for Morphett for sharing the available time before the luncheon break. We are here doing a grievance on the outcome of the estimates committees. The estimates committees looked into the ninth budget, line by line, of this Treasurer and this government. I will not go over

everything my leader and the shadow treasurer said earlier in this debate, but I do think the points they made are very pertinent.

They made the point that this Treasurer and this government have been not only incompetent in managing the finances of the state but they have also been deceitful. This government in general has been deceitful, and it has misled the people of South Australia for over the period they have been in government but, more particularly, at the most recent election they turned that misleading into an art form.

There is a series of significant policy areas where they deliberately misled the South Australian people. The Adelaide Oval obviously stands out. The member for Morphett, the shadow minister for health, was just talking about the Royal Adelaide Hospital. We have, as I speak, members of the Public Service Association and other unions demonstrating on the front steps of this very building. We have just seen people power change and cause a backflip on the budget decision in regard to the Parks Community Centre.

The Treasurer has told us that the budget decisions were unanimously adopted by the cabinet. Every one of the cabinet members endorsed the decision to close the Parks Community Centre. We heard that the Labor caucus applauded the budget when the Treasurer briefed them on it before he presented it to the parliament. Every one of the Labor caucus members applauded this budget, we were told, and yet they have already had to reverse these measures, and they have their very heartland, their true believers, out on the front steps of the parliament protesting against them.

The people of South Australia, including Labor's heartland, including Labor's true believers, have lost confidence in this government and for good reason. This government has made an art form of deceiving the people of this state, just as they made an art form of mismanaging the finances of this state. The Treasurer would have us believe—and I will repeat what I said in an earlier debate on the budget—that the global financial crisis has caused him problems.

However, I already pointed out in earlier debate that, during the two budget periods, when he complained that revenues were falling, unbudgeted revenues (and he was claiming \$1.4 billion disappeared from the forward estimates) of almost that amount—I think it was \$1.6 billion—appeared. The Treasurer, for want of a better expression, has no clothes. The Treasurer just does not get it. People see through him because they have been caught out so many times by his rhetoric, which has never been matched by what in fact occurs.

I also want to talk about the estimates process, as well as talking about some of the outcomes of the committees that I was involved in. I have been the shadow minister for energy on a number of occasions during estimates, and I have raised yet again this year with the Minister for Energy the fact that two hours to examine the budget lines on energy is nonsense. There are about two lines in the budget on energy. The two hours harks back to the days when the state owned all the electricity generating and distribution assets.

We no longer own those and there are no longer budget lines pertaining to those; yet, because this minister does not want to spend the time on being (or his colleagues being) questioned on other matters, he maintains this farce where we spend two hours questioning him on energy matters. I will come back to some of the nonsensical answers that he gave us, if time permits, in a few moments. The leader pointed this out earlier: it is nonsensical that the alternative government cannot have some of its shadow ministers, those who are members of the other place, question ministers whom they are shadowing on the budget.

*The Hon. J.D. Hill interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I did not make the decision, minister. I am just pointing out that it is nonsense. It was no doubt nonsense in those days and, minister, if you and your colleagues are willing to change that, I am sure we will move to change it. Minister, if you and your colleagues insist that we maintain the farce for the rest of your term in government, I am sure if we come into government some of my colleagues might be encouraged to do the same. I would suggest we make it—

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I, minister, will argue strongly for a change. I am one member of this parliament who has always argued that good government is delivered when you have good

accountability, and the estimates process could be one of those planks in good accountability. I would also suggest, minister, for your benefit, that I think it is nonsense having ministers delivering the answers to questions. I think we should be asking the questions of the bureaucrats; that would take the politics out of it and we would actually get some information.

I spent a number of hours asking questions of ministers and getting nothing back other than political answers which contained no information whatsoever. One of the ways of overcoming that would be giving members of parliament the opportunity to direct questions to the bureaucrats—not unlike what happens in the Senate estimates committees where real information is brought forward for the benefit of the parliament.

Let me come to the estimates committees that I was involved in. Certainly for energy, we did not use the whole two hours. We used a bit over an hour, which we have done in most energy estimates committees since I have been involved and since the current minister has been involved. We talked for some time about the Green Grid proposal on the Eyre Peninsula. The minister highlighted way back in 2008 that he had brought a proposal to the energy ministers' conference to institute a rule change to support the development of more renewable energy, particularly here in South Australia where we have a lot of wind resource.

But the minister refuses to talk on the detail of how that would happen. He keeps giving nonsensical answers to the questions I put to him in a bid to continue to delude the people of South Australia that wind farms are here in this state because of this government and not because we have a fantastic wind resource. It is nonsense that the minister keeps making things up about how the grid and the network work, and he keeps confusing issues about where electrons actually get used. Obviously the National Electricity Market is about identifying who is generating power, who is selling power at the various levels (whether it be wholesale or retail), who is buying it and where those sellers and purchasers are, and that is how the costs are attributed across the network. The minister knows that, but he plays very dumb when it comes to estimates committees.

I did ask the minister about the desal plant, and I will talk about this now rather than in water, because I have received the same answer from the Minister for Water about the desal plant and the renewable energies. Those who follow the emissions trading and renewable energy targets debate will know that we are now obliged in this nation that, by 2020, 20 per cent of our electricity energy will need to come from renewable sources. Those who have also been following the climate change debate will know that the Premier uses every opportunity to remind South Australians that the desal plant will be driven by green energy.

The reality is—and this was exposed both in the energy committee and in the water committee—that the green energy used in the desal plant will form part of that 20 per cent obligation; it will not be a voluntary green energy or renewable energy; it will not be on top of the 20 per cent obligation that we have to meet. So, all we are doing is paying extra to buy our water because of the use of renewable energy to drive the desal plant. We are not making one iota of difference to the state's overall carbon footprint. Again, it is spin bordering on deceit, the stock in trade of this government.

Also, when I asked the minister about the decision to cease the solar hot water rebate—and we do know that one of the best ways of reducing our carbon footprint is to use solar hot water; it is one of the most effective methods of reducing household energy use—it was nothing to do with some energy-based rationale; it was totally a budget decision, and that is very disappointing. I move to the area of minerals. We had quite a discussion on royalties in the estimates last year with the minister responsible for mineral resources. I quoted to him where he said that one of the reasons that we have a lot of interest in this state in the minerals industry is that we have a low royalties base.

Of course, it was revealed, again, after the election, not before the election—and indeed the Premier during the election campaign, if my memory serves me correctly, tried to claim that the opposition had an intention to increase royalty rates when we had made a firm commitment not to—that the government had always had the intention of increasing royalty rates. It just omitted to tell the industry that before the election, as it omitted to tell many people many things that were their intent.

Notwithstanding that, and notwithstanding the fact that the exploration spend within South Australia as a percentage of exploration across the nation has dropped from 14.4 per cent two or three years ago in 2007-08 to 7.5 per cent in the most recent year—a halving of the share of

exploration spend in Australia—this government has decided to take the quick option and grab the cash while it can by increasing royalty rates.

I asked the minister whether South Australian miners will get a full rebate under the new proposed resource rents tax that will be instituted by the federal government at some stage. We are not quite sure of the detail of that, but the federal government said that it would not stand for states gouging more money out of there. So again, that may well undermine the resources industry in this state if it comes to pass that, because of the sleight of hand by this government in sneaking in these royalty increases at this time, miners might be dissuaded from coming to South Australia because they will not get the full benefit of any rebate.

We talked about the PACE program, and it seems that the government has taken functions within the department which have traditionally been funded in the department, rebadged them and shifted them in under the heading of the PACE program, saying that it is now putting more money into the PACE program. I will take other opportunities at other times. I am about to run out of time, so I do want to, rather than going to the water—

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Can I ask the member whether he has sought leave to continue his remarks later?

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I might in fact do that, because I would like to touch on water. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

*[Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00]*

#### SEAFORD POLICE STATION

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts):** Presented a petition signed by 2,589 residents of Seaford and greater South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to take immediate action to provide a police station in the District of Seaford.

#### WOOL BAY

**Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder):** Presented a petition signed by 419 residents of Wool Bay and greater South Australia requesting the house to urge the Department of Environment and Heritage to take immediate action to make the cliff area at Wool Bay safe so that toilets and change rooms can be reopened as soon as possible.

#### PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker—

Lease over portion of the Adelaide Park Lands—Prince Alfred College Boatshed

By the Minister for Police (Hon. M.J. Wright)—

Death of—Adam Keneth McNamara Report

By the Minister for Families and Communities (Hon. J.M. Rankine)—

Boundary Adjustment Facilitation Panel—Annual Report 2009-10  
Regulations made under the following Act—

Liquor Licensing—

Dry Areas Short Term—

Coffin Bay Area 1

Semaphore

Local Council By-Laws—

City of Victor Harbor—No. 2—Moveable Signs

District Council of Streaky Bay—

No. 1—Permits and Penalties

No. 2—Moveable Signs

No. 3—Roads  
 No. 4—Local Government Land  
 No. 5—Dogs  
 No. 6—Cats

By the Minister for Ageing (Hon. J.M. Rankine)—

Ageing, Office of—Administration of the Retirement Villages Act 1987 Annual Report 2009-10

By the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (Hon. M.F. O'Brien)—

Dairy Authority of South Australia—Annual Report 2009-10

By the Attorney-General (Hon. J.R. Rau)—

Electoral Commission SA—South Australian Election 2010—Report and Statistics  
 Legal Practitioners Education and Admission Council—Annual Report 2009-10

Regulations made under the following Act—

Criminal Law (Clamping, Impounding and Forfeiture of Vehicles)—Forfeiture Offences

Rules made under the following Act—

Magistrates Court—Civil Rules—Amendment 36

#### MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:01):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Last Friday, the independent Murray Darling Basin Authority released its guide to the proposed basin plan that lays down a blueprint for how Australia can restore and sustain life along our most significant river system. The authority is not claiming the guide is perfect and there are many weeks of consultation ahead of us to sort through the detail, find the flaws and ensure the anomalies are corrected. We are talking about a draft for a draft before the final plan is released. As that process begins, none of us can afford to lose sight of what we have all set ourselves to achieve and that is restoring the River Murray to better health.

I cannot believe that there would be any among us in this house today who did not want to see the River Murray returned to a healthy, vibrant river once again. This is not about irrigators versus the environment. It is not about fauna survival versus food security. It is not about city versus country. It is not about one end of the river against the other end of the river. This is about developing a sensible national plan to use fresh water in a dry continent. None of us wins if the river system is allowed to die, and it is been dying from the mouth up.

The MDBA plan, when it is settled, will be about ensuring that through radical weather changes and prolonged periods of droughts the river basin remains a resilient, viable resource that supports life and livelihoods. It will lay down a framework that secures a sustainable river system that supports food production and an internationally significant ecosystem over the long term. This will require a new way of using this valuable resource, one that will keep the Murray mouth open and allow water to flow right through the system, taking with it millions of tonnes of salt accumulated across the entire basin.

It is important for us to consider how it is that we have reached this point today. As the end-users of this River Murray, it was South Australia that recognised early on the need for practices along the river to change. It was South Australia that managed to get the River Murray onto the national COAG agenda. It was South Australia that argued for, and won, the establishment of an independent body to manage the river on the basis of scientific expertise and not political pressures.

Remember that the original proposal was for it to be run by federal politicians, who would be making the decisions, and we fought hard and long to ensure that there was an independent commission making decisions on the basis of science, not politics, and on the basis of principles, not greed. We were fought along the way. I remember the cartoons saying that we were up a creek

without a paddle. I remember being out on a branch on my own but, steadfastly, together we in South Australia argued for an independent commission, and we won.

It has taken years to get to the point where we now have the outline of a plan to manage the river system sensibly according to scientific evidence. The recent severe drought that affected the whole of Australia and brought the river system to its knees helped accelerate the need for reform, because it demonstrated so starkly the problems of mismanagement that have been allowed to continue for generations. Images of receding and cracking river banks, drying lakes, rising salinity levels, dying river gums, dead fish and turtles and acres of yellowing citrus trees generated huge anger in our community.

That wave of shock and anger helped drive these reforms that we are now helping to consider and shape for the future. So, the recent increase in rains and improved water conditions should not give way to complacency or political interference that will slow the momentum for change. Whilst we must assist affected communities to adjust to the changes required, we must be careful we do not get distracted by hysterical and over-hyped arguments from upstream states about food security and job losses.

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** If the Leader of the Opposition wants to be on the side of the upstream states, the cotton growers and the rice farmers, be that on her head. All Australians must recognise that the River Murray is at a critical point in its existence. Historically, the Murray-Darling has been run as a river system in four parts, based on state boundaries, and not run as a river as a whole. But we all know that decisions affecting the life of the river system should be based on science, not politics; fairness, not greed; principles, not power. The MDBA guide to the proposed plan—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Go and tell that to the people at the bottom end of the River Murray. If you don't want the river to flow through the river mouth, go out there and have the guts to say so.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** The MDBA guide to the proposed plan has determined that there needs to be between 27 per cent and 37 per cent of current water extractions returned to the river system across the whole basin and between 26 per cent and 35 per cent in the South Australian River Murray corridor. There are issues upon which this government will embark on a thorough consultation process with irrigators and the community as we provide feedback to the MDBA in preparation for its next two reports. We have all recognised for a long time that reduced water extractions from the River Murray were necessary.

If anyone in this parliament does not know that there has been an over-allocation over the years that has caused this problem, they must have a particularly dim view of their own existence in this place. Indeed, the commonwealth has already begun the process of buying back water for the environment and, so far, it has purchased about 50 gigalitres of water licences from irrigators in South Australia alone. The commonwealth remains committed to buying back all the water necessary from willing sellers to meet the required reductions. It is not compulsory. The buy-back will be from those who want to sell their water allocations. This government, in the meantime, has its own concerns—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the Leader of the Opposition! Be quiet.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** This government, in the meantime, has its own concerns about the MDBA's guide released on Friday, and we will be doing all we can to be heard on these issues. Our concerns focus principally on the high level of investment in water efficiencies that have been adopted by South Australian irrigators over many years and our early action taken to cap water use—in stark contrast to many irrigators in upstream states who have not been recognised in the MDBA's guide. This government has made it clear to the MDBA that it should recognise the prior action of the South Australian government and Riverland irrigators—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** If members opposite think that a draft of a draft is too late, then the only solution that they would ever have to any problem is to hold up their hands in surrender, because they are the white flag party.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** If members opposite think that it is time to give up on the River Murray, then go outside and raise the white flag. This government has made it clear to the MDBA—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will sit down for a minute.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Premier.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Thank you, ma'am. The government has made it clear to the MDBA that it should recognise the prior action of the South Australian government and Riverland irrigators to invest in water efficiencies when making a final determination of by how much each area should have their allocations reduced. In other words, we will be arguing that years of hard work to do the right thing should be recognised—years of hard work by South Australian irrigators supported by successive governments of both sides of politics—and that prior effort should be recognised.

Irrigators in the upstream state would do well to come to South Australia to see some of the technologically-advanced efficiencies that have been adopted by irrigators in South Australia. On a visit to the Riverland recently with the Minister for Water and the River Murray, I was briefed by two irrigators about the new technology they use to track every drop of water they use.

Via a computer program, they were able to demonstrate to me on screen where each drop of water had been deposited and the current water moisture content of every square metre of their irrigated property. Every litre of water they extracted from the river was being used wisely and sensibly to maximum effect. These irrigators were also, in effect, water scientists. They had invested in water technology, educated themselves in computer programming and were impressively proficient at both food production and water usage.

These South Australian irrigators are the way of the future. They are already proving that there is a better way—better than using open channels that are subject to huge rates of evaporation, and better than using flood irrigation methods which are hugely wasteful and which return animal faeces and pesticides into the river flows.

The simple reality is that there has been an overallocation of water licences for too many years, and far too much water is being drained out of the system. According to the guide, scientists are advising the MDBA that between 3 billion litres and 7.5 billion litres per year is needed to be returned as flow to restore the health of the basin.

We know that this will have a social and economic impact, and the MDBA has begun the process of consultation across the basin to study a range of scenarios that it hopes will, in the final analysis, return up to 4,000 billion litres of permanent flow into the river system—permanent flow down the river, permanent flow down to the Murray Mouth, permanent flow down to the Coorong and permanent flow to the Lower Lakes; all the things that members opposite now seem to be advocating for upstream states rather than for South Australia. Tackling the problems—

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The deputy leader will be quiet.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** —of the River Murray will not be easy but nor is it optional. We simply do not have a choice. The South Australian government will be preparing responses to the MDBA's guide and to the actual proposed basin plan when it is released—most likely, early next year.



Our responses will be based on careful analysis and facts. They will be informed by our scientists, our policy makers, our irrigators and our communities. The Minister for the River Murray will be conducting community information sessions in Murray Bridge on 15 November, in Berri on 17 November and in Adelaide on 18 November to discuss these matters and to hear the views of South Australians and to help us develop our formal response to the guide. The minister and his department will also keep talking with key groups in South Australia who have an interest in how the basin is managed.

Throughout this period and over coming months, as the proposed basin plan is refined and released for formal consultation, we will continue to seek a basin plan that restores a permanent system of environmental flows that reach the Lower Lakes, Coorong and Murray Mouth, while still providing for viable and productive industries and communities into the future. All of us want the River Murray to be returned to good health and to become, once again, the lifeblood of our nation, and we must never lose sight of that goal.

We cannot allow the current better position in terms of water flows, our reservoirs and the upcoming desal plant opening to allow us to be complacent about taking on this issue permanently, because, ultimately, this will be the test of our nation's resolve. Are we going to squib it; are we going to listen to the other side who prefer to do nothing?

#### MARY MACKILLOP

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:16):** I seek leave to make another ministerial statement about the events celebrating the canonisation of Mother Mary MacKillop.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I am sure that many members of parliament on both sides of this house will take the opportunity this weekend and, indeed, in subsequent weeks, to take part in events, services and ceremonies that commemorate Mary MacKillop's life, work, legacy and inspiration here in South Australia. I will be going to Penola at the weekend—and I am sure I will be welcomed by the local member of parliament—and will also be renaming the Mary MacKillop Bridge on Sunday.

Mary MacKillop's was a life of struggle and passion that was underpinned by integrity. She embraced and commanded the virtues of all significant men and women who inspire faith in their followers and who believe in self-sacrifice and commit themselves to the underprivileged, the vulnerable and the voiceless. Mary MacKillop was a rebel who refused to compromise her principles. She fought for right time and time again. She opposed the moral fixity of the Victorian era, the unforgiving harshness and small-mindedness of those who sought to diminish her contribution and the inflexible power of the church's conservative hierarchy.

Mary MacKillop was a survivor, a pragmatist, a fighter; a deeply-driven woman whose motivation was her work—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** —and whose nourishment was her faith. Like history's most towering figures, Mary MacKillop also bore flaws that reassure us that she was, after all, human. In the course of her life's work, she made foes, she alienated friends and she even divided church communities. She endured the harshest of punishments—excommunication from the church to which she had devoted her life.

On occasions, her single-mindedness was interpreted as stubborn pride. Her naivety in matters financial and political threatened, at various times, to undermine her life's quest. Her unwillingness to accept leadership alternatives meant she, again and again, would drain her physical and mental resources to keep her dream alive. But hers was not a dream of self-aggrandisement, personal wealth or earthly power. Her mission was to give comfort and solace to the poor, education to the disenfranchised and hope to society's forgotten underclass.

In the streets and Parks of Adelaide, Norwood and Port Adelaide, in the inner-city tenements of Sydney and Brisbane, and in the rural communities of South Australia's Mid North and our South-East, which, of course, is where her life's work began and which will be the special focus of this weekend's celebrations. I look forward to being in Penola on Sunday and to joining

with the local community and Mary MacKillop's supporters, followers and pilgrims to commemorate this most historic day.

Among the celebrations will be a procession retracing her footsteps from the site of her original school set up in a disused stable, past the historic Woods MacKillop stone schoolhouse, to the site of the outdoor mass. This will be conducted by Emeritus Archbishop Leonard Faulkner, along with Father Richard Morris and Father Peter Fountain. Here in Adelaide, the celebrations will centre on Sunday's procession from the Josephite Convent and Mary MacKillop College in Kensington to St Francis Xavier's Cathedral.

There in Mary MacKillop Plaza, next to where she oversaw the St Francis Xavier Cathedral School as Sister Mary of the Cross, a concert will celebrate her life and work. Both events will feature a live telecast of the canonisation ceremony from Rome, which will be con-celebrated by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI and Adelaide's Archbishop Philip Wilson. Masses and celebrations will also take place throughout our state on Sunday, including special events at regional centres, including Port Augusta, Port Pirie, Renmark, Wallaroo and Port Lincoln.

The canonisation of Mary MacKillop will instil great pride in so many South Australians, both followers of the Catholic faith and throughout our wider community. It also provides deserved recognition for countless people who have devoted their time and energies to achieving this recognition of her work, such as the tireless Father Paul Gardiner from St Joseph's Church in Penola. While it has been a lengthy campaign since the 1920s, it has also been—just like the life of Mary MacKillop—a labour of love.

Mary worked relentlessly and travelled tirelessly to support and supervise the operation of the Josephite Order (the Brown Joeys) throughout South Australia, around the nation, in New Zealand and elsewhere. The times when she opposed authority, when she forged her own path, when she battled her own self-doubt, failing health and spiritual despondency, she did so to secure the survival and prosperity of her work. Her one abiding constant in sickness, health, success and personal misery was her unswerving, unshakeable belief in her God and the mission he had given her.

In Mary MacKillop, we see (embodied in shining, heavenly raiment) the pioneering Australian spirit and our nation's unflagging ideals of egalitarianism, social justice, neighbourly kindness, and the triumph of the human spirit over power, prejudice and bigotry. Hers is a life to be celebrated and learned from. This weekend, her contribution will be recognised the world over. Among the countless tributes will be the re-naming of the rail bridge at Port Adelaide, the port where she arrived, by boat, from the South-East in 1867. The Mary MacKillop Bridge will be re-named the St Mary MacKillop Bridge on Sunday.

The procedures required to formalise the name change were gazetted today, having been passed by executive council and by His Excellency the Governor, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce. The new name will be officially adopted on Sunday. A new plaque will be installed alongside the existing commemorative inscription, which was blessed by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI during the 2008 World Youth Day celebrations in Sydney. Mary MacKillop's elevation to sainthood will constitute the ultimate validation of her work and will provide inspiration, joy and thankfulness among her disciples and her admirers throughout Australia and around the world.

#### VISITORS

**The SPEAKER:** I advise members of the presence in the gallery today of students in year 11 at Charles Campbell Secondary School, who are guests of the member for Morialta. Welcome, and we hope you enjoy your time here today.

#### BUSHFIRE TASK FORCE

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Lee—Minister for Police, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:23):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** The Victorian bushfires of February 2009 have been described as an unprecedented disaster in Australia's history and were a tragedy that I am sure Australians will never forget. One hundred and seventy-three people lost their lives, while many more were left injured, homeless and dispossessed. Those who fought the fires on the ground did an

extraordinary job, as did our volunteers who bravely went over to provide vital support. I again express my thanks for their efforts.

The state government acted quickly following the catastrophic bushfires by establishing the bushfire task force. The task force was commissioned to analyse key issues arising from the Victorian bushfires and to look into immediate, medium and long-term solutions needed to improve bushfire management practices and strategies in South Australia. The task force was chaired by the Chief Officer of the South Australian Country Fire Service, Mr Euan Ferguson, and comprised expert members from 18 government and non-government agencies.

A number of improvements have already been made in response to the commission's two interim reports in August 2009 and November 2009. On 31 July, the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission handed its final report to the Governor of Victoria and the Bushfire Task Force immediately commenced analysing each recommendation. The recommendations related to a wide range of fire management and bushfire safety policies. As a result of that analysis, I am able to inform the house of the state government's response to those 67 recommendations.

I am pleased to advise that South Australia is well placed in the lead-up to this fire danger season, with 28 of the 67 recommendations covering the areas of emergency and incident management, planning and building, safety policy, fire ground response and deliberately lit fires already in place. Of the remaining 39 recommendations, the state government supports 34, has noted three with an SA-based risk approach to be taken, while two recommendations are not supported.

The state government does not support recommendation 53, which relates to retreat and resettlement. If implemented, this recommendation would give property owners in high risk areas only a voluntary option of retreat and resettlement. Therefore, there is no guarantee that people would relocate even if buyback options were offered.

It is the government's view that such a policy would have significant unintended consequences to communities in high risk areas. Unintended consequences would include increased fire risk for those who chose to stay and economic impacts on local businesses and industries. People who I speak to in these areas tell me that they choose to live in such picturesque settings knowing full well the increased risk they face every summer. What we can do and what we have done is help people make informed decisions about the risks of living in these areas and put in place appropriate planning and building regulations to protect them from the threat of bushfires.

Since Black Saturday, the Rann government has provided an additional \$47 million towards ensuring that South Australians are more prepared than ever before to face the threat of bushfires. Expenditure on firefighting aircraft has increased significantly since the election of this government. Under the previous government, \$831,000 per year was allocated to our state's aerial capacity, while in 2010-11 over \$7 million has been budgeted for, representing a \$6 million increase since we were elected in 2002.

Our firefighters are better trained and better resourced than ever before with improvements in training, increases in funding and the provision of protective clothing and new equipment that is the envy of other services across the country. The state government remains committed to doing all that it can to preserve human life and property in the event of a bushfire and help make our state as safe as possible. While preparation for the upcoming fire season—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** —has priority, of the 34 recommendations supported by the government, those that have the most impact on the protection of human life will be the primary focus, while other initiatives will be progressed as resources and opportunity allow.

The task now for this government, for communities and for individuals, is to ensure that our state is as prepared as possible and as fire safe and fire ready as possible for the upcoming bushfire season. It is vitally important that we all play our part this bushfire season to ensure that we are bushfire ready. The state government is absolutely determined—in partnership with agencies, local government, communities and individuals—to do everything in its power to make our communities better prepared and as safe as possible.

**The SPEAKER:** There is a lot of background noise here this afternoon; it is very hard to hear. Can you please keep quiet and give the ministers the courtesy they deserve. The Minister for Families and Communities.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (14:31):** I bring up the 386<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Osborne North Industrial Precinct.

Report received and ordered to be published.

**The SPEAKER:** Questions without notice. We will have an orderly questions without notice this afternoon, I am sure. Leader of the Opposition.

#### **QUESTION TIME**

##### **MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN**

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:32):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I promise that the questions will go in order. My first question is to the Premier. Given his rousing endorsement of the recently released draft Murray-Darling Basin Plan in his ministerial statement today, does the Premier not agree with the federal government's decision to have a new inquiry into the Murray-Darling Basin, headed by Tony Windsor?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:33):** The federal government will ask a new parliamentary committee for regional Australia to examine the possible human costs of cutting water usage in the Murray-Darling Basin. The committee will investigate the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's proposal to cut irrigation use by up to 4,000 gegalitres. It is likely to have a strong focus on understanding the human impact of any proposed changes. The committee will report to the federal parliament by the end of April 2011. The decision comes as the authority wound up a third of its public consultation meetings in the New South Wales irrigation centre of Griffith. I should say that I welcome this; I think this is important.

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, listen to the answer!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Rather than yelling out abuse, even though, ostensibly, your party, whoever was the leader at the time, supported an independent commission, in my memory, it would seem to me that if you had listened carefully you would have noted that in this draft of a draft plan I was critical in my ministerial statement of indeed the failure by the draft of the draft to recognise prior commitment in South Australia, when, from the late 1960s in the time of Steele Hall, through to Don Dunstan, action was taken in this state to cap irrigation to make sure that measures were taken to decrease wastage. So the efficiencies were done here, the hard yards—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** —were done here, and that was not recognised in the draft of the draft. However, what I am saying is: if anyone believes that, because an independent commission, which all of us called on, is making decisions independently is wrong, then those who called for it on the other side were completely phoney. What we now have to do is prove our case on the basis of facts and science, not politics.

##### **PREMIER'S READING AND BE ACTIVE CHALLENGES**

**Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (14:35):** I rise to ask a question directly of the Premier. Particularly since I have a young person at home, I have a keen interest in this matter. Can the Premier provide the house with an update on the success of the Premier's Reading Challenge and the Premier's Be Active Challenge this year?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:35):** I hope this one at least has bipartisan support. I thank the honourable member for her support for the challenge. It has been another outstanding year for the Premier's Reading Challenge and in fact for the Be Active Challenge as well. As many of our athletes win

Commonwealth Games medals in Delhi, South Australian students will be collecting medals of their own for achievements in reading and physical activity.

I am delighted to inform the house today that we had record numbers of students complete both challenges in 2010. More than 115,000 students from 751 South Australian schools completed the Premier's Reading Challenge this year, which is a 3.4 per cent increase from 2009. All of these students have met the requirement to read more than 12 books during the challenge period, and a lot of students read many more than the minimum quota. A couple of years ago I met a young man who had read 1,000 books, and he was an inspiration to all of us.

More than 7,000 of these students will be receiving the first ever Hall of Fame medals for being the first group of students to complete every year of the challenge since it started in 2004. They will also have the opportunity to choose to be the first to have their names added to the Hall of Fame honour roll on the Premier's Reading Challenge website.

There are also 23,800 students who have completed the challenge for the very first time in 2010, and each will receive a certificate. More than 21,500 bronze medals, 19,600 silver medals, 17,900 gold medals, 14,800 champion medals and 10,600 legend medals will arrive in schools shortly for presentations in November—far more medals than were won by any nation or all nations combined in Delhi. Congratulations to our kids!

This year, medals are also being sent to Canberra, Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales, the Northern Territory, India, Canada, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Denmark to children who have moved away but were keen to continue their participation. I have announced a new award for 2011: the Hall of Fame: Reader for Life award for students who complete eight or more years of the challenge.

I am delighted that this challenge continues to inspire students to read more books and to win medals that may have been previously unattainable for those who do not excel at sport. Results of literacy testing show that students participating in the challenge show increased reading growth compared to those who do not participate.

In another area, more than 35,000 students from 282 schools improved their physical activity levels and completed the 2010 Premier's Be Active Challenge, which is a 25 per cent increase on the previous year. Of these, 1,457 students will receive the first Premier's Be Active Challenge champion medals; 5,489 will receive gold medals; 9,997, silver medals; and 18,254, bronze medals.

Among the medal winners will be 429 students with a disability, an increase from 365 in 2009. The challenge encourages children to be active for at least 60 minutes per day for at least four weeks, helping to start healthy habits for life. Receptions to acknowledge 50 high-achieving schools in both challenges will be held during November.

I would like to thank our ambassadors for both challenges, people like Power coach Matthew Primus, children's author Mem Fox and athlete Katrina Webb, who give freely of their time to visit schools to promote reading and physical activity to students. Thanks also to our joint team ambassadors: Adelaide United, Adelaide Crows, the Thunderbirds, Link Lightning and Port Power.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Alle Goldsworthy who has managed the Reading Challenge since it started and who will retire at the end of this year after some 35 years with the education department. Alle's passion for reading and children's literacy has been a major factor behind the continued success of the Premier's Reading Challenge which, I am told, has one of the highest take-ups of any such program in the world.

#### **PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT**

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:40):** My question is again to the Premier: does the Premier agree with the leader of the ACTU who was outside this parliament at lunchtime saying that the Premier has no principles and has abandoned Labor's values?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:40):** No.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I was given early warning and I appreciate the opposition for telling me what the question would be. What the Leader of the Opposition needs to understand is that putting together this budget—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** —required careful consideration of how a \$1.4 billion drop in anticipated revenue would impact on South Australians. We rejected a whole host of measures recommended by the Sustainable Budget Commission. The commission recommended cuts—

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Norwood! Keep your voice down. In fact, keep it quiet.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** We have all heard about the Marshall plan. The commission recommended cuts to core services such as hospitals and schools, cuts to policing, and it recommended raising taxes and charges but, while the commission knows the cost of services (and that is what they were asked to do), the government knows the value. The budget strategy involved tough decisions, hard savings measures, and that is because we were determined to meet all of our election funding commitments. We wanted to ensure that our budget remains sustainable in future years, and that is the difference.

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Norwood.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** You promise everything to everyone, which is why you are on that side of the parliament, because the people of this state want governments that make tough decisions, that have the courage to take the tough decisions—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** —for the long term, not just for tomorrow's headline. We also wanted to protect core services and maintain our ongoing investment in infrastructure. Just remember, compare the difference of the jobs growth in this state under Labor compared to the former eight years under the Liberals—it could not be separated by a more massive amount. Jobs growth—and infrastructure funding, five times more than it was under the Liberals, because we want to rebuild this state and that is what we have been doing. We have had the guts to make the hard decisions to keep jobs growth going: 120,000 extra people in work compared to when you were in office, because you did not have the guts to make hard decisions.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Norwood, you have been warned once. I warn you for the second time.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** The opposition should make it quite clear where they stand on this issue and how they would decide. Would they close the Repat hospital? Would they close Modbury Hospital? Would they close country hospitals? Would they reduce police numbers like they did when they were in power? Would they close schools and cut teacher numbers? Would they close schools like they did when they were in power? Would they raise taxes and charges? Would they double the emergency services levy, which they introduced, or the River Murray levy? The fact is that the cabinet has rejected these options.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** They are all competing.

*Mr Pisoni interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Unley!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** The fact is that the cabinet rejected those decisions. Only this morning, because I listened on the radio system, we heard the Leader of the Opposition talk about her aspirations for—wait for it—a smaller Public Service. How many Public Service jobs did she want to get rid of? The fact is that this government has committed to additional expenditure that will see increases in public sector jobs in priority areas of health, community welfare, policing—and we have announced more than 300 extra police in this term—and education; a massive increase in the number of doctors, a massive increase in the number of nurses, a massive increase in the number of police and a record number of people in jobs.

This government, as a responsible government, had to return the budget to a sustainable position, so there were recommendations from the Sustainable Budget Commission that we accepted. We accepted changes to leave arrangements for some, but not all, public sector employees. Those changes to leave entitlements bring Public Service conditions more into line with the general community standards, that is, conditions under which most people out there in the private sector are employed; but they, of course, do not have security of tenure.

The payment of leave loading will continue unchanged for employees who are employed as shift workers, or seven day a week workers; and, similarly, those who come within the exclusions, for example, police, doctors, nurses and other health practitioners, health ancillary employees, teachers, school support officers and others detailed in the bill. We have exempted those employees. Employees who will cease to receive a payment of leave loading will instead be compensated by two extra days of recreation leave.

In relation to long service leave entitlements, employees will continue to accrue long service leave in accordance with the community standard of nine calendar days' leave per year after the qualifying period of seven years. The current arrangements where 15 calendar days per year are accrued for employees with more than 15 years' service will be discontinued. Instead, from 1 July next year they will accrue nine calendar days per year after 15 years of service.

Importantly, all accrued entitlements will be preserved. I repeat: all accrued entitlements will be preserved. This is not a retrospective measure. If changes to leave loading and long service leave arrangements for some public sector workers were not adopted, it would have meant about 500 more public sector jobs would go in order to deliver the equivalent savings. Again, these are hard decisions from a responsible government.

I can confirm today, however, that the government has not changed the policy of no forced redundancies for tenured employees. Let me repeat that: I can confirm today that the government has not changed the policy of no forced redundancies for tenured employees. Government employees who become excess as a consequence of budget-saving measures will have the opportunity for training and skills development to assist them to find any alternative employment duties that arise from natural attrition and higher priority expenditure initiatives in the public sector.

Employees who become excess and are not assigned to other duties will also have available the most generous voluntary separation packages. Following the introduction of separation packages (and there will be a gold standard that will then go to silver), if the required reduction in the number of employees is not achieved in 12 months through redeployment and voluntary separation packages, the government will reconsider its no forced redundancy policy. We do not expect to have to do that.

That reconsideration will only occur if the required reduction in employee numbers is not achieved. Voluntary separation packages have successfully been made available from time to time in the past and, as I publicly stated, I remain optimistic that the generous voluntary separation packages and, indeed, redeployment opportunities that will be available to employees who are declared as excess, plus the attrition rate, will achieve the required reduction. Thank you for the prior notice of that question.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Have you finished? We have got 43 minutes left of question time and, if we run out of time, you will not be able to ask all your questions; but I am going to sit here until you are quiet. The member for Mount Gambier.

#### **MOUNT GAMBIER WATER FLUORIDATION**

**Mr PEGLER (Mount Gambier) (14:49):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, given that today fluoride has been introduced for the first time to

the water supply of Mount Gambier, what benefits will the fluoridation of the water supply bring to the people of Mount Gambier, and are there any associated risks?

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (14:50):** I thank the member for Mount Gambier for this question. The state government—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition; she is very noisy today.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** She reminds me of that Warnie doll one of the beer companies put out some time ago.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** A Boonie doll: it just goes off periodically.

**Mr PENGILLY:** Point of order, Madam Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is a point of order. I expected a point of order. The member for Finniss.

**Mr PENGILLY:** The Minister for Health is reflecting on another member, being the leader.

**The SPEAKER:** I am not sure that he got to reflecting, but he may have got there eventually. I ask you to be careful, minister.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** Yes; he interrupted me too quickly. Madam Speaker, the South Australian government is committed to continuing the process of fluoridation of country South Australia's drinking water, a process which historically has had bipartisan support, which I am pleased to report and I understand that it is still the case.

Fluoridation was introduced in metro Adelaide in 1971 following a state cabinet decision in 1968. In 1983 the then cabinet decided to progressively extend fluoridation to country South Australia. As of today, as the honourable member has said, I am pleased to advise that Mount Gambier's water supply is now fluoridated. A number of other countries fluoridate their water supplies, and they include the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Drinking water fluoridation is less common in Europe, I understand, because instead in those countries—particularly in Germany, Switzerland, France, Austria, Belgium and Spain—fluoride is added to cooking salt. Salt is also fortified in a number of other countries in the Caribbean and in Central and South America. Fluoride is also added to milk in a number of countries.

Many wide-ranging and independent studies have found that water fluoridation does protect teeth against tooth decay without causing any of the side effects that are frequently claimed for it. I can assure the honourable member that the teeth of the children of Mount Gambier over time will see the benefits of this addition to their water supply.

These studies have been published in the *British Medical Journal*, the *American Medical Association Journal* and the *National Research Council of the National Academies (USA)*. Australia's own National Health and Medical Research Council has undertaken three comprehensive reviews of water fluoridation, the most recent in 2007. Every time the safety of water fluoridation and its ability to reduce levels of dental decay were confirmed.

Fluoridation of drinking water remains the most effective and socially equitable means of minimising caries in the community. The National Oral Health Plan of 2004-13 states:

...fluoridation of public water supplies is the single most effective public health measure for reducing dental caries across the population, with its most pronounced effects among those who are disadvantaged and most at risk.

The World Health Organisation supports the measure, and the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention has rated water fluoridation as one of the 10 greatest public health achievements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The concrete evidence of the benefits and safety of a fluoridated water supply is also readily available closer at hand. A 40-year history of fluoridation in Adelaide stands as testimony to



its safety. The benefits of fluoridation can also clearly can be demonstrated in our state. In 2004, 12 year old children in Mount Gambier had 78 per cent more dental decay than children of the same age in Adelaide, where the water is and has been fluoridated.

More recently, there have been increasing rates of dental decay in Mount Gambier, despite decreases across the state as a whole. Over the past five years the South Australian Dental Service has successfully adopted several strategies to try to reverse the trend of increased tooth decay experiences throughout the 1990s, which was related to an increase in sugary foods and drinks and increased drinking of rainwater and bottled water that have low fluoride levels.

As a result of these strategies, in the past 18 months we have seen an 8 per cent reduction in tooth decay across 12 year old children in South Australia. This improvement has been even better in country areas, I am pleased to say. The only exception has been in the South-East of the state where the amount of tooth decay amongst 12 year olds has increased by 12 per cent over the past two years. These figures, of course, are dominated by Mount Gambier, which, until today, has been the only major centre in South Australia where the water supply has not had adequate levels of fluoride.

The government is very much in favour of water fluoridation and will not allow the scaremongering of a number of people in the media and other places to unnecessarily delay the implementation of these measures. There have been some positive voices in the media, and I will quote from a caller to ABC radio this morning, Dr John Reed, a dentist, who says:

I've been a dentist for 34 years...my first two years after graduating I worked in central Victoria where there was no fluoridation. The last 12 years I worked between Adelaide and Geelong, which also had no fluoridated water supply...basically the difference is like working in a Third World country. The level of dental health in Geelong is just appalling...little children having multiple extractions; teenagers regularly needing multiple extractions and dentures and the rate of full clearances of extracting all teeth for adults is absolutely horrendous...you come back to South Australia and regularly you'll see...teenagers and 20 year olds that need no treatment whatsoever because...purely the effect of fluoridated water supply.

That is the outcome we want for Mount Gambier, not the outcome that they are experiencing at the moment. Once again, I would like to acknowledge the bipartisan support of the opposition for fluoridation of water supplies. The member for Morphett, for example, previously told media in Mount Gambier, 'The Liberal Party will be supporting the fluoridation of Mount Gambier water.' So, I thank him for that. The children of Mount Gambier should not be denied the same preventative health measures enjoyed by the rest of this state.

#### **PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT**

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:56):** My question is again to the Premier. How can the Premier expect South Australian public servants, including those true believers who have been protesting outside on the steps of Parliament House today, to trust him after he cut their job entitlements and is likely to abandon his government's written promise that there will be no forced redundancies?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:57):** I know you have a set list of questions which is why, because I was told of that, I decided to answer all of them at once, because we actually answered that question before. I do not expect to have to abandon our commitment on no forced redundancies, given the attrition rate and given the very generous nature of the separation packages that will be offered in a voluntary way.

#### **NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME**

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (14:57):** My question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. What support is being provided to assist volunteers and community groups to conserve and protect South Australia's unique biodiversity?

**The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (14:57):** I am pleased to inform all members that the application process for grants to community groups across the state to carry out local landcare, coast care and water care projects is now open. The government is providing up to \$2 million for the natural resources management community grant scheme, which is designed to support the vital role that volunteers and communities play in conserving and protecting the unique biodiversity of South Australia.

The NRM community grants acknowledge the value of community involvement and volunteerism and encourage collaboration between community groups and their regional NRM boards. This funding will help support grassroots natural resource management initiatives right across our state, and I strongly encourage landcare groups, conservation groups, progress associations, local action planning groups, catchment and water care groups, farming and agricultural groups, friends of Parks groups, Aboriginal organisations and schools to apply to receive this substantial support.

Grants will be given for a range of natural resources management activities, such as the fencing of watercourses, sustainable land management, soil protection, weed control, native plant revegetation, habitat protection for native animals, as well as other priorities identified in regional NRM plans. While this funding will help communities manage key natural resource issues in their local areas, it also helps to address issues of statewide significance. Successful grant applications will have demonstrated a contribution toward the achievement of long-term targets within regional NRM plans, as developed by South Australia's eight NRM boards.

Small grants of up to \$10,000 and larger grants of between \$10,000 and \$30,000 are available under this scheme, with proposals for community groups to be submitted by 19 November this year. Application forms and further details are available through the NRM website [www.nrm.sa.gov.au](http://www.nrm.sa.gov.au). The NRM community grants form a key part of the state NRM program, an initiative that supports a number of our State Strategic Plan targets, which aim to promote the integrated management of our natural resources, ensuring that we can better maintain the health of natural systems to make them more resilient to socioeconomic use and the impacts of changing climate.

#### PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (15:00):** My question is to the Treasurer. Did the government seek any legal advice on using legislation to cut the public sector entitlements immediately after settling enterprise bargaining agreements where the cuts were not mentioned, and is the government concerned that SA Unions are threatening legal action on that basis?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Federal/State Relations, Minister for Defence Industries) (15:00):** I am not at all concerned about threatened legal action. I would expect the union to do what unions should do; that is, to represent their interests. But there is some sort of twilight zone here. I mean, members opposite are clearly aghast at what this government is doing. This government is doing, as the Premier said, what we have to do and what is necessary to minimise the impact on the general public from either tax increases or more severe cuts to frontline services in the broader community. That is why the cabinet took the decision it took and that is why we agreed—

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** It was an absolutely unanimous decision of cabinet. Absolutely.

**Mr Goldsworthy:** So if you go, they are all going with you?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Madam Speaker, can I point out that we have a momentous day today.

**Mrs Redmond:** Yes, the union protest outside.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** No. The member for Bragg has moved her seat, because clearly she can no longer tolerate sitting next to Martin Hamilton-Smith. What an extraordinary—

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** Point of order, Madam Chair: the Premier has left because he cannot stand the contender. Jay Weatherill, the next contender, did not even roll up; he cannot stand the contender. Shall we get back to business, Treasurer?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I tell you what, when Iain Evans is defending Vickie—or is it Martin? This is a weird world!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Treasurer will get back to the question.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Have a look. She has moved over to get right away from you, Marty—right away from you. What have you done to her? Look at the red face on him.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! We will get back to the question now.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** We are a disciplined, orderly party, but have a look at the Liberal Party. Have a look at them. They are a rabble.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I cannot hear the Treasurer.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Is he that bad to sit next to, Vickie?

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, get back to the question, and do not refer to members by name.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Normally Vickie would be interjecting.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Treasurer, we will not engage in conversations across the floor. Back to the question.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Sorry, Madam Speaker. I apologise. I just feel it is my duty to point out great division in the Liberal Party when it is confronting us.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** Point of order, Madam Chair, the Treasurer is defying your ruling that he get back to answering the question.

**The SPEAKER:** I am sure he is now going to answer the question, and keep in mind standing order 123 where you do not refer to members by their name.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I apologise, Madam Speaker, as always.

**The SPEAKER:** Mean it this time and do it.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** But I can point out, Madam Speaker, as to references to missing ministers—they are actually authorised by your lot as pairs and are at ministerial councils.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Of course we got legal advice.

**Mr Pengilly:** Sit down then.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Finniss, be quiet. We are finally getting to answer the question.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** What, am I causing you some embarrassment over there, am I? All right, I will sit down then. Sorry.

#### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (15:04):** My question is to the Minister for Housing. Can the minister advise the house of the latest developments in the provision of affordable housing through the National Rental Affordability Scheme?

**The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability) (15:04):** This morning I had the pleasure of announcing South Australia's participation in round 4 of the National Rental Affordability Scheme. In addition to previous NRAS approvals, the state government will now provide an additional \$50 million to help fund 1,626 new affordable homes for South Australians.

Today's decision will lead to a construction program even bigger than the recent Nation Building-Economic Stimulus package, which is delivering 1,360 new homes for public and community housing tenants. Around Australia, we are continuing to experience a housing supply shortfall, and we know that this affects people who can least afford it.

Through NRAS, we will provide funding to help build new and affordable properties, giving low to middle income earners a decent place to call home at a rent level that they can afford. Housing SA will now seek partners, including community housing groups and developers, to build these properties and reduce pressure on the rental market. The homes will be available to single people and families who meet certain rental criteria, starting from an upper income limit of \$42,386 for a single person, about \$58,000 for a single parent with a child, and more for couples with children. Houses built under NRAS must be rented out at a minimum of 20 per cent below the market rate.

The commonwealth government's goal is that NRAS will generate 50,000 new rental properties across Australia by 2014, and South Australia's target is 3,800 homes. We have previously committed to funding 1,304 houses in rounds 1 and 2 and are awaiting results from round 3, which had a minimum of 1,000 houses per applicant. South Australia is already reaping the rewards of NRAS, with 254 already built and hundreds more under construction or committed. We are seeing these homes in the inner city, including a development in partnership with Unity Housing that I visited this morning, and we will be encouraging bids for regional South Australia as part of this round 4 process.

Under the scheme, the federal government gives housing providers an annual incentive of \$6,855 per home, and the state government \$2,285, indexed to the rental component of the CPI for a 10-year period. The 10-year subsidy ensures that these rental properties will remain affordable for at least the next decade, and I hope that many of the families who are housed under this scheme will be able to recognise their dream of home ownership during that time. This announcement continues this government's commitment and proven success in delivering affordable and innovative housing solutions to South Australians.

#### MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:07):** My question is to the Premier. Can he explain how it has occurred that the guide to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan has failed to recognise the long-standing cap on diversions in South Australia and irrigators' investment in efficient water use measures, given that the South Australian government was invited to make submissions to the authority during the plan's development?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (15:08):** I think that during the evolution of the process there has been enormous contact between the officers of the department—in fact, I am sure that the minister will be able to give more details of that—and those involved in this process, and that will be ongoing. A lot of people around the country are unhappy with the plan, but do not forget that, during the middle of the drought, when we were told at a COAG meeting by someone who had been introduced to us by John Howard—he was the head of the then authority—that we were facing a one in one thousand year low inflow, and it then got worse—

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I rise on a point of order. The question was: how did the key to South Australia's future get left out of the plan when this government had the opportunity to make submissions to the drafters of the plan?

**The SPEAKER:** So, your point of order, I presume, is relevance. I think that the Premier might be getting to it, because I have been listening carefully to what is said.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** What I am trying to do in, perhaps, a discursive way and without the normal rhetorical interruptions from the other side, is to explain that they have considered an incredibly complex range of inputs. What we hope we will see happen is that in the final plan there will be some recognition of prior commitment.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** If you want to know why, perhaps you should ask the independent commission.

### REMOTE INDIGENOUS SERVICES

**Mr BIGNELL (Mawson) (15:10):** My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation. Can the minister provide the house with information about the report by the commonwealth Coordinator-General for Remote Indigenous Services, which was released last week?

**The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (15:10):** I thank the member for Mawson for his important question. I am very pleased to report that South Australia has received a very positive tick from the Coordinator-General for Remote Indigenous Services, Mr Brian Gleeson, in his second six-monthly report. The report measures progress being made towards delivering improved services in 29 remote Aboriginal communities—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. G. PORTOLESI:** —including the two South Australian communities that are part of this work, Amata and Mimili in our APY lands. I would like to offer my most sincere congratulations to our communities in Amata and Mimili, because they were the first in Australia to sign off on these local implementation plans, and they did so at the end of June. That is an outstanding result.

These local implementation plans (LIPs) are a bit like a local plan of action for these communities. They identify the things—the projects, the services—that are important for the sustainable development and progress of these communities. They are very simple things like improved street lighting and public facilities. Others are more complex—issues relating to education—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The Hon. G. PORTOLESI:** The opposition leader laughs. Others are more complex, and relate to education and health services as well as governance structures for these communities. I am very pleased to see that very real progress is being made in relation to things like the near finalisation of plans for an early childhood centre in Amata, the construction of 15 new houses by Housing SA in Amata and 11 in Mimili and the development of a home living skills program—and the list goes on.

Mr Gleeson's report does highlight that more work needs to be done in relation to governance, and we are committed to doing that. We have made, however, very significant progress with the APY Executive and changed, for instance, bylaws so that visiting journalists, Australian Public Service employees, contractors and Australian Federal Police no longer have to apply for permits to enter the lands.

It is important to remember that this remote service delivery initiative is not about quick wins: it is a long term commitment by the commonwealth, by the state and, most importantly, by those communities for their sustainable development.

### MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:13):** My question is again to the Premier. Can the Premier explain how his so-called historic water agreement of March 2008 will protect food producers and provide certainty for irrigators in light of the new Murray-Darling Basin Plan, which he has welcomed?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (15:13):** Well, I would have thought that, given the Liberals in federal government and the Liberals at the state level supported it (in the end; they had to be dragged kicking and screaming to get there; go and look at what Malcolm Turnbull said), as far as I can remember everyone supported an independent commission to run the River Murray on the basis of science.

When I was in Sydney yesterday, I was aware from the papers there that irrigators in those states in the east think that they have been duded in favour of us. So, play your games; meanwhile, let's actually work to get the best outcome for the whole river, not just parts of it. You can play your politics; you wanted politics out of it. Come up with ideas, come up with facts, get the science right, and support us in that process.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Can I just point out to the person who is taking photos from the gallery that it is not permitted to take photos in the chamber. The member for Chaffey.

#### **MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN**

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:14):** My question is to Premier Rann. Has your government done an analysis on what impact the guide to the draft Murray-Darling Basin Plan will have on jobs and the social wellbeing of the people and communities along the River Murray in South Australia affected by the proposed basin plan?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! This minister needs a lot of quiet to be heard. He is a gentleman and he expects you to behave accordingly.

**The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (15:14):** Thank you very much for your kind assistance, Madam Speaker. I thank the honourable member for his question. As he would be aware, the guide only came out on Friday and in fact, as I understand it, the first chapter or volume of the guide is all that we have. There is still an enormous amount of information that is yet to be provided by the authority. As of yesterday, and I have not checked today, that was still not on their website and we are awaiting that particular material. In regard to whether we have done an analysis of the socioeconomic consequences of the guide—and I think that was the thrust of the member's question—it is safe to say that at this stage we have not, because it is very early days.

However, I can inform the honourable member that we are committed to working with the irrigators through the trusts and through individual irrigator groups, and we are committed to working with the broader community. We are committed to continuing to work with the scientists to ensure that a robust analysis means that the scientific assumptions of the guide are fully tested. In fact, I also make the commitment today to work with the local member—the member for Chaffey—provided of course that his external body organs are kept intact following that, if he chooses to work with us, and I know that that has worried the member in the past in relation to what he can say, but we welcome—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. P. CAICA:** No; I am talking about his body organs that he was worried about losing. I am going to stay very disciplined here.

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

**The Hon. P. CAICA:** Mine? No. I am going to stay very disciplined here, because we do want some calmness during this process. We have seen the upper states and the reactions of some of the irrigators from the upstream states. We see this as a once in a hundred years opportunity to address what has been the overallocation of water that has been taken out of the system, a system that is under stress. If this does not result in a proper plan that restores the river system back to health, we then condemn it to a slow death, if not a quick one. We are committed to that. We have been committed from the very start to the establishment of the authority and committed to the establishment of a plan that becomes this nation's plan.

This state is going to work with the people of South Australia to make sure that we have not just adequate input into the plan but certainly expert input into that plan. Where there are flaws—and the authority has admitted that there are some shortcomings and flaws—it is our responsibility to iron out those flaws and to make sure that the plan becomes a better plan than would otherwise be the case because of the involvement that we have had in the further development of that plan. I have asked on numerous occasions for there to be a bipartisan approach to the way in which the state responds to the plan. It is clear to me that some people within the opposition wish to play politics on this particular matter.

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**The Hon. P. CAICA:** It's true, Ivan. It's true. This is about what is in the best interests of the Murray-Darling Basin system, which in turn is going to be in the best interests of South Australia. It is going to be in the best interests of those people who rely on irrigation as the means of their livelihood. As the Premier mentioned earlier, it is not a battle about the environment versus

irrigators. It is not a battle between biodiversity and food. It is about making sure that we have security going forward, security in the future for irrigators, security in the future for the environment, and an environment which is sustainable, which in turn means that the means of production that rely on that environment are going to be sustainable.

I look forward to working with the member for Chaffey (and I know that his body parts will be kept intact) and most certainly with the opposition if it chooses to work with the government, just as we are going to work with the Riverland communities, irrigators, trusts and anyone else who is able to ensure that we can have a whole of state, whole of government response to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's draft guide.

#### **PARKS COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (15:19):** My question is to the Attorney-General: does the Attorney-General agree with the Treasurer's statement, made on 7 October during estimates and repeated in this house today, regarding the decision to close the Parks Community Centre? He said, 'It was a unanimous decision of cabinet. There was no dissenting voice.'

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Federal/State Relations, Minister for Defence Industries) (15:20):** The Attorney-General, you would hope—

**Mrs REDMOND:** Point of order, Madam Speaker. Whilst I know that any minister can answer any question, I fail to see how the Treasurer can possibly answer a question about whether the Attorney-General agrees with a statement. The question was: does the Attorney-General agree with the statement?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Madam Speaker—

**The SPEAKER:** I have not given a ruling on that. It is up to any minister to answer the question; it is up to the government to answer any question, and I do not think it is really relevant in his role as Attorney-General. I will not uphold that point of order.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** The Attorney-General is not responsible for the Parks ; she should have asked the minister responsible or me as Treasurer. You have to understand how things work here. As I have said—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** —it was a very hard budget, a budget in which we wish we did not have to take a number of decisions that we had to. As the Premier quite rightly pointed out, the government is about difficult, hard decisions, and a capable, experienced government can make difficult, hard decisions.

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** We have seen, as a result of this budget, the credit rating agency Standard & Poor's reaffirming our AAA credit rating. I have met with Moody's, and Moody's I would expect to reaffirm our AAA credit rating.

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN:** I rise on a point of order as to relevance. Even if the Treasurer is going to answer on behalf of the Attorney-General, the question was specifically about the Attorney-General's opinion of what the Treasurer said; it had nothing to do with trying to re-justify the budget.

**The SPEAKER:** Sit down, member for Stuart. There is no point of order there. The cabinet is of one mind, and any minister can answer.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** We are of one mind and of one voice. We are one voice; we are one voice. The reality is that—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** —difficult decisions to maintain a AAA credit rating are the hard work of government.

**Mr PENGILLY:** I rise on a point of order, namely, 128, Madam Speaker. The AAA credit rating has nothing to do with the question that was asked of the Attorney-General.

**The SPEAKER:** No, I do not uphold that point of order. The Treasurer is answering in a very roundabout way, but he is getting to his answer and it is relevant, I think. Have you finished Treasurer? Good.

#### LAND TAX

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (15:23):** My question is to the Treasurer. When did the Treasurer first become aware that Revenue SA, without approval, had wrongly charged land tax on 136 South Australian properties; has the land tax been paid back to the taxpayers; and how can taxpayers have confidence that when they receive a land tax bill it is valid, when unapproved, unjustified bills have been distributed?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Federal/State Relations, Minister for Defence Industries) (15:23):** Obviously, I will get a specific answer to the member but, yes—

*Mr Pisoni interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Hang on, small business genius; just hold on.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Treasurer will return to the question.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Yes, then you went broke; then you went bankrupt.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** He can dish it, but he can't take it.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** The reality is that there are times—limited, thankfully—when there are errors made—

**The Hon. I.F. Evans:** Unapproved.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Well, I cannot stand here and say that errors do not occur when we send out literally tens upon tens upon tens of thousands of land tax notices. If an error has occurred, we will obviously apologise and rectify it, but I would be very confident in saying that errors would have occurred on a regular basis under the opposition's administration, because we very rarely get 100 per cent of transactions correct all the time. There will be glitches. I will get the specific details of the matter the member raised. If he can give it to me, to make sure I get it correctly, I will do so.

#### AIR WARFARE DESTROYER

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite) (15:25):** My question is to the Premier. During the state election campaign, why did the Premier overstate the value to South Australia of the air warfare destroyer contract at \$6.6 billion? During the state election campaign, the Premier released a personally signed policy statement (accompanied by his photograph) which claimed:

In the past six years South Australia has secured, for now and the future, around \$44 billion worth of defence projects. This includes the largest defence contract awarded in Australia's history, the \$8 billion air warfare destroyer project.

But the Treasurer said on 7 October that only \$1.4 billion over 10 years from the air warfare destroyer project will, in fact, be spent in South Australia.

**Mr Pisoni:** I know the answer: because he's a fraud.



**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (15:26):** I seem to remember—

**Mr Pisoni:** The Premier is a fraud. That's why he said it.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Unley! That is out of order.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I have a point of order, Madam Speaker. The member for Unley, on more than one occasion, said the Premier is a fraud. That is most unparliamentary. I ask that he withdraw and apologise.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, I uphold that point of order. Member for Unley, I ask that you withdraw that comment. What you said was very loud and very clear. I heard it very clearly.

**Mr PISONI:** I did call the Premier a fraud, Madam Speaker, and I withdraw.

*Mr Pengilly interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Finniss. I warn the member for Finniss.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I was looking through the figures the other day and, since I have been the leader of the Labor Party, there have been six leaders of the Liberal Party and 10 deputy leaders: Oceans 16.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I have a point of order. The question was about the vast discrepancy between claims made during the election campaign and the reality as explained by the Treasurer in the estimates committee.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, I do give them some leniency but it is getting close to the bone. I think you had better get back to the question, Premier.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** It really hits at the core of them. The thing is that, if you go back to what the Howard government said, you were all very keen to say that it really had nothing to do with the South Australian government. You thought it was all to do with Nick Minchin and John Howard. 'The fact that we were up against the other states had nothing to do with us. It was a fantastic project. It was a Liberal project,' you said, and you talked about the billions of dollars, of course—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Now they are going to attack John Howard. I can't believe it. The guy lost his seat. Kick a man—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is a point of order.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Madam Speaker, it was not John Howard's photograph and signature on the ALP campaign material that misled the people of South Australia.

**The SPEAKER:** That is a very longwinded point of order. I do not think there is one.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I am very pleased that, rather than buying air warfare destroyers off the shelf from overseas, we are actually building them here. It includes, of course—and only a blockhead would doubt this—radar and missile systems that are purchased from overseas. But the fact is that it is being done here and it is the biggest project in Australian history, one which, by the way, members opposite (just as they did with John Bannon on the submarine project) said we were not going to win. Ultimately, they rejoice when the unemployment figures go up. When they go down and we have record employment numbers, it is like a sea of depression on the second floor.

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Davenport!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** And what a difference. Since you were in the cabinet there are 120,000 more people in work, five times the infrastructure spend, and we have got—

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I know why he is sensitive. What were his figures? Iain Frederick Evans, 2006-07 as leader, then before that he was deputy leader. Look at them—10 deputy

leaders. I thought there was 12. I was wrong; I have misled people. I thought there was only 12; there are 16.

**Mr PENGILLY:** Point of order, Madam Speaker: standing order 128.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I uphold that point of order. Premier, have you finished your answer?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Yes, I have.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Torrens.

#### FINES COLLECTION

**Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens) (15:30):** Can the Attorney-General inform the house about new measures to improve fines collection by the Courts Administration Authority?

**The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Tourism) (15:30):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and I thank the member for Torrens very much for her important question.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** That is better. This is a—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! We have two minutes left of question time.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** —very important question, and it is a matter that I take very seriously. Members may or may not know that the Courts Administration Authority and the Fines Collection Unit process a number of expiation notices on behalf of people, such as SAPOL, and third parties, such as local government, councils and such like, as well as the result of unpaid fines in criminal proceedings. The government regards it as being a matter of great importance that there be an improvement in the collection rate for these outstanding penalties. The recent state budget, in fact, happily announced extra funding—and I will underline that, 'extra funding'—for additional fines enforcement staff.

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

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** They must have gotten past you. This will mean, we believe, substantial increases and improvement in the recovery rate for these unpaid fines. These staff, along with the authorised officers who execute the warrants, will now form a very important new thing called the Fines Enforcement Mobile Task Force.

**The Hon. G. Portolesi:** A SWAT team?

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** That is right. They are going to leave no stone unturned. The task force is going to start off by intensively case managing the recalcitrants who are refusing to pay these debts, and they will be using every legal means to pursue these people. If any of those people happen to be listening to this—and I do not know how they could be, but if they are—they need to become very fearful because—

**The Hon. G. Portolesi:** Be afraid, be very afraid.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** Indeed. We are getting very serious about this—much more serious than we have been. The way to move forward with this, of course, is that the task force has decided as a start—and only as a start—to review the history and enforcement arrangements for all debtors who have over 20 penalties—all of them, every single one of them—and they are going to be targeted over the next six months. It is going to become very unpleasant, because any of them who are under current payment arrangements will have their payment arrangements reconsidered.

*The Hon. G. Portolesi interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** That is right. Measures will be taken to recover debts, including, where necessary, warrants of arrest and seizure of goods, which would then be sold. Also, other penalties will be imposed on such people, including having a cessation of business notice with the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, which means they cannot register a motor vehicle; suspension of

driver's licences; in some cases compulsory deduction from wages or bank accounts; and so on. But this is just a beginning.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** What else?

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** I am glad the honourable member asks me that question. In the immediate future, in an attempt to get this message out and about, members of the task force will be setting up booths around South Australia to advise people of this new stance being taken by the authority, because we do not want people to be caught unawares. The Treasurer will be pleased to know, perhaps, that the Port Adelaide shopping mall, as from Saturday 16 October, is going to be one of the first places where this great information will be provided to members of the public.

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

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** There are a lot of synergies happening there. I have to say that this is not an end to this at all: this is a beginning.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** More?

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** This is not even an end of the beginning, but it is a beginning. We are looking also to consider the following things, including legislative changes to the sentencing act and the Expiation of Offences Act. We are also presently engaged in making comparisons with the regime operating in other states around Australia to see whether they have methods that are more effective than ours, and, if they do, we will be taking steps to pick them up. These people are being visited, in fact, next week by officers from the Courts Administration Authority in several states. There is a lot of activity going on in that department. We are also looking at additional ways and matching of data activities in order to locate debtors who presently have spent some time and effort hiding themselves from the government. The message for now is: if you haven't paid fines, go to court before the court comes to you.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

#### **WINDLASS, MR K.**

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (15:35):** Madam, I seek leave to make another ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I want the house to acknowledge the passing of Mr Kunmanara Windlass, an Aboriginal elder of the Pitjantjatjara people and a leader of the Aboriginal people of the Maralinga Tjarutja lands, who was highly respected by many people throughout South Australia and beyond. The South Australian government was saddened to learn of the passing of Mr Kunmanara Windlass on 16 September and we extend our sincere condolences to his family, extended family, the Aboriginal people of the West Coast, Oak Valley, Yalata, Maralinga Tjarutja, the surrounding areas of South Australia and Western Australia, and to all those who knew and worked with him. Mr Kunmanara Windlass's funeral was held on 8 October.

Mr Windlass was born about two kilometres north-east of Kingoonya, in the bush not far from the railway line. The missionaries estimated his birth at January 1928. He was about 82 years old when he passed away. Mr Windlass's father was called Windlass while he was working at Coorabie, where his job was to draw water from the well using the windlass, hence the family name. During his earlier life, Mr Windlass lived at different places along the trans-Australian railway line with his family and other Anangu, making artefacts for selling to passengers on the trains, obtaining rations, hunting rabbits and kangaroos and doing occasional station work. His Anangu community then moved to Ooldea where he went to school to learn to read and write.

As a child, Mr Windlass was responsible for caring for his blind grandfather, to guide him as he walked, to give him food, to fetch his firewood and generally care for him. These caring qualities and his kindness towards others remained with Mr Windlass throughout his life. While living in Ooldea, he went through the law and became an initiated man. During his lifetime, Mr Windlass and his family and community experienced a number of life-changing shocks. The first came in 1952 when the mission at Ooldea was closed. People left the mission and were scattered across the countryside, with many people moving to the new mission at Yalata and further afield, and the community lost its cohesion. Mr Windlass settled in Coorabie and Koonibba.

The second key life-changing event was the atomic bomb tests on the Maralinga Tjarutja lands. Mr Windlass was in Koonibba when the atomic bomb was detonated at Maralinga and heard the explosion while speaking on the phone at the mission. A total of seven atomic devices were tested on Maralinga lands in 1956 and 1957. Rather than being defeated by this event, Mr Windlass took action and made a significant contribution to advancing the interests of the Maralinga Tjarutja people, and he became an important spokesperson for his community.

Mr Windlass demonstrated a tireless persistence in fighting for the rights of his people. In 1992, when I was minister for Aboriginal affairs, he was part of a delegation that travelled to London and presented the British parliament with a piece of contaminated Maralinga land and appealed directly to the British government for compensation. This resulted in compensation being paid to the Maralinga Tjarutja people by the British government in 1995. Mr Windlass also played a critical role in organising and participating in delegations to Adelaide and Canberra, resulting in the commonwealth government's support for the clean-up of radioactive contaminants on the Maralinga Tjarutja lands in 1999. This was the second clean-up that followed the initial attempt made by the British government in the 1960s and, indeed, in 1979.

Mr Windlass and his community had returned to their country in the 1980s. The land had been returned to them and the community chose to live in an area they called Oak Valley, named after the desert oaks. He and the late Mr Archie Barton were the leaders of the Oak Valley people for over 25 years. They worked closely together to realise the community's land rights and gain compensation for the damage done to their country by the atomic tests in the 1950s. He was a passionate, articulate and effective spokesperson for his people and spoke a number of Aboriginal languages, as well as English.

The clean-up of the Maralinga Tjarutja lands made possible the historic hand-back of Maralinga section 400—the actual bomb test site and last remaining former prohibited area—to the traditional owners, including Mr Windlass, in December 2009. Mr Windlass's contribution was acknowledged by the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP during the hand-back ceremony at the time. Mr Windlass's last official duty for Maralinga Tjarutja was on 18 December when he raised the Aboriginal flag at Maralinga Village to mark its hand-back by the commonwealth.

Although Mr Windlass died less than a year after this event, it must be a great comfort to his people that he lived to see the completion of his life's work: the return of his people's traditional lands. His representative roles were impressive. He was Chairman of the Yalata community from the late 1970s until 1984 and was then the principal traditional spokesman for Maralinga Tjarutja from 1984 and for most of the 1990s, as well as being the council chairperson. He was an ATSIC regional councillor and represented Yalata and Maralinga Tjarutja on the Aboriginal Lands Trust.

Mr Windlass was one of the first Aboriginal park rangers in South Australia and represented Maralinga Tjarutja on the joint management board with National Parks, was the representative for the hand-back of the Unnamed Conservation Park (now known as Mamungari) in 2004, and was a representative of the Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Board. He continued travelling into the bush and visiting his country to the very end.

Mr Windlass's major contribution to South Australia was not only the representative offices that he occupied but the advocacy for his people and the contributions towards a fairer South Australia in which rights are acknowledged and observed. Mr Scott Cane, an associate of Mr Windlass, commented:

To white people, Mr Windlass' life was one of leadership, and political and personal achievement. To Mr Windlass, his life was one of landscape and ritual association. His greatness lay in his love of country, his religious knowledge, his wisdom, vision and reasoned sense of social justice.

Mr Windlass was not only a dedicated and serious campaigner for the rights of his community and of Aboriginal people as a whole but he also had the capacity to laugh and to play. He was a very good footballer, playing with both district and mission teams. The late Mr Archie Barton described Mr Windlass as 'the most elusive footballer—his feet were as nimble as his mind'.

Mr Windlass encountered and challenged many obstacles that his people and his generation faced, including the traumatic removal from his country and its destruction by the atomic bomb blasts, as well as the subsequent effects of these events on the community's social cohesion, the erosion of traditional authority and the opportunities available to members of his community.

In conclusion, it is with great sadness and a profound sense of gratitude that we honour and salute the life and commitment of Mr Windlass. I first met him in 1984 in the process for the

handover of the first Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Act. I then became a member of the parliamentary committee on Aboriginal affairs and spent considerable time with Mr Windlass. I then became minister for Aboriginal affairs and worked with him and Archie Barton to pass legislation that was to return the Ooldea lands as a major handover of important spiritual lands.

I made a promise in the early 1990s that a future Labor government would return the Unnamed Conservation Park, and I was very pleased to be able to join with Mr Windlass, who I knew as Hughie, to hand the land back. Of course, that was completed with the handover of section 400. He was a very effective campaigner, a very decent man and will be sadly lost by our state. Our thoughts are with his family and community and all those who mourn his loss at this sad time.

## GRIEVANCE DEBATE

### MARY MACKILLOP

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:44):** I think everybody in the house knows that this weekend will be a momentous occasion for South Australia and certainly for the people of Penola with the canonisation of Mary MacKillop on Sunday, 17 October. I will take this opportunity to put on the record a very brief overview of some of the highlights of Mary MacKillop's life and try to explain why Mary MacKillop is receiving this most incredible honour, and the influence that she had on many, many people whom she came across, not just in and around Penola but here in Adelaide, in other cities around this nation, in New Zealand and other parts of the world.

Mary MacKillop's story started in the Highlands of Scotland where both of her parents grew up, and who, unknown to each other and separately, both emigrated to Melbourne. Her father, Alexander MacKillop, had previously spent some six years in Rome studying at a Roman Catholic College, I believe with the original intention of becoming a priest.

He returned to Scotland due to ill health and then spent another 17 months, I believe, studying for the priesthood, but decided to emigrate to Melbourne instead—I am not quite sure why. He then met Flora MacDonald, who had also emigrated to Melbourne with her family a few years later, and they were married. In 1842, Mary MacKillop was the first of their children and the eldest of eight, although one child only lived for 11 months.

Interestingly, although Alexander MacKillop was a very well educated man—and that is probably the most important thing that he was able to pass onto his children—he was, apparently, not a fantastic provider for his family and was not successful in his business ventures. So, the family lived in very poor conditions. Indeed, Mary MacKillop entered the workforce at the age of 14 and her wage went to support the other members of her family.

She arrived in Penola in 1860, at the age of 18, to work as a governess for her uncle and aunt, members of the Cameron family who founded Penola. While she was governess for their children she also took in other children—particularly the children of families who were working for the Camerons—and started to educate those children as well.

After a short time she moved back to Portland, where she also worked for the Cameron family. In the meantime, she had met Father Julian Tenison Woods, whom she befriended, and he encouraged her in her work and encouraged her to take on her vocation, which she later did. She returned to Penola in 1866, at the age of 24, with two of her sisters and one of her brothers and established a formal school in Penola.

One of my great-grandmothers, although she was a Protestant, was educated by Mary MacKillop in Penola during that period. I think that is one of the reasons why Mary MacKillop has touched so many people: she did not just take in children who were of the same faith as her, but she believed and understood that education was such a powerful instrument. She also believed that women should have had a much higher status in society than what they did have, and that brought her into conflict with the establishment of the church throughout her life.

Time will elude me in the things that I would like to put on the record, but she established schools throughout Australia, in all the states of Australia, and in New Zealand. She had a continuing battle with the authorities within the church, but she always stood up for the sisters of her order, the order which she established, and she particularly always stood up for the underprivileged children who came to her schools and whom she taught.

In 1902, when the right to vote was given to females in the federal sphere in Australia, she wrote to all of the sisters within her order and encouraged them to get their names onto the electoral role and encouraged them to vote in that election. She advised them to take advice from a well known male that they trusted, but who was not necessarily the local Catholic priest.

### SERVICE CLUB WEEK

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:49):** Today I wish to speak about service clubs, as this is Service Club Week. On Tuesday night, I represented the Premier at the Association of Community Service Organisations Premier's Awards presentation dinner. The award night is a key event of Service Club Week. I can report to the house that the association very warmly welcomes and appreciates the financial support given by the state government to the awards night. Service Club Week is about celebrating the remarkable achievements of service clubs in our communities. Service clubs have a long tradition of service to our communities.

Service Club Week celebrates and recognises the outstanding contribution and achievements of all South Australian service clubs and that each make an enormous contribution to the lives of other South Australians. While the clubs do great work individually, when they combine their efforts they do some fantastic things for communities. In my hometown of Gawler, the work of the combined service clubs is everywhere to be seen. The volunteering stories of these clubs are truly amazing. These traditions have been developed and nurtured by committed individuals over many years of service to the community.

The week is about acknowledging the various club members' willingness to donate their time to improving the lives of others, and it is a true testament to the giving nature of South Australians. The state government sees volunteering as a critical part of South Australia's economic, social and cultural prosperity and well-being. We have a proud tradition of volunteering in this state, one we can certainly be truly proud of. While the economic benefits of volunteering are well known, those intangible social and cultural benefits are sometimes hidden but are no less important.

The sense of community they develop is critical to the well-being of many, particularly those who for whatever reason have become isolated from mainstream communities. We also know from a survey conducted by Harrison Research earlier this year that more than half of all South Australians—that is, more than 830,000 individuals—volunteer in our community in some way. Whether this is formally, with a local community organisation (like a service club, whose contribution we are acknowledging this week) or, more informally, for example, helping your neighbour with their grocery shopping, it all makes a difference and an enormous contribution to the South Australian community.

What service clubs do not do themselves, they do by supporting others, and many service clubs have extensive donation programs to support other community groups. The government itself has put a range of initiatives in place to support volunteers and their organisations. These initiatives are crucial steps in helping to encourage volunteering in our state, something that is vital for the future well-being of the community as a whole. I wish to take a few moments to acknowledge the fine work performed by service clubs in my own electorate of Light. From fund-raising to staffing car Parks at community events, to collecting rubbish, running community markets, to funding community awareness programs and helping the kids in the community, the work of the service clubs is everywhere to be seen.

These small bands of dedicated volunteers contribute hundreds of hours and raise tens of thousands of dollars for local, national and international projects. I wish in particular to acknowledge the following clubs and individuals in my community. I would like to acknowledge the following presidents in the clubs: Warren Dibben and members of the Rotary Club of Gawler; Peter Maas and the Rotary Club of Gawler Light; Linda Bertran and the Gawler branch of the Country Women's Association; Robert Gambell and members of the Kiwanis Club of Gawler; Leon Budnell and the members of the Gawler Apex Club; and Barry Hill (my president, as I am a member) and the Gawler Lions Club.

I would particularly like to acknowledge Ms Naomi Arnold, the President of the Zonta Club of Gawler, and her members. I particularly wish to congratulate the Zonta Club, as it was one of winners on Tuesday night, for its contribution to the Significant Women of Gawler project, which is, indeed, a good project, and one that was supported by the former minister for the status of women, the Hon. Jennifer Rankin, and also the current minister. Both ministers have made a contribution to

that project. For the dedication and generosity that the social clubs and their members have shown to their communities, I would like to acknowledge and applaud them.

### MARY MACKILLOP

**Mr MARSHALL (Norwood) (15:54):** On 17 October this year, Australia will have its very first saint. Mary Helen MacKillop, who was born on 15 January 1842 and died on 8 August 1909, was an Australian Roman Catholic nun who, together with Father Julian Tenison Woods, founded the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

In 1995 Pope John Paul II beatified Mother Mary MacKillop and this Sunday Pope Benedict will formally recognise the lifetime's work of the blessed Mary MacKillop with her canonisation into sainthood. This will be a momentous occasion that will finally give the tireless work of a woman from South Australia the recognition she has long deserved.

The beliefs and work of the blessed Mary MacKillop were truly selfless and in many respects showed amazing foresight. Her pioneering outlook on providing welfare and her quest for universal education are an inspiration to all. I am sure the member for MacKillop has claimed her as one of his very own from Penola, but today I would like to inform the house of her long association with the people of Kensington and Norwood; in fact, Sister Mary MacKillop lived in Norwood for 11 years. First, however, I will give you some background.

Sister Mary began her working life as a clerk and a schoolteacher. She then became a family governess and established the Bayview House School for Young Ladies in Portland, Victoria in 1864. However it was the teachings of Father Julian Tenison Woods that ultimately inspired her to work for those less fortunate. Father Woods' doctrine was a message of tolerance and selflessness. He believed that the church should observe and work with the same standards of austerity as those whom they were striving to help.

In 1866, Mary went to Penola in the South-East and, together with Father Tenison Woods, established a school for more than 50 local students. In the same year, at age 25, she adopted the religious name Sister Mary of the Cross. In 1867, Mary MacKillop became the first sister and mother superior of the newly formed order, the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart, and moved to the new convent in Grote Street, Adelaide. There they founded a new school at the request of the Bishop of Adelaide, Bishop Laurence Shiel. Dedicated to the education of children of the poor, it was the first religious order to be founded by an Australian.

The rules written up by Father Woods and Mary MacKillop for the sisters to live by emphasised poverty, a dependence on divine providence, no ownership of personal belongings, faith that God would provide and that the sisters would go wherever they were needed. The rules were approved by the bishop and, by the end of 1867, 10 other sisters had joined the Josephites. The order arrived in Kensington in 1867 and the sisters soon opened a school in Hectorville in 1870.

Mother Mary MacKillop went beyond what was required in her call of duty. Her work went beyond everyday education and religious instruction. She was instrumental in offering shelter and protection to pregnant girls who had been ostracised by the society of the day. She offered health assistance for the poor by performing hospital work. She was regarded by all as having a real aura of warmth and companionship.

She demonstrated real skill and endeavour at raising money and housing for the poor. This was done regardless of religious persuasion. Indeed her principal benefactor was an elderly Jewish man, Emmanuel Solomon, founder of Adelaide's Jewish community, who was so touched by Mary MacKillop's work that he became her main supplier of homes and shelter for those less fortunate.

After the acquisition of the mother house in Kensington in 1872, Mother Mary MacKillop made preparations to leave for Rome to have the rules of the Sisters of Saint Joseph officially approved. She travelled to Rome in 1873 to seek papal approval for the religious congregation and was encouraged in her work by Pope Pius IX. The authorities in Rome made changes to the way the sisters lived in poverty and declared that the superior-general and her council were the authorities in charge of the order.

The resulting alterations to the rule of life caused a breach between MacKillop and Father Woods who felt that the revised rule compromised the ideal of vowed poverty and blamed MacKillop for not getting the rule accepted in its original form. Before Woods' death on 7 October 1889, he and MacKillop were personally reconciled, but he did not renew his involvement with her

order. In 1873 while Mary was in Rome, the sisters started a school in Bridge Street in Kensington. By 1877 the order of Josephites had over 40 schools operating throughout Adelaide.

### GENDER EQUITY

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (16:00):** I would like to endorse the comments that have been made by members about the importance of soon-to-be St Mary MacKillop. I note that my electorate of Reynell had a key role in her life in that it was in the Catholic church in Morphett Vale that her excommunication was lifted. I am pleased that whatever people's religious beliefs we can respect Mother Mary MacKillop as an Australian woman of great integrity and great social conscience. I think in today's parlance she would be described as a feminist: somebody who was clearly of the view that women can manage themselves—

**The Hon. S.W. Key:** And probably a socialist, too.

**Ms THOMPSON:** —and, as the member for Ashford says, probably a socialist too, with her emphasis on the education of the poor. However, while I want to talk today on the matter of women's role in the community, it is not about Mother Mary MacKillop. Instead, I want to address some words of the Leader of the Opposition during the estimates session on 7 October, when she said in a question to minister Holloway:

Perhaps I could ask the minister a question on that issue of gender equity. Does the minister agree that, if it is not necessary to be of a particular gender to perform the tasks of a particular position, then gender equity is achieved when the appointment makers are, if I may use the expression, blind to the gender of the applicant?

Now, I respect the Leader of the Opposition. She has considerable achievements in her world of the Liberal Party. She has made a contribution to community life and must be respected for being the first South Australian woman leader of the Liberal Party. However, it does seem that leader's life has been a little bit sheltered in her use of the term 'gender blindness'.

The other day I was coming back from Melbourne on the early morning flight. I was astounded to see the row of black suits being worn by men in front of me. I have not done that for a few years and I had hoped things had changed. In fact, the row of men in black suits was longer than it was, I think, 15 years ago. I was very relieved when a couple of women, in black suits, came up to join the queue behind me, but was still alarmed that, from their conversation, I could hear that they were public servants. They were federal public servants, and the federal and the state public service have always been places where women have thrived better than in private industry.

The gender blindness is something that occurs in our community. If you are asked to name your best mates, if you are asked to name who you know who can do this, that or the other thing, you usually name someone of your own gender. We do not need to look very far to see that there are men's networks and there are women's networks and that it has been very difficult for women to join some of the major networks.

I think we would have to say that one of the biggest networks of men in South Australia is the old collegians of St Peter's College, and also of Prince Alfred College. Those people stick together very closely and, from conversations with some of them, it is quite clear that they see the role of 'old collegiate' as very important and support each other in advancement in business and community life.

The role of targets for boards and communities is to reduce gender blindness. It is to ask people to look beyond their first reaction in terms of suggestions for committees. It is to ask them to look at the fact that we need comprehensive backgrounds and different perspectives if our business and public organisations are to really thrive. Yes, men and women are brought up differently in our community. They often have different interests. Those different interests often bring a rounded contribution to whatever the task is. So, the target makes people say, 'Is there a woman or is there a man beyond my normal circle of acquaintances who might, indeed, be the best person for this job?'

### MITCHAM CITY COUNCIL

**Mr PISONI (Unley) (16:05):** The South Australian Labor Party is involved in a clandestine attempt to take over the Mitcham council using two apparatchiks—one from the left faction of the Labor Party and one from the right faction of the Labor Party—to launch an assault on the top job. Neither of the ALP candidates has openly declared in their election material that they are members of the ALP, nor have they declared that they are both employed by state Labor Party members engaged in political work.



*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Excuse me for one second, member for Unley. Members on my right, I understand that you are excited, but I actually cannot hear the member for Unley very well. Let us hear what he has to say.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let us hear what he has to say. Carry on, member for Unley.

**Mr PISONI:** They might not like what I am saying, but they should be defending my right to say it, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am.

**Mr PISONI:** Mitcham residents may not be aware that the two Labor Party figures running for mayor at the council elections are ALP identities. The Labor figures are Michael Picton, currently a serving member of the Mitcham council, and Ms Adriana Christopoulos, a former councillor of West Torrens, who has only just recently moved into the district. Ms Christopoulos was a candidate for the ALP at the 2010 state election in the seat of Fisher, where she ran against Liberal candidate Chris Moriarty and the sitting member Bob Such. Ms Christopoulos is a member of Emily's List and is a convenor of the Labor Women's Network in South Australia. She works for Rann Labor government minister and star from the left faction of the Labor Party, the member for Hartley, Grace Portolesi.

Mr Picton, who is a well-known Labor Party identity in the Mitcham area, has been regularly sighted manning polling booths for the ALP during state and federal elections. Mr Picton assisted the Labor candidate for Waite at the last state election and is listed in the Parliament House telephone directory as being employed by the apprentice of the member for Croydon, Mr Finnigan, Labor MLC from the Labor Party's right faction in the other place.

A search of the website and campaign material of both Ms Christopoulos and Mr Picton reveals no identification of either candidate with the ALP. It keeps secret their membership of the Labor Party and their activities and employment with the Rann Labor government. The other candidates, it is understood, are not members of political parties and include prominent businessman Glenn Spear (a helicopter pilot and community activist), Ian Perry (a local businessman) and Doug Ayles (a former council CEO).

Mr Spear and his wife have lived in Mitcham for more than 25 years. He has run his own business for 28 years, which has given him excellent people management, financial accountability and sound decision-making skills. Mr Ian Perry has lived in the Mitcham council area for 35 years and been a business owner in Blackwood for 10 years. He served the community as a councillor for the Craighburn ward for the last four years. Mr Doug Ayles is a local government professional manager who has lived in the City of Mitcham for 23 years and has served on four metropolitan councils as CEO. He was awarded a Centenary of Federation Medal for his services.

This is a brazen attempt by the ALP to take over the Mitcham Council. No doubt the two Labor candidates will be preferencing each other in a dirty deal between the left and the right in order to try to block out other candidates for the mayoralty. As we have seen in other councils—particularly through the interference of the member for Croydon in the City of West Torrens elections—we have seen the debacle that has played—

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I have a point of order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Excuse me, member for Unley. Please take your seat. There is a point of order from the member for Croydon. Don't worry, your time will be held, member for Unley.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** I have no involvement in West Torrens council elections whatsoever.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is a personal explanation more than anything else, but you did have an opportunity to tell us that, so that is lovely.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, that is good. The member for Unley.

**Mr PISONI:** The member for Croydon has told me on numerous occasions that he involves himself in local government elections. Ms Christopoulos and Mr Picton should both

declare that they are running as ALP candidates and come clean with the people of Mitcham. It is a sad day when party political machines enter local government. People do not like party politics in local government, and they want honest, hard-working community members to step forward. They do not want local government used as stepping stones for Labor Party hacks and members of the Labor Party working for Labor Party ministers and working for Labor Party numbers men in the parliament. These are the very Labor people trying to smother the mayoral race in Mitcham.

Time expired.

### DISABLED PARKING PERMITS

**The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford) (16:09):** I rise today to talk about an issue that has been ongoing in the electorate of Ashford and, I suspect, in other electorates, with regard to how one accesses a disabled parking permit. In this particular case, a constituent, on behalf of his wife who has macular degeneration, has tried to access a disabled parking permit and been refused a number of times.

In the most recent correspondence he has received, which is from Martin Small, Registrar of Motor Vehicles, dated 5 October, the response was that macular degeneration did not fit under the definition of 'disability'; and, basically, that 'sensory disabilities'—or 'visual impairment' as defined under the act—is not grounds for the carer (in this case the husband) to access a disabled parking permit for his wife when has to take her to different appointments and also general business that the family needs to do.

While the Motor Vehicles Act 1959 contains a provision for anything other than physical impairment, it seems to be a very harsh interpretation of what physical impairment would be, especially when you look at other acts. I refer to the Equal Opportunity Act 1984, Part 5, section 66(a), which provides:

if he or she treats another unfavourably because of the other's disability, or a past disability or a disability that may exist in the future;

Also, the interpretation of 'disability' states:

...in relation to a person, means—

- (a) total or partial loss of a person's bodily or mental functions.

One of the grounds under the Equal Opportunity Act, of course, is 'the provision of goods and services'. I turn to the Disability Services Act 1993. Under section 3 of that act 'disability' is defined in relation to a person with a disability as:

- (a) that is attributable to intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological,—

and I must emphasise this—

sensory or physical impairment, or a combination of any of those impairments; and

- (b) that is, or is likely to be, permanent; and
- (c) that results in the person having—
  - (i) a reduced capacity for social interaction, communication, learning, mobility, decision making or self care.

'Disability services' means:

services provided, whether wholly or partially, for persons with disabilities or their carers, and without limiting the generality of the expression, includes—

and there are a whole lot of areas included, including subsection (m) which is 'transport services'. I would have thought that not only does the application for a disabled parking permit fit within the equal opportunity and the disability services legislation with regard to 'disability' but also under the Disability Services Act with respect to 'transport services'. I would have thought that a disabled parking permit fits under that particular service.

I would like to say that I understand that the Registrar of Motor Vehicles does have a difficult time in receiving all these applications, but I really cannot see how macular degeneration could be excluded as a disability under this act; and, if that interpretation is, in fact, supported, I think there needs to be amendments.

Time expired.

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

Adjourned debate on motion:

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

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (16:15):** Madam Deputy Speaker, I was talking about the committees I was involved in. I think I was talking about the minerals area at the time the house adjourned for lunch. I was talking about the PACE program and the sleight of hand, the smoke and mirrors movement of some of the other functions and the funding thereof, which is normally carried out within the agency under the heading of PACE to try to enhance that program, a program, which, as I always point out, really is a rebadged and renamed TEISA (Targeted Exploration Initiative South Australia) which was initiated by the former Liberal government.

Also during the estimates committee on minerals with the Minister for Mineral Resources Development, I raised issues regarding a deep sea port in South Australia. The government seems to have taken its eye right off the ball with regard to a deep sea port, but if you ask anyone in the industry in South Australia, 'What do we need to promote the mining sector in South Australia,' the answer that always comes back is, 'A deep sea port, a deep sea port, with a bulk loading facility to support the industry.'

We have the absurdity of exporting iron ore, which is a bulk but low value commodity, out of South Australia through the port of Port Adelaide, after its coming from the Far North of the state, and/or through Port Pirie. Neither of those facilities are suitable for the export of that sort of product, and we wonder why we do not have a mining boom in South Australia. If you talk to serious commentators, rather than the Premier, we do not have a mining boom in South Australia. We are heading that way, we will get a mining boom, but until we get a deep sea port and a decent deep sea port, we will be stifling that particular industry.

I also want to talk about the estimates committee with regard to water and the Minister for Water. One of the matters I raised and highlighted in the committee was the new cost recovery measure of \$44.6 million over the out years of the budget, which will see that amount of money gouged from irrigators and/or SA Water, according to the budget papers. I tried to get some detail on that from the minister. The minister was unable to provide details on how that is going to work and who is going to be responsible for paying that money. However, he did say, 'Oh, but don't worry about it, it doesn't start to 1 July next year,' and then he went on to say, 'and we will have a chat with those people, as well.'

I am sure the irrigators who have been through years and years of drought and who are now looking at the prospect of losing a third of their water allocation because they have been let down by this government—and this minister is going to gouge up to \$44.5 million out of them—will be delighted that it is going to be all right because he is going to sit down and have a chat with them. I raised the issue again of why irrigators in South Australia can only get a maximum 67 per cent of their allocation this year. The minister's explanation is that the agreement—and people, when they get to understand this, will not wonder why the former member for Chaffey was unceremoniously turfed out of her electorate at the recent election—is that carryover water would come off the state's allocation in the subsequent years.

She made a lot about winning the right for South Australian irrigators to carryover water into the following season. This encouraged irrigators who were operating in the market to buy water to carry forward, but, all of a sudden, when they go into the next year, yes, they can carry that water forward, but if it rains and we get a normal allocation of 1,850 gigalitres coming across the border, that carryover water is taken off. I still cannot understand the rationale behind this. That water was available in storage on 30 June. It was physically there. It was water that they could have extracted out of the river on 29 June. On 1 July, for all intents and purposes, it has disappeared.

If it did not rain it was still going to be there and they could have used it, but because it rained it has disappeared. As a consequence, those who have large amounts of carryover water are able to bring that water across and have the equivalent of 100 per cent of their allocation, but those who did not have large quantities of carryover water find themselves in the situation where they have a maximum of 67 per cent allocation this year. It is an absurdity. As I say, no wonder the previous member for Chaffey got turfed out if she was making those sorts of deals.

With regard to SA Water, we know it has been used as a cash cow by this government for many years. I note in the Auditor-General's Report the debt-to-asset ratio has hit what Treasury signed off some years ago as being the maximum level at 24 per cent. So, those members of the government who applauded the Treasurer's budget should remember that a lot of the indebtedness is hidden in the non-financial corporations sector: SA Water, ForestrySA and those areas. It is hidden from the books, but SA Water's debt continues to go up by hundreds and hundreds of millions a year to enable the Treasurer to fudge the books.

The last matter I want to raise is with regard to Keith hospital in my electorate, which is having a significant cut to its funding from this government. Minister Hill, yesterday on public radio, declared that he believed there was no way that the hospital would close as a result of him reducing funding. One of the board members of the Keith hospital was on public radio this morning and it was quite clear—and I have actually seen the figures—that, as of the end of June this year, without funding from the state, the Keith hospital will close and there will be no accident and emergency service for about 120 or 160 kilometres of the Dukes Highway and 70 or 80 kilometres of the Riddoch Highway. It is something which cannot be sustained.

**Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel) (16:22):** I am pleased to make a contribution to this part of the budget estimates process and make some observations in relation to some of the issues that have come to light as a consequence of the estimates committees and also to highlight some matters that I think are important, particularly in relation to the areas of portfolio responsibility that I have on behalf of the state Liberal Party in this place.

The first committee I attended was that of the Office for State/Local Government Relations. One of the issues that came to the fore in the course of questioning through that committee was the lack of attention and the inept manner that the Minister for State/Local Government Relations has applied to the issue of the investigation into the Burnside council. I am aware that I have to take some care in the comments I make, and I was cautious in the committee. I think, Madam Deputy Speaker, you were the chair of that committee. We were careful, because we do know matters in relation to that are before the court.

However, my main line of questioning was concerned with the announcement by the minister over 12 months ago that there would be an investigation into the Burnside council and the process—the 14 or so months—leading up to the time that the matter went to court. I am not going to make any comment in here or publicly about the issue while it is in the court, but I do want to comment about the process leading up to the court action, because I think it was deficient.

I think the process that the minister had responsibility for is deficient, and I say that for the following reasons. We will go back one step. I am paraphrasing because I do not have the direct quote, but the minister basically said that, if she became aware of any allegations that the police needed to investigate, then she would act on them immediately. That was at the very beginning. I think that was one of her initial statements, if not the initial statement that she made, when the investigation first commenced.

I asked the minister whether Mr MacPherson, during the course of the investigation, highlighted with her any areas that he thought may well need to be referred to the police. I also asked the minister whether she had held regular meetings with Mr MacPherson. Her response was no, that she had not held any meetings with Mr MacPherson, which I thought was extremely odd, at the very least.

The Director of the Office of State Local Government Relations was, supposedly, the contact point with Mr MacPherson, so I guess you could say that he was the conduit of information from Mr MacPherson through to the minister. It was an important issue—it has cost the taxpayers nearly \$1.1 million, if my memory serves me correctly—so I find it extremely odd that the minister herself was not liaising with the investigator. She gave some reasons for that, but I find it hard to reason.

So, Mr MacPherson was not telling the minister, via the director, that there were any allegations of activity that needed to be referred to the police. However, what is more astounding, what is more stunning, what is, I guess, a real example of how the minister has mismanaged this whole process, is that the minister, via the director, did not request Mr MacPherson to report any allegations or any suggestions of matters that needed to be referred to the police. The minister, in one of her opening statements, said, 'If I become aware of any issues that need to be referred to the police, I will do that.' I am paraphrasing, but those are basically the words that she used.

However, she was so negligent in the manner in which she has dealt with this investigation that she did not, via the director or whatever means of communication the minister wanted to use, ask Mr MacPherson to tell her if he came across any matters that needed to be referred to the police. If that is not a dereliction of duty, I do not know what is. So, I just want to highlight that.

That is part of the process of the investigation leading up to the matter going to court. Obviously, I am not going to make any comment in relation to that, but this is one glaring example of how the minister has mismanaged this whole matter relating to the investigation into the Burnside council. Goodness knows how long it is going to take to be resolved. We have to wait for the court process to be finalised and then, who knows, a report may come out, or the court might say, 'No, you are not going to release that report,' but the minister does have to table a report, so it might be a sanitised version—who knows. It is still out there in no man's land, it is still out there in the ether, and that is the only entity, I guess, that does know when the report is going to be finalised.

The next matter I want to talk about is emergency services. We had a good committee in relation to emergency services. We asked lots of good questions, and I was pleased that we were able to negotiate with the member and his staff that they did not ask any Dorothy Dix questions. There was no opening statement, so we could get straight into the questions.

Can I say at the outset that the minister said with some pride that we are not going to make any cuts to the CFS budget. Well, whoopee doo! The budget is in poor shape because of the dismal management of the state's finances by the Treasurer and other people. If the budget was in better shape, then we would be able to increase funding to the CFS. We know that there are real unmet needs within the CFS agency; however, I will talk more about that a little bit later.

What I do want to highlight is the significant staff cuts within the SAFECOM agency itself. We have been of the opinion that that particular agency was growing, becoming somewhat bloated, if you like, and we thought that there may well need to be a review of where the resources would best be suited in terms of moving some of them from Safecom into the other Emergency Services agencies, in particular the CFS and/or the SES. The MFS pretty well looks after itself, with all the industrial relations activities that they are involved in.

SAFECOM are going to take some big hits, and so is the MFS. The MFS is going to lose some quite senior positions from its top levels. I know that the United Fire Fighters Union are extremely concerned with those proposals. Having said that, there are some real deficiencies, I think, that have been highlighted in relation to the way the government and the minister have been dealing with the CFS in particular. We highlighted those throughout the process of the estimates committee. I note that the minister made a statement today and issued a press release; but, really, one could say that it is a reannouncement of previous announcements in terms of recommendations to the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, and also the funding that the government has attributed to Emergency Services.

I have a copy of the press release that supposedly lists the money that the government has put towards different initiatives. On a quick check, I cannot necessarily see where that money is reflected in the budget. There is a budget line on page 5.116 under the Safecom section, where a statement of comprehensive income shows a figure of \$5.999 million. It looks like new money—it is under the heading of Grants and Subsidies. When you look at some of the comments in relation to it, I read it as mainly relating to the carry over of commonwealth programs, including the Natural Disaster Resilience Program, the Natural Disaster Mitigation Program and the Bushfire Mitigation Program. I think we need further clarification from the government whether this is actual new government money, whether it is money that is carried forward from previous years' budgets or indeed whether it is commonwealth money. The release says something along the lines that the Rann government has provided \$47 million in additional funding.

That might be the grossed-up figure, but I would like to know from which years, whether it is carryover, whether it is commonwealth money or where the money is coming from, because we know how well this government can spin. They are masters at spin, and we hear a lot about what they are planning to do. The deputy leader has highlighted this: we hear about their inputs, but we hear very little about what has actually been achieved.

Another real area of concern that I want to highlight is the real and concerning delay in the establishment of the bushfire management areas and bushfire management committees. This was highlighted through the estimates committees process. Initially the minister said that these areas and committees would be established within 10 to 12 weeks after the bill was assented to. That bill

was assented to 12 months ago, and we still do not have full membership of those bushfire management areas. The minister said that nine committees are to be established; four of the committees have been established, but there are still five committees that do not have their full complement of membership.

I hope, for the wellbeing of the state, that it will not be the case, but it looks like we are going to be stuck between the old structure and the new structure as we enter this current bushfire season. We are going to have four of the areas and committees fully established, but we are going to have five that are in this sort of halfway house, if you like. That is less than satisfactory when we are going into probably one of the worst bushfire seasons that the state is to experience in the last couple of decades.

The next area I want to highlight is in connection with the minister's statement today and his press release concerning the supposed \$47 million of additional funding. I asked the same question in estimates, and it was in relation to one of the key points in 'Targets and Highlights' for the 2010-11 year. The very first dot point states: 'adopt or adapt where appropriate, Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission findings to South Australia and identify relevant remedial actions'.

The minister's statement today, in my interpretation, goes to that very issue. The minister today said that there is \$47 million of additional funding to boost our bushfire preparedness since Black Saturday but, when I asked that question in estimates, he must have had a memory loss—a bit like the Treasurer—because he referred it to the chief officer, Mr Ferguson, and after a long explanation he got to the nitty-gritty. This was only the day before yesterday, so they must have had a bit of a cobbling together of the facts—I don't know. It is really up to the minister to come in and explain. The *Hansard* states:

Through the task force, agencies have also identified whether or not additional funding is required for implementing a particular recommendation. In most cases agencies have indicated that recommendations that have not yet been implemented can be accommodated within the individual budgets of those agencies. Where that has not been the case, it has been referred to the chief executive or the minister concerned.

Now, that leaves a bit of a question mark because what are the decisions from those matters being referred to the chief executive or the minister concerned? That was the answer to, I think, that question the day before yesterday, and then the minister comes out with a press release and a ministerial statement. Perhaps they have recovered from their amnesia.

I want to talk quickly about some road safety matters focusing on the issue of the tragedy that occurred on the freeway the day before yesterday. I raised this issue during estimates, and the Minister for Road Safety said:

The member for Kavel is making an allegation that there have been a number of accidents involving heavy vehicles. I would like to know if this is just an assertion or whether there was some substratum of fact of that allegation.

He must have been listening to the member for Croydon. For the minister's benefit, I can provide him with the detail. Obviously, the day before yesterday, there was a runaway truck that killed one person. Then, in September, a truck crashed through the gate in the morning. On 16 February, unfortunately there was another tragedy when a lady was killed when a semi-trailer ran into her car. Back in April last year, a truck caught fire in the tunnels and again, another truck caught fire just above the tunnels. A semi-trailer ran through the tollgate, hit the traffic lights and the walls across the road and then again, a truck crashed into several cars at the bottom of the freeway. There are some facts for you, minister. That is certainly not an assertion; there have been a number of very serious accidents in the last couple of years.

**Mr GARDNER (Morialta) (16:42):** I enjoyed the opportunity to take part in my first budget estimates process as a new member in this house and it was certainly a very instructive experience. For me, as a new member, as some of the other new members have commented, we learnt a lot during this process. One thing that I learned was that the Labor Party cannot be trusted.

The Labor Party went to the election promising that it would be an education government—it is not an education government, it cannot be trusted. The Labor Party went to the election promising that the government would spend \$450 million on the Adelaide Oval and 'not a penny more' and we are now up for at least \$535 million on that project—the Labor Party cannot be trusted.

In the last week, we have seen a great deal of union discontent with the Labor Party. It went to the election promising that public servants would not lose their terms and conditions and it is now going back on that pledge—it cannot be trusted.

The AWU and the PSA's discontent at the moment has been reflected by a number of people within the Labor Party as I understand it. In fact, one public servant was unkind enough to the Labor Party the other day to say that the left of the Labor Party does not even support this budget.

We know that the AWU is actively spruiking now for the Minister for Education to take over. Unfortunately, the bad news for them is that the left within cabinet—the Minister for Education, the Minister for Water, all of those hard-line warriors of the union movement—all support this budget. They all voted for it in the cabinet. We have been told on a number of occasions that this budget has the unanimous support of the cabinet.

I note that the Minister for Education, while he presents himself as this lily white agent of change within the government, accused the government in August when he said:

We have got into the habit of trying to avoid public criticism by truncating the public policy process. Sometimes we get away with that and sometimes we don't. They call it the announce-and-defend rather than the debate-and-decide model and we have to be in the latter.

The Minister for Education suggests that the government should be in the debate and decide the model rather than the announce and defend model, yet he is as culpable as anyone else in the government for propagating this announce and defence sort of policy. He certainly cannot be trusted with the government of South Australia.

We know that the Minister for Education says that he does not like the announce and defend. He wants communities to debate issues, and government to come in and make decisions later. Yet, in his very own portfolio, part of his budget savings measures is to take 68 school communities and give them no opportunity to debate the policy of whether or not they should amalgamate: or, if they do debate it, their decision will not be taken into account.

I asked him in the budget estimates, for example, about the Stradbroke primary school, which is within my electorate, and what the process would be with this amalgamation savings target. The minister's response, while he said first that he did not want to pre-empt discussions with the local community, was, 'We will, in the first instance, be seeking to reach agreement with those schools.' That is all well and good: that is part of the debate before the decision. But then he went on to say, 'We are committed to the savings task.' He promotes the concept that there will be discussion within communities but he has already told those communities what the answer will be.

How can those school communities go into good faith negotiations and discussions with the government, this government that says they will be amalgamated, when they already know what the answer will be? The Minister for Education went on to say, 'The budget is clear in that it anticipates that the savings measures are sought to be achieved by the commencement of the 2013 school year.' So much for his claims of being a consultative minister—an option for the Labor Party that would present them with a clean-cut fresh appearance going into the 2014 election. His hands are as sullied and tarnished by the tar in this budget as are the Treasurer's and the Premier's.

The Minister for Education went to the election as part of a government that made no mention of the green school grants that it was going to cut. He was part of the government that made no mention of the school security grants that are going to be cut. I know many schools in my electorate have benefited from that security grant over recent years. The Campbelltown Primary School has had vandalism incidents at its site cut dramatically since the putting up of the fence that was built as a result of this grant. However, schools in the future that have problems with vandalism on school grounds after hours will no longer have the benefit that Campbelltown primary had.

This government went to the election saying nothing about the \$11 million worth of cuts it was going to make to small schools, and saying nothing about the fact that it was going to cut the adult re-entry program in the Department of Education-run schools. The Marden school, that currently has well in excess of 1,000 students, many of whom entered this school after they turned 21 years so they could get further training and education in order to get a SACE certificate, will no longer have the opportunity to do so. That is a result of this budget decision, fully supported by the Minister for Education, who is certainly no white knight.

Further in the Minister for Education's portfolio, we see in the budget this year that additional above-entitlement supports allocated to schools with multiple and dual campuses will be reviewed and reduced. The minister has tried to defend this decision on a number of occasions by saying that those schools are operating in a way that they can have efficiencies so that they will not need above-entitlement support. I will use Norwood Morialta school as an example of a multiple

and dual campus school because it is the biggest school and is also half within my electorate. It has a middle school with years 8 to 10 in Rostrevor and a senior school with years 11 and 12 in Magill. They are 3½ kilometres apart. Each of those sites clearly needs a library. The middle school needs a library and the high school needs a library, otherwise the students will have a 7 kilometre round trip in order to borrow a book for their class work.

The fact of the matter is that multiple and dual campus schools have added costs and complexities that cannot just be explained away by the minister as efficiencies that can be pulled out of nowhere. I asked him in the budget estimates proceedings, 'Will the minister describe the efficiency measures he thinks the schools can take in order save the \$600,000, which is the above-entitlement support that is necessary to keep these above-entitlement staff positions?' He went to some length to say that I had misquoted the correct figure—he said I was off by a figure of \$30,000—so we will put that to one side for the moment. The essence of his response was this:

What we were going to do—and we are doing this—is work with the school to identify the way in which the school works across the two campuses, because there are ways in which the school works across the two campuses that can create costs for the school, and there are ways of working across the two campuses in terms of the way that staff are allocated that can reduce costs. We want to find ways in which we can work with the school to minimise those costs.

What a mealy-mouthed and pathetic explanation of his budget decision from a man who claims to believe in the 'consult and then decide' model of operating a government. We have this budget decision that is going to rip \$600,000 a year out of the budget of the Norwood Morialta High School, and now the government is going to the school and talk about where, maybe, efficiencies can be made.

If this minister were remotely serious when he says that we should be in the 'debate and decide' model, they should have gone to the school first. They should have been discussing this with the school first, yet we can see in Budget Paper 6 the line item that says that this school is going to lose the money, along with the other multiple campus schools in South Australia. It is a disgrace. He cannot be trusted. He is part of a government that cannot be trusted.

The lesson we learnt out of estimates is that the Australian Labor Party cannot be trusted. But there is one more thing about the Minister for Education's performance during the estimates proceedings that really caught my eye. From a man who claims to be the Premier-in-waiting, according to that *SA Weekend* article, we had a performance: he was the only minister to my knowledge—he was certainly the only minister out of the seven estimates proceedings that I saw—who took Dorothy Dixers from the government. He made a significant opening statement.

We had four hours to look at the estimates for the education portfolio. I believe that—and the chairman may correct me—he would have spent at least three quarters of the time allocated answering lengthy Dorothy Dix questions from government members. The fact is that, when the minister knew that the question was coming and had a three-page explanation that he was then able to read into the *Hansard*, the fact that we had four hours to discuss the estimates is a nonsense. We were given the same number of questions as the government, but the minister took very little time to answer our questions. He took many of them on notice. He fobbed many of them off, but he took lengthy, lengthy responses to the government questions.

In the estimates proceedings, I give many government ministers credit, and I notice the Attorney-General in the chamber who ran very thorough and smooth estimates. He answered all our questions honestly. He was a gentleman. The Minister for Education, I think, lacks the ticker to be the leader of this state. The fact is that, out of the Attorney-General, the Treasurer—even the Minister for Families and Communities, who I thought was overly combative in her approach to the estimates process, the Minister for Education was the only minister who felt the need to protect himself from scrutiny by making lengthy, interminable, boring answers to Dorothy Dix questions that, if members were interested in those issues, could easily have been put in a letter.

Estimates should be an opportunity for the opposition to grill the government about what it puts in its budget and to hold the government accountable. This government, to its credit at least tried to focus questions for the opposition in this estimates process, yet the Minister for Education did not have the guts to do that, and for that he stands condemned. The government went to the election announcing cuts of \$750 million recommended by the Sustainable Budget Commission. We saw \$2.5 billion worth of cuts and, as the shadow treasurer said earlier today, it is the things that the government did not talk about during the election campaign that leaves it standing condemned as not being up-front with the South Australian public.



This government never went to the election promising that it would jack up the car parking fees at our public hospitals. It never said before the election that it was going to jack up the rents on Housing Trust units for pensioners. Not only did it not say that it was going to cut 3,750 public servants, it actually promised the exact opposite. It did not go to the election saying that it would jack up the cost of driver's licences, metro bus tickets and mining royalties. It did not admit that it was going to end the solar hot water rebates. It did not say that it would cut the first home buyers grant for existing dwellings.

*[Sitting extended beyond 17:00 on motion of Hon. J.R. Rau]*

**Mr GARDNER:** The government went to the election saying nothing about the increases that it was going to impose on stamp duty. The government went to the election without any mention of the fact that it was going to be cutting 10 per cent from the budget for the Police Complaints Authority, which I had the opportunity to ask the Attorney-General about in the estimates process.

The fact is that the Labor Party cannot be trusted. Throughout the entire election campaign (which was so significantly about the believability of either party's costings), the government said the Royal Adelaide Hospital would cost \$1.7 billion, but we now know that the government signed off in November to a \$1.8 billion cost. We have spoken about the Adelaide Oval which started out as a \$300 million state government commitment, then it went to \$450 and now it is \$515; and originally with any federal funds to be offset against our \$450, but now, potentially, it is in addition to our \$515.

This is a government that started out by saying that Adelaide had no need for a desalination plant, then saying that it was their idea that we have a desalination plan and, while we are at it, why don't we build one that is twice the size we need, which will result in our water prices being double what they were five years ago. This is a government that cannot be trusted. It is not even just on the big ticket items.

In my electorate, the Labor Party was claiming credit for the Montacute CFS station—'a new site leased and building begins this year'. They claimed credit for securing a new land lease and station for the Montacute CFS, yet in estimates the other day, Mr Euan Ferguson said that the project will probably be spread over two financial years. He said, '...there is work that needs to be done before the project can progress and planning approvals are obtained'. The minister admitted that the project had been delayed. The fact is that, during the election campaign, the government said that building had already commenced. It is a government that cannot be trusted.

Also in relation the emergency services portfolio, I refer to an article in this week's *East Torrens Messenger*:

Before the March state poll sitting Morialta member Lindsay Simmons promised a Labor government would act on a new fire siren [for the people of Athelstone]. 'It gives people the option to take control over their lives, whether it be to turn on the sprinkler system, whether to evacuate children, old people and pets,' Ms Simmons said at the time.

Before the election, the Labor Party wanted to claim credit for this idea. After the election, they have done nothing in six months.

The responses we have got from the Labor Party and the Minister for Emergency Services to every letter from me are: 'We are doing a statewide audit of CFS stations'; 'We will think about it'; 'It probably might happen'; 'It is probably not going to happen before this year's fire danger season.' An article in the *Messenger* this week states:

A spokeswoman for Emergency Services Minister Michael Wright said it was up to the CFS and Campbelltown Council to find a site for the siren—not the government. She also said a new siren required a development application and there is no government money set aside to pay for it.

I asked about this in estimates, the very day that *Messenger* article came out. The story from the minister had changed again. When I asked him about it, minister Wright said:

My advice is that the cost is not the issue but the trouble is finding a location the neighbours are happy with...We think the Campbelltown City Council has a role to play here, working with the local area to find a suitable site and convince neighbours of its suitability.

It was pointed out to the minister that the Campbelltown City Council wrote to him in May suggesting that this siren be installed at Wadmore Park. They had suggested a site.

The minister then went onto a new explanation, saying, 'It's not my decision and it's not the government's decision.' Yet, in March, the Labor Party wanted to take this to the election as something they could hold up and say, 'Vote Labor: we can be trusted to deliver this siren at Athelstone.' What we now know is the Labor Party cannot be trusted to deliver on anything. In the last couple of days we saw in *The Advertiser*:

Labor backbenchers also confirm it is getting harder to sell the message in the suburbs. There is a view people generally are not listening to Mr Rann or that when they do, they don't believe anything he says. 'I just don't get it, I actually don't,' one backbencher said. 'I can't figure out why they (Mr Rann, Mr Foley, Patrick Conlon) can't see what the public thinks of them.'

I cannot work it out either. It is an embarrassment.

We have a troika at the top—the Premier, the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport—who cannot see what the public thinks of them; that is, no-one believes a word they say. They have been tried; they have been given another opportunity and another opportunity, yet in project area after area, in funding promise after promise and in commitment after commitment, they have been found wanting. They cannot be trusted and their alternative is a cabinet who unanimously endorsed their knowledge and who unanimously endorsed those broken promises.

There is very little that the Labor Party has going for it in its future, and when they look at generational change, if they are looking for a clean skin, God help me. The only one that I can see over there with the gumption to be opposing the Treasurer is the member for Croydon. He may be a generational change in the wrong direction, but at least it would be something that would present a different face to the troika at the top who do not listen to the community and who, according to their own back bench, cannot see what the public thinks of them.

You have the white knight from the AWU, the minister for education, who, probably in more spending areas than any other minister, has gone against his own promise to debate and consult rather than decide and then defend. It is a disgrace. This government cannot be trusted and I look forward to hearing other speakers on the same matter.

**Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (17:00):** I shall be brief. I do commend the member for Morialta, and I think his 18 or so minutes expresses the frustration that he felt in the seven sessions of the five days of estimates that he actually took part in. For my sins, I was actually involved in all five days, across 13 different portfolio areas and 15 hours, and I asked questions for 13 of those, so I suppose I had the chance to express my level of frustration a bit more than some other members.

I enjoy estimates questions opportunities. I think it provides a good chance for us to drill down to specific issues. There is a chance for some level of informal chat to occur. It is interesting that some members do not choose to do that; they choose to have quite lengthy opening statements and then a lot of questions from their own side. Some are very comfortable in just being asked questions, so I commend those members who do that.

There are a couple of areas I want to focus on today. The first is the health area and community private hospitals. We had a good opportunity to ask questions of minister Hill in that regard. It disappoints me immensely that this decision, taking effect from July of 2011, will withdraw \$1.174 million from the Glenelg, Keith, Ardrossan and Moonta community private hospitals. Being lucky enough to represent the Ardrossan and Moonta hospitals, this decision disappoints me terribly, and I know the communities in the central Yorke Peninsula and northern Yorke Peninsula are very concerned about the impact it will have on health provision in those areas.

I want to put a few basic facts before the chamber. In the Moonta scenario, up to eight beds per day can be made available for public use at that private hospital. The government pays, as per a negotiation, \$120.05 for every day of bed occupancy. To me, that seems the cheapest public bed hospital you will ever find in your life. It is a mad situation. It jeopardises the future of the Moonta hospital. Twenty staff, potentially, face retrenchment from probably March or April next year, because the hospital has to ensure that it has the funds to pay out the expected costs of any retrenchment payment to any of their staff members.

In the Ardrossan scenario, they have had an agreement in place for 4½ years for a contribution originally at \$10,000 per month, which has had some level of indexation, bringing it up to about \$140,000 per year now for accident and emergency funding. The loss of that will make an important difference to their ability to fund their clinical care beds, and indeed place the Ardrossan hospital, which has an extensive area for high and low-care aged services, also in doubt. These are two communities that are vibrant and strong. They have great futures. There is development occurring in that area. The populations will continue to grow.

To me, it seems a ridiculous decision to withdraw a relatively small amount of money from the health budget, being some \$4.5 billion in total, and taking \$1.174 million away from these four community private hospitals. That is why the member for Light's contribution today really did disappoint me. I have had points of order taken on me before for the use of the word 'gobbledegook'. I would have said that about the member for Light but, given that some people have expressed a frustration with that, I will say it was all balderdash then, because what the member for Light demonstrated to me today was that he does not truly understand communities. He wanted to take political opportunism out of it, and I thought more of the member for Light than that. Anyway, we will move forward.

I had great concerns also in the small business and regional development areas when it affects Regional Development Australia and their reduced funding from 2013, and indeed reduced funding for the Business Enterprise Centres from July of 2011. These are government-supported arms of economic development at the lower level that do truly make a difference. They have existed for some years. They have a wide network of clients. They provide support in so many different ways that make a difference to the success of small business, and the challenges of the GFC have presented themselves to metropolitan and regional areas alike. Small business is the lifeblood of South Australia, but it appears to me that really the Labor government has been prepared in this budget to sacrifice any support for small business.

That is extremely disappointing, because if we want our economy to grow we need to ensure that small business is supported so that little problems do not become big problems. Quite often it only takes a relatively small amount of effort from an RDA or a BEC; those groups know how to help small businesses grow their businesses, but the withdrawal of funds and the threat that that poses—by basically both ministers saying that it is necessary for those groups to go out and find alternative sources of funding which can only come from one source and that is from the businesses that they support which, indeed, puts more pressure upon the businesses that need their support—disappoints me immensely.

I commend the member for Waite on his questioning in respect to Playford Capital, which is venture capital at the lower level of the scale with a greater level of risk associated with it, but the economic benefit to the state is magnified many times through that. So, withdrawing funds from Playford Capital and, indeed, withdrawing funds from Innovate SA, which is based out of Mawson Lakes, again, puts more pressure upon small business.

All members here would know that there are 135,000 small businesses in South Australia, and 96 per cent of our businesses are classified as small to medium enterprises. If government support cannot exist to ensure that small business is there to grow the economy in South Australia, it places the future of our great state at risk. So, there has to be a reversal of this situation; there has to be an inward-looking Labor government that recognises that it has made errors and does something about it to move our state forward, because if it does not then it is putting everything at great risk.

Finally, I want to close on the Department of Planning and Local Government estimates session: it is very important. When it comes to the future growth of our state, with population projections, we need to make sure that we get that right. I was rather amazed, and I know that the member for Light has questioned this before, that concerns have been expressed about Liberal members seemingly wanting to spend more money all the time. I raise the point that the DPLG holds an important role in the future in getting the planning right, and the member for Light acknowledges that too.

I was disappointed to note that there has been a 10 per cent reduction in the salaries costs of DPLG. These are the people who need to be there; they need to make sure that they are supporting local government and business when it comes to development plan amendments, and they need to make sure that they get the planning right for the 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide. If there is one area of government that needs support within the bureaucracy it seems to me that the DPLG is it. So, that is frustrating to me.

In reply, the minister talked about better use of resources, condensing things, making sure that outcomes are focusing on areas of strategic needs, but that means that other things are missing out. Communities across South Australia have expressed a lot of concern about the continual delay in the consideration of development plan amendments, so we need to make sure that we get that right. I welcomed the estimates sessions. I am sure that other members want to contribute. Thank you.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite) (17:07):** I will speak briefly about the portfolios for which I am responsible, starting with the Motor Sport Board, for which I am the opposition spokesperson. I note with concern that the Treasurer would not rule out increased ticket prices and that the event has encountered some difficulties as far as the Auditor-General is concerned, particularly regarding contracts and contract management. I hope that the concerns raised during estimates are taken seriously by the Treasurer, who manages the event, and that he sorts out the internal issues within the Motor Sport Board so that the Auditor-General is satisfied.

I also note that \$3 million was wasted on the flawed Victoria Park proposal put forward by the Treasurer. I remind the house that the opposition agreed and was prepared to pass legislation to enable the permanent grandstand for both motor sport and racing to be built but that the Treasurer went to water, along with the Premier and the whole of the Labor cabinet, and did not proceed with the idea that they had championed. Why? They wanted to appease the then member for Adelaide, who was a member of the Labor Party.

The opposition fully supports the Clipsal; it is a great event. To give the government credit, it has continued the good work of the former government and taken it from strength to strength, and I commend the Treasurer for being prepared to take questions from the opposition without Dorothy Dixers. I think it a sign of a good minister when they are prepared to do that and give the opposition a go and not waste the parliament's time with Dorothies.

While he is here, could I extend the same compliment to the Minister for Science and Technology, who was also prepared to take questions from the opposition without Dorothy Dixers which, again, shows the sign of a confident minister across his brief, not wasting the time of the parliament. Although, I must say that from some of his answers I was not quite sure that he was across his brief, but I will come to that in a minute.

Let me move on to the Department of Trade and Economic Development. I was very saddened during estimates that the minister and the government intended to send 78 public servants packing before Christmas, some with as little as two weeks' notice; they were those on contracts. That had not been revealed in the budget papers. It was shocking news and very disappointing.

I was also very disappointed to hear of the savage cuts to the Department of Trade and Economic Development from the very areas where we need them most—in export development and industry attraction to South Australia and business migration. While marketing, promotions and those sorts of activities have had fewer staff cuts, the areas where we most need them have been slashed to the bone.

We are spending \$300,000 on things like manufacturing thinkers in residence, while cutting funding to organisations such as the Council for International Trade and Commerce (CITCSA), Innovate SA, BioInnovation SA, Playford Capital, and a few other very important entities for small business, not to mention business enterprise centres. What South Australia needs from the Department of Trade and Economic Development, minister, is action, not thinkers.

I was also disappointed to have revealed the sham of the Treasurer's promise of 12 July 2008 that he would attract 50,000 Filipino workers to South Australia in some sort of a grand migration scheme. Well, of course, it was revealed that no MOU has been signed or is ever likely to be signed, and the whole thing was just a media stunt to get a front page on *The Advertiser*. I think *The Advertiser* and others in the media should be quite angry and upset about that media spin to which there was no substance whatsoever.

I want to move on to the area of defence, because it was here that some of the most stunning revelations from estimates were uncovered. In particular, the Treasurer, as Minister for Defence Industries, let it slip—I think it was an absolute slip-up—that, of the \$8 billion to be spent on the air warfare destroyer program only \$2.5 billion was to be spent in Australia. The rest is being sent off in cheques to overseas companies.

I do not think he is on top of the good boy list with the federal Minister for Defence and the federal minister for defence industries, who have Senate estimates next week, and he will now face questioning on the level of Australian content within that program. That slip-up was made with senior defence staff present. I am sure it is accurate, and it makes a sham of the Premier's claim that \$8 billion had been attracted to South Australia by that defence project—utter nonsense. It turns out that our slice of the action is something like \$1.4 billion over 10 years, as little as \$140 million a year—a fraction of what South Australians were led to believe during the election campaign.

Of course, we have also virtually had the prospect of the fourth air warfare destroyer written from the books. The Premier has confirmed that will not be happening. They were some of the most stunning revelations, I think, out of estimates, because they are very important projects for the state.

Finally, to move to the area of science and technology. I am delighted that the government allotted 2¼ hours to it. It was time well spent, and the minister was very lucky to get a ten minute early mark. Although, as I said, I do commend the minister for taking all of the opposition's questions and answering them as best he could.

However, I would say that there are some disappointments from that estimates sequence, most particularly that the government chose that period to announce the axing of Playford Capital. It could have announced it during the budget, but it chose not to; it announced it in the depths of the last day in the late afternoon of estimates. I think that is disappointing. A lot of businesses will be upset.

I do not agree with the minister that Playford Capital has been a venture capital entity; I think it has been a seed funding entity, more than anything. I do not think it is a venture capital enterprise. If one talks to the venture capital industry, venture capital is a different animal. It is usually looking for investments in the \$5 million to \$10 million range. It is looking for companies that are already a viable proposition. It looks to take them to the next stage. It is quite different from initial seed start-up funding. There are various stages in the development process for a start-up from genesis to IPO. There are various types of—

**The Hon. J.J. Snelling:** You're splitting hairs, Martin.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** No; I am not splitting hairs. I commend to the minister, who is interjecting, that he undertake a bit of research on how the venture capital industry works. This is not a venture capital proposition in my view, and I am happy to debate him on it in any forum. The axing of Playford Capital is a real disappointment. Information regarding Bio Innovation SA with the implications for the Thebarton Biosciences Precinct and the Centre for Plant Functional Genomics is equally a very important bit of news coming from estimates.

This is a very important part of the government's investment in science and technology. It is linked to industry growth and it is an area that should not be neglected. Sadly, it has been and when you take the package of all the things I have mentioned during this brief contribution together, the signal it sends to small businesses and SMEs and to the state economy and its stakeholders generally is that Labor is walking away. They are not walking away in other state governments. They are still there helping their businesses. So, it is a bad budget for business in this state. With those remarks, I conclude, and I look forward to the remainder of the sitting year.

**Mr VENNING (Schubert) (17:16):** These estimates were never going to produce any positive answers from the Rann Labor government following their horror budget but at least it got the Treasurer to finally admit that they have no-one to blame for their financial situation but themselves. Despite repeatedly blaming the global financial crisis for our state's financial position, the Treasurer finally admitted, when put under pressure last week during estimates, that the Rann government's level of expenditure was 'shocking'.

'There is no question that the blowout in expenses is our problem,' Foley told Estimates Committee A last Thursday. As the Treasurer has now openly admitted that the state's ballooning debt and interest payments of nearly \$2 million per day is a result of its expenditure, why are 3,740 Public Service workers going to lose their jobs? Why do small schools have to have their grant funding cut which in many cases will lead to their closure? Why do wineries have to put up with the cellar door rebates cap being lowered which will put huge disincentives to our key tourism drawcards? The damage will be a lot more than I thought. Why does PIRSA have to manage a \$20 million cut when there is already such a lean budget to fund research and development?

I was amazed to hear in the budget speech that the government will cut the funding to the advisory board, but I will talk about that a bit later. I could go on and on, but my point is this: by their own admission, it is the Rann Labor government's mess, so surely they should be the ones to feel the pain and fix it. What about reducing the number of ministers in the cabinet? It would have been obvious and it would have been easy. Why does the Premier's media unit and spin team not have to reduce its numbers? What about enforcing the cap on the Treasurer's mobile phone bill? These ideas will all save money, and yet the Rann Labor government has decided that South Australians should have to wear the pain of their years of financial mismanagement.

PIRSA will have cuts of \$20 million per year every year for the next four years out of its \$133 million budget. That is \$80 million in total and 179 jobs to be axed, as the member for Hammond has said earlier, in addition to the 106 jobs that were lost in PIRSA in Rural Solutions prior to the election. Yet the minister said in estimates yesterday:

I conclude my opening statement by reiterating that the government recognises the contribution that our primary industries make to the state's economy and wellbeing and that PIRSA's role in supporting this sector remains vital.

One wonders! The minister also said in his opening statement:

...it is planned that PIRSA services will be consolidated into the major centres aligned with the new state government regions. This would include Port Lincoln, Clare, Lenswood, Loxton and Mount Gambier as hubs for service delivery.

What does that mean for the fantastic research centre at Nuriootpa? What about the department office at Jamestown with a long history; what happens to that? Forty of the jobs set to be lost will be from rural areas which will have a significant impact on country areas. The minister says that these cuts were arrived at by examining the work carried out by of Rural Solutions. As announced in the budget, Rural Solutions will now be operating in full cost recovery mode and farmers will have to pay full price for any advice they receive. That is appalling. Those who have the money can get the advice; a bad, wrong message. The minister also said yesterday:

SARDI will exit some areas of R&D and reduce some state investment across a range of research programs.

That is an absolute, direct wrong decision. In the time when we ought to be increasing our R&D expenses, we are cutting; all one way, all pulling out.

Another big hit to agriculture has been the announcement in the budget that government support for the Advisory Board of Agriculture will cease. This board is the governing body of the Agriculture Bureau and provides policy and recommendations on agriculture management to the state government and direct advice to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. Where will the government now get its advice? I sat on this board myself for eight years. I went to a function of the board last night where it presented its awards, and I cannot believe that this has happened.

This group of people has always been fiercely apolitical; never in all my time have I heard them criticise the government of the day. Now they are not able to defend themselves or defend their existence, and I find that rather appalling. I note looking in *Hansard* that we asked the question of the minister twice. I am very concerned when you see how lacking we are in rural leadership right across country South Australia; they are not there. I am a product—good or bad—of rural youth, which no longer exists. Why does it not exist? This government just took those resources away from it.

When it was set up, it had five full-time paid government advisers. One by one, Labor governments took them away and, of course, they withered on the vine. We have now seen the Farmers Federation at an extremely low ebb. I know this is an industry and not government organisation, but we should not allow a major political body of farmers to get to this point where it has just a handful of members. It is appalling, and there has been nothing said from the government. I am very concerned about this. I have never seen our farmer organisations any weaker than they are at the moment, and nothing is being said about it. It is appalling, and it is high time there was some intervention here, because we do need to have strong farmer lobby groups.

We had the United Farmers and Stockowners, which was very strong. It had a membership of 3,000 to 4,000 back in its heyday. Today, I do not know, because it is all very secretive; I am not allowed to go to the annual general meeting, because I am no longer a member. In the old days, MPs were invited to the annual general meeting. We went there and often took a bit of abuse from the chair or whatever, but now it is a closed shop. You are not allowed to go. I am also very annoyed that most of these positions are not elected: they are selected. That is wrong, and how can this be? It goes on; it is very sad indeed that we have come to this.

I am very concerned now, after seeing rural youth gone, SAFF in this position, and now we are seeing the Agriculture Bureau being targeted. Ag bureaus are a very strong movement. I have five in the Barossa with over 1,500 members across South Australia, and you are just about to cut the management body, just pull it away. What do you want? You do not want leaders in agriculture. Who are your future farmers; where are they coming from? Where are your leaders? Our younger generation will not stand up; they do not join these organisations. There is no incentive at all to do that; none. I am pretty upset that the government does not recognise a need here.

You need leadership in all organisations, particularly those that produce your food, and you are going to cut the bureau down now, and for what? For about 1½ salaries. It is a disgrace, and I cannot believe how small minded it is. Do you know why? Because it is a soft target. These people are not going to speak up; they are not going to bite back. Well, so much for loyalty. I am appalled. Surely, with the announcement yesterday that Australia's food production industry is worth around \$3.5 billion, up 7 per cent, reaching a new record high, the Rann Labor government would want to have advice on how the agriculture sector can be supported so that our farmers can share in the good times after years of protracted drought.

These cuts are a strong sign that they do not value the contribution that the primary industry sector makes to the state. Now I would like to discuss very briefly the cellar door rebate before I sit down. I tried to get some answers from the minister for agriculture yesterday; however none was forthcoming and he said it was not part of his portfolio responsibility. I would have thought that he would have had some input into this decision with its flow-on effects to the wine grape industry, which is part of his portfolio responsibility.

The Rann Labor government has decided to reduce the cap of the cellar door subsidy offered to cellar doors from \$521,000 per producer to \$50,000 per producer. This will heavily impact not only on wineries but also the wine regions as a whole, especially those boutique style wineries that rely on cellar door sales. I have mentioned to members privately who these companies are. I will not put it on the record because I do not think it is fair or proper, but this is going to hit a lot deeper than I thought. I thought \$521,000 would only hit the big fellows. That is wrong. All members would know that there are several boutique wineries that only sell at cellar door or by mail order. They will be hit extremely strongly by this—in fact, to the tune of half a million dollars, some of them.

This morning I got the figure from the SA Wine Industry Association and, per year, it will cost \$1.7 million straight out of their pockets. Where is that coming from in times like this? The Hon. Kevin Foley said, 'The measure will assist to better target small producers and will save \$7 million over three years.' The figure I was given this morning says \$1.7 million, so he is not far away with that figure over three years. I question why they would do this. This is the wrong message and the wrong time, and I cannot understand why.

We all know the grape industry is battling. Why impose an impost like this? Who are the penny-pinching sods who decided they would pull this money away from the people out there? What have we got in the Barossa, the Coonawarra, the Riverland, the Clare Valley, the Adelaide Hills, McLaren Vale and Langhorne Creek if we do not have successful cellar door sales? What tourism is there without them? There is none. So, I say to the minister and the government: please reconsider this and put something back because, without it, it is going to hurt. I also remind the house that some of these people support Labor—one, in particular—and you ought to have a bloody good look at it.

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (17:27):** With regard to the estimates process, I will say a few words. In fairness to my colleagues who would like to say something this evening, I will not take long.

There is a lot of debate about the estimates process and whether or not it is useful. Having eagerly sat through my first session of estimates—and I mean that quite genuinely; as a brand new member of parliament I take every opportunity to participate in everything I can and make the very most of it—the conclusion I have come to is that it actually comes down to the quality and attitude of the minister as to whether or not it is useful. I have seen a whole range of ministers work within these committees. We have hard-working, diligent shadow ministers doing their very best, and other backbench MPs supporting them.

I have seen some of the government ministers being very forthright and open, doing their very best to answer questions, not using the Dorothy Dixers and not wasting a lot of time with long, useless opening statements, and I commend those ministers who have done that. I have seen ministers who do their very best to answer questions. You can tell the difference between someone who actually has a handle on his or her portfolio versus someone who does not. I saw one minister not answer a question without referring to an adviser, which I thought was disgraceful. However, there were some ministers who certainly did take on the challenge and who had some faith in themselves to represent their portfolios, and I congratulate them for that.

With regard to outcomes of the estimates, I think we have to accept the fact that, whether or not the process is perfect, we need to make the most of it. We need to ask penetrating questions

and get as much information out of this as we possibly can. Certainly, there was a lot of information that came out of the estimates process.

There were issues to do with the fact that the highly touted MOU to bring Filipino workers to South Australia has not progressed. Members should keep in mind the reason for trying to do that is to leave locally skilled workers to do the jobs that we need done. As our requirement for labour increases, people are not all heading off to the mines leaving rural and regional areas, and suburban metro areas as well. Absolutely nothing has happened there.

We found out that the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has not spoken to the federal minister for approximately two months. We found out that many DTED staff, who were expected to go in this financial year, will actually lose their jobs before the end of the financial year. We found out that the jobs of park rangers are at risk. We found out that a minute fraction of the money that was expected to come into this state through the air warfare destroyer program will never come into South Australia.

We found out even more than we knew before about the fact that water prices are due to skyrocket. We found out that this government needs and depends upon traffic infringement revenue for this budget—that if it does not earn the amount of money that it is looking for in traffic infringement fines the budget will be in difficulty. We found out that a lot of issues that were known to this government before the last election have been kept secret from the South Australian public until now.

I have to say that the estimates process has provided us with some information that we did not have before. With regard to the budget overall, and this is just broad ranging, I had two opportunities—20 minutes and 10 minutes—to talk about the budget. I do not plan to rehash all of that, but, certainly, I will highlight a few of the things that are particularly disappointing to me from a regional South Australian perspective.

I want to highlight the lack of funding to the RDAs; the removal of the fuel subsidy; the small schools grant (as every member here knows, it is not the biggest amount of money but to me one of the most disappointing parts of this budget); the cellar door rebate; the PIRSA cuts (\$80 million and 180 people to go out of PIRSA); lack of funding for country and outback roads; and Shared Services, which I have spoken about here many times—just a great shame.

*Mr Pederick interjecting:*

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN:** The minister is not able to tell us, thank you, member for Hammond. The minister is still not able to tell us where the 180 jobs will go from out of PIRSA. Will they come out of Jamestown? I was at Jamestown on Sunday, and people there are terrified about the loss of their jobs. Not only can the minister not tell us how many of those Jamestown jobs will go but also he cannot tell us when he will decide, which is terribly disappointing.

Forests: forward selling three rotations of our forests. Basically, it looks like that money is going to pay for the Adelaide Oval upgrade. It had to come from somewhere. So, forward selling—generations of forestry and work of future income just smitten, absolutely gone. One of the things that surprises me enormously is that, for the first time ever, there is no regional budget paper. That sends a big message right there.

One of the other things about this budget that we now know more than we knew before the estimates process is the lack of consultation. Not only has there been a lack of consultation with the people of South Australia, but I am confident that there has been a lack of consultation from within the Labor Party, from within the government. I am sure that a lot of Labor members of parliament are very disappointed with the impact that this budget will have on their electorates, as I am with the impact on the electorate of Stuart.

I would just like to highlight two really stark things to me in this budget. They are in different parts of the state and completely different issues, but they highlight the problem with this government: first, the small schools grant (which I have spoken about extensively previously and which will affect eight schools in the electorate of Stuart) to go. It is only \$30,000 per school, but to those schools it makes an enormous difference. To those towns, to the hard-working students, principals, families and governing councils it makes an enormous difference.

Secondly, the Parks recreational centre. The member for Light—and I am glad that he is here to listen to this—said that we would falsely claim the Parks issue as our own. Honestly, that is crazy. The Parks issue is not just an Enfield issue and it is not just an Adelaide issue. When I lived



in Adelaide I lived in Croydon. I used to go to the Parks recreational centre a few times a week for years.

**Mr Pengilly:** You didn't vote for the member for Croydon, did you?

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN:** Thank you very much, member for Finniss, I did not support the member for Croydon at the election booth. No, I certainly did not. That is a fantastic place. I am not claiming it as my own. We are not claiming it as our own. However, it is an example of what is going on within this government when the government can plan to slash something like that without consulting with the people. I am sure—and I am not putting words in anyone's mouth—that there was minimal consultation from within the local government members of parliament who would be dreadfully affected by this. It certainly came out afterwards how astounded they were at that.

I look at one extreme: a small amount of money primarily in country schools—I know it affects city schools as well—a small schools grant, and a large amount of money, \$5 million I think it is, for the Parks in a metro setting. That highlights to me that the government is not looking after communities. The government is not consulting with communities. The government is not doing the very best it can for people on the ground, and I am terribly disappointed about that.

I will pick up on a couple of comments the member for Light made before. I congratulate him for the fact that he did stand up and speak. I have to give him credit for that. I think you were the only government member who stood up to speak. I do not want to miss anyone out, but you were the only one I heard. I will tell you what, you made three big mistakes. First, giving us a hard time about the Parks Community Centre; secondly, asking how we would have done things differently. There are a lot of ways, but one very simple thing would have been to rebuild the Royal Adelaide Hospital on site where it is right now. Saving approximately \$1 billion over the life of the project would have made a huge, huge difference. The third thing you said and where you made a dreadful mistake was in talking about our trust in our leader, the member for Heysen—huge, huge error. There is not one person on this side who does not trust her to stand up for South Australia.

I will give a very good example of why. When she was in here on the very first day of estimates questioning the Premier of this state, he tried to give her a hard time because she made a mistake. The Premier said to our leader, 'Look, you are getting all angry. Don't get angry with your staff because they've mixed things up.' She instantly, without any hesitation, said, 'Premier, that was my mistake, I mixed up that question. It was my mistake and I fixed it.' That is why we trust our leader.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN:** You made three very bad mistakes when you stood up to speak. I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words on the estimates.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (17:37):** I am full of nervous tension here. Perhaps the most wondrous thing about estimates is that this year, for the first time in four years, all the new members had to sit through it and I did not. I thought that was wonderful. However, in saying that, I want to pick up on a couple of things. The member for Kavel spoke a few minutes ago. I think he raised a pertinent issue in relation to the Burnside council. I am not going to go into the ifs, buts and maybes, but the very fact that he raised it is indicative of the Minister for State/Local Government Relations; that is the problem.

That is what estimates exposes. It exposes the competent ministers who can handle themselves in the committee and it exposes the weakness of ministers who are just not up to it and do not cut the mustard, quite frankly. Just on Burnside, it is quite untrue that, as has been suggested, the minister could not have done something about it. The minister could have stepped in and put in an administrator months and months ago and saved a lot of time and money.

*Mr Piccolo interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr PENGILLY:** Moving on from that, what I also found interesting was what happened out the front today and what was tossed around the chamber this afternoon. The very fact that the

government took the decisions it did absolutely flummoxed their constituents, their union friends and many of those who work under union banners. I have been involved with unions in another life. I do not agree with everything they do, but I do not disagree with everything they do either. I guess that is just the way it is.

I can remember being forced to join the AWU when I was about 18 in the shearing sheds, and that did not impress me at all. When they came around four years later to tell me that I had not paid dues for the last three years I basically told them where to go, and they tried to bully me into paying. That did not impress me. Things may or may not have changed; I do not know. Then 10 years later I was told I was still in the AWU even though I had not paid. That is when I really told them where to go.

It is all very well for the unions to get out there today and to be in the media lately lambasting the government, but the reality of it is, if there was an election tomorrow, federal or state, they would all turn around and support the Labor government for all they are worth. So, they have not got a lot of credibility as far as I am concerned. They lack the courage of their convictions, in my view, because at the end of the day they will always back the Labor Party.

The Labor Party tends to have a bit of fun with us over what has happened in the past and a few changes here and there, but there is no question that at the moment the South Australian Labor Party is in turmoil. You do not have to look very far across the chamber—past the front row even—to see what is going on over there. We have the member for West Torrens who is a 'could be and would be' if he could be, and we have the Minister for Education who desperately craves the top job.

As our leader correctly said, the right have the numbers and the left have the talent. I thought that was a very opportune observation, quite frankly. What really made it interesting this morning was when the Minister for Education came in and sat by the Treasurer and the Treasurer had nowhere to go. He had to sit there. He could not move. He could not get out of it. He wanted to disappear into the couch. It is just a pity that the media were not here to do something about it and see it, but I am sure they have heard.

I do not want to go on. I understand there are others who want to speak and we need to finish this by 6 o'clock, but I sincerely think that, with estimates, we need either to get very serious about it and make it an opportunity for the opposition of the day—and I say 'the opposition of the day'—to get into it and get proper answers or do something different with it. I understand my friend the member for Newland wants to speak, so I will conclude my remarks.

**Mr KENYON (Newland) (17:42):** That was quicker than I expected, I must say. I rise today to reveal serious claims about illegal activities on the Burnside council. My attention has been drawn to an incident that occurred on 16 February 2010. This incident does not yet appear to have been investigated appropriately. During the course of the Burnside council meeting on 16 February, the council went into a confidential session. There is nothing unusual in that; it is a regular occurrence in council meetings around the state. As members would know, the Local Government Act provides for this in order that councils can deal with confidential and sensitive information.

If an elected member of the council is the subject of a confidential discussion then they must declare an interest and remove themselves from the chamber. On the occasion of 16 February, councillor Rob Gilbert was the subject of the confidential discussion. The subject at hand was his harassment of a female staff member, which is a breach of the code of conduct in force at Burnside council. In what I believe may be a breach of the federal Listening Devices Act, councillor Gilbert left a recording device, which was in fact recording the meeting, on his desk. When another councillor pointed this out to the meeting, the acting CEO removed the device from the chamber. This may also be a breach of the Local Government Act.

I have two statutory declarations attesting to these events and am somewhat shocked at the behaviour of the member of council, who has enough experience to know he was breaking the law. It is open to conclusion that councillor Gilbert has deliberately broken the law. As members know, statutory declarations are very important documents and penalties apply to persons who use them to make false allegations. These declarations are not made lightly and they are made in the full knowledge of requirements for truthfulness and accuracy. There is a clear need for justice to be done in this case and the matter to be fully investigated.

Madam Speaker, I am referring these matters to both the Federal Police and the Anti-Corruption Branch of South Australia Police. Councillor Gilbert is a former used car dealer, with a

reputation that makes the Dodgy Brothers look angelic, and he is now running for mayor of Burnside. In my opinion, the allegations of Rob Gilbert's flouting of the law and potential criminal behaviour make him unfit to hold further public office. His association with another dubious member of the Burnside council, Jim Jacobs, is further proof of his unsuitability for the office of mayor. I warn voters in the Burnside council to be very careful about whom they vote for when voting for mayor.

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (17:45):** Having experienced my first state budget, I am left wondering just where this great state of South Australia is headed under the current Labor government. Over the course of estimates, it has shown me the depth of certain ministers and it is questionable as to exactly what depth the current Labor government has. I commend some of the ministers in answering the questions and having the advice at hand, but it has certainly shown me that there are ministers and advisers who are not worthy of the job.

Through estimates, the mismanagement of this government, throughout the budget, has been highlighted. I look at the renewable energy targets that are clouded by the Premier continuously telling us how great this government has been at promoting the renewable energy targets, and then hearing the Minister for Energy saying that solar power is like throwing money away, and I would suggest that this is a long-term prospect, not just a four-year proposition.

The state government's approach to keeping our rural roads safe is questionable. This government continues to raise revenue through increased fines and charges, but education is a distant prospect, especially in dealing with the young. Country and defensive driving education programs are vital. Crushing cars is not the answer: education and a controlled environment is. We must change the mindset and focus of our young in a bipartisan approach, and the focus of our young is to be proactive and not reactive. The primary industries sector has had a huge hit and this government has cut the heart out of the regions' future.

South Australia has always been a proud leader in research and development, and this government is now hell-bent on taking a back seat with regard to leading the way with the agriculture and horticulture sector, and now biosecurity is being questioned. This government is prepared to risk decades of hard work by our food producers that have created new markets that are safe, green and clean, and now the perception by our importing customers is: 'Let's reassess those markets because they have decided to risk that biosecurity.' As I mentioned in my budget reply, the member for Mawson, the member for Schubert, and all members for the wine regions, must be horrified at the reduced cellar door support that the wine industry has previously enjoyed. This effect is on all wineries, not just the big end of town.

Water security has also been misrepresented: building the \$1.8 million desalination plant, plus a \$400 million connector pipe, of which the price has now not been confirmed, and not only that, it has not taken the pressure off the River Murray. Shame! Taxpayers continue to pay more for less. We see the Premier's knee-jerk reaction on Adelaide water restrictions, while food producing irrigators take another hit with only 67 per cent allocations, and now the South Australian food producers are being told that they will take, possibly, another 37 per cent reduction in regard to their water allocation.

What is this government doing to defend the state's irrigators' exemplary behaviour? As an irrigator, again, I ask: what is the Premier and his government doing for this state's food producing irrigators' future? As a new member of this parliament, I am aghast at the mistruths within this budget. What I hear and believe is that you cannot trust the Rann government. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (17:49):** I would like to take this opportunity, as a new member, following the member for Chaffey, to make some observations about my first experience of the estimates procedure. I will be brief because much has already been said about the revelations to come out of the estimates committees and, of course, the day is drawing to a close as well. I noted with interest the remarks of the Treasurer on the first day of estimates about the whole process. The Treasurer very graciously opted to not take Dorothy Dixers from government members. In relation to his thoughts on the estimates committee, he said, and I quote from *Hansard*:

...previous practice will demonstrate that I prefer not to make statements; I prefer to answer questions. I find statements both gratuitous and boring...

I find it interesting that earlier in that same day the Premier did exactly the opposite: he made gratuitous and boring opening statements for each and every agency for which he is the responsible minister. I think my leader described his opening remarks as 'rubbish', and I

wholeheartedly agree with that. We see that the Treasurer and his Premier are very much at odds on the way estimates should operate. I think this says a lot about the deep divisions within the Labor Party that are becoming increasingly public in nature.

For the record, I am in unison with the Treasurer on the conduct of the ministers during the estimates process. I think the estimates committees would greatly benefit from dispensing with gratuitous and boring opening statements and Dorothy Dixers from government members. I also note with interest some remarks from the member for Enfield from last year's reports of estimates on 2 July 2009. When the member for Enfield was a backbencher, he spoke in this place of his resolute disdain for the whole estimates process. He said:

It is tedious, repetitive, unhelpful and enormously wasting of time, time of the parliament, time of the ministers, time of the public servants.

I do not know whether the member for Enfield still holds those views now that he is a minister, but I do note that he is at odds with his Premier and has decided to dispense with Dorothy Dixers. In fact, it seems that almost everybody who I speak with is dissatisfied in some way with the current estimates procedure.

So the point I am trying to make as a new member of this place is that perhaps reforming the estimates procedure is something worth considering. I think new members have a fresh set of eyes in many ways when it comes to the procedures of parliament. I would like to put on the record my personal view that the estimates process needs to be looked at. Whether a Senate Estimates-style process is pursued by this parliament is for others to decide, but I believe it would be a step in the direction to a more open and transparent executive.

Having said all that, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues for the enormous amount of work that they have put in, and I also acknowledge the efforts of the public servants, who have no doubt spent many hours preparing for estimates. It is a significant effort, and I congratulate them for that. I will briefly turn to the estimates committees of which I was a member. My colleagues on the side of the house have already made much of ministers' answers, or lack thereof. Much like question time in this place, the same occurred during estimates.

Ministers were very adept at giving non answers, for want of a better term. The point was made by my leader earlier today: why bring in all these public servants if you are going to take the question on notice and therefore not utilise the public servants to give an answer? It just does not make sense. At one point, the Minister for Industrial Relations had about 36 advisers, and we still could not get an answer. It really became a bit farcical.

I understand that ministers can provide answers to questions on notice arising from estimates by Friday 19 November this year, but what guarantee can the government give that this will actually occur? When you consider the hundreds of questions on notice ministers refuse to answer year after year, it will be no great surprise if we do not receive any satisfactory responses from estimates questions. It has been a worthwhile learning experience for me during my first estimates committees. I would like to reiterate that I think the procedure needs some reform, but I do believe that on balance it does give the opposition the opportunity to expose the government's financial mismanagement and to hold it to account.

The full impact of this budget is yet to be realised. I think we will also take some time to digest some of the more shocking revelations to come out of estimates. Considering what has been witnessed on the steps of parliament house over the last couple of days, with protests by unions (incidentally, there are more planned, I understand, for tomorrow and next week), it is clear that the South Australian public sector workforce has given up on Labor when it comes to looking after the rights of workers.

What is abundantly clear, however, is that this is a Labor budget, and it has done a number of things. It has eroded the benefits of public sector workers, it has burdened the taxpayers with enormous debt, it has forgotten those who need government support the most, and it has cemented South Australia's place as the highest taxed state in the nation. For that, members opposite stand condemned, and we need to ask ourselves once again: how on earth did we get to this point?

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (17:54):** In the brief time I have left, I wish to make a few remarks about the lack of spending on agriculture in this state. I just want to repeat from the *Hansard* the closing comments of the opening statement of the so-called expert minister in his own right, minister O'Brien:

I conclude my opening statement by reiterating that the government recognises the contribution that our primary industries make to the state's economy and wellbeing and that PIRSA's role in supporting this sector remains vital.

Yet, this Labor government has just delivered a budget that tears the heart out of regional South Australia, tears the heart out of primary industries funding and seeks full cost recovery across all sectors whether it be farming, fishing or aquaculture. Now we see biosecurity measures where there will be people who have horses whether for pleasure or other matters, or people who run a few alpacas—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr PEDERICK:** I haven't got time to respond to interjections.

*Mr Piccolo interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Light! It is time to go home.

**Mr PEDERICK:** I think we had better go for another hour. People who have small numbers of animals, whether they are just sheep for lawnmowers, will be hit for extra fees, property identification code fees, biosecurity fees. The government says it has consulted but it has not consulted publicly; it has only consulted with a few people, the representatives of different bodies.

We have also seen where another 180 jobs will go from primary industries, including 40 from the regions. With the multiplier effect, that will be at least 200 jobs in regional areas. Service is being scaled back for primary industries where we see the Keith office closure, and I had to eke it out of the minister during estimates when it had already come quietly to me that the Keith office was closing. What future for Jamestown, Nuriootpa and other offices?

I also look at the advisory board and it is interesting to note that the minister has not turned up to the last two agriculture advisory board awards nights. One was last night and the member for Schubert commented on it. I do not think there is a future for this board. I think the government will roll up its new frameless and nameless, whatever they are going to replace the food council with, and the minister does not even know what that will be because it is frameless and nameless and he basically admitted that during estimates.

I also acknowledge that the forward sales of forestry in my mind will be a straight swap for the Adelaide Oval botch-up, which it is, because that is where the money will go. It will just go straight into that and decimate 30 per cent of the regional economy that is reliant on forestry in the lower South-East.

Just in closing I note a couple of other things. The small schools are getting an impost of \$12 million taken off them. That will really hurt us in the regions and the fuel rebate cut of \$50 million will devastate us in the regions.

My very final comment relates to the Parks decision by this government. It was an absolutely shameless decision. They were forced to do a backflip with a triple pike. I would just like to say that my lovely wife is a product of the Parks. She did not finish her matriculation at Woodville; she went to the Parks and did a TAFE course and that helped her to become the environmental scientist she now is. These people just do not talk the people; they do not talk to anyone and they think they can get away with it in their own electorates and they have just found out that they cannot.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** I move:

That the remainder of the bill be agreed to.

Motion carried.

Bill read a third time and passed.

#### **STATUTES AMENDMENT (ARTS AGENCIES GOVERNANCE AND OTHER MATTERS) BILL**

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

At 18:00 the house adjourned until Tuesday 26 October 2010 at 11:00.