

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday 21 August 2002

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. R.R. Roberts)** took the chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The **Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO**: I lay on the table the 9th report of the committee and move:

That the report be read.

Motion carried.

The **Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO**: I lay on the table the 10th report of the committee.

The **Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO**: I lay on the table the minutes of evidence of the committee on regulations under the Fisheries Act 1982 concerning the giant crab quota system and the individual giant crab quota system.

QUESTION TIME

PUBLIC SERVICE, BONUSES

The **Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Leader of the Opposition)**: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Leader of the Government, representing the Treasurer, a question about bonuses paid to public servants.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. R.I. LUCAS**: Prior to the recent state election, the then leader of the opposition (Mr Rann) and other Labor representatives (in particular, though, the then leader of the opposition) made a number of claims about how the Labor Party, should it be elected to government, would cut expenditure to help fund Labor's claimed priority areas. On a number of occasions, the then leader of the opposition gave media interviews where he indicated that, as one of the policy measures he would introduce when he first got into government, he would stop bonuses being paid to chief executive officers of government departments.

On a number of occasions, the former government and I, representing the government, pointed out that Mr Rann's claims in this area were inaccurate in that no chief executives of government departments were being paid bonuses. Nevertheless, the then leader of the opposition chose to ignore that advice and continued to make the claims. My question for the Treasurer is: now that the Treasurer has had some months in office, can he now confirm that no chief executive officer of a government department was actually paid a bonus in the months leading up to and at the time of the election, and that the claim made by the former leader of the opposition and now Premier (Mr Rann) was, in fact, wrong?

The **Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)**: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I will refer his question to the Premier for a reply because, I think, chief executives are employed under a contract with the Premier.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The **Hon. A.J. REDFORD**: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of the Government in this place a question about open government.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. A.J. REDFORD**: During the course of the last government, the then opposition talked long and loud about the concept of open government, in particular, the importance of the Freedom of Information Act in so far as that concept is concerned. On many occasions, the Premier, the Attorney-General and the leader in this place have endorsed that principle. Indeed, they have endorsed the following principle:

A government that is open to public scrutiny is more accountable to the people who elect it.

During the course of the election campaign, Labor promised to improve freedom of information guidelines. Under the heading 'More information to the public', it said:

Freedom of information legislation is an important avenue to the public to scrutinise the activities of government. In government, Labor will review the FOI Act to ensure that it remains an effective avenue to ensure open and accountable government.

The then opposition (that is, the present government), in a press release issued earlier last year, said:

The government can bring in any changes to legislation that it likes, but unless there is the will of the government to follow it it won't work.

We all know that, pursuant to section 53 of the Freedom of Information Act, there is provision for the charging of members of parliament for access to freedom of information records. Section 53(2)(b) provides:

The regulations must provide for access to documents by members of parliament without charge unless the work generated by the application exceeds a threshold stated in the regulations.

The regulations set out that the fee applicable to a member of parliament is as follows:

A member of parliament who applies for access to an agency's document under the act is entitled to access to the document without charge unless the work generated by the application involves fees and charges totalling more than \$350.

Over the past 24 hours, I have encountered numerous Labor backbenchers wandering the corridors of this place giggling about some rumour to the effect that the government intends to remove this very important mechanism in the importance of open government—

The Hon. R.K. Sneath interjecting:

The **Hon. A.J. REDFORD**: The honourable member interjects, but I am setting it out fairly clearly so that even he can understand it. In any event, I am concerned about this attitude, as indicated by the members opposite, in their interjections about their attitude towards the role of the opposition, towards the role of the important position that we hold in ensuring that there is appropriate accountability in this government, that this rumour may in fact be correct. In the light of that, my questions are—

The **Hon. R.K. Sneath**: I thought all the rumours were about the Liberal leadership.

The **Hon. A.J. REDFORD**: Well, only amongst members opposite. This is a very important issue that goes to the very basis of this democracy, and members opposite might be flippant about it—which is not inconsistent with the attitude that they have displayed in spreading the rumour about the parliament in the past 24 hours. My questions are:

1. Is the government considering changes along the lines that I have suggested in my explanation; if so, what are those changes?

2. If the government is considering those changes, will the government rule out making those changes by regulation and undertake to bring a bill to this parliament so that it can be

properly debated and the government's adherence to open government can be properly examined?

3. Does the minister now agree, in the light of those rumours, that the rhetoric throughout the course of the last parliament was simply that—rhetoric?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): The answer to the last part of the question is no. As I indicated yesterday in answer to a question from the Hon. Mike Elliott, the government is at the stage where it is ready to introduce a bill. I believe my colleague in another place, the Minister for Administrative Services, will be introducing a bill to amend the Freedom of Information Act shortly. As for the detail of that bill, I think it is appropriate that that minister at the appropriate time explain all the provisions contained within that bill. The honourable member will not have to wait very long. I believe it is the government's intention to introduce the bill before the end of this session, so the honourable member will know the answer fairly shortly. As I indicated yesterday, the new freedom of information bill to be introduced by the government will give effect to the government's election promises to be more open and accountable. It will further extend the availability of information—which was not a hallmark of the previous government.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: It is all very well for the Leader of the Opposition to talk about it, but we all know that if there was one hallmark of the previous government it was that the former government represented the secret state. I suggest that members opposite contain their enthusiasm. They will not have to wait very long. I understand the bill will be available for discussion during the debate. It is a very lengthy bill. There are a considerable number of changes in the bill. It is a very far reaching amendment.

The Hon. A.J. Redford interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The honourable member obviously was not listening yesterday. I answered all this yesterday. The Hon. Mike Elliott asked me a question on this subject yesterday. Members opposite will not have to wait very long. I suggest they contain their enthusiasm and all will be revealed in the next week or two.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is too much interjection.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I have a supplementary question. Is there any reason why the member cannot tell us now?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The honourable member is asking for detail about a bill for which another minister is responsible. I believe that minister should be given the courtesy to be asked the detail about the specific measures. I do not have a copy of the bill with me, so members opposite will just have to contain their enthusiasm.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Members are offering too much information.

EMPLOYMENT, JUNIOR PAY RATES

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council a question about junior pay rates.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: Two articles which have appeared in the *Advertiser* recently in relation to the UTLC's submission to the industrial relations review have reported

that one of the major planks of the UTLC's submission is that junior pay rates be abolished. This submission, as reported in the *Advertiser* and as explained by Ms Janet Giles (Secretary of the UTLC) on ABC Radio yesterday, makes it clear that the peak union body will be pursuing the Labor government to abolish junior rates. Many small businesses and young people have contacted me in the past 24 hours expressing absolute disgust at this position. Does the minister's government support the retention of junior pay rates, or will it follow blindly the submission of its union cronies?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): I believe that an identical question was asked in the House of Assembly earlier today. I suggest that the honourable member read the response to that question by the Minister for Industrial Relations.

FARMING, CONTROLLED TRAFFIC

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries a question about the use of controlled traffic in cropping systems.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: I have read an interesting article in the *West Coast Sentinel* dated 15 August 2002 on what is known as controlled traffic. The term 'controlled traffic' is increasingly being mentioned in relation to new cropping systems in Australia. Can the minister explain this term, together with the benefits resulting from its implementation, and inform the council about the research being undertaken into this activity in South Australia?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): I thank the member for her question and for her interest in agriculture. Controlled traffic farming is a way of managing the compaction limitations that are placed on crops by excessive traffic, that is, from tractors and farm machinery. Restricting traffic to set tracks provides the opportunity to reduce compaction over the rest of the paddock. The benefits from this practice can be immense. The compact track allows access to the crop with a ground spraying unit in wetter conditions; spraying and fertiliser costs that would have resulted from application by air can be reduced by up to 10 per cent; and the timing of these is maintained or improved. However, the most beneficial outcome of controlled traffic farming is improved soil structure that reduces run-off, as the soil has the ability to hold more water. The end result is increased yield and improved stability and sustainability of the farming system.

The Minnipa Agricultural Centre is adopting the new technique across 75 per cent of its farms this season in order to measure the impact on crop yields and to demonstrate the benefits of the new farming system to farmers over the next few years. I am pleased to say that this issue will be one of the highlights of the annual field day to be held at the Minnipa centre, I believe, next month.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: Sir, I have a supplementary question. How far apart are the controlled traffic lanes and on what soil types is it most beneficial?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The reason why we are having these trials at the moment, of course, is to determine exactly that. The reason why the Minnipa centre has been chosen is that, obviously, there are particular soil types in that

area. Much of the work in that region is being done to answer exactly those questions.

An honourable member: What are the soil types?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: For example, some work is being done there on liquid fertiliser for low boron soils, and so on. I am no expert in soil types. I am sure that members opposite who have been involved in agriculture would understand that the compaction of soil has an impact on productivity. It reduces the absorption, and it is important that we should be working on this problem. I compliment SARDI for the work that it is doing at Minnipa in relation to seeking ways in which to reduce the compaction of soil.

FARMBIS

The Hon. IAN GILFILLAN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries a question about FarmBis.

Leave granted.

The Hon. IAN GILFILLAN: The huge cut in FarmBis funding is regarded by the rural community as a devastating blow to service training and education for the farming community at a time when that particular career is becoming more and more sophisticated. The South Australian Farmers Federation regards the cut as counterproductive. The most devastating consequence is the removal of simpler general programs as the requirement of courses goes from AQF 1 to AQF 5. The Australian qualifications framework assigns different TAFE courses to one of six levels. These levels are set out from one up to six, the lowest being certificates, and the highest being an advanced diploma at level 6, and a diploma at level 5. As the level increases, the general complexity of the course, and the cost, increase. Under the new FarmBis guidelines that were set out as a result of the government's failing to allocate adequate funding to the program, as I said, courses will need to start at AQF 5.

The experience of the FarmBis program is that most participants have chosen the certificate courses, the lower, less arduous courses. This is due to both the cost and the time required to complete the courses. Nonetheless, participants have found the courses very useful; in fact, many participants who have completed the lower level courses have invested their time in gaining the benefits that the higher level courses offer. I have information that a significant number of courses will not be offered within the FarmBis scheme as a result of the government's funding cuts and the reallocation to the AQF 5 level, and they are the sorts of courses that will no longer exist—courses in electronic trading, certificate 3 in agriculture, farm office computing, using farm software, soil water solutions, sensor-based irrigation, fungicide management, farm improvements and farm machinery maintenance. No-one could say that they are not basic and well sought after courses. They will no longer be available through FarmBis. The general crash in the program will hit in January 2003.

My information is that this will mean that only 10 per cent of the programs currently being supported will continue and, because they are so much more expensive and onerous, there will be far less than 10 per cent of the participants. The problem that this will create is compounded by the fact that those programs that will continue to be supported are the most expensive and most extensive. My questions to the minister are these: first, does the minister believe that the FarmBis programs assist the skills of South Australian farmers and, if not, why not? If he does believe they assist the

skills of South Australian farmers, why is he destroying them?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): The honourable member has obviously missed the answer to some questions about FarmBis earlier this year. Of course, the reason why there have been cuts to the FarmBis programs was essentially that previous government did not provide funding for the 2003-04 year for that program. The previous government was quite happy to announce a \$24 million program over three years, that is, \$8 million of spending in each of the three years, with \$4 million being provided by the commonwealth and \$4 million being provided by the state. However, no allocation was made in the forward funding for the final year of that program.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Are you saying it's wrong? The fact is that there was no forward allocation in the budget by that government. That is a simple fact. Whereas the former government was happy to announce the program, it was not prepared to provide the funds into the future. That was the whole problem with the financial management under the previous government. The forward estimates of that government were really meaningless figures, because it was not prepared to release any break-up of those figures. However, quite clearly a series of programs came to an end at the close of the financial year. The then government was quite happy to portray to the public the idea that, 'Yes, we will continue funding these programs,' but it was not prepared to put its money where its mouth was in terms of an allocation of funding for it.

That is why this government had a number of difficult decisions to make. It was not just FarmBis. If it was just FarmBis, things might have been easy. In my department alone there was no funding in the forward estimates for TEISA—for the mineral exploration initiative—there was no funding for aquaculture programs, and there was also no funding for NHT. Parts of NHT have now been transferred to the sustainable development part of the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Compensation. So there was a whole series. For the government to provide funding for some of those—and we have been able to fund three out of four—clearly, it had to make some hard decisions.

In relation to FarmBis, there was a significant carry-over in funding from the previous year into this financial year and, hopefully, the money allocated under the FarmBis program for this year will be somewhere in the region of the \$8 million which was previously promised. But the government has been able to hold over some money so there will be money for FarmBis next year, rather than it being cut to a dead stop, which would have been the case if we had stuck with the previous government's forward estimates.

I think it is important to put on record the philosophy of the FarmBis program. It has been designed to make farmers aware of the benefits of training and attaining skills in agriculture. That is one of the purposes of FarmBis and it was established with a limited time frame in mind, the idea being that farmers should learn to appreciate the benefit of training so that subsequently they pay for their own training into the future—as does every other member of the Australian community. So the FarmBis program was always designed to increase farm skills but also to make farmers aware of the benefits of acquiring ongoing training throughout their lives. So the state planning group of FarmBis, by these changed arrangements, has reduced the subsidy from 75 per cent to

50 per cent. That is quite consistent with the philosophy of FarmBis, which is to gradually reduce the taxpayers' subsidy so that farmers will in the future cover the cost of their training.

There are 11 300 farm holdings in this state that earn greater than \$50 000 a year: so, there are about 11 300 agricultural enterprises in this state. The number of individual participants in FarmBis to date has been nearly 17 000, and the training activities participants number 22 400. So, already, if one looks at the number of farm enterprises, there has been an average of twice the number of courses offered or participants involved as there are farm holdings in the state. So, the program has been successful both in increasing the skills of farmers and also in getting farmers into the training system.

As I said, the state planning group has recommended that the subsidy be reduced from 75 per cent to 50 per cent so that the number of courses at that lower level will be increased. I think there are still something like 15 000 to 20 000 places that we hope will be offered in training under the FarmBis program. Then, when the funding ends and if it has been successful—and remember that it would have ended the year after next, anyway, because it was a finite program by the federal government—hopefully, the benefits will be such that the farm community will pick up training at its own cost because it will appreciate the benefits.

So, the government is certainly mindful of the need for farm training. We are mindful of the principles of FarmBis and we believe that what we have done is, in the financial circumstances facing us, the best possible outcome to encourage the principles of FarmBis.

The Hon. IAN GILFILLAN: I have a supplementary question. Is the minister happy to see FarmBis expire: yes or no?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: As I said, as a result of the changes the government has made, we have extended it outwards. We have reduced the individual subsidy but we are extending the time frame because there was no money in the budget beyond this year to provide for it. Through rejigging the scheme, we have ensured that at a lower subsidy level there are more places available.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the minister representing the Minister for Social Justice a question about accommodation for victims of domestic violence.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: On 12 August 2002 the *Advertiser* reported the current crisis of emergency housing for victims of domestic violence. I was alarmed to read that the reported numbers of nights spent by women and children in motels as a result of domestic violence on women and children seeking shelter had increased by 170 per cent, according to figures released by the Domestic Violence Crisis Service. The article mentioned that victims were being turned away from shelters because there were no rooms available at the time when victims leave their homes. Many are forced to shelter in motels and, as a result, do not receive the physical and emotional support they would otherwise receive in a shelter.

Where victims are mothers with children, this situation is unacceptable. The police are acting on reports of domestic violence because such reports could lead to a life-threatening

scenario. However, the process is stymied at the point where victims arrive on the doorstep of the shelters and are being turned away. With limited support, victims are placed in a no-win situation, often having to return to their homes. My questions are:

1. What is the minister doing to increase the number of shelters for victims of domestic violence in the short term and long term?

2. Realising that domestic violence is a statewide issue, is the minister aware of the lack of accommodation in domestic violence shelters in metropolitan and country centres and, if so, what is it?

3. Will the minister ensure that resources to address the current accommodation crisis in shelters take into consideration the situation in metropolitan as well as country centres and, if so, how?

The PRESIDENT: Order! Just before the minister answers, there are too many people moving around the chamber and there is too much audible conversation.

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation): I will refer those important questions to the Minister for Social Justice in another place and bring back a reply.

CHERRY RESEARCH CENTRE

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: Will the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries confirm or deny the now consistent and loud rumours that there are to be funding and/or staff cuts to the only cherry research centre in the southern hemisphere, at Lenswood?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): The centre at Lenswood is conducting work that is absolutely world class. As I pointed out before, the budget position facing this government has been extremely difficult and some cuts will need to be borne across the board on low priority research. This government is putting a lot of extra money into the Plant Genomic Centre and other areas within SARDI, so there will need to be some adjustments within the SARDI budget. Those will be determined within the department but, clearly, the cherry program is very important and has had great success.

CARRICK HILL

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the minister representing the Minister for the Arts a question about Carrick Hill.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I refer to advice that I received earlier today that, before the Liquor Licensing Court, the complaints by representatives of the Springfield Estate Residents Association Inc., regarding the liquor licence at Carrick Hill, were dismissed. I understand that sanity has prevailed with agreement reached between all parties, and minor conditions only added to the liquor licence. This outcome is great news and certainly lifts the enormous cloud of uncertainty and unease that has hung over the head of both the daily operations and the future of Carrick Hill for far too long.

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: The gin and tonics are on you tonight!

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Or champagne. With confidence, Carrick Hill will now be able to accept function bookings that are so critical to its ongoing viability—at least

it will be able to do so for some foreseeable time. There do remain some outstanding issues, however, that the government must urgently address. These issues relate specifically to the current catering marquee that has a life of only 14 months under current planning approvals. The tent is required to be removed by October 2003, and this timetable already represents an extension of one year following the successful application earlier this year by Arts SA to the Development Assessment Committee.

Meanwhile, when I was Minister for the Arts last year, I approved a payment of \$100 000 to Carrick Hill through Arts SA to undertake a feasibility study for a new function centre some distance from the house and further away from the Springfield residents. Arts SA also commenced the preparation of a budget bid for this financial year and next amounting to \$2.2 million to facilitate construction of a new function facility. As the budget papers for this year do not reveal any funding allocation for any function facility at Carrick Hill, I ask the Premier and Minister for the Arts four questions:

1. Was the \$100 000 that I approved last year ever provided to Carrick Hill to commence the function centre feasibility study, and what is the status of this study?

2. Have any capital funds been provided in Arts SA's budget for this year or beyond to commence and complete construction of the required new catering facility, and over what timetable?

3. If no capital funding has been provided or is envisaged from state government sources, is the government prepared to consider a privately funded function facility, with Carrick Hill managing the facility on a sole or partnership basis, and possibly also sharing the income rather than just gaining the rental?

4. Acknowledging that it is unlikely that any new function facility at Carrick Hill can be built and operating before the expiry in October 2003 of the planning approval for the operation of the current marquee facility, what plans has the government developed to address the time sensitive planning and development issues, plus the long-term catering income and operating viability issues that now confront the board and management and all users of Carrick Hill?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): I will refer those questions to the Premier to provide a reply.

HMAS HOBART

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Regional Affairs, representing the Minister for Tourism, a question about HMAS *Hobart*.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I understand that the former Royal Australian Navy vessel HMAS *Hobart* is currently situated at Port Adelaide where it is being prepared for sinking off the coastline of the Fleurieu Peninsula to create a unique artificial reef. Will the minister provide any information regarding the progress of the preparation of the former HMAS *Hobart* for scuttling to become an artificial reef for divers?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation): I thank the honourable member for her question and for her interest. I am advised by the Minister for Tourism that HMAS *Hobart* promises to become a significant tourist attraction as a dive destination for

thousands of local, interstate and overseas divers, with most of the benefits going to a regional area south of Adelaide. Briefly, the background to this development is that South Australia was presented with HMAS *Hobart* as a gift by the federal government (ahead of Western Australia and Tasmania which were competing for that vessel) to create an artificial reef off the coastline of the Fleurieu Peninsula. The ship needs to be scuttled to allow it to build up as an artificial reef.

To prepare the ship for scuttling, work on the main deck level (stage 1) was completed in June 2001 by contractor McMahon Services, which was also contracted to complete stage 2 at Port Adelaide. Work is now completed in the forward upper and lower areas while preparation of the aft areas for the diver access is well under way. Environmental cleaning is underway in the engine and boiler rooms with work more than half completed. The ship is scheduled to be scuttled in early November 2002. The ship will not be blown up or exploded: it will be scuttled by a controlled flooding exercise and should take about four minutes to sink.

Although the project has taken longer than first anticipated, it is important that scuttling the ship in the Yankalilla Bay poses no risk to the Fleurieu Peninsula environment. In fact, it should enhance some of the fishing and diving opportunities in the region. A large amount of accessories and memorabilia will remain onboard the submerged vessel, and many areas normally sealed off to divers will remain accessible, including the missile launcher, gun turrets, both smokestacks and an engine room. It will become Australia's best artificial reef and the only one with access to an engine room.

An economic impact assessment produced by EconSearch suggests that by year three the project has the potential to generate an additional \$10.1 million in business and turnover on Fleurieu Peninsula, create 127 new jobs and attract approximately 16 000 divers to Fleurieu Peninsula—an estimated 50 per cent being international tourists. Having been to a ship graveyard in Vanuatu, I can attest to the international interest in diving on ships.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Did you dive?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: No, I did not, unfortunately. I was not professional enough to go to the depths required. One of the destroyers was quite near to the surface at a particular time when the tide was out, but even that was too deep for me with a snorkel, so I took the best option and viewed it from afar. Benefits should flow into the Fleurieu and attract more divers. Hopefully, they will then take an interest in some of the natural reefs that occur off Kangaroo Island and other places within our coastal areas.

FISHING, RECREATIONAL

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries questions about recreational fishing licences.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: Recreational fishing is one of South Australia's largest industries with over 450 000 people over the age of five years fishing at least once every year, with an annual recurrent expenditure of some \$350 million added to the state's economy. The South Australian Fishing Advisory Council (SAFAC) strongly supports the introduction of a licence on the condition that all funds received go to a dedicated trust fund. Money from the fund would be spent for the benefit of recreational fishing and research into fisheries and the ecosystems that sustain them.

SAFAC estimates that the introduction of fishing licences would raise \$12.7 million over four years. About 150 000 fishers are expected to take out fishing licences at \$25 a year, with 300 000 opting for a \$6 weekend four-day licence. SAFAC has also recommended that licence exemptions apply to those aged under 16, pension card holders and indigenous people fishing areas subject to native title claims. It appears that this licensing system has worked elsewhere. My questions to the minister are:

1. When will the government make a final decision on the introduction of recreational fishing licences?

2. Can the minister assure the council that fees raised by the introduction of fishing licences will be placed into a dedicated trust account to fund and sustain the sport, and not flow into general revenue?

3. Similarly, will the minister guarantee that those aged under 16, pension card holders and indigenous people will not be required to pay for fishing licences?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): The government has made a final decision that it will not be introducing recreational fishing licences. It was a commitment that the Labor Party made before the last election. The government made a commitment that recreational fishing licences would not be introduced, and the government will keep that commitment. That was confirmed the other day by the Premier, so there will be no recreational fishing licences in this state.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Members of the opposition will not rise to the bait.

SHIP BREAKING, WHYALLA

The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Regional Affairs a question on the ship breaking proposal in Whyalla.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS: I have been approached by a number of constituents in the Whyalla area for an update on the ship breaking proposal in Whyalla. The ship recycling project has been attempting to get off the ground for a number of years, and proponents of the project tell me that it potentially involves 1 000 direct jobs as well as peripheral jobs.

During discussions in relation to his compact with the Labor government, Peter Lewis made it known that the Whyalla ship breaking project was high on his agenda for regional development. I understand that the Mayor of Whyalla wrote to Premier Rann on 7 May in relation to this project and the proponents of the project wrote to the Premier on 27 June asking for government cooperation. As far as I know there has been no reply to either letter. With the loss of the SASE pig iron project, Whyalla more than ever needs to realistically examine all potential employment possibilities and know from the government exactly what projects are possible and those that realistically are a waste of time. My questions are:

1. Has the minister and/or the Minister for Industry, Investment and Trade taken a serious interest in this development proposal and met with the proponents?

2. What is the government's position on the proposed government ship recycling project?

3. Will the government support proper consideration of possibly locating a ship breaking project in Whyalla?

4. What action will he as Minister for Regional Affairs be taking to ensure that this project is given a reasonable hearing by government and timely consideration of the project?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Regional Affairs): I thank the honourable member for his questions. I understand his interest in representing the Mayor of Whyalla and the local council who have taken a strong interest in Whyalla being a beneficiary if there is to be a ship recycling program in this state. In opposition, I think I was lobbied more on the ship recycling program than on any other development program—

The Hon. A.J. Redford interjecting:

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS:—not by my colleagues but by a number of people interested in promoting the project. Throughout the world, ship breaking is a dangerous and dirty occupation if it is done in the wrong way. I understand that many ship breaking yards in the Third World operate with little or no environmental protection or support and often in a dangerous way.

Ship recycling yards do not have to operate in that way, because the latest recycling methods can be environmentally controlled. The dangers posed by the breaking up of ships, with their internals—particularly the engine room and fridge cargo areas—being full of asbestos lining and boilers, can be handled safely if done correctly and if the right investment is made in the project from day one.

Developed countries can certainly provide that infrastructure if the investment strategies of the proponents can be put together. My understanding is that the proponents of the project are still talking to a wide range of people in relation to siting. I do not think that Whyalla is the only proposed site. I think that other sites have been proposed and ruled out; other interstate sites are still being examined as well as, I understand, overseas.

I think that promotion at a government level is still alive: it certainly has not been ruled out. I believe that the proponents need to have a fresh approach to put to the investment bankers or backers so that the project can get off with some certainty. It would certainly have to be sited in an environmentally friendly area, with the community and the environment being isolated from any danger of contamination by oils, liquids or asbestos.

Those sorts of questions need to be examined. There needs to be, I think, a round table of those people who have the potential to finance a project such as that and to draw together the customer base. I understand that millions of tonnes of potential shipping can be used in the recycling or breaking yards. It is not a matter of having fodder for it: it is a matter of financial support for the project. I will refer the question for fresh information to those who would be involved in the negotiations at perhaps Treasury level through the Economic Development Board and bring back a reply and an update on exactly how negotiations are proceeding and the role Whyalla can play.

As I understand it, a number of sites have been chosen for potential customers, and certainly there is an interest in using the recycled steel, although with changes to steel industry ownership, and the role and function of the blast furnaces in Whyalla, it might have been changed somewhat as to how the steel can be used. Those questions need to be answered. I will bring back those replies for the honourable member.

SUICIDE KITS

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, representing the Premier, a question on a matter of states' rights.

Leave granted.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: News today that the federal government intends to take steps to prevent the so-called suicide kits being imported into Australia is of concern. While suicide is not illegal in South Australia, and while there are no laws to allow people to avail themselves of humane voluntary euthanasia, people who are suffering and hopelessly ill will continue to seek viable alternatives. My questions are:

1. Will the Premier investigate whether the federal government has the power to prevent items being manufactured in South Australia that are not illegal in South Australia?

2. Will the Premier investigate whether the federal government has the power to prevent plastic bags with a fabric gusset and a drawstring at one end being manufactured in South Australia?

3. Will the Premier write to the federal justice and customs minister to express concern that the civil liberties of South Australians would be adversely affected by any ban on individuals ordering items such as this type of plastic bag from overseas and, if not, why not?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation): I think the question should be directed to the Minister for Justice. I will take those questions on notice and bring back a reply.

INDEPENDENT GAMBLING AUTHORITY

The Hon. NICK XENOPHON: My questions to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, representing the Minister for Gambling, are as follows:

1. When will the Independent Gambling Authority's inquiry into gambling-related crime commence; what will its terms of reference be; what resources will be allocated to it; and when will the report be handed down, given that the Minister for Gambling made a statement in relation to that in May this year?

2. Given the inquiries that the Independent Gambling Authority is undertaking, or will undertake shortly, in relation to the lotteries code of practice, the wagering codes of practice, poker machine numbers, the hotel and clubs gaming codes of practice, the link between gambling and crime, and poker machine loyalty schemes, will the minister say whether he considers the IGA has adequate resources to deal with these matters; and, if so, will he specify the staffing and other resources available to the IGA, including the budget for independent research?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation): I will refer those important questions to the minister in another place and bring back a reply.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I have a supplementary question. Who will the IGA be consulting throughout these processes?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: I will endeavour to refer the supplementary question to the Minister for Gambling and bring back a reply.

HIGHWAYS, NAMING

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, representing the Minister for Transport, a question about the naming of highways.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: On 28 May this year, I asked the minister about the progress of the consultation process regarding the naming of major roads in this state. While I have since noted some media reports about the naming of one route, and I am aware of consultation with relevant councils regarding other routes, I have yet to receive a response to my questions. Will the minister indicate when I am likely to receive an answer?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation): I recently signed off on a document which contained a reply to the member's question. There must be a hiccup in the system. I will endeavour to straighten out that matter for the honourable member as soon as I can.

FESTIVAL THEATRE

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, representing the Minister for the Arts, a question about the Festival Theatre redevelopment project.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: Honourable members would be aware that, in May and June this year, I raised a series of questions in relation to the redevelopment of the Festival Theatre precinct. The construction of this project has been progressing slowly, which has created difficulties for people using the car park and attending various functions at the Festival Theatre. Following a number of questions that I asked on 7 May 2002, on 27 May the minister provided me with a response which, in part, reads as follows:

While reinstatement of the site after the demolition phase has taken some weeks longer than expected, the paving work has commenced, and the first stage was opened on Thursday 9 May, 2002. This work will progress rapidly and, by early June 2002, it is expected that a paved pedestrian access path will be provided from King William Road to the Dunstan Playhouse, and that a large portion of Festival Drive will be bituminised. The redevelopment work is expected to be completed during September 2002.

Given the answers provided to me by the minister, my questions are:

1. Does the minister approve of the installation of the extensive clear plate glass balustrade, which will provide an opportunity for scratched graffiti vandalism as well as unsuspecting exposure to women wearing skirts when they are in the vicinity of the balustrade?

2. Can the minister advise the council why the stated target dates for the completion of the work have not been met?

3. Is the minister able to confirm when the exact completion date of all the works is likely to be achieved?

4. Can the minister advise the council whether all the project works will be completed within the original budgeted costs?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): I thank the Hon. Julian Stefani for his continuing interest in this matter. He has asked a number of questions about it, and I know that he has been provided with some replies, to which he just referred. In relation to the

progress of work, clearly, there have been some difficulties, and I think they were outlined in the answers given to him previously. I will refer these additional questions to the Premier and bring back a reply as soon as possible.

AUSTRALIAN WORKERS UNION

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: My questions are directed to the Hon. Bob Sneath, recognising his former role as AWU secretary in South Australia. Is the member aware of the anger of the AWU arising from the government's budget decision to cut 26 contractors from work that they have long undertaken in the Far North on the roads network and—

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: Sir, I rise on a point of order.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: I beg your pardon?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Do you know your standing order?

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: I realise that anyone can answer questions in this place but, obviously, the Hon. Bob Sneath is not a minister. Secondly—

The Hon. A.J. Redford interjecting:

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: Don't be a clown all the time, Angus.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Ms Zollo is now breaching the orders herself.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Angus Redford will—

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: Secondly, what does it have to do with the running of the state?

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is a point of order. Unless it is a duty in which the honourable member has a particular interest, he can either answer or not answer the question. It is entirely a matter for Mr Sneath. It is something which is done by government instruments, so it is the business of the council.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Thank you, Mr President. I would agree with your ruling and your sentiment that the Hon. Bob Sneath does not need the protection of his whip. He is well able to look after himself. That is why I am asking this question of him—because I want to know whether he can also look after members that he used to represent now that he is a member of parliament.

The Hon. A.J. Redford interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Will they, as a result of this government decision? My question is: is the honourable member aware of the anger of the AWU arising from the government's budget decision to cut 26 road contractor jobs from the Far North and, in doing so, cut the number of road gangs from four to two? Does the honourable member endorse the union action in taking this matter to the Industrial Relations Commission? Has he used his initiative to take up this matter with the minister, as he will recall when he was concerned—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: No. As he will recall—

An honourable member interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Dissent is not a point of order. It might be discussing, but it is not a point of order. I will allow the honourable member to complete what the honourable member believes to be the question. I am likely to rule on standing order 107 at the conclusion of the honourable member's question, and I will make it clear at that time. The

honourable member can complete her question, but I ask her to come to the point.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: My third question is: has the honourable member taken the initiative to take up this matter with the minister? The member will recall that, when he was secretary and I was minister, when he had matters of concern with his members he used to take them up with me and we met and we resolved them, thereby precluding industrial action.

The PRESIDENT: Order! According to standing order 107 this is not a matter in which Mr Sneath holds exclusively an interest in any more than any other member. What he did in his former career really does not impinge on that. Technically speaking, it is a matter that I would rule out of order, on the standing orders, but the Hon. Mr Sneath, if he wants to take the opportunity, can answer the question.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: Thank you, Mr President. I have been in here for some time now, and I certainly do not interfere in what happens at the AWU. It has a new Secretary, and I am sure that, if there are concerns regarding what is happening in the north of the state with the road gangs, he would have taken them up with the appropriate minister.

LOWER MURRAY IRRIGATION ADVISORY BOARD

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: My question is directed to the minister representing the minister for water and all things other than agriculture in another place. Funding for the Lower Murray Irrigation Advisory Board ceases at the end of this year. Will the minister advise of the government's plans to provide ongoing funding for this important board and, if ongoing funding is not to be provided, can he then clarify who will represent the interests of the irrigators and the ongoing plan for rehabilitation of the Lower Murray flats?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation): I will take those important questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

PARLIAMENT, PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of the Government in the council a question about private members' business.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Since the election of the Rann-Lewis Labor government, we have seen a number of changes in the way we do business here, including sitting times. One of the changes for which the government should be praised has been the increase in time available for private members' business in the other place. Another is the flexible arrangements of the government in relation to private members' business being adjourned to government business days. On the face of it, the arrangements would appear to give private members the opportunity to get their business through parliament. Sadly, however, the process is now proving illusory.

The process of managing private members' business has all but stalled in this place. Let me give some examples: the parliamentary committees bill was introduced on 8 May, as were the Gaming Machines (Limitation on Exception to Freeze) Amendment Bill, the gaming machine regulation—betting rate legislation and the gaming machine regulation—alcohol bill. The Statutes Amendment (Road Safety Initia-

tives) Bill and the City of Adelaide (Abolition of Capital City Committee) Amendment bill were introduced in May. The Parliamentary Entitlements Bill and motions on the delay in redistribution and the development of parklands were all moved on 6 June. In respect of all of those private members' issues and initiatives, to date, the government has declined to make a single response, and some of them date back more than three months. In light of that, my questions to the minister are:

1. Why has the government not responded to these bills and motions?

2. Will the government endeavour to develop some mechanisms to ensure that there is a government response to private business in a timely fashion?

3. Will the government consider giving its backbenchers some responsibility in relation to private members' business to improve their performance, or does the government completely lack confidence in their ability to deal with these matters?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): I have every confidence in the ability of the backbenchers on this side of the parliament to handle business and, indeed, they have done just that on a number of occasions and I am sure they will continue to do so.

In relation to the timetable, we have, of course, just had a four week break. Certainly, the conduct of business in this council is always subject to negotiation and, as the leader of government business, I am always prepared to negotiate with the opposition as to its priority issues. Indeed, I indicate to the opposition and other members in this place what the government's priorities are so that we can handle business in a sensible way. I understand that there are a couple of matters that the opposition has indicated that it wishes to have addressed during this current two-week session before we adjourn for the winter break and, certainly, the government will attempt to deal with those matters expeditiously.

MATTERS OF INTEREST

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE AND BUSINESS

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: It was my pleasure last month to open the Women in Agriculture and Business state conference in Port Augusta. Lynette Staude, the state President, and Helen Rogers, the Conference Coordinator, were most welcoming. Port Augusta was chosen this year as the venue to link in with the Year of the Outback, because it is often known as our gateway to the Outback. The program for the first day was both educational and entertaining, with a variety of speakers. I particularly enjoyed listening to Professor Peter Langridge, Professor of Plant Science at the University of Adelaide, who spoke on GM food; Douglas Sprigg, chairman of the 230 square mile Arkaroola Tourist Resort and Wilderness Sanctuary, Northern Flinders Ranges; and Jane Gloster who, until recently, lived with her husband and young son on Mulyungarie Station, which occupies 1 million acres, 430 kilometres east of Port Augusta. Jane shared with the audience her experiences on Mulyungarie and her commitment to remote education.

The principal aim and objective of the Women in Agriculture and Business organisation is to encourage interest and participation in the activities of rural people and organisations, especially in primary industries. The 2002 conference was certainly able to fulfil that commitment and was, obviously, an excellent opportunity to promote goodwill, friendship and understanding among members, and I congratulate all involved in its success.

We all recognise the vital role that our rural industries play in the economic success of our state. All governments over the years have displayed their recognition and support for rural South Australia through such activities as Rural Counselling, the development of the Rural Affairs Unit in the Department of Primary Industries, the establishment of the Rural Women's Information Service and many of the activities associated with the early Rural Women's Movement. Women in Agriculture and Business has had a successful association with government over the past 85 years.

Increasingly, the important role of rural women in primary production has become better understood and appreciated by governments, and this is in no small way due to the diligence of organisations such as Women in Agriculture and Business, Australian Women in Agriculture, Women in Horticulture, Associated Country Women of the World, Rural Women's Networks and the Country Women's Association.

Keeping governments informed on issues helps ensure that policies are inclusive of the needs of all people. I acknowledge the role that Women in Agriculture and Business play in pressing for the recognition and worth of rural people at all levels of government. I understand that over 7 000 women in South Australia alone define themselves as farmers or farm managers so, by numbers alone, women's management and decision-making contribution to primary industry is highly significant.

As the convener of the Issues Group of Food South Australia and the Premier's Food Council, I particularly acknowledge the food sector's significant contribution to South Australia, both economically and socially. In my capacity as parliamentary secretary to minister Holloway, I look forward to leading the delegation of South Australian rural women to the Third International Congress for Rural Women in Madrid, Spain. The congress will be another opportunity for rural women to benefit not just themselves but their communities and businesses. It is important for people to be part of the bigger picture and to have an opportunity to network with other rural women around the world, to bring a clearer understanding of the issues affecting primary industries.

In my speech I congratulated the Women in Agriculture and Business, because it can be a brave move to hold a state function away from a central location. The conference provided the opportunity to have a little taste of the outback, its people and its beauty. The people of country South Australia are great at supporting one another, and this conference was no exception. The conference was a highly successful one, with the participation of members and visitors from all parts of Australia.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: How many people would have participated?

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: Probably a couple of hundred. It was a wonderful few days of learning and networking, and I again congratulate the Women in Agriculture and Business.

EMPLOYMENT, JUNIOR PAY RATES

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: I rise today in outrage. Call the ambulance: we have a bleeder! The United Trades and Labor Council of South Australia has yet again proved why the once strong and powerful union movement is now suffering massive internal bleeding and dying a slow and painful death. We saw yesterday and today media reports that the union movement is calling for, amongst other backward-looking measures, the scrapping of junior rates of pay. Clearly, the union movement pines for the days of Mike Rann as minister for youth employment, because simply scrapping junior rates will mean that youth unemployment will rise more quickly than union membership is falling. In other words, it would set a world record for the hundred metres sprint.

Junior rates give young people a competitive advantage. Without this advantage, young people would simply not be employed. When they come to employers at 15 or 16, they have very little skill or experience, which is only natural. However, junior rates of pay give an employer a reason to give our kids a chance. With this chance comes experience and opportunity for the future which, in the end, only benefits our society. Do these unionists not have kids? Many small businessmen have told me that they would simply not employ young people without junior rates. They have to be realistic in business, and people without work experience and the skills necessary do not stack up against someone who has years of experience in the industry.

The union movement contends that junior rates and, therefore, my position are discriminatory against young people. I and most business people would plead guilty, because they are. But it is positive discrimination: it simply gives our kids a go. We will not back down from this position. Clearly, the union movement has its priorities wrong. It desires high youth unemployment, for some strange reason, maybe because basically it represents no-one in small business and therefore has no care for the state of small business. The policy position put forward by this poor excuse for a representative body goes to the heart of the reason. They were once a powerful union movement and now have membership levels of less than 20 per cent in the private sector in South Australia.

They are simply irrelevant, which is a complete turnaround from the days when you, Mr President, and others in this chamber had significant involvement and the union movement was strong. Thankfully, at the moment, the policy is just that—policy. It is now up to the Labor cabinet to prove that it is not a lackey of the union movement. Tony Blair has done it; Simon Crean is trying but failing; and now Mike Rann and this government have their turn.

Labor must come out today and refute this ridiculous policy suggestion by the union movement in the strongest possible terms. This policy will cost jobs and opportunity. Already, Labor has hit small business with further deregulation of shop trading hours, which we will discuss in more detail later. If Labor accepts these recommendations for scrapping junior rates, it will effectively destroy small business in this state. We have heard much rhetoric from the Labor Party—especially before the election—about supporting small business. Cometh the hour, cometh the man—or the government in this case.

This is the Labor Party's opportunity to prove that this promise was not made by 'broken promises Foley' and that it will be kept. The promise cannot be broken because it is too

important to small business across the width and breadth of this state. If it is, mark my words, the government will be in for the biggest political fight of its life.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: I take this opportunity to speak about the harmony within the Labor Party and the turmoil that haunts the Democrats and the Liberal Party in Australia, which is leaving the people of Australia with poor representation and ineffective opposition in the states and territories. It shows that individual egos within the liberals and the Democrats have steered them well away from their main objective of being good opposition and putting Australians first. A headline appearing on the front page of today's *Australian* reads 'Natasha ready to quit after ambush'. Over the past few weeks—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: Who cares; she's history.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I rise on a point of order, sir. It is not often that I rise to defend a Democrat, but I think it is appropriate that the honourable member refer to Senator Despoja by her proper name, as is the requirement under standing orders.

The PRESIDENT: I am sure that the honourable member meant to say Senator Despoja; and I am sure the honourable member is apologetic and that, even though he was interrupted, he will resume his contribution with the same gusto.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: Over the past few weeks we have read about the chaos within the Democrats—of individual's ambitions and egos. They have been held to ransom by individuals. The former leader, the Hon. Meg Lees, will go down in history as the politician who supported a tax on ordinary pensioners and unemployed people who, unlike Senator Harradine from Tasmania, received nothing from the state in which the Democrats have their biggest vote. Well, not any more. I do not think they would get a big vote in South Australia.

Unfortunately, now they are on the path of the Tasmanian tiger, and the last Democrat could soon be on display in the Tantanoola Tiger Hotel. The good senator had signed an agreement with the Democrats to quit politics if she ever resigned from the party, but she reneged on that agreement. It is amazing that people of this calibre and principle ever get to be leaders of political parties. Also appearing on the front page of the *Australian* is the headline, 'Battling liberals look to a new face', which refers to a successful leadership challenge in Victoria by a man who was sacked last week for disloyalty to the party.

We have also witnessed the demise of the Liberals in Queensland and Tasmania—a demise from which it will take years to recover. Of course, the only answer the Liberals can come up with in Tasmania is to recycle a leader. Federally, we see Mr Costello running around the country promoting himself and eagerly suggesting that it is time for the Prime Minister to go.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: This instability is showing in the polls.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is a point of order.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: As a point of accuracy, Mr Hidding has never been leader of the Liberal Party in Tasmania and he deserves a fair go.

The PRESIDENT: There is no point of order. It might be an inaccurate assessment, but the Hon. Mr Sneath will continue.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: All sorts of rumours are circulating in South Australia of leadership challenges within the Liberal Party. The strongest rumour is that the Hon. Dean Brown will be recycled, and some on the street are saying that his deputy will be Vickie Chapman or, as she is referred to on the street, Dickie Vickie. There are also strong rumours and murmurs amongst the liberals that the shadow treasurer is not safe from a challenge. The Hon. Robert Lawson and the Hon. Angus Redford both had their eyes on the Legislative Council opposition leader's guernsey. All the time this is happening, the South Australian Liberals have not been able to accept that they are in opposition.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The members on my extreme left will cease to be amused—so loudly.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: Instead, they continue to conduct a witch-hunt against the Speaker in the other place. It looks as if the only current leader to survive of all the Liberals may be John Elliott at Carlton, and we all know where they finished. Perhaps their 'born to rule' motto should be thrown out the window whilst they have a good, long look themselves, and start serving the community as good politicians should. It is a pleasure to belong to a Labor government and to look at all the states and territories in Australia where there are Labor governments, and see the discipline and loyalty that is afforded to our leaders by our politicians, rank and file and affiliates. I am sure that this has resulted in our being in government in all states and territories, and will also result in our winning the next federal election.

GEHL, Mr J.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: My comments today relate to the final report prepared by Mr Jan Gehl, the Danish architect who has spent some of the past 30 years promoting more human, people-oriented public spaces across the world, in terms of urban design and city planning. His report, 'Public Spaces and Public Life: City of Adelaide 2002' was released on 17 July by the Lord Mayor, having been commissioned late last year by Planning SA, the Adelaide City Council and the Capital City Committee. At that time, I was minister for transport and urban planning and a most enthusiastic advocate of this undertaking. Therefore, I regret that at the launch of the final report last month the current minister, the Hon. Jay Weatherill, did not choose to participate. He did attend. Incidentally, I was not invited.

I first met Mr Jan Gehl at the 'City on a Stage' symposium in March 2001, which was sponsored by two agencies that reported to me: the Festival of Arts and Planning SA. It was an invigorating few days with local, state and international speakers such as Mr Gehl contributing what they considered to be factors that made a great city in terms of a place to live, work, visit and have fun—a vital place. It was quite clear from that seminar that we have enormous assets in our city. And although many of them are tired, there is much more we can do to make it a vibrant, vital place that is relevant to young people—a place where people want to gather and work—and to see that Adelaide works as a real engine house for the state in terms of economic and social development.

One of the outcomes of this symposium was a real desire by all present to see that the issues were not left to die, that

they were taken further, and the commissioning of Mr Gehl for this exercise was one of those outcomes. I strongly recommend that all honourable members of this parliament read this excellent report produced by Mr Gehl and his team. I believe it is fair to suggest that it is the most significant input into design and management of our city since the first City of Adelaide plan. It notes that cities all over the world are rediscovering their public places and becoming increasingly aware of the need for dignified, high-quality city environments.

I want to make a few comments. First, the report marries in exceedingly well with initiatives by the former government, when I was minister, in terms of urban growth boundaries, Parklands 21, open space strategies generally, the Streetwise program, urban regeneration projects, public transport investment and patronage increases. In terms of the report, the Adelaide City Council, at its meeting last Monday night, agreed to a set of short-term priorities. They will now go to the Capital City Committee, which meets in October, and the council will seek an agreement with the state government on joint strategies and projects to advance this report in the short, medium and long terms. I hope that the state government will cooperate with the city council in this endeavour, and I will be very interested to learn what the Minister for Urban Development and Planning anticipates he will be doing in terms of this report and setting the government priorities, short, medium and long term.

Briefly, improved pedestrian access is one aspect that I endorse. There is the footpaths policy and issue of the proliferation of signs: how can we get rid of the many ugly billboards and other signs around our city? I support the council in promoting a sample area—that being the central west of Adelaide—to test Professor Gehl's idea. I agree with the council that a number of transport projects must be advanced with the state government and, in terms of car parking, that we cannot reduce the number of car parks until we look at a regulated policy that also involves the out-of-city car park spaces. We must do more in terms of live music: much more must be done by the state government to support the council in terms of this matter and its objectives for increased population density. I support our city squares being reduced in terms of traffic access.

Time expired.

FOSTER CARE

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: Members may recall that, on one occasion in the last parliament, I quoted a foster-carer who described the Department of Family and Youth Services as being dangerously dysfunctional. Now we have had a change of government but, unfortunately, little else has changed, at least as far as the practices of FAYS are concerned. Foster-carers are diminishing in numbers, and one of the disincentives to fostering is the persistent risk of allegations of abuse.

In June, a 17 year old girl in the care of the minister committed suicide. Her natural father holds FAYS wholly responsible for this. He has written to the Coroner asking for an inquest, and because of that I will not use names in what I have to say. This girl was emotionally disturbed, with a history of making abuse allegations against her carers and others. These included the natural children of the foster-carers, other foster-children, and even a taxi driver and a fish shop proprietor.

One of the carers that she had, whom I will call Foster Parent A, looked after this girl for six and a half years, the longest placement that she had in her short life. But, when the girl made an allegation of physical abuse against the carer, she was removed from the placement. The foster-carer ultimately quit as a carer because of continual hounding by FAYS. Now, that was a great loss to the system, and the truth of the situation was that the girl had, in fact, attacked the carer. That foster-carer was absolutely devastated that FAYS had chosen to believe the allegations. The resulting instability would not have helped this emotionally disturbed child either.

Subsequent carers, Foster Parents B, also had problems. The girl made allegations of sexual abuse against their 12½ year old natural son, at which point they asked Anglicare to cancel the placement. That happened, but the girl wanted desperately to stay. When she was unable to bring that about, she retaliated by making sexual abuse allegations against the former foster-father. Although he was never interviewed by the police, he was charged with six counts of unlawful sexual intercourse, and this despite the fact that the family doctor provided a statement showing that the man was both physically and medically incapable of such action. Obviously, aware of the serious implications of her allegations, the girl wanted to retract the story. She tried to talk to Foster Parents B, but they could not talk with her because of the issues associated with interfering with the witness. A letter from her natural father to the Coroner says that when talking to his mother the girl had said:

I cannot live with my lies any longer, and if

Grumps (foster-father) goes to court it will kill him, so I will go first.

He says:

My daughter had phoned me. . . every night for a week telling that she had told lies. I responded to my daughter that all she had to do was tell the truth. Her response to me was no-one would listen to her.

On 9 June, the girl suicided by taking 100 Paracetamol tablets. Because the accuser is dead, the case against the foster father has now been dropped. In the meantime, they have been deregistered as foster parents and now have no opportunity to clear their names. FAYS has lost an extraordinary foster mother because of the inept way it has handled these allegations.

Of the 31 children fostered by foster mother B, 28 of them have chosen to remain in contact with her; a real tribute to her capacity as a foster parent. However, FAYS's mishandling did not stop at the girl's death. Foster parent A, the woman who had looked after this girl in an extremely caring way for more than six years and had formed a very strong bond with her during that time, was not even advised by FAYS of her death. She found out third-hand from other carers who had looked after this girl and who had attended the funeral. For her, this lack of compassion on the part of FAYS has opened up old wounds.

Everyone is a loser in this tragedy. The number of abuse allegations made by this girl surely should have seen FAYS officers questioning the veracity of the allegations. Hopefully, the Coroner will conduct an inquiry. At the very least, FAYS should admit its culpability, do its own internal review and kick some heads. In my view, FAYS remains dangerously dysfunctional. The children and carers in our foster system deserve better than this.

BIRDSEYE, Mrs S.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: During 1999, I noted the alternative National Highway One, which travels through Robe and Beachport, had been renamed the Southern Ports Highway. I congratulated the then minister for transport (Hon. Diana Laidlaw) on this action and indicated my view that more of South Australia's major routes should be named as highways. The then minister agreed and sought my help in gaining community views on possible names that could be used.

This proposal gained media attention, and I received feedback across the state. I subsequently passed on these suggestions to the working party that was established to assess possible highway names for major roads. One of the suggestions came from Florence Jukes-Heley BEM of Eden Hills, who nominated Mrs Sylvia Birdseye as someone who should be honoured as a pioneer bus operator in this state. I was delighted that, in recent press articles, the government has approved the naming of the Cowell to Elliston road as the Birdseye Highway. I understand that this is the first South Australian highway to be named after a woman.

In the time remaining, I will read extracts from a bicentennial essay about Mrs Birdseye written by Mrs Florence Jukes-Heley:

In 1921, Sylvia Merrill became a driver for the first motorised transport service in South Australia, operating daily a return trip of 192 kilometres between Adelaide and Mannum.

Her employer was Alfred Birdseye, who gave her a job in his office but soon had enough belief in her ability to put her in charge of one of his valuable, recently acquired motor buses for the Adelaide/Mannum route. At 19 she had achieved her ambition.

Two years later Sylvia married her childhood sweetheart, Alfred's son, Sydney, who worked at the Adelaide terminus and kept the buses running. . . . When, in 1926, the Adelaide/Mannum service was sold, Sydney and Sylvia started a service to Port Augusta. This was extended in 1933 to Port Lincoln. By 1938 they had a straight-eight Nash going to Streaky Bay and later, when more vehicles were added they took in Ceduna.

'Send it by Birdseye' had become a household phrase on Eyre Peninsula. They soon earned a reputation for delivering goods on time, intact and at a fraction of the cost of other modes of transport. They had achieved this on roads that were narrow, winding, unmarked, corrugated, potholed, subject to flooding and dust storms. . . . For almost 40 years Sylvia [Birdseye] drove 3 200 kilometres a week. . . . Much of this was done at night while her passengers dozed in their seats. When her children were young, accompanied by a nursemaid they went with her, unaware of their unique lifestyle.

On the road no one was ever allowed to change tyres or help with any mechanical difficulty—Sylvia performed these tasks herself. Dressed in slacks or overalls, she would disappear under the bus to emerge only when the repair was effected. If she needed a country garage she told the mechanic what had to be done. Sylvia always loaded her bus, knowing she could then unload it better than anyone. . . . One of the few occasions on which her bus failed to arrive on time was when record floods hit Eyre Peninsula in 1946. The Birdseye Bus was bogged 15 kilometres south of Whyalla—it took 8 days to reach Port Lincoln. During that time Sylvia showed remarkable courage, resourcefulness and concern for her 30 passengers.

In 1954 her. . . [husband] died, privately mourned by Sylvia until the day she died. On August 8, 1962 while preparing her bus to drive to Streaky Bay Sylvia had a stroke and died. . . [a day later].

Many people in this chamber would be aware that at a place called Lincoln Gap, I think it is—where the Eyre Highway parts from the Lincoln Highway—a simple cairn has been erected in memory of the girl who so long ago knew what she wanted and drove on to become a legend.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw has told me that a Transport SA scholarship, known as the Sylvia Birdseye Scholarship, has

been established for female engineers to work with Transport SA. I thank Florence Jukes-Heley for nominating Sylvia Birdseye and providing the information from which I have quoted.

UNITING CHURCH

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: On 22 June I had the pleasant duty of attending the Uniting Church's 25th birthday. Held at Prince Alfred College, it was a special celebration and was essentially an internal affair—a sort of family party. However, leaders from other parts of the church were invited as well. Its theme was hope, and various people spoke on that theme. They included a retired minister, a school chaplain, people involved in new experimental ministries and a refugee from Sudan, who had arrived in Australia less than two weeks before the celebrations, who spoke about Christians being persecuted in Sudan.

The Uniting Church is an interesting denomination. While its ancient roots date back 2 000 years, it actually came into being on 22 June 1977 out of a union between the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches. The Uniting Church sees itself as an indigenous church—a uniquely Australian church—and describes itself as the Australian Christian Movement. It says it shares with Australian people in the search for meaning, purpose and community in life. A leaflet circulated for the church's birthday stated that, 25 years ago, the people of three churches were captured by a vision. The leaflet states:

This vision was so compelling and so exciting that they were willing to leave the traditions and ways of doing church they loved, to establish the Uniting Church.

The Uniting Church is the third largest church in Australia, and 1.3 million claim affiliation with the church. Across Australia, 300 000 members worship regularly in 2 800 congregations. In South Australia, there are 25 000 worshippers in 370 congregations.

I am particularly encouraged by the church's contribution to the welfare of families. It has one of the largest networks of caring bodies and agencies in the country. Community services provided by the Uniting Church in this state alone have a combined budget of more than \$300 million. Nationally, approximately 400 Uniting care agencies serve more than a million people and their families each year.

The Uniting Church is well known in Australia for being outspoken on social issues. Some of the issues about which it has been vocal are: native title; environmental issues; refugees and asylum seekers; abolishing mandatory sentencing; and reconciliation. The Reverend Ian Tanner was the first SA Moderator of the Uniting Church and later became the church's national president. He now lives in Canberra, but he returned to speak at the birthday celebrations. I was impressed by the man's heart and focus. He stated:

There is no pathway of hope unless we include the suffering world as a focus of our mission—the world of suffering people, and the world of the suffering and exploited universe.

I am proud of the contribution that Australian Christians are making to the life and welfare of our country. Many charity organisations are church-based and are contributing substantially to the needs of our community. Where would our state be without them? I was pleased to be part of the church's 25th birthday celebration here in South Australia. I am sure all members will join with me in thanking members of the Uniting Church, especially in our state, for what they are

doing in our community. I am sure members will also join me in wishing them well for the future.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: HILLS FACE ZONE

The Hon. J. GAZZOLA: I move:

That the report of the committee concerning the hills face zone be noted.

The original intention of the hills face zone was to define an area which was unable to be easily serviced with a water supply. What we have gained since is the opportunity to provide a scenic backdrop to the city of Adelaide, which includes significant areas of native and introduced vegetation and a wide range of land use activities. Today, the hills face zone is 70 per cent privately owned and 91 kilometres in length. It provides a number of vital roles for metropolitan Adelaide, including catchment for Adelaide's water supply, farming pursuits, industry, residential housing and tourism. Perhaps, most importantly, the hills face zone in the eyes of many is an attractive backdrop to Adelaide. It has an environmental quality valued by South Australians and it is widely accepted that it needs to be preserved.

The current committee believes that the development plan objectives outline the need for the hills face zone to remain a beautiful natural backdrop to Adelaide and the plains. The policy emphasises the preservation and enhancement of this character, whilst accommodating existing low intensity agriculture and open space. It is the view of the committee that a healthy balance between development and environmental concerns must be maintained. The hills face zone is not consistently being used or conserved in line with the stated objectives. For example, despite the development plan indicating the hills face zone is not a residential zone, large conspicuous houses are being built and extended and are eroding the zone's visual landscape.

The committee believes that examples in the report demonstrate that current development controls do not adequately protect the hills face zone. The committee found inconsistencies in both the assessment of development applications and the enforcement of development controls, and unauthorised development by both local government and the Development Assessment Commission. Indeed, the requirement to remediate sites which have illegal development is not applied despite applicable legislative tools available under the Development Act 1993. The committee believes that there needs to be regional consistency in the assessment of development applications, the enforcement of breaches of development approval and action against illegal development.

The committee is of the opinion that an increase in certainty for all interested parties could be achieved by a number of routes, including more specific controls in the development plan and/or the hills face zone being the subject of its own legislation. As such, the committee recommends that a number of legislative and non act-based administrative arrangements should be contemplated. The committee has also recommended that the hills face zone be administered by a single regional assessment panel with delegated authority from councils or as determined by regulation. Additionally, the committee recommends that the minister, in conjunction with the Local Government Association, instigate a process to improve policing of illegal development, including remediation, and development approval conditions.

The committee is of the opinion that a number of policy changes to the hills face zone need to be considered, either immediately or through the development plan section 30 review process. Any plan amendment report policy changes need to be consistent with the planning strategy and, as such, the committee believes that the planning strategy needs to provide a more detailed consideration of the hills face zone, which should result in further policy expression on a number of issues. The committee believes one consideration should be the removal of double storey dwellings from the non-complying list of development. The development plan opposes two storey or two level houses, yet expert evidence from local government and the Development Assessment Commission suggests that on steep sloping blocks split level homes are often the best way to reduce site cut and fill.

The committee also supports the consideration of policy areas and a common policy mechanism in development plans that facilitates a more diverse and locally responsive policy for land within the single zone. While the policies in the hills face zone are protecting the viewscape, adjacent areas may be compromising the objectives of these policies. Accordingly, the committee is of the opinion that viewscape issues should not be confined to the hills face zone only. There are many adjacent areas that impact on the presentation of both the hills face zone and the overall backdrop to the city, and these areas need to be identified and considered. This approach was favoured by the committee over consideration of large scale changes to the hills face zone boundary, as it is commonly recognised that such hills face zone changes would not be accepted by the community. However, the committee does believe that a number of possible minor boundary changes could be considered and recommends that such changes be assessed by state and local government in conjunction with the community.

In terms of understanding the requirements of the development plan, the committee found that people who purchase a block of land in the hills face zone have an expectation that it can be developed but are often completely unaware of the applicable controls and possible land uses that can occur in the immediate locality. This expectation raises pressure on authorities to allow a development for social, political and economic reasons. Potential purchasers of land must be made aware that they do not have automatic development rights and that land uses surrounding the property will vary.

The committee has recommended that the minister should implement an advice alerting potential purchasers of real estate to applicable development controls for the property and the surrounding area; something like a notice prior to sale would help address expectations that any site development could occur or that there will be no impacts from other local development. Additionally, development that is more sympathetic to the objectives of the hills face zone can be more effectively achieved by informed owners, planners and developers.

Education also needs to be provided for all participants regarding inappropriate development that would be considered contrary to the development plan. The committee recommends that the minister undertake a broad education program with owners, administrators, planners and developers to enhance awareness of the role and function of the hills face zone. In conclusion, I thank the following people who assisted with this report:

- those who made submissions and gave evidence;

- both the former minister for transport and urban planning (Hon. Diana Laidlaw) and the current Minister for Urban Development and Planning and their staff; and
- the committee staff, Knut Cudarans and Stephen Yarwood.

The committee believes that parliament needs to take a strong interest and leadership role in managing the hills face zone to ensure that South Australians and visitors to our state can continue to enjoy the special natural character of the zone. The pressure for development of the hills face zone is increasing and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. As such, the preservation and enhancement of the hills face zone and natural character, while allowing for existing low intensity activities, is paramount. Policy implementation has not always been successful with the attrition of the zone evident to both residents and visitors of Adelaide and the plains.

The objectives for the hills face zone must again become central in the development decision process, and it is hoped that the recommendations listed in the report suggest alternatives for the minister to explore. To do nothing is not an option: to act is an important investment in Adelaide's future. We look forward to the minister's response to this report.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW secured the adjournment of the debate.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The Hon. J. GAZZOLA: I move:

That the Environment, Resources and Development Committee be requested to investigate and report on urban development in South Australia having regard to—

- I. global and regional development trends;
- II. the changing role of cities;
- III. the cost and benefits to the state;
- IV. performance of, and strategies for, developing and promoting current projects;
- V. any other relevant matter.

The inquiry into urban development was initiated by the previous membership of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee. At a meeting on 7 March 2001, the committee resolved of its own motion to conduct this inquiry. I am advised that, on 17 October, an all-day urban development forum was held in the House of Assembly chamber. This forum brought together a number of eminent practitioners from both the private and public sectors to discuss those issues that they saw as being foremost for the organisation they represented. The transcript of that forum is available on the Environment, Resources and Development Committee's web site.

With the change of membership of the committee after the last election, it was resolved to continue this inquiry under the same terms of reference. The topic is so broad and the inquiry could become so lengthy that the only manageable and, indeed, acceptable manner in which to keep parliament informed of the committee's deliberations is to report to parliament through a series of reports, each with its own focus. The first of these reports will deal with the urban growth boundary. Not only is it a logical starting point but also our investigations are timely, since the Gawler, Playford, Noarlunga City, Willunga Development Plans—Metropolitan Urban Boundary PAR is currently out for public consultation

and will come before the committee in the next few months. Other reports under this overarching inquiry might deal with urban consolidation and regeneration, transport, utility services and infrastructure, social impacts and, perhaps, the fundamentals of the planning strategy.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I also support this motion. As the mover noted, it was an initiative of the former ERD Committee to move this motion and take on this inquiry. In looking at the terms of reference of this motion, I believe that if the matter had come before this place for consideration before being referred to the committee the terms may have been more specific in relation to the issues that we would take on.

The committee is being asked to consider urban development in South Australia with regard to global and regional development trends, the changing role of cities and any other relevant matter. We are, essentially, taking on the world, and we could be at this task forever. That is why I strongly support the remarks of the Hon. John Gazzola in relation to a variety of interim reports on specific subjects that will be the focus of the committee's attention. Only in this way will it be manageable for the committee and of any benefit to this parliament, the government and our community as a whole.

Essentially, this inquiry on urban development deals with the issue of urban sprawl. The Hon. John Gazzola mentioned that it is relevant that the first interim inquiry and report arising from this term of reference will be the urban growth boundary. This is highly relevant to land supply and our regard for land as a precious resource. I have often indicated that, with our vast state and land mass, it would be a surprise to most people that land should be regarded as scarce. But, certainly, our prime agricultural land is scarce, and we have been very reverent in our regard for land and the growth and design of our city and careful planning for the future.

That has also led to a lot of infrastructure issues, and the best investment of state and commonwealth funds. Certainly, it has been a source of grief to me over recent years to see schools being closed because of the lack of a population base of young families, yet we have been building new schools on the outskirts of our city. We have not been prudent in utilising the investment of past taxpayers in infrastructure or providing adequately for the maintenance of infrastructure, whether it be power, water and sewerage, roads or public buildings.

I think it is also relevant, in terms of urban development and the issues with which we will deal, to look at not only how to use our capital resources in a better way but also, for instance, in terms of schools, whether we should use the existing infrastructure in its own right, for longer hours of the day, and use those facilities more effectively over the weekend for community purposes and open space.

There are a lot of questions that we should be addressing as a community, and I think that the ERD Committee and this term of reference, which is so broad, will provide the committee with an opportunity to raise many questions, suggestions and recommendations that will be of benefit as we plan our future as a city. How we deal with issues in Adelaide will, of course, have ramifications for near urban areas and regional cities. It will be a very broad term of reference, and we will have to be very careful to have regard to the consequences of the decisions that we make that relate to Adelaide, because they will have flow-on effects.

I am also interested to see the way in which this government will seek to work within the Planning and Development

Act and the Local Government Act. In particular, I would strongly encourage, on a personal level—and, hopefully, through this committee—greater powers to the minister to implement planning matters across the community. By implementing the urban growth boundary, many difficult issues will arise—whether it be transportation corridors, a stronger mix of housing types, stormwater issues and how stormwater can be incorporated in open space effectively. Many of the decisions will be for the community good: they may not necessarily be seen as a benefit to the individual in every instance.

I suspect that there will be a lot of fire and heat as we work through these issues over some period of time. In those circumstances, the local council may not be the body that any government can rely on to implement what the state needs in the greater public good. I suspect that the minister will have to exercise more and more responsibility by using powers which are already in the act but which have been used rarely to date. I believe that, thinking through these issues, the committee can pursue this matter on a bipartisan basis and possibly provide the minister with courage to apply the powers in the act or even to extend those powers. So, there is a broad range of matters for this committee to explore. I support this reference being taken up by the ERD Committee.

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO secured the adjournment of the debate.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORT

The Hon. J. GAZZOLA: I move:

That the annual report, 2001-2002, of the committee be noted.

I note that the Presiding Member of the committee, Ms Lyn Breuer, has already tabled and spoken to this report in the other place. I also note that other members are queuing up to discuss this matter. So, I will simply commend the report to the Legislative Council and thank and congratulate the previous committee for its terrific report.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: In rising to support the noting of this report, I indicate that it was my pleasure to be a member of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee for more than four years. I am pleased to support the noting of this report, particularly because for those four years I was in the position in which the Hon. John Gazzola now finds himself, both in the fact that I sat where he now sits but also I was the government member from the Legislative Council on that committee. So, it was my responsibility, as the Hon. John Gazzola is now doing, to bring up similar reports in this chamber.

The composition of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee has changed significantly since the election. In fact, my understanding is that the Hon. Mike Elliott is the only remaining member of the former committee, and he has been a committee member since its inception. The only other member who was there since the formation of the committee was the now Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Hon. Terry Roberts).

I enjoyed very much my time on the ERD Committee. Its membership came from four separate political parties. Despite the fact that we obviously had a range of views about a wide variety of issues, there were no dissenting reports. We worked pretty hard to get consensus, and that was not always

easy. I pay tribute to my colleagues on that committee: the Hon. Terry Roberts; Mrs Karlene Maywald, the member for Chaffey in another place; the Hon. Stephanie Key who is now, of course, a minister in the Rann government; the Hon. Mike Elliott; and the presiding member and member for Schubert, Mr Ivan Venning.

I am delighted that my colleague the Hon. Diana Laidlaw has been elected to serve on that committee. She has a wealth of knowledge in many of the areas considered by the ERD Committee, and I am delighted that she saw fit to accept the nomination from our party to be on the committee. The other members of the committee are: Ms Lyn Breuer, the member for Giles and the Presiding Member; my own local member, the Hon. Malcolm Buckby, the member for Light; as I said, the Hon. Mike Elliott MLC remains; the Hon. Mr Gazzola; and the member for Mount Gambier in another place, Mr Rory McEwen.

Before touching on one or two of the inquiries, I would like to make some comments about the staff. The staff of parliamentary committees have a difficult role in many ways. Mr Knut Cudarans as the Secretary of the committee was always very helpful to me, particularly on occasions when, for unavoidable reasons, the member for Schubert was unavailable, so I had to act as chairman. I thank Mr Cudarans for his help. Also, in the period covered by this report, we had two research officers: Mr Stephen Yarwood was on study leave for a significant part of that period, and his position was taken by Mr Philip Frensham. I understand that Mr Frensham is now in the employ of the House of Assembly, in the chamber. I thank both of those gentlemen for their work as research officers to the committee.

I do not wish to delay the council for long, but I will make a couple of comments about some of the inquiries. Certainly, the ecotourism inquiry was very interesting. I am a strong believer that South Australia has much to benefit from the development of ecotourism. We have many wonderful opportunities to develop tourism in ecological areas and areas where people have a particular interest, whether it be star gazing or witnessing a certain bird type. There are so many opportunities for South Australia.

We have made great strides in recent years. Certainly, before this inquiry was undertaken there was some concern that we were behind the mark. However, I believe that a lot of work was being done. The Year of the Outback has helped to focus that work. There are some amazing examples of ecotourism operators who are as good as the world has to offer. Part of that inquiry included field visits and, while I was not able to go on the trip that went to the Far North and the north-east of the state, I certainly have great memories of the work we did when we visited the West Coast of South Australia, including the head of the Bight, Ceduna, Elliston, Streaky Bay, Wudinna, Whyalla and, of course, the wonderful Gawler Ranges.

Another aspect of this report deals with the inquiry that the committee conducted into urban development. I understand that the new committee has decided to seek a renewal of the parliament's wish to work in that area. I share the sentiments of my colleague the Hon. Diana Laidlaw when she says that you could go on forever in that area. As a committee, we found the area to be huge. There are many issues, not all relating to the city of Adelaide. I think we need to examine urban development in many of our regional communities.

Of course, one area that I brought to the attention of the committee is Lewiston, which is close to where I used to live. There has been a form of urban development there in various

stages over the last 40 years—rural living and animal husbandry blocks have been developed—and some of it has been done very well but some of it has been done not so well.

One of the things that I well remember about the committee's work on that inquiry was a one-day forum on urban development which was held in the House of Assembly chamber last year. We heard a range of speakers from across government and other organisations such as planning organisations and architectural organisations who made very good contributions, and I hope that that information will be used by the committee in its further deliberations in this area.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, it will.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I am pleased to hear from the Hon. Diana Laidlaw that that is the case. One of the other things that it is important for people who are not aware of the ERD committee's work to recognise is that it is basically the last stopping point for PARs (Planning Amendment Reports) before they are gazetted. So, much of the committee's work is taken up with examining these PARs as they are put forward and, in some cases, the committee needed to take evidence in relation to them. During the time that I was on the committee I do not believe that the committee ever rejected one but, on a number of occasions—as my colleague the Hon. Diana Laidlaw, the then minister for planning, would be aware—we suggested amendments to a number of them and I think that in many cases those adjustments were seen as benefiting the general community.

There was a large number of other inquiries, and also described in the table of contents of this report are other interests that the committee looked at. Things were brought to our attention from time to time that were not actually the subject of an inquiry. Some of those were monitoring situations that had been the subject of previous inquiries.

In closing, I can say that I enjoyed my work on the Environment, Resources and Development Committee. It was, and I believe still is, one of the busiest committees of the parliament. I note from this report that the number of meetings of the committee was lower than in the past but that was, obviously, because of the election period and also the fact that following the Labor Party's coming to government the best part of two months passed before committees were elected. That has obviously impacted on the number of meetings. But, in my time, I think the average number of meetings of that committee was over 40. It was, along with the Statutory Authorities Review Committee—of which I was also a member—a very busy committee.

With those few words, I support the noting of this report and I wish the Environment, Resources and Development Committee under the chairmanship of the member for Giles every success in the work that it does in these important areas.

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO secured the adjournment of the debate.

MURRAY RIVER FISHERY

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. Caroline Schaefer:

That the regulations under the Fisheries Act 1982 concerning fishing activities, made on 30 June 2002 and laid on the table of this council on 9 July 2002, be disallowed.

(Continued from 10 July. Page 448.)

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: Since I moved this disallowance motion, events have moved considerably for the

30 river fishers who have been denuded of their right to a living. An offer has been made by minister Holloway and his department which equates to adding their previous three financial years' income, dividing it by three and multiplying it by 1.5.

It did not in fact take into account any of the other issues that have gone with this whole sorry saga of the river fishing community. I have before me piles and piles of letters and offers from these fishers and, even at a cursory glance, I would say that there has been no equity and no justice in the offers that have been made to them. I have been offered the privilege of using a number of their letters, and I know that many of the members here have also received a great number of them. I will read some of them as we go on, but I first want to talk a little about what is required to be a river fisher.

They have been offered compensation for 30 nets but, as they have explained to me and as they would I am sure have explained to the minister had he agreed to speak with them, some of them require up to 100 nets in lots of 30, because the size of the net is species specific. If they want to catch one particular sort of fish they use one sort of net; they are allowed to use a maximum of them. While they have been offered compensation for 30 nets at \$160, the rest of their nets now have absolutely no use and sit in their sheds. Their sheds are another matter: most of them have had to build sheds in order to store their equipment. Many of them have large refrigeration units, and none of these have been taken into account in this compensation offer, yet they are essential tools of trade.

They are not tradeable: they cannot be used for any other form of making a living. I remind members that these are not people who were in financial difficulty. They are not people who had been told that they had an unsustainable fishery. In fact, scientifically, they had been told that they had a sustainable fishery. They voluntarily bought out some nine licences in as late as 1996, I believe, in order to get themselves property rights, a tradeable facility, and many of them borrowed money on that in the same way as if they had owned a farm. I will read a couple of these letters. I have been told that I can read their names, although I will not do that, but I have here a letter that reads as follows:

We have enclosed the front of our offer. This inadequate offer fails to address the following issues:

1. The value of a fishing licence was at least \$100 000 until Mr Holloway cancelled transferability.
2. We would not have sold our licence for anything under \$150 000 and have at least \$50 000 of equipment.
3. We would have at least 60 gill nets. Anyone who knows anything about fishing knows that we used different sizes and types of nets depending on the fish that we were targeting, water conditions and the fish that were moving at the time.
4. The same goes for drum nets. What do we do with the ones in excess of the government's offer?
5. How can anyone possibly think that we would be able to start again with this amount of money? A marine scale licence would cost at least \$150 000. Then we would need to purchase equipment on top of that.
6. What happened to the offer of help with marine scale licences? This was offered at our meeting with Mr Holloway at Loxton. All of a sudden this seems to have been withdrawn.
7. This licence has been in my family since 1936. This is my family heritage. I pulled out the last of my gill nets on the fourth anniversary of my father's death, and Mr Holloway tells me this is all only worth \$38 367. This is an insult.
8. This should not be dealt with like a redundancy from a job. This should be dealt with as purchasing our business from us. We did not just have a job, we had a sustainable business.
9. Obviously, Mr Holloway has never relocated his family. If he had, he would know that \$10 000 doesn't even come close to covering relocation. As mentioned in previous correspondence, how

does this help those of us who wish to keep our current home and rent it out while we try life elsewhere? Also, we have considered . . . commuting to another job until he is set up, and then I would continue to work in my current job and keep the kids in their school.

10. How much retraining can you get for \$5 000 (and what exactly does he suggest we do)? What do we live on while undertaking this retraining?

11. Tell Mr Holloway that if he wants us to go quietly he needs to offer—

and I will not put in the amount, but a realistic amount—

12. \$38 367 does not even cover the stress Mr Holloway has put us through with his incompetent efforts in dealing with this issue.

13. The fact that we didn't fish our reach hard for environmental reasons means that we are now being punished. We were waiting for a high river to allow fish to breed before giving up other work and making fishing our main income. This licence was my superannuation package. Could Mr Holloway retire on \$38 367? I think not.

As well as being a total mess this has been a case of a total lack of understanding of what these licences are and what they are. The compensation, if we could call it that, has been offered on a fishing catch, yet these people had essentially a property right. Anyone who has owned a farm or even a house knows that you borrow against that property right. Many of these people have significant debts borrowed against what they believed, as they said, was their property right and was indeed their superannuation. I have tried to think of some just means of doing this, but it is very difficult to think of a just means other than a staged phase-out over some time.

Unfortunately, the Labor government's unseemly rush to agree to anything that Peter Lewis asked for has made that now impossible. I have tried to think of some formula that would create at least a fair basis on which Mr Holloway could sit down and speak with these people and negotiate. The only similar thing that I can think of is a compulsory acquisition of property. I will use the example of a highway needed to go through someone's business. Under the law of this state, if the government compulsorily acquired someone else's property, the value of that property would be assessed and paid for.

I have here a Fisheries Act National Competition Policy Review Paper of June 2001, being a summary of licence fees and the value of South Australian fishing licences in 1998-99, the major source for which was exactly the same consultant as one of the ministers referred to today, that is, Econsearch and its economic indicator reports. The value of those licences at that time, for the river and lakes and Coorong, was \$100 000. The average licence fee was \$3 500 and the gross percentage value of production was 3.8 per cent, yet it appears that none of those figures has been used in what is a grossly unfair method of destroying people's livelihoods. I put it that the only fair way, now that we have gone down this ridiculous path, is to buy those people's property and then compensate them for loss of income.

I can hear the minister saying, 'But we can't afford that. That's going to cost too much money.' Well, I am sorry, the government should have thought of that when it rushed with unseemly haste into an alliance with the Speaker in another place without looking at the damage that it would do to these people. As an aside, I might add that the government also rushed into this part of the compact in a much more rapid fashion than it did any other part of the compact. It seems to me that the government has removed licences from these people, thereby removing their method of making a living, and it is the only part of the compact to which it has strictly adhered.

With respect to branch broomrape, no, the funding is not there, and it will go ahead with the method that was to be

used previously. Most, if not all, of the areas in the compact have not been adhered to, and it seems to me that the government thought that this would be an easy target. It was just 30 people—occupants of the Riverland who did not particularly like them pursuing their living; 30 people who were not going to cost too much money, and so it would use these people as a scapegoat to get into government. I will quote another letter from an older couple. It has been put to me, 'Some of these people are in their 80s and why should they be compensated for the loss of their livelihood?'

It is not their livelihood for which they need to be compensated: it is their property. It is their superannuation and their right to a decent and dignified retirement. The letter states:

We are extremely distressed after receiving our offer of the compensation package from minister Holloway. . . We were ready to retire in July after being full-time conservative fishers. Our transferable licence was our superannuation and our long service leave. Last year we had an offer of \$110 000 for our reach! With this miserable offer our superannuation has been stolen from us! We intended to go on a holiday around Australia after we retired—

which I would not have thought was too grandiose a dream—

As far as the offer of \$10 000 for relocating and \$5 000 for retraining, we being the ages of 76 and 68, will not be able to access this as we don't intend to move or how can we be retrained for something else. E.g. Perhaps fighter jet pilots!!! We strongly believe that catch history alone is unfair because of the compulsory acquisition of a fishery it should be based on the buy-out of fishery not individual fishermen. If I was to sell my licence I would be able to negotiate with the buyer, but there has been no negotiation with individual fishermen over the compensation package. Would any politician or public servant be happy to get their remuneration based on what they earned four years ago and why hasn't last year's return been included as fish prices were higher than four years ago as were our wages? We strongly believe that the minimum that anyone should receive is \$200 000 based on our valuation of transferable fishing licence of \$110 000,—

which, as I say, is documented in a departmental document—

\$40 000 worth of gear and \$50 000 worth of—

as they put it—

'Golden Handshake'!!!

I think that most of us could say that, instead of being a golden handshake, that would be the ex gratia payment that may give people just a little breathing space after paying off their debts in order to try to find another living. The letter concludes:

Bearing in mind we were in a 150 year old heritage fishery.

There are a number of those letters. There is a letter from a fisherman who bought his reach about only 18 months ago. He appealed to have his catch history used instead of the formula which in fact gave him only one year's income to be assessed. He was told summarily that there was no appeal. The human suffering, which I touched on last time, has not lessened. These people remain quite determined that they will not accept what the government is offering them. The offers vary and vary widely. Certainly, one that I have seen is \$164 000, and I believe that at least two are over and above that amount.

However, the vast majority are within the \$30 000 range, having just heard that most of them have property to the value of \$200 000. Indeed, I have documentation of offers of \$11 000, \$15 000 and \$14 000—not enough even to shift interstate to look for other work. As I say, many of these people have significant debts. They have borrowed in good faith against an asset which they were given—transferability and property rights—only some six to eight years ago. This

measure is not due to sustainability; this is not Labor Party policy; this is not Liberal Party policy—this is government by Peter Lewis, and it has been introduced for the expediency of getting into power.

These few people should not be made to pay in any form of social justice. These people should not be made to pay for what has been a cynical exercise by a few politicians. Our job is to represent the whole of the community. As I have said, many people say, 'These are only 30 people', and they are only 30 licences. Those 30 people all have families. As I said, social justice should apply equally to 30, 300 or three, and one would have to ask, who is next? If the government can do this to one set of annual renewable licences, who is next? Are the next people at threat, say, the fishermen in the Coorong and the lakes?

Do we then go to Gulf St Vincent? Perhaps many of the mining leases have renewable licences. Where does this stop and when do we get back to looking at people's human dignity as a base line? I have suggested a number of, if not solutions, more equitable methods of compensating these people than have been suggested at the moment. I must also object in the strongest possible terms to the threat which now is held over their head, namely, that, if they do not accept this offer by 30 September, on 1 October that offer is halved, and if they do not accept it by January they get nothing.

Many of these people—and I have letters here which, to save the embarrassment of my colleagues on the other side, I will not read—are members of unions and they have voted Labor all their lives. In March this year they voted Labor in good faith. By June they had no living, not through any fault of their own but because of a dirty back-room deal, and now they are not being afforded the dignity of decent compensation. I want to stress for the record, because I do not wish to mislead or break these people's hearts any further, that I will move this disallowance but the government has the right to reinstate the disallowance the next day.

In fact, by not renewing the licences, on 1 July this year if these people were to be misled into putting their gill nets back into the river they would be breaking the law. All I am trying to do is to work on people's conscience. The Labor Party has always professed to be the party with the social conscience, but it seems to me that it is a social conscience that must apply only if you are the member of a very powerful union. In my view, the ALP has done something very similar to the road gangs in the north of the state. Those gangs involve about the same number of people as the 30 fishermen, because there are 26 on the road gangs. The government has summarily said, 'Okay, you're out of a job as of tomorrow.' The only difference is that the road gangs had the power of the AWU behind them and so they have gained themselves some extra time. The AWU is taking the government to court on their behalf.

If the river fishery is going to take the government to court, it will have to beg and borrow from more affluent sectors of the community to do so, because the fishers have been bankrupted, in many cases, by this cold and heartless move by the government. So, what I am doing today is, in a way, retrospective. I know that it cannot change unless an appeal to some of the people, who are no longer sitting opposite me, interestingly, who may have a conscience, will go back to the caucus. I do not believe that the Hon. Paul Holloway is, in fact, an absolutely heartless man. I imagine that within caucus he has probably tried to get a more equitable deal for these people. Perhaps it is time for some of his backbench (and indeed frontbench) colleagues to stick up

for him to see whether they cannot—at least once—just swallow a bit of humble pie and say, ‘We made a mistake here. Let’s go back to the table, negotiate with these people as living, breathing individuals, and let’s see if we cannot work out fair compensation’. I do not believe that that is impossible. It is expensive, but this government brought this upon itself. It has no one to blame but itself and the Hon. Peter Lewis.

So, as I say, I know that there is very little more that I can do for these people other than to continue to try to explain to those on the other side that this is not fair; it is not equitable; it is not what government is about. It defies most commercial principles and practices and it is immoral.

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: I rise to make a short contribution to the debate on the motion moved by the Hon. Caroline Schaefer in relation to the regulations under the Fisheries Act 1982 concerning fishing activities using gill nets, tabled in the Legislative Council on 9 July 2002. From available information, it appears that gill net fishing licences in other states have, over a period of time, been withdrawn. It is also true to say that the Environment, Resources and Development Committee of this parliament has previously prepared a report which recommended the phasing out of gill net fishing licences over a period of time.

This, surely, was a signal to the holders of gill net fishing licences that sooner or later there would be a decision taken by the South Australian government to withdraw the existing fishing licences. I am conscious that some holders of these licences have lived in hope that such a decision would not be taken by the state government, and therefore continued their activities, some of which have been extensive and commercially focused. On the other hand, other licence holders have continued their activity on a much smaller scale and, in some instances, these licences have been handed down from generation to generation within a particular family.

It is obvious that following the signing of the agreement between the Labor Party and the member for Hammond, and the formation of a Labor government, the conditions stipulated in the agreement by the member for Hammond had to be satisfied by the new state government. Some of the conditions required the government to cancel the gill net fishing licences by a certain date. The Labor government was compelled to honour the conditions of the agreement through which it had gained the Treasury bench.

Unfortunately for the licence holders, this meant the compulsory acquisition or cancellation of their licences at short notice. There was also the question of compensation which had to be formulated by the government. As I understand it, the compensation package is not satisfactory to a good number of licence holders and is now causing a great deal of debate and concern. I urge the government to give appropriate consideration to addressing some of the concerns which have been raised by a number of licence holders who depend on their fishing activities for a living and may not receive adequate compensation through the formula announced by the government.

In summary, I believe that the cancellation of the licences was always going to occur. However, it is the time frame in which this decision has been taken by the government that is causing financial hardship to a number of licence holders. I urge the minister to consider some way of addressing the matter so that fairness and justice can be achieved.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY secured the adjournment of the debate.

SPEED CAMERAS

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. T.G. Cameron:

1. That a select committee of the Legislative Council be appointed to investigate and report upon the current use of speed cameras in South Australia including—

- (a) their effectiveness as a deterrent to speeding and road injury;
- (b) strategies for deciding their placement;
- (c) differences in their use between city and country roads;
- (d) the relationship between fines collected, main arterial roads and crash ‘black spots’;
- (e) drivers’ perception, beliefs and attitude towards speed cameras;
- (f) placement and effectiveness of speed camera warning signs;
- (g) the feasibility of putting all money raised by speed cameras into road safety initiatives;
- (h) initiatives taken by other governments;
- (i) the appropriateness of setting up a ‘Speed Camera Advisory Committee’; and
- (j) any other matter on speed cameras which is deemed relevant.

2. That the committee consist of six members and that the quorum of members necessary to be present at all meetings of the committee be fixed at four members and that standing order 389 be so far suspended as to enable the chairperson of the committee to have a deliberative vote only.

3. That this council permits the select committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it sees fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being reported to the council.

4. Standing order 396 be suspended to enable strangers to be admitted when the select committee is examining witnesses unless the committee otherwise resolves, but they shall be excluded when the committee is deliberating.

(Continued from 17 July. Page 587.)

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Liberal Party supports the Hon. Mr Cameron’s motion to set up a select committee of the Legislative Council to investigate and report on the current use of speed cameras in South Australia, and many related matters. I recognise that in moving for this select committee that the Hon. Mr Cameron has campaigned long and hard on the issue of speed cameras, their revenue raising strengths and weaknesses (as he sees them), the placement of signs by the police at sites where the cameras are located, and many other matters.

He has been most diligent in his questioning and clearly wishes to take this matter further, and the Liberal Party will support him in that exercise. I must admit, however, that I do not hold many of his views about the focus and purpose of these speed cameras. I hold a very strong view that they are not only an important deterrent to speeding and road injury but also, in relation to road safety and law enforcement, important in developing the perception amongst all road users, particularly motorists, that there is a good chance that they will be caught if they offend in terms of speeding.

It is very important that other road users who act within the law and do their best in terms of caution, care and courtesy on the road are confident that there is a strong police presence in their area and that people will be caught if they disobey the law. I have always felt strongly that those who focus on the revenue raising measures forget the fact that no-one need pay a cent to the government, let alone the millions of dollars the government receives each year for general revenue purposes, if they simply keep within the speed limit.

It is interesting that people are caught driving some 10 or 12 km/h over the maximum speed limit. In road safety terms, it has often been argued to me that the police should take

action as soon as the posted speed limit is broken and not make allowances for seven or nine km/h above the posted speed limit. Certainly, the attitude of motorists is that some allowance is made, but they are even prepared to creep above that rather than stick to the maximum speed limit that is there not only for their safety but also for the many other road users, such as pedestrians, children, older people, the disabled, cyclists and rollerbladers.

The maximum speed limit may be seen as unreasonable at times, particularly at night when there are no other vehicles on the road, but it is there not only because of road conditions and abutting developments but also in consideration of weather conditions and other hazards. If a dog, a cat or a person leapt out in front of a motorist who is exceeding the speed limit, it is unlikely that they could react adequately to avoid an accident, causing injury or even death to themselves or someone else and damage to their motor vehicle.

While maximum speed limits may be seen to be unreasonable, there are a whole range of good reasons why they are set and enforced rigorously in this state. When people get behind a wheel, they think they are sitting in an armoured vehicle and are protected from the world. They think they drive in isolation and that other influences or factors do not affect their attention or compromise their driving ability that could lead to an accident because they do not have the appropriate time to react with care.

I support the establishment of this select committee, but I come to it with very strong views, which may ensure that the debate is quite lively. I suspect that my prejudices and perceptions are different to those of the mover and of the other members in this place who have campaigned in relation to speed cameras and their use in this state. Paragraph 1(c) of the motion states:

Differences in their use between city and country roads;

It is also important that we recognise that in this state the same offence incurs a different penalty if one offends outside the metropolitan area. I believe that a difference in penalty would be difficult to justify, and it would be discriminatory. Radar gun offences attract demerit points plus a fine outside the metropolitan area but not within the metropolitan area is something I would like to see redressed. In the past, I have not been successful when I have raised this issue, but as a member of the select committee I look forward to advancing my support for the use of demerit points for speeding offences, including those detected by speed cameras as well as radar guns.

I note that the mover has made reference in paragraph (g) to the Labor policy to put all the money raised from speed cameras into road safety initiatives. I am very keen to explore this issue further, and I welcome the opportunity that the select committee will provide for this purpose. I suspect that, as a result of questions I have raised in the past, it is a case of the pea and thimble trick or the smoke and mirrors when the government suggests that it is putting more money into road safety. I would be very surprised if speed camera fines were devoted to the transport budget without money being taken from the highways fund for other purposes. As much as I would like the additional funds to go to transport without qualification or strings attached, I would be very surprised if there were not a compensating cut in the funding that is now going to road safety.

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: That's the smoke and wallet trick!

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: A lot of terms could be used, but I do believe there will be some trick to this. I am keen to explore it further to see how tricky the government is being. At the moment, members opposite are praising themselves, as if they are holier than thou in terms of road safety, yet, for some reason, after 20 years in this place I just do not believe it.

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: You are a cynic!

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Perhaps I am a cynic. I did always say that if I became cynical about politics or the parliament, then it was time to go; I am on my last few years so I will apply that cynicism wisely. I will certainly apply it to this commitment of the government to devote speed camera fines to road safety and policing. I doubt it is a bonus for any of those highlighted areas.

Finally, I make reference to a further matter that the Hon. Mr Cameron has asked us to address in this motion. Paragraph (i) refers specifically to the appropriateness of setting up a speed camera advisory committee. I believe that either that committee or some other committee has some appeal. I recall a provision in the Road Traffic Act back in the 1970s when random breath testing was first introduced in South Australia. Because of that major initiative at the time, the parliament, in a zeal of caution, but I think wisely in terms of education of the parliament and the public, set up a means by which an annual report would be provided to the parliament by the Commissioner of Police. That report outlined a range of issues that had been monitored in terms of random breath testing. That annual report provision was removed from the act in 1998 with other amendments to the Road Traffic Act.

We could look at that option in terms of speed cameras, but, also, to use it for educative purposes. Enforcement and engineering are important components of road safety but so, too, is education. I think we can do more in terms of education than the current approach of mass advertising, or work through schools and other approaches. Another option in terms of education, assessment, reporting and monitoring of not only speed cameras but also the general road safety package the government is promoting is the re-establishment of a select committee on transport safety. It operated in the last parliament but it has not been reconstituted for this parliament. I highlight that every other parliament across Australia has a standing committee on transport safety. I find it quite interesting that there has been a reluctance every time I have pushed for a similar initiative to provide for a standing committee of the parliament in South Australia. As the minister acknowledges—and I have always acknowledged—we have a higher rate per 100 000 of road crashes and deaths in South Australia.

I have said before, but it remains true, that so many measures implemented to date have been the easy things. I think it is important to strive to get bipartisan or cross-party support for road safety reforms and not to use it as a political mechanism to gain popular support. These will not be easy measures. They are not easy measures in the terms of the private members bill that I have before the parliament on road safety initiatives; nor are they easy measures in the Hon. Nick Xenophon's private members bill before the Legislative Council; and it will not be easy for members of parliament generally to deal with the government's proposed package of measures. I feel very strongly that we should have some form of committee structure, where members of parliament can work through these things to achieve some consensus and at least some broader understanding of why these measures are

important, so they do not become political footballs and avenues for political scoring.

I make the general comment, in terms of the appropriateness of setting up a speed camera advisory committee, that broader issues should be discussed in terms of road safety, but the very fact that this is one of the terms of reference allows us to think of an appropriate structure for monitoring the effectiveness of all road safety initiatives; particularly as we anticipate, over the next year, the addition of many more measures in a legislative and enforcement sense that will be introduced to the community—some with community support and some with a great deal of community angst, I suspect, but all with good intent. With those remarks I indicate that the Liberal Party supports this initiative. If it does pass, I look forward to the opportunity of serving on the committee.

The Hon. J. GAZZOLA secured the adjournment of the debate.

PITJANTJATJARA COUNCIL

The Hon. R.D. LAWSON: I move:

1. That a select committee of the Legislative Council be appointed to investigate and report upon—

- (a) the operation of the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981;
- (b) opportunities for, and impediments to, enhancement of the cultural life and the economic and social development of the traditional owners of the lands;
- (c) the past activities of the Pitjantjatjara Council in relation to the lands.

2. That the committee consist of six members and that the quorum of members necessary to be present at all meetings of the committee be fixed at four members and that Standing Order 389 be so far suspended as to enable the chairperson of the committee to have a deliberative vote only.

3. That this council permits the select committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it sees fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being reported to the council.

4. Standing order 396 be suspended to enable strangers to be admitted when the select committee is examining witnesses, unless the committee otherwise resolves, but they shall be excluded when the committee is deliberating.

A number of questions have been asked in this council over the past couple of months, and the answers provided by the minister have not allayed concerns that exist about the governance of the Pitjantjatjara lands and the welfare of the people on those lands and the traditional owners. The Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981 was a landmark piece of legislation, which had as its principal purpose the vesting of the so-called Pitjantjatjara lands in the people known as the Anangu Pitjantjatjara. The act provides that Anangu Pitjantjatjara (which I will hereafter call AP) means the body corporate constituted under the act. The act stipulates the functions of AP as follows:

- (a) to ascertain the wishes and opinions of traditional owners in relation to the management, use and control of the lands, and to seek, where practicable, to give effect to those wishes and opinions;
- (b) to protect the interests of traditional owners in relation to the management, use and control of the lands;
- (c) to negotiate with persons desiring to use, occupy or gain access to any part of the lands;
- and
- (d) to administer land vested in Anangu Pitjantjatjara.

AP was given certain powers, including the power to sue and be sued, enter into contracts, appoint and dismiss staff, receive and disperse moneys, and obtain advice from persons who are expert in matters with which the AP is concerned. There is a requirement in the act that AP shall, before

carrying out or authorising or permitting the carrying out of any proposal relating to the administration, development or use of any portion of the lands, have regard to the interests of, and consult with, traditional owners having a particular interest in that portion of the lands or otherwise affected by the proposal, and AP shall not carry out the proposal or authorise or permit it to be carried out unless it is satisfied that those traditional owners understand the nature and purpose of the proposal, have the opportunity to express their views to AP and consent to the proposal. This is important South Australian legislation. The functions vested in AP and its executive board (which is established under Division 4 of the act) are significant powers.

In February this year, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) received a final report, which was endorsed by a steering committee, concerning a review of the essential and municipal infrastructure service provision to indigenous communities in South Australia. This very comprehensive report made a number of significant proposals.

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: Is that the 1996 report?

The Hon. R.D. LAWSON: No, 2002. The minister was appointed in, I think, early March this year. I indicate right at the very beginning that he is a person who has for a long time had important responsibilities in relation to Aboriginal Affairs in this state. He was, before being appointed minister, the spokesperson for the Labor opposition on Aboriginal Affairs, and he certainly made it his business to be familiar with many of the issues. His commitment to Aboriginal people is not in question in this motion, or at all.

However, that said, the minister started off on an extremely bad footing with the AP people. For example, on 13 April, a media release was issued by Mr Owen Burton, the Chairman of AP, which was entitled 'South Australian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs insults traditional owners'. The media release stated:

South Australia's Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Terry Roberts has been misled about the key issues affecting traditional owners and should be pulled into line by the Premier, AP Chairman Owen Burton said.

Following the minister's comments during an extensive interview on ABC Radio on Thursday, Owen Burton said AP was losing confidence in the minister's ability to conduct his portfolio responsibilities properly and appropriately.

The media release goes on to state:

'His lack of understanding of AP and the issues currently facing traditional owners (Anangu) has resulted in him being sucked in by a campaign of false and misleading information about the governance of the Pitjantjatjara lands and funding,' Mr Burton said. 'Unfortunately, his lack of understanding means he has been drawn into a very misleading campaign driven by a few people with an axe to grind and personal agendas. Those people, especially Gary Lewis, have been driving a campaign to spread false and misleading information to the media, government and government agencies. It is downright scary to know that someone in the minister's position can be influenced by such a campaign when he has the facts at the tip of his fingers, but unfortunately he has been influenced.'

The media release further states:

'He [the minister] has made comments about people dying in indigenous communities as a result of problems associated with petrol sniffing, alcohol abuse and poor nutrition, because of a funding crisis. These claims are quite simply not true. There is no funding crisis. There are problems on the land, but they are not because AP is employing its own legal and anthropological staff, and it is ridiculous to relate them to each other,' Owen Burton said.

The media release continues:

'It's an absolute insult to have the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs asserting that AP is acting in some way contrary to the wishes of

traditional owners, as well as trying to tell us how we should obtain legal and anthropological services,' Mr Burton said.

'The minister talks about having an inquiry. He can have all the inquiries he likes, but the fact is that AP is going ahead with its plan to get better value for money for its professional services and to establish strong governance on the AP lands. Sadly, Terry Roberts seems unable to clearly see what the issues are in the dispute between AP and the Pitjantjatjara Council. If he can't support us he should get out of the way.'

The media release continues:

Gary Lewis was a former director of AP. He was dismissed from that position. His attack on AP must be seen against that background, and the fact that the AP restructure he is fighting against will result in a loss of power to him. Gary Lewis says that he is the chairman of Pitjantjatjara Council. However, there are serious doubts that a proper election took place, which means that there is no proper decision making occurring at the Pitjantjatjara Council and Mr Lewis is just acting on his own authority.

Yami Lester is a former chairman of AP. He was a member of the executive when it unanimously endorsed the appointment of Chris Marshall to assist with the empowerment of AP. It is very disappointing [Mr Burton says] that Mr Lester has taken an anti-AP line when he was involved in the decision making process that has led to the current restructuring of AP.

The media release concludes (I will not read the balance of it) as follows:

AP has decided to employ its own staff to provide the legal and anthropological services that were previously provided by the Pitjantjatjara Council. The decision to do so is the result of a long consultative process and has been talked about for several years. It will not change.

'AP rejects the intervention of the minister. He is making things worse. He should stay out of the dispute because at the moment he is a "white fella" acting against the wishes of traditional owners,' Owen Burton said.

This was a serious media release issued by the Chairman of the executive board of AP. Shortly after that letter of 13 April, Mr Brian Butler, the South Australian Zone Commissioner for ATSIC, wrote to the Premier (Hon. Mike Rann). His letter was dated 29 April, and copies were sent to the federal minister; also to Geoff Clark, Chairman of ATSIC; and to the Hon. Terry Roberts as state minister. The letter, which was marked urgent, was on the topic 'Stoppage of ATSIC funds to Anangu Pitjantjatjara (AP) for land rights administration.' The letter reads:

Dear Premier,

I write to request your urgent intervention in the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation's apparent decision to stop funding to Anangu Pitjantjatjara.

ATSIC officials have today received information that there has been a last minute cancellation of an order to release funds for the amount of \$365 000. The Department of State Aboriginal Affairs has confirmed the Minister's funding decision in response to our inquiry early this afternoon.

These funds have been provided to the State Government by ATSIC for the purpose of Land Rights Administration for AP as per an existing agreement. . .

The letter continues:

. . . I have been informed in a telephone call from an advisor to Minister Roberts, that the Minister intends to transfer funds from the state Department of Aboriginal Affairs to the Pitjantjatjara Council for the duration of the review he has announced into funding and governance matters on the Lands. I take this opportunity to point out that there has been no formal consultation with ATSIC on the matter of the so-called 'eminent persons' review of funding and governance for AP. As the principal provider of funding to AP, and in keeping with the spirit of the agreement entered into by both parties twelve years ago, we must protest at this clear lack of consultation and communication on the part of your Minister.

Further, Mr Butler says:

Premier, I refer you to the earlier correspondence sent by me to Minister Roberts dated 18 March and 12 April. Both letters clearly

state ATSIC's position on the matter of the dispute between AP and the Pitjantjatjara Council. I note that neither letter has been responded to as requested.

I request that you intervene to restore these funds without delay. Moreover, I request that all further decisions regarding the funding of AP be fully discussed with ATSIC before any decisions to vary the current agreement are made in the future. Further, I request an immediate briefing from your officers on the nature, duration, objectives and Terms of Reference for the review of governance and funding criteria which the Minister has announced in the media.

Since that time there have been a number of developments, as the minister indicated to this council. He appointed Mr Mick Dodson to mediate in matters of difference between the AP and the Pitjantjatjara Council.

Earlier this month—or perhaps it was late last month—the minister, in company with advisers, including Mr Randall Ashbourne and a media adviser from the Premier's office, had meetings in Alice Springs concerning this ongoing dispute. Following that meeting in Alice Springs, Mr Randall Ashbourne, as senior adviser from the office of the Premier, wrote a memo to Mr Owen Burton, Chairman of AP; to Garry Lewis, Chairman of the Pitjantjatjara Council; and to Yami Lester, Chairman of the Yankunjatjara Council. The memorandum from Mr Randall Ashbourne was quite unequivocal in a number of respects. It states:

The Pitjantjatjara Land Rights legislation is perfectly clear—Anangu Pitjantjatjara, through the elected Executive, is the official voice of the traditional owners in relation to the administration of land issues.

The Act also gives AP the power to obtain advice from persons expert in matters with which AP is concerned.

It could therefore be argued that AP Executive not only has the right to seek advice, but actually has an obligation to ensure it has independent access to expert advice so that it can meet its legal responsibilities to administer the funds.

If any anangu disagree with the decisions made by AP Executive, the Act sets out a process by which a Special General Meeting can be called. The Act states that the Executive Board shall carry out resolutions of the anangu.

Mr Ashbourne then states:

Pitjantjatjara Council is not recognised in the Act and there are no provisions in the legislation for the Pitjantjatjara Council to be used in any way—let alone as a checking mechanism on decisions of the AP Executive.

He continues:

The South Australian Government recognises the AP Executive and its chairman, Mr Owen Burton, as the official, legal representatives of the people of the Pitjantjatjara lands in relation to issues relating to the use and management of the lands.

He said that the government agrees with AP that it is not productive to have two political voices seeking to represent the Anangu. Further, he said:

The government has a number of concerns about the manner in which the lands have been and are being managed by AP. It also has grave concerns about the provision of services such as health, housing and education, to the anangu.

It considers that the Act needs to be amended or re-written to ensure a more adequate provision of services and higher level of accountability. At this stage, it would like to see a structure where AP and its Executive act in the general manner of a Land Council and that a hybrid local government structure is formally established and recognised in the new Act to provide day-to-day services to anangu communities.

Whether or not members of the Pitjantjatjara Council will have a role to play in the new structure is a matter entirely for the anangu themselves to decide.

Subsequent to the memorandum from Mr Ashbourne, the minister has released to the parties a number of proposed alternative models for governance of the lands. However, it appears that the government has taken the view—the policy position—that the AP and its executives should act in the

general manner of a land council. This is quite a new concept, one that is certainly not reflected in the existing legislation and one that has many ramifications.

The need for a select committee at this juncture is to investigate—as well as ascertain the matters referred to in the terms of reference—and ascertain at this stage rather than later whether the proposed model the government is advancing is in the best interests of the people on the lands. It appears to the opposition that the minister and the government have been overly favourably disposed towards the Pitjantjatjara Council and that they have been insufficiently attentive to the needs of the AP with its responsibilities.

The Hon. A.J. Redford: And the act itself.

The Hon. R.D. LAWSON: Indeed, as my colleague the Hon. Angus Redford says, and the act itself, which is very clear. It now transpires that, not having obtained its own way in relation to a number of measures, and not having Mr Dodson successfully mediate a solution between the parties, the government is contemplating some amendment to this significant legislation. Rather than our having a debate about legislation when it will be difficult to consult with the traditional owners, we believe that it is appropriate to have a select committee so that all interested members in this place have an opportunity to fully ascertain the facts and the background.

I know that the Hon. Sandra Kanck has a longstanding interest in this issue and I know that she will be keen to ensure that the select committee provides information to the community as well as to the parliament and the government which will be of benefit. I seek leave to conclude my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES COMMISSION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 19 August. Page 644.)

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: I rise to support the second reading of this bill. This bill was introduced by the Labor government to deliver on an election promise to protect the long-term interests of South Australians in essential services. The bill establishes the Essential Services Commission with power over electricity, gas, water and sewerage, maritime, rail and any other prescribed services. The commission's function will be regulatory, including prices and codes. However, the scope of the regulation will be greatly increased by the introduction of a new objective into the act to protect the long-term interests of South Australian consumers with respect to the price, quality and reliability of essential services. It will succeed the Office of the Independent Industry Regulator, and Lew Owens, the current Independent Industry Regulator, will be appointed as first chairman of the commission.

The economic regulation of water and sewerage services is not included in the initial powers of the commission but there is power to declare other services within the scope of the legislation. Maximum penalties are increased: breaching a determination of the commission is punishable by a fine of up to \$1 million, and the commission has the powers of warnings and injunctions. This is also available as a judicial option to the minister or any other party. The legislation will, naturally, be linked with the relevant industry act.

The commission will be appointed by the Governor. The number of commissioners is not fixed and part-time commis-

sioners can be appointed. The commission will have the power to delegate functions to the chairperson and commissioners as required. Conflict of interest provisions, good practice provisions and the requirements, performance and budget plans are included in the legislation. The commission is required to prepare and publish a charter of consultation and regulatory practice and must consult with the minister in its preparation. It will also coordinate regulatory services, and memoranda of understanding must be entered into with other regulators. It will also have the power to approve a new essential services ombudsman scheme which will build upon the electricity ombudsman scheme.

A couple of issues concern me that I ask the government to respond to. First, the number of committee members has been left undetermined, and I ask whether the government can give an explanation for that. Second, I understand that the government has power to declare other industries within the range of the regulator: can the government say what intentions it might have down the track to declare other industries within the scope of the Essential Services Commission Bill?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO secured the adjournment of the debate.

AIR TRANSPORT (ROUTE LICENSING—PASSENGER SERVICES) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from August 19. Page 662.)

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: Again, I rise to support a government bill—I think this is eight or nine times in a row at the moment. I will give a bit of background to this bill. From 1937 until 1979 the commonwealth regulated both interstate and intrastate airlines. In 1979 the constitutionality of that was brought into question. Since then, various states have regulated their intrastate air traffic. South Australia left market forces to regulate theirs. However, since the 11 September attacks and the collapse of Ansett, it has become apparent that the industry has become, in the minister's opinion, risk averse. This bill seeks to bring some stability to the industry by allowing the government to license routes and give confidence to business decisions made by regional airlines. The bill will allow the minister to declare routes and issue one or more licences on that particular route, and those licences will set out the duration and conditions of the route and the licence respectively.

The minister must take into account certain criteria when making a decision, and these will include monopoly competition considerations, benefits in maintaining services, other types of transport services that may be available in the absence of air transport efficiency, public benefits and the public interest. Routes can be declared for three years and extended for another three years, then must be redeclared by the minister. Information on how to apply for a licence on this route, along with any conditions, will be published along with a declaration in the gazette.

Charter services will be exempt from this scheme. Only scheduled service routes will be regulated. Licences can only be subcontracted, transferred or otherwise dealt with with the approval of the minister. Where an already existing service provider operates a scheduled service on a declared route, the minister must first offer them the licence before opening it up to general tender. The minister must report to parliament within 12 days about whom the licence has been awarded to,

the term of the licence, the performance and service levels, flight schedules and fares to be charged.

The awarding of a licence under this bill is not a guarantee that the person or company that holds the licence is fit to hold it, and the minister is not liable for their negligence. The right to appeal to the administrative and disciplinary division of the District Court against a decision of the minister is set out in the bill. Other consequential provisions as to the administrative operation of the act are also set out. SA First supports this bill. It will provide certainty to some regional operators and enable them to trade through what are particularly tough times.

[Sitting suspended from 5.57 to 7.45 p.m.]

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Liberal Party supports this bill. It is an important piece of legislation. Personally, I feel that it does not adequately address the issues that country communities face in the provision of air passenger services, and I shall address that matter a little further in a moment. Overall, the bill provides a legislative framework for the establishment of a licensing system in South Australia for the conduct of regular passenger air services on declared routes between airports in regional or rural areas of the state. There are various reasons why this legislation is required now and for the foreseeable future.

Until recently, all South Australian regional air services have operated viably without state government intervention in any form, although some routes have been only marginally profitable. The collapse of Ansett and its regional subsidiaries, combined with world events since 11 September 2001, have created significant instability and uncertainty in South Australian and Australian aviation markets. This is particularly so in regional markets because of the low capital base of most of the regional airlines that operate in South Australia and the cost pressures that they are now facing.

Over the past year alone regular air services have ceased to Leigh Creek, Cleve and Wudinna, depriving these communities of time-efficient passenger and freight services. The loss of these services has also undermined the access of these townships to medical personnel and other important services. Certainly in the Year of the Outback this is a major loss to these communities and, I suspect, it has also had tourism implications. Traditionally in South Australia regular air services have not been regulated. This is not the case in other states with populations also spread over vast distances.

I highlight that while this legislation is, in terms of regulation of air services, new for South Australia it has been in place for many years in some other states, namely, Western Australia, New South Wales and Queensland. It is also important to recognise that the regulation of transport services in areas other than air has been a longstanding practice in South Australia in passenger transport services, such as for buses and coaches to rural centres and, more recently, in rail services. And I highlight the Rail Access Act that passed this parliament last year, I think, specifically to deal with issues of tendering for the reopening of the South-East line.

In that instance, the parliament provided that there would be a regulated and restricted access to rail services to any successful operator of a reopened, standardised line to the South-East. The basis of that was to ensure that, as far as possible, the private sector would invest in the operation of a reopened railway line and that their investment would be protected for a number of years (for South-East rail, some seven years) by limiting competition to the use of that line so

that the operator, the investor, alone had exclusive access to the line. That same principle is now being applied in this legislation to regional air services generally in this state.

Overall, the bill reflects the provisions of a private member's bill introduced in the other place in May this year by the shadow minister for transport, the Hon. Malcolm Buckby. It is legislation that was under active consideration by the former government following the collapse of the Ansett airline and all the ensuing difficulties for Kendell's operations in South Australia. I seek leave to incorporate in *Hansard* a table that highlights Kendell Airlines' flight frequency and seats operated by aircraft type and route, pre and post the collapse of Ansett.

Leave granted.

Kendell Airlines pre/post collapse				
Frequency and seats operated by aircraft type and route				
Route	Aircraft	Pre-collapse	Post-collapse	Change
Port Lincoln	Metro	8	2	4
	Saab	20	24	+4
	Total flights	28	26	-2
	Total seats	832	854	+22
Mt Gambier	Metro	0	18	+18
	Saab	18	0	-18
	Total flights	18	18	0
	Total seats	612	342	-270
Kingscote	Metro	8	0	-8
	Saab	14	8	-6
	Total flights	22	8	-14
	Total seats	628	272	-356
Whyalla	Metro	27	18	-9
	Saab	0	0	0
	Total flights	27	18	-9
	Total seats	513	342	-171
Olympic Dam	Metro	7	0	-7
	Saab	6	10	+4
	Total flights	13	10	-3
	Total seats	337	340	+3
Ceduna	Metro	8	8	0
	Saab	0	0	0
	Total flights	8	8	0
	Total seats	152	152	0
Coober Pedy	Metro	7	4	-3
	Saab	0	0	0
	Total flights	7	4	-3
	Total seats	133	76	-57
Broken Hill	Metro	17	15	-2
	Saab	0	0	0
	Total flights	17	15	-2
	Total seats	323	285	-38
All routes	Metro	82	65	-17
	Saab	58	42	-16
	Total flights	140	107	-33
	Total seats	3 530	2 663	-867

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: When members have an opportunity to look at this table I think they will find it particularly sobering. In terms of Kendell Airlines' pre and post collapse the routes operated were Port Lincoln, Mount Gambier, Kingscote, Whyalla, Olympic Dam, Ceduna, Coober Pedy and Broken Hill. In relation to all flights pre collapse there was a total of 140; post collapse, 107, a reduction of 33. In terms of the seats offered on those routes, pre collapse, 3 530. It fell after the demise of Ansett to 2 663, a loss of 867. In addition, we have lost services, which is not a reflection directly on the Kendell issue but on the viability of regional services generally.

As I highlighted, they have been to Leigh Creek, Ceduna and Wudinna. Overall, there is a loss of more flights and seats than is highlighted in the table that I have now sought leave to incorporate in *Hansard*. This bill seeks to address the very difficult circumstances in country areas where we have dispersed, smaller communities and limited numbers of

people who want to, or who are able to, or who can afford to fly. Even if they are able to fly, are they able to fly in the numbers that would ensure that the airline was viable, or would they be able to afford the cost of the flight if smaller numbers are using that airline?

South Australia, of all the states that I have mentioned which already apply a route licensing system—they being Western Australia, New South Wales and Queensland—has a smaller population base. We are more vulnerable. It is of enormous credit to the regional airlines in South Australia that they have operated to date in such an unregulated market, and have generally—although not always, as we know with the Whyalla Airlines situation—operated with an enormously high degree of safety and comfort for passengers at a very low operating and profitable margin to themselves.

I commend the airlines generally but note the pressure that they are under. I highlight that the opposition sought to do something about this at the first opportunity, by introducing a private member's bill in May, and I only regret that it has taken until now for the government to act on this measure by introducing this bill, which, as I highlight, the Liberal Party does support. The bill enables a regulator—the minister—to control entry on an air route and, as part of a competitive tendering process, provides an award to a single operator where a route does not generate a sufficiently high number of regular passengers to support more than one operator. The declared route will initially have effect for a period not exceeding three years, specifically declared by the minister by notice in the *Government Gazette*.

Effectively, licensing a marginal route to a single operator can significantly reduce the risk to the operator in considering investment in the route service, and it can also generate a level of service that a route may not otherwise attract. Overall, the provision of air services is important in terms of providing more remote areas of the state with an alternative, efficient means of transport to that offered by road access or, indeed, rail access where that still exists, as well as in providing levels of government services such as visiting medical specialists. Tourism access is also a consideration and so are road safety and road wear offsets.

I highlight this issue of road safety and road wear offsets because too many people—and perhaps I should include the honourable minister, who does not need to travel further than from West Lakes to the city to get to work—forget how testing and time-consuming it is to live in the country without access to the services that the city provides, for business purposes or for entertainment when they wish to come to the city. In the country generally nothing can be undertaken without some time being allowed for travel. Generally, it can come at a cost, not only in terms of allocation of personal time but in the cost of petrol, road and car maintenance. I know, because so many people tell me in the country areas, it can come at the cost of maintenance of a vehicle: tyres and a lot of other outlays. It is something that people in the metropolitan area take for granted on a regular basis, and they often belittle, deride or are bemused by country people who talk about roads on such a regular basis. But roads are their lifeline to services, entertainment, family and friends. Nothing in country areas happens without some access to roads, and the time that is taken can be extensive.

Often when we look at this issue of air access—for those who can afford it—it can be interpreted as a road safety measure. For busy people who can afford it, air travel provides a safe alternative to travelling on the road. With more and more people travelling on the roads daily in South

Australia, and with more and more heavy vehicles predicted to travel in the future to meet all our economic development pressures in country areas, this issue of time and cost has to be considered in terms of road safety and road wear offsets.

I highlight that very strenuously because I am exceedingly disappointed that this legislation does not provide specific reference to the provision of subsidies as a matter that the minister could consider—need not specifically provide—but could consider as one of the issues that could be provided to a regional airline to successfully and viably operate. I feel very passionate about this point. I see my shadow treasurer has his newspaper up in front of him and I know he does not feel equal passion about the issue of airline subsidies, because we have had this debate before.

I think too many people look at it simply in economic terms and not in social terms and not as an offset to road safety and road wear costs. I find it particularly disappointing in relation to this bill that what Western Australia and Queensland provide in their legislation and apply in practice—and that is subsidies—are not even provided for specifically in this legislation. I think it is disappointing when we have seen legislation of a similar nature in place for many years in Western Australia and Queensland and we know it has been effective in providing regulated services, but only on the basis that those services also received a subsidy.

The members opposite—and my shadow treasurer—should look at the fact that the Labor governments in both Western Australia and Queensland have recently increased the level of subsidy for regional air services to ensure that those services operate, and that country people have a choice in the range of access provision to their areas, and in emergency situations. We have dealt with the economics and the influence of Treasury many times in this parliament. I would like to see a real effort put into this government's commitment to social inclusion—I think at present it is more rhetoric than substance—in country areas of this state, and that may well have to include some form of subsidy.

I have certainly been a champion of public transport in the metropolitan area, but we must keep in perspective the fact that metropolitan people do not—at any time of any day of any week—have the same distances to travel as do country people, but they gain about \$200 million a year in public transport subsidies. Yet this government will not even entertain the possibility of putting a specific provision in this bill to provide the minister with the option of air transport subsidies.

They need not be applied, but this government has deliberately excluded them. I find that to be particularly distasteful and exceedingly disappointing from a government which says it is about social inclusion. It is social inclusion for some—for those who live in Labor seats, I suspect. It will be interesting to see how this government applies this legislation. I suspect that the minister will beat his chest and say that he has done all these things, but it will have no practical impact on South Australia. We know that in Western Australia and Queensland this route licensing measure has required a subsidy to ensure that the airline services can operate.

I am a champion of the arts, but we know in this state that the arts do not operate without subsidy. We know that public transport does not operate without subsidy, and we know that other forms of transport services to country areas do not operate without a subsidy. I have already nominated rail, and I have highlighted bus and coach in terms of the support the government gives to concession travellers, which is a form

of subsidy. Bus routes to country areas would not be available today without the support provided through concession ticket prices. Without a government return to the operator, those services would not be viable. However, this government, by intent, does not even make provision in this bill for the minister to exercise the option of a subsidy.

I highlight an interview given by the minister on national radio on 13 May in relation to his decision to release a discussion paper about route service licensing for air. I suspect the minister would be pleased that national radio has a small listening audience, because he was an embarrassment to himself and, in terms of intellectual rigour, he would not have wanted too many people to hear his contribution. The interviewer was Vivian Schenker, and the transcript of the interview is as follows:

Okay now in Queensland the government pays a subsidy to keep airlines flying on some marginal routes. Is that something that you've looked at as well?

[Minister]

We're not going to be in the business of providing subsidies; we don't think that's the way to go. We believe that that does create a distortion to the market and we're not in the business of providing subsidies to airlines but we think—

The interviewer interrupts the minister and says:

Sorry, can I just stop you? You talk about distortion in the market. Presumably, artificially limiting a route to one sole flyer is also restricting the market.

She is a pretty intelligent interviewer, because she is exactly right. The minister continues:

Well, I guess you could make that interpretation but we would say that far better to be able to provide a carrier than not have one at all and if route licensing gives that greater certainty and provides that opportunity we think that's a good policy position.

The interviewer then says:

Oh indeed, but all I'm saying is you could use the same argument presumably about subsidy.

I say hear, hear! Any intelligent and rational person would say exactly the same. The minister said:

... far better to be able to provide a carrier than not have one at all. . .

I endorse that. However, he is saying that route licensing alone can provide that service rather than not having one at all. The Western Australian and Queensland experience has proved that that is not the case. In bringing this legislation forward, the minister and the government are restricting their options in providing a carrier rather than not having one at all by providing the minister with the option to negotiate a subsidy.

These subsidies are not enormous. In Western Australia, from information I have gained through the department there, the subsidy was in the order of \$150 000 until the Western Australian government increased it to about \$300 000. That has enabled regular airline flights between Derby, Broome, Kalebba and other places which are an important part of the whole economy and social fabric of Western Australia. Without the subsidies those communities would not have access to regular air services.

This is an important piece of legislation, but I wonder what effect it will have on actually providing the services we know are needed on a continuing and viable basis. I also highlight another aspect in relation to Western Australia and Queensland where those state governments have incorporated in comprehensive legislation this issue of air route licensing, including subsidies to all forms of transport.

I refer to the Queensland Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, which applies to air, rail and public and private bus operations on a route basis. In Western Australia, the provision of route service licensing subsidies is applied through the Western Australian Transport Coordination Act. They are applying, in reality, some form of integrity. They apply, as we do here in South Australia, some form of subsidy in restricted access for bus and rail operations and also to air. However, we are not prepared to apply to air what we apply to other forms of transport.

I have many questions to ask the minister responsible for this legislation during the committee stage. The Minister for Regional Affairs is meant to have a social conscience, so I will be interested in his answers to questions I have in relation to this bill. I feel very strongly that the government is going through the process here but does not have the commitment.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH secured the adjournment of the debate.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 20 August. Page 705.)

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I support the bill. I recognise the importance of it in providing finance for various programs that are incorporated in the budget. In supporting this legislation, I wish to register concern about some budget decisions that I believe will impact on rural and regional communities of South Australia. I have identified some of those concerns. Similar concerns have been indicated by the South Australian Farmers Federation in the latest edition of its members' magazine, *Farmer and Stock Owner*. The South Australian Farmers Federation has pointed out the following:

The rural sector in South Australia will suffer from losses in capital expenditure and capital works funding to the tune of around \$38 million in this year's state budget. . . The 2002-03 budget has been one of the most difficult to analyse and come out with definitive figures on where there have been cuts and where there have been increases in funding.

The federation expresses its concern that:

... cuts to large sectors including rural education, rural health and transport, as well as the loss of funding to PIRSA, will mean losses in funding of hundreds of millions of dollars to the rural sector. After determining which PIRSA services have been transferred to other departments, there is a reported total fall in PIRSA funding of \$17 million, which is absolutely unacceptable given that agriculture has provided in excess of 55 per cent of the state's export earnings and has had an average growth of over 3 per cent annually.

I also share the concerns of the South Australian Farmers Federation and many members of rural communities in relation to a number of other budget decisions, including significant cuts to the FarmBis business education service for primary producers; a reduction in the animal health budget within PIRSA; increases in stamp duty and conveyance fees for land purchases; and the large scale reduction of jobs in Transport SA in regional South Australia. The decision to considerably reduce the number of road gangs working on the 10 000-plus kilometres of unsealed roads in unincorporated areas of outback South Australia is of particular concern to me.

Another budget decision that concerns me is the increase in peppercorn rents on crown lease land and on the cost of

freeholding. I understand that a select committee has been set up in another place to look at this issue. However, it is important to emphasise that the budget decision impacts on many residential properties, as well as pastoral and agricultural land. In preparing this budget the government, in my view, has failed to take into consideration the fact that people have had to purchase the leasehold tenure on these properties: they are not just paying peppercorn rents. Previously in this place I read a letter which was sent to the editor of the *Advertiser* by Mr and Mrs Balshaw from the Riverland and which detailed the concerns of thousands of residential lease land-holders in the Riverland. I have also received an email from the Deputy Mayor of the District Council of Coober Pedy, Councillor Steve Baines, which states:

I was appalled to note that the government has increased the average rental and freehold on crown leases and licences quite substantially. The increase in rent for all crown leases and licences from \$255 to a minimum \$300 per year, coupled with a minimum increase in freehold to \$6 000, will affect a considerable proportion of Coober Pedy's population. Apart from the hardship it will cause to 255 holders of residential freehold licences in our town, it will restrict economic development and discourage people from relocating to Coober Pedy. There does not seem to be any indication as to the proposed increases in both rents and freehold at this time as the government has only indicated minimum rates. This is also a concern to the people of Coober Pedy, as it is not known just how much the proposed increases will be. For a government that is trying to promote the fact that it is supporting regional communities in South Australia, I do not see this revenue raising exercise to be conducive with the policies that they are trying to lead people to believe they are implementing. I would suggest that the state government would be better served by exempting residential licences from the increases and seek your support to attain this on behalf of the people of Coober Pedy.

In addressing this bill, I want to talk about another major concern expressed by the South Australian Farmers Federation. This government did not release a regional budget statement as part of the budget papers. I am aware that there has been some advice to the community that the Office of Regional Affairs is preparing a statement, which will be released, but I think the fact that the Farmers Federation indicated it was a very difficult budget to analyse, particularly in relation to the rural sector, emphasises the fact that the regional budget statement that has been brought down in the past two years has been of benefit for the community, as well as indicating the commitment of the previous government to the regions and its acknowledgment of the huge role the rural sector has played in the economic recovery of this state.

I turn now to some issues relating directly to the regional affairs portfolio. As members are aware, I have a very strong feeling for the worth of the community builders program, and I am very keen to see the government commit to continuing with that and to working with the federal Department of Family and Community Services and the Local Government Association, which have been the partners in that program, in doing so. I am also very keen to know what is happening in relation to the regional work force accommodation study. That has been one of the outcomes of the previous Regional Development Council.

I think a lot of players in the community, such as local government and regional development boards, worked very hard on this project. There was also a lot of input across government departments in relation to trying to solve the problem of finding appropriate accommodation for a whole range of employees in regional areas. I would welcome the minister's advice in relation to the progress in implementing that study.

I also have a question to which I would be pleased to have the answer, when the minister can provide it, in relation to the announcement of some offices, which I understand are ministerial offices at Port Augusta and Murray Bridge. However, some people in the community are under the impression that those offices will be part of the Office of Regional Affairs. I would like clarification as to whether they are ministerial offices for the Minister for Regional Affairs or whether they are part of the bureaucracy, as such, of the Office of Regional Affairs.

I have also had expressed to me continuing speculation about the future of the regional development boards in this state. I understand, from the estimates process, that resource agreements with regional development boards are being pursued at this point. But I think there is an urgency in the minister's pursuing that matter, along with, I understand, the Minister for Industry, Investment and Trade. I know that the minister comes from the country area, and I think he understands the fact that certain stories get around and that they gather momentum. Some people are running around saying that boards will be merged. If that is to happen, so be it, but I think we need some certainty with respect to that situation. There are some, I think, unhealthy rumours around at the moment that there might be a merger between the South-East and the Mallee.

The remaining matter that I would like to take up relates to the Murray-Mallee Strategic Task Force. The minister in this place has assured the future of that body, but I am not sure where we are in relation to its funding—and, in particular, the federal aspect. I think that that organisation has done a tremendous job in strategic planning for a region that has had, I think, in recent years, some very good economic times. Currently, its fortunes, due to the weather, are taking a turn for the worse. But there are some wonderful people involved with that task force, and I would appreciate some information about when there might be some certainty there, and the negotiations with the federal government in that regard.

I think it is well known that, when the previous Liberal government came to power, there was a significant financial debt in this state. That debt has largely been turned around. Another matter that does not receive as much publicity, but of which I am well aware, is that the Liberal government, when it came into office in 1993, inherited a significant infrastructure debt. There were many things that had not been done in infrastructure, particularly in rural areas—but it was not only rural areas. I do not absolve the Tonkin government from that. I think that, throughout the Bannon years, the Dunstan years and the Tonkin government's period, not enough work was done, in terms that laymen would understand, to keep the house painted. I am concerned that we do not go back into a situation that will cause problems in that area of infrastructure, particularly outside the Adelaide metropolitan area. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in relation to this bill. As I said, without the passing of the bill, the various programs that the elected government has put forward cannot be implemented. I support the bill, and I look forward to some responses from the minister in due course.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is with great pleasure that I rise to support the government's first budget, which I believe is financially responsible and which is targeted at Labor's priorities—health and education. Overall, this budget has received wide support from the community, and I have received many calls of congratulations. The general thrust of the feedback has been that the community feels confident that

the government is on track and that it has provided sound financial management. Clearly, these views are not shared by all sectors of the community. However, the budget has received broad community support.

There is no denying that we have had to make some very tough decisions with respect to this budget, for which we do not apologise. However, it is also a fair budget. There are many reasons why we were faced with so many tough decisions, not the least of which was the previous government's financial mismanagement, which I will talk about a little later. There are many challenges that South Australia faces when it comes to budget planning. We are all well aware that South Australia has one of the lowest average weekly incomes and one of the oldest age profiles. South Australia also has one of the slowest population growths, with a significant exodus of talent and skills annually across the borders to other states. Clearly, this has significant implications for both revenue generation and expenditure on services, given that we tend to have a higher than average dependence on social welfare systems and lower than average wage levels.

In terms of revenue generation, South Australia does not have a lot of options. Most of the taxes available to us at state level tend to be in areas of very low growth. We are massively reliant on the commonwealth for revenue from taxes that, again, we have very little control over, as we saw recently, when the states had their contribution significantly slashed by the commonwealth government's decision to abandon the indexation of fuel excise. Clearly, we have a great need for tight fiscal policy. We inherited inexcusable budget disarray from the previous government. The Treasurer—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Let me just take some time to outline, for my colleague's benefit, some of the disarray. First, the Treasurer has uncovered a black hole, or budget deficit, of about \$340 million left to us because a wide range of cost pressures over the forward estimate period were ignored by the previous government. To make matters even worse, we saw large budget payouts being made as incentives, which generated few benefits for South Australia—and many of these initiatives were, in fact, financial disasters. There are too many for me to mention, so I will just give a brief thumbnail sketch.

There was the \$30 million for the EDS building; the huge cost blow-out for the soccer stadium; the wine centre fiasco—not to mention the obscene \$400 000 opening party; there was the 13-year tax freeze given to Skycity; and there was the debacle with the government radio network—which has cost us \$272 million so far (the original cost estimate by the previous government being only \$150 million), and we still have problems with the system because it is still not working properly. Then, in sheer desperation, the former government had to introduce the emergency services levy. And, of course, I cannot go without mentioning the flogging off of our precious state revenue generating assets, such as ETSA. And members opposite sit there with the cheek to point the finger at us about broken promises!

The sale of ETSA was an act of treachery and duplicity. South Australians will remember the former government for that every time they have to pay a power bill. What a legacy. Of course, I have not mentioned the sell off of water or the TAB yet. I will perhaps leave that to another time. The previous government left our state in what can be described as nothing short of a mess. We were left to pick up—

An honourable member: What are you going to do about it, Gail?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I'm glad you asked me that, because I will go to some lengths to explain. I will take pleasure in doing that.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I'm glad you have asked me those questions. I am very pleased to have the opportunity to answer those questions. So we were left to pick up the pieces. Labor promised to deliver a balanced budget, and that is what we did. In terms of revenue, the Treasurer (Hon. Kevin Foley) was left no choice but to instigate—and I quote the Treasurer—'urgent action' in the form of generating revenue through the introduction of a gaming machine tax and stamp duty on conveyancing and commercial equipment hire purchase. These changes have been carefully targeted to those who can afford it the most.

I would now like to spend a little time addressing health issues. Labor's health budget is the first step towards rebuilding our public health services and delivering on the government's commitment to public health. The budget focuses on four critical health issues: first, the budget delivers the government's key election promise to improve service delivery and quality care.

An honourable member: What about the MRI scan?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have not finished. I will get to it. I have quite a bit to say on health, given that so many honourable members are taking such a keen interest. I will be pleased to go into detail. Around \$52 million over four years—this is what Labor has done; you asked what Labor is doing about it—has been provided for an extra 100 hospital beds, together with a \$2.7 million strategy for nurse recruitment and retention, and I will come back to that later. In addition, \$130 million has been provided in the forward estimates towards completing upgrades of the Royal Adelaide, Lyell McEwin and Queen Elizabeth hospitals.

The sum of \$9.5 million extra has been provided over four years to reduce waiting times for elective surgery. In addition, \$8 million has been set aside over four years to tackle the waiting list for dental treatment; \$6 million has been set aside over four years for cleaner and safer hospitals; and \$17.3 million has been set aside over four years for mental health capital works, including 40 acute mental health beds at the Flinders Medical Centre, 30 aged acute beds at the repatriation hospital and the redevelopment of the adolescent mental health unit at the Women's and Children's Hospital. It also includes a record \$162 million for health capital works in 2002-03, funding for the protection of blood supplies, funding for a falls protection program and funding for the strengthening of locally based childhood early intervention programs.

I find it a bit rich for the Leader of the Opposition to say that Labor's health policies are in tatters. That is quite incredible, considering how the former government allowed our public health system to run down. In fact, the second issue that the health budget deals with addresses the legacy of inadequate funding for our public hospitals and health system, shackled by increasing burdens of debt accumulation during the terms of the previous Liberal government. Additional funding of \$28 million was provided in June this year ahead of the budget, enabling the Department of Human Services and the public hospitals to balance their books and start the next financial year without the burden of repaying huge debts accumulated from 2001-02. The Hon. Rob Lucas referred to that as rewarding the—

The Hon. Caroline Schaefer: Financial incompetence, I would think.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Words to that effect; thank you. These hospitals were paralysed with financial debt, because of successive years of funding cuts by the previous government. We had no choice but to try to bail them out of a terrible situation.

Let us take a look at the state our health system was left in by the former government. There are some very interesting statistics. From 1993-94 to 2000-01 total hospital admissions rose by a staggering 20 per cent. So there was 20 per cent more demand on our hospital services. During that same time, the average length of hospital stay dropped by 16 per cent, that is, patient turnover increased significantly. It is incredible, isn't it? The number of patients attending casualty rose by 25 per cent.

So, what was the former government's response to the increasing demand on our health system? What did it do? What did it do to help the sick and suffering? It cut. During this same period of time it cut around 400 public hospital beds. To make matters worse, it also slashed 400 FTE registered nurse positions, and that is a reduction of around 6 per cent from 1993-94 to 2000-01. It is not surprising that cuts such as this have resulted in enormous pressures in our public health system, not to mention the pain and suffering associated with delayed service, delayed surgery and diminished access to health services generally.

The Hon. A.J. Redford interjecting:

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: For those who could get in. It is also not surprising that recent surveys conducted by the public health system show poor staffing levels and skill mixes that are often insufficient to meet patient demand. Patients also report that they are too often discharged before they feel that they are ready. Nurses in particular are reporting increasing levels of workplace stress, and figures confirm that they are leaving the profession or reducing the time spent at work to cope with the work pressures, thus compounding the nursing shortage. Nurses are reporting that they, like their patients, feel more at risk.

It is an absolute disgrace that the opposition's response to the figures indicating that 600 elective surgery cases have been recently reported as being cancelled was to say that the government strategy is not working. If it were not so tragic, it would be laughable. I would simply consider you lot—the ones who created this wretched mess—a joke. It took you eight years to achieve this current level of misery. Now we are left with the mess, to pick up the pieces. Eight years! I am sure that by now we are all aware that South Australia is currently suffering from a grave shortage of nurses in metropolitan, rural and remote areas. Figures currently indicate a nurse shortage of 400 FTEs. That is what it took you eight years to do—to create a nursing shortage of 400 FTEs. We have to cancel surgery because we do not—

The Hon. A.J. Redford: What's an FTE?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Full time equivalent—have enough staff to provide the care needed to open up beds safely. That is the situation you have left us in—a shortage of 400 nurses. I acknowledge that similar trends are also occurring nationally and internationally. However, what I find extremely difficult to accept is that I know the former government was forewarned of this potential crisis arising, because I personally attended those ministerial delegations, with both former health ministers, the Hon. Michael Armitage and later with the Hon. Dean Brown.

As former State Secretary of the Nursing Federation, I alerted ministers to the potential shortage. The federation highlighted at the time that it needed urgent government intervention. There was evidence of a pending problem as far back as the mid 1990s. What did the former government do about trying to prevent this crisis occurring? Nothing. You sat on your hands and continued to dish out large sums of money for those projects that you saw as priorities—the soccer stadium, the wine centre and the rose garden. You failed us; you failed South Australians yet again—even when the experts came out to warn you and advise you.

Once again, when we came into government, we had to clean up the mess. We immediately authorised an executive working group to put together a nursing recruitment and retention plan for 2002-05 years. A detailed package of strategies has already been put together by a broader group of experts outlining short, medium and long-term outcomes. The budget allocates \$2.7 million to recruiting nurses and making sure they stay. It would appear that the personal discussions between the Minister for Health and the University Vice Chancellor are likely to result in an increase in nurse graduate places. Refresher and retraining courses have been looked into, as has the recruitment of overseas nurses. The working conditions and career structures for nurses are also being genuinely examined. This has taken place within the first few months of us taking government. So I am very pleased to have been asked the question, 'What is Labor doing about it?' And there is more.

I take great pleasure in talking about the third health issue that I would like to raise. This budget establishes a generational review of the public health system and its structures and processes to develop a plan to meet the needs of South Australians for the next 20 years. We will make sure that this never happens again. This review—the first comprehensive review of our health system since the Bright report in the 1970s—is headed by distinguished South Australian John Menadue. The generational review will conduct a root and branch examination of everything our health system does and does not do and, most importantly, how we can do it better. The review will report early next year with recommendations and a plan for a sustainable public health system in South Australia.

Fourthly, as promised during the election campaign, the budget funds the establishment of a health and community services ombudsman. I do not intend to canvass this initiative today because, as honourable members will be aware, legislation to establish the health and community services ombudsman is before the other place.

After years of watching our public health system being ringbarked by the previous Liberal government, I believe that South Australians will recognise that this is a very impressive start by the new government to rebuilding our public health services, and this is just a down payment. Yet I note that the Leader of the Opposition could not help making negative and misleading statements about the health budget. For example, the leader claimed that health 'missed out in the budget and that there would be 159 000 fewer outpatients in metropolitan hospitals'. The claim is simply false. The Leader of the Opposition has chosen to quote a minimum activity target as being a funding allocation. If the Leader of the Opposition had checked, he would have found out that the previous minister for human services also published activity targets that invariably were below the actual performance numbers achieved by our public hospitals.

So let me correct the record, and I refer to Budget Paper 4, Output 6.2. The minimum activity target for outpatient services at metropolitan public hospitals—and I stress the word ‘minimum’ because this is explained in the footnote to these figures—calculated as weighted separations under case mix for the purposes of demand management in our metropolitan hospitals for the coming year is 947 000 separations. This target is the same as that used by the former minister last year. The opposition leader did not mention, probably because the shadow minister either chose not to tell him or neglected to tell him—and it would be interesting to know which it was—that the explanation is underneath this figure in output table 6.2. This states:

Targets are to remain at 2001-02 levels in keeping with existing demand strategies. This is a minimum target and not a funding allocation. It should be noted that expenditure reflects an increased level of funding [for outpatient services of] (\$20.2 million).

Since the introduction of this form of reporting with accrual accounting, every year the budget papers have indicated that our public hospitals achieve higher outputs than the published targets. Last year, the former minister published a target of 947 000 weighted separations. This was 111 000 less than the 2000-01 result of 1 058 000 outpatients.

I have gone into some detail because nobody should believe the claim made by the Leader of the Opposition and his shadow minister for health. Had the opposition leader turned the page, he would have seen that the budget this year for outpatient services across South Australia is \$352 million, an increase of \$20.2 million or 6.08 per cent on last year’s expenditure. Had the opposition leader turned the page, he would have seen that the budget this year for admitted patient services across the state is \$1 494 million, an increase of \$69 million, a 4.8 per cent increase on last year’s expenditure.

I said earlier that it was a bit rich that the Leader of the Opposition should claim that the new government’s health policies are in tatters. It is a bit rich after the Liberal government’s reannouncement of projects time after time without delivering. Take, for example, the redevelopment of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital that was announced seven times before work started; or the mental health beds at Flinders Medical Centre announced in 1988, again in 1999 and again in 2001 that were never built. Compare the funding for more hospital beds, more elective surgery, more dental treatment and safer and cleaner hospitals with the promise made by the Liberal government that if ETSA was sold it would mean an extra \$2 million a day for our public hospitals. We all know that, when ETSA was sold, hospitals received nothing extra and power prices went up. What a legacy of broken promises!

I will now briefly talk about one other important aspect of the budget, and that is the government’s delivery of its other election promises relating to education and children’s services. The government’s commitment to education can be seen by the Department for Education, Training and Employment’s 2002-03 budget operating increase of \$156 million compared with the previous Liberal budget. This is a real growth rate of 6 per cent. I was concerned, yet again, when I read the Leader of the Opposition’s budget remarks, as follows:

The Rann government has cut education spending by an incredible \$34 million.

Again, he is quite simply wrong, and it is worth noting that the previous year’s budget for DETE was \$1 803 million. Subsequent decisions added \$4.5 million to that figure, bringing the implied mid-budget review estimate of DETE expenditure to \$1 808 million. The 2002-03 budget is

\$152 million higher than this figure, which results in a 5.8 per cent growth. The opposition does not like listening to the details. The latest Liberal budget spin doctoring is a very interesting tactic, because the Liberals are also trying to claim credit for the \$42 million extra that Labor had to fund when it came into government to fill the education black hole left by the Liberal government. So, the new Labor government actually bumped up last year’s expenditure and the Liberals are now trying to take credit for it, when all they did was leave the new government with a whopping great black hole. Once again, we have been left a legacy of financial mismanagement.

On a more positive note, I will quickly mention the new education initiatives which total \$93 million in the 2002-03 budget, the equivalent of \$527 million over four years. These measures include: additional funding to support the public education system; extra teachers to reduce primary school classes; funding to support an increase in the school leaving age; additional facilities and training for teaching IT skills in public schools; fee rebates for TAFE students undertaking work-related courses; and I was also pleased to note that an extra 14 primary school counsellors have been allocated, bringing the total number to 109, servicing 170 schools.

So, I was very pleased to be asked the question as to what Labor is doing about it. On capital works, Labor again had to clear up the mess left by the Liberals because of the chronic ongoing underspending, which amounted to \$124 million over the time they were in office—\$124 million of underspending of our precious school assets. Instead of getting on with the job of improving school facilities, the Liberal government reannounced and reannounced projects year in, year out. Had that additional \$124 million been spent by the previous government, our schools would certainly be in a much better position than they are in now.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I rise on a point of order, sir. That is a reflection on the previous government, that we reannounced and reannounced projects. That is simply not the case. The fact of the matter is that the only announcements we have had in the past three months are—

The PRESIDENT: Order! This is not a debate; it is a point of order. It may be patently painful for the honourable member, but there is no point of order.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Would the honourable member like me to go back through the details of the reannouncements?

The PRESIDENT: I think the honourable member would be best to adjust her speech accordingly.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: What a shame. I have plenty of details of the dates, years and projects that have been reannounced, if members opposite would like me to go through them.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: There are many other aspects of the budget that I would like to go into, but I will leave that to my colleagues. Although this is a tough budget, it is a fair budget and it delivers Labor’s election promises to prioritise health and education. It delivers more beds and more teachers while balancing the books. I commend this budget to the council.

The Hon. A.J. Redford: I see that that interjection knocked off that speech, didn’t it?

The PRESIDENT: Order! A few other things will be knocked off if we get more noise coming out of ‘incorrigible corner’.

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: As is the tradition of the parliament, I support the Appropriation Bill and, in doing so, take the opportunity to make comment on this budget, particularly as it applies to rural and regional South Australia. This is a vicious, cynical budget which, in effect, says loudly and clearly—

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway interjecting:

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: And I can do without your help, thank you. It says loudly and clearly to anyone living outside the metropolitan area, and particularly anyone employed in agriculture, ‘Look: you didn’t vote for us. You got a good deal with the other lot; now you can pay.’ The extent of the axe that has been taken to the region is still becoming apparent, but perhaps the most glaring example of ignorance is the decision, without any consultation, to change crown lease perpetual annual payments to a minimum of \$300 per title (an increase of over 1 000 per cent in many cases) and freeholding to \$6 000 from \$1 500.

There appears to have been no understanding of the history of crown lease perpetual or the fact that they have always been treated in the same way as freehold. Even native title recognises that perpetual lease is to all intents and purposes the same as freehold and that the occupiers have paid for that title in the same way and in the same amount as the holders of freehold. But this government has gone out and increased payments by hundreds, if not thousands, of per cent, in some cases, on land that has never been cleared and returns no income; in other cases, in marginal areas where people may hold 60, 80 or even 100 titles; and also, in places like the Riverland and Coober Pedy, on people’s residences.

On top of that, if people want to get out of this terrible impost by freeholding, they now have to pay a minimum of \$6 000, as I have said, instead of \$1 500. So, perhaps they have had enough by now and decided to sell, only to find that stamp duty has increased on any property valued at over \$200 000. The Treasurer likes to imply that this will affect only the big end of town but, in fact, there are many homes, even in regional areas, worth over \$200 000, and I would venture to say that there would be virtually no working farms worth less than \$200 000 and the majority would be worth \$1 million or over. Does this mean, as seems to be implied, particularly by the Hon. Gail Gago, that they can afford to pay? Probably not—the old adage asset rich, income poor, still applies in rural South Australia.

What is obvious is that this self-styled Robin Hood—or is it Robbing Hood—Treasurer knows very little about wealth creation and cares very little about the sector that creates 55 per cent of our export wealth. Perhaps more concerning than the savage budgetary cuts and the ignorance is the cultural change which has subtly taken place and which has now been confirmed in this budget. With land management, water management, sustainable resources, advisory boards, the Upper South-East Drainage Scheme, the rehabilitation of the Lower Murray flats, the Loxton drainage scheme, branched broomrape eradication and even genetically modified plants—and that names just a few—all falling under the control of the new super-minister John Hill, there has been scant regard for the views or expertise of those who know and care as we see a government moving back to management by bureaucrats and theorists.

On top of that, we now find the Treasurer making announcements about droughts and, it appears, entirely managing the regional affairs budget. What do our upper house ministers have left to do? In the Hon. Terry Roberts’ case, it appears, drive around and chat to people without any

real decision-making authority, while the Hon. Paul Holloway has the dubious honour of being the minister for closing fisheries. At this rate, my appropriation speech this time next year will be very short, because it appears that the two ministers that I shadow will have no budget at all.

Let me speak now about some of the cuts specific to the primary industries budget, leaving aside the major funding slice that has gone over to the new water, land, biodiversity and conservation department, and I will name just some of them. First, there is a cut of \$4 million in incidence response due to, according to the budget papers, ‘a high number of biosecurity incidence responses in 2001-02, which are not likely to be repeated in 2002-03.’ We have pointed out on a number of occasions that the high number of responses were in fact during the locust plague in 2001-02, so this cut has been made to a normal year’s budget. What happens if, God forbid, we have a plague or an outbreak of something in this financial year?

Further to that, a cut and eventual phasing out of FarmBis. Last week’s *Stock Journal* had the headline ‘FarmBis cuts shake SA.’ The key points box says it all, as follows:

- \$5 million state funding cuts to FarmBis;
- loss of dollar-for-dollar federal grants;
- grants reduced to 50 per cent of costs; and
- changes to eligibility criteria.

I quote some of the opinions in that article as follows:

FarmBis State Planning Group Chairman David Jericho said while it was difficult to put an overall dollar value on FarmBis, results statewide, state and federal grants paid and committed to in the past 12 months alone amounted to \$7 million. SA Farmers Federation President John Lush believed the state had the highest participation rate in the program. . .

That is throughout Australia. That is indeed documented elsewhere. The article continues:

‘The optimism FarmBis had created has been nipped in the bud, because it appears there will be no funding to finish the full life of the program originally set at 2004,’ he said. Mr Jericho said FarmBis had been ‘turned upside down by the state budget cuts,’ making a reduction in grants from 75 to 50 per cent of total course costs a necessity and leading to an overhaul of eligibility requirements.

One successful FarmBis initiative has been the Better Soils program, which has provided for 2 500 land managers to train. It cost \$300 000 and has been proven to have returned \$7.5 million over three years to land managers within South Australia in efficiency funding, yet this government, in its total lack of comprehension, has decimated this scheme with, as usual, no warning and no consultation. Further, there have been cuts to research funding for SARDI, called in the budget papers a ‘re-prioritisation’—a re-prioritisation of what, I ask? I have no details yet as to what those cuts will be but, again, our government fought hard in previous years to get good value for our research and development dollar in this state. It has, for many years, been a lean budget. Now that budget dollar has been slashed.

We know of at least one cut of \$70 000 to marine scale fishing research, but what of the rest? When will these details be released and who will suffer? What of our fishery compliance officers? They remain, as I understand it, but with no confirmed funding, so I ask the question: what other section of the Fisheries Department will be slashed to retain those officers? There is an extra impost on cost recovery from the farm sector and industry, but in what areas and what other fees and charges will be sneaked in? This is an insidious budget, with cuts sneaked in across the board, and I would like to list again those as they appear in the budget.

I refer to the PIRSA budget: resource regulation planning services, minus \$1 million; licensing services, minus \$1 million; compliance services, minus \$1 million; incidence response services, minus \$4 million; policy advice and support services, minus \$1 million; facilitation planning services, minus \$200 000; trade and market services, minus \$1 million; and portfolio program management services, minus \$9 million. This equates to a whopping \$18.2 million off a relatively small budget. And what of the hundred or so jobs that are to be lost from PIRSA, and this is on top of the 168 former PIRSA staff who have gone across to the Hon. John Hill's super department?

In addition, it is estimated that there will be a job loss of somewhere around 100 to 130 jobs. How many of those job losses will affect rural people doing their valuable work, living in regional areas and contributing to their communities? What proportion of cuts will be made in the city by comparison, and how many of the cuts will be at executive level to comply with the ALP's election promises? I am aware that several of my colleagues wish to speak further in detail on regional issues and, indeed, to some degree, the Hon. John Dawkins has done so.

Let me paint a thumbnail sketch of just how bad, how uninformed and how ignorant of rural people this budget is. No doubt more detail will creep out over time, but just let us look at these facts. It is intended to phase out the Regional Development Infrastructure Fund over the next three years. That fund encouraged a huge amount of real development within regional South Australia. I have discussed the primary industries and resources area. If one adds the \$18.2 million that I have discussed previously to the projected job cuts, the whole PIRSA area will be cut by about \$22 million. There will be a 40 per cent cut in the budget for incidence response services, that is, as I have said, locust control, mouse plagues, fruit fly outbreaks, etc.

I mention the wind-up of FarmBis over a very short time. There will be a cut to regional schools funding and cuts to capital works programs in that area. In case members think that I am exaggerating, let me just list some of the schools that have been affected by this government's 're-prioritisation'. These are all schools which had capital works approved but which have now been abandoned: Angaston Primary School, deferred; Boolaroo Centre School, reduced from \$2.5 million to \$2 million; Ceduna Area School, reduced from \$5 million to \$3.9 million; Coromandel Valley Primary School, deferred; Gawler Primary School, deferred; Mawson Lakes School, reduced from \$15.6 million to \$7.6 million; Orroroo Area School, deferred; and Willunga Primary School, cut from \$6.2 million to \$850 000.

Surprisingly, or perhaps not surprisingly, there has been a corresponding increase in funding to inner city schools. I continue: closure of three regional ambulance communications offices resulting in 16 job losses; a cut to HomeStart funding for aged care, leaving 269 planned aged-care beds unable to be provided; crown leases, as I have suggested; outback roads maintenance gangs I have discussed earlier, but it amounts to a loss of 20 jobs, and let us all hope and pray that it does not amount to a loss of a number of lives because those roads, above all, need to be maintained; and a cut to the regional roads program (roads of regional importance) from \$2.2 million to \$700 000.

Included in that is the abandonment of the sealing of the Dublin Road. Those of us who know very much at all understand that the saleyards are to be shifted to Dublin. We will now have huge road trains and large amounts of livestock

transported into that area over gravel roads, in my view creating huge dust problems in that area. Also, a cut in the rural arterial roads sealing program from \$8.24 million to \$2.83 million; an increase in the cost for applying—just applying; it does not mean you will get approval—to clear native vegetation from \$50 to \$400; and a cut from \$1.4 million to \$600 000 a year for funding 18 crime prevention officers in regional centres.

There has been a cut to remote areas electricity subsidy of \$400 000, and a cut to country arts funding of \$7.2 million. The message, therefore, is very clear. We have a government that does not care about anyone or anything outside the metropolitan area. But, if my word is not good enough, let me use some of the quotes from a South Australian Farmers Federation article on the state budget review. In part, the article states:

The 2002-03 budget has been one of the most difficult to analyse. . . The SA Farmers Federation has discovered the rural sector will suffer from losses in capital expenditure and capital works funding to the tune of around \$38 million. . .

I can only say that, as members read the budget more closely, they will find that it is a greater figure than that, not a smaller figure. The article continues:

. . . it has been revealed that cuts to large sectors, including rural education, rural health and transport, as well as the loss of funding for PIRSA, will mean losses of funding of hundreds of millions of dollars to the rural sector. . . there is a reported total fall in PIRSA funding of \$17 million, which is absolutely unacceptable given that agriculture has provided in excess of 55 per cent of the state's export earnings and has an average growth of over 3 per cent annually. . . In addition to this, we have discovered a loss of around \$7 million to the PIRSA animal health budget which, given the pressure in the livestock industry for OJD, BJD and the threat of a possible incursion of foot and mouth disease, shows that the state Treasurer has no regard for the state's multibillion dollar livestock industries.

The article goes on to state that 100 jobs will be slashed in Transport SA 'which will further limit services to regional customers'. It then states:

Taking into account the education, health and transport portfolio cuts and the loss of funding to PIRSA, the rural sector will recognise losses in funding of around over \$52 million. This figure does not include the loss of around \$53 million worth of funding to PIRSA that has been shifted to other departments, further reducing the effectiveness of the only primary producer government department.

And further:

The federation is also vehemently opposed to increases in stamp duty and conveyancing fees for land purchases. We note that for property valued at over \$1 million (as many broadacre, viticulture and horticulture blocks would be) conveyance fees will increase by \$7 500 to \$48 830, which is an increase of almost 16 per cent.

The South Australian Farmers Federation notes, as did we—and we questioned this during the estimates:

. . . the lack of production of a regional budget statement contained in the papers by the new state government to be an indicator of the importance and view held by the government of regional and rural issues, their communities and their importance to the state in financial terms and strongly suggest that the state government take urgent steps to rectify the current funding trend, which will damage regional South Australia irreparably.

It will also irreparably damage the long-term health of the economy of the state. However the SA Farmers Federation does note—and lists—some budget positives, and I would like to comment on those. They are as follows:

- Reopening the South-East rail network—which, of course, was a Liberal initiative.
- \$3.5 million for black spot funding of rural and urban roads. I served on the Black Spot Committee, representing the former minister, Diana Laidlaw, and, as we all know, whether

it is hypothecated as a black spot fund or not is immaterial, because that money is tied to federal funding. So, without the \$3.5 million from somewhere, whether it was hypothecated or not, that money had to be found within our budget in order to obtain the black spot funding from the federal government. So, that is in fact neutral.

- Scholarships for country-based teaching students; and I acknowledge that I believe that that is a good move.

- Continued funding for the Plant Genome Centre at the Waite Campus—again, a Liberal initiative.

- \$4.1 million for the South-East drain program, which is about the amount one would have expected to have budgeted for.

So, as I have said, in the end this is a vicious and cynical budget that displays an absolute lack of regard for that section of our state that provides over half of the export economy—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: The community that we are talking about provided \$5 billion of export income last year. You could ask why the government has done this; why has this government decided to kill the goose that laid the golden egg? Why has this government turned its back on the wealth-earners of this state? I suspect that if the current Treasurer was asked that question—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the chamber.

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: —why he has turned his back on regional South Australia, his answer—for which he is becoming famed—would be, ‘Because I can.’

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: With some misgiving, I support the second reading of this bill. I indicate that I am not too sure what I am supporting in the sense of this budget, because it is a moving feast. Since the budget was introduced, the Treasurer has backtracked on the issue of the gaming tax, and it would appear that with the establishment of a select committee in relation to the crown land issues—and the government’s proposal for additional charges—further adjustments will be made.

The Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins: They’ve got no idea.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: As the Hon. John Dawkins interjects—and quite rightly so—they have no idea. I want to refer to a number of issues in relation to Transport SA, where clearly the minister has no idea and the government has been led into making some very poor decisions on the advice of the department, I suspect, again because the minister has no idea, no capacity to lead and little care for the consequences.

The particular issues that I want to address are in relation to Transport SA and the Far North roads issue and, in relation to passenger transport, the purchase of new buses. In the arts portfolio, I will specifically address the issue of the regional arts event, the Barossa Music Festival, and peer assessment and ticket subsidy issues.

There are a whole lot of questions that I could ask arising from the budget and the estimates committee, but I will progressively put those on notice. One specific question that I would like answered in relation to all of the portfolios that I used to represent, and that I would like answered by the minister in his reply to this second reading debate, or during the committee stage, relates to the reductions that the government has required in terms of those agencies meeting cost efficiencies.

In relation to Transport SA, the minister (Hon. Michael Wright) said, during the estimates committee, that there had been a \$4.8 million reduction between 2001-02 and 2002-03, which will be met entirely from cost efficiencies being applied within the department. Specifically, I would like a list of all the areas, projects and/or programs that have been cut, and the amount in each instance, to meet this cost efficiency requirement of \$4.8 million.

The Premier and Minister for the Arts, in the arts estimates, indicated that Arts SA had been required to make a savings target of \$3.249 million for 2002-03 compared to 2001-02, and, again, I would like the minister to specifically list all the areas, projects or programs that have been cut, and the amount in each instance, to make up that total of \$3.249 million. And, I would like the total and the components of the cost efficiency savings between 2001-02 and 2002-03 for Planning SA, the Passenger Transport Board, TransAdelaide and the Office of the Status of Women.

In terms of Transport SA and the Far North roads budget, I have to say that I am not only disgusted but bitterly disappointed that the minister, and in turn the government, has made a decision to cut the jobs of 26 road contractors, and, in turn, cut from four to two the number of road gangs that must maintain and—if there is ever a budget—upgrade the roads in the Far North of this state. As so many of the people who live and work in that area who have contacted me about this issue have noted, this is not the Year of the Outback it is the Year of the Cut Back. They are disgusted with this government’s decision, and I completely share their disgust.

It is a long way from Adelaide when you live north of Port Augusta. It is in these areas that the government has so savagely cut not only budgets but also jobs. It will have a severe impact on those communities, because these people live in local towns and work as part of Transport SA road gangs. This rare breed of men and women is willing to live away from home for some 18 days straight and then have some 10 days off. They live in transportable accommodation and work in hostile conditions. It is not easy to get people, particularly younger people, to work in these environments.

It is a very foolish decision by this government to not only cut the budget for the road network in the Far North of this state, which covers some 80 per cent of this state, but also to deprive people living in small towns in the Far North of the state of jobs, because it will, in turn, undermine the viability of those townships.

There are some 15 000 kilometres of unsealed roads through this area, and this government expects two road gangs of 26 people to maintain this 15 000 kilometres of road. It is no wonder that the Australian Workers Union (AWU), pastoralists, a whole group of people in the tourism industry, school teachers, the medical profession and local councils have deplored the government’s decision.

Earlier today, I asked a question, and I know that your ruling, Mr President, may not have been technically proper—that I had asked the question or that there was no requirement for the Hon. Mr Sneath to answer it. But I was pleased that, despite efforts by his whip to protect or silence him, the Hon. Mr Sneath did get up and answer my question. However, I did expect him to show a little more substance and backbone. When I was minister for transport, I essentially had an open door for people from the union movement representing the work force that had some relationship with any of the agencies—

The Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins: Including the North West organiser of the AWU, who is very complimentary of your work. He went on ABC Radio to say so.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Yes, that is right, and I do acknowledge that public endorsement by the AWU organiser. However, I am disappointed that the Hon. Bob Sneath is prepared to so readily abandon the AWU and its members now that he is a member of the backbench of the government. When he was an opposition backbencher, he was prepared to ask questions relating to AWU matters, ferry workers and contracts. I recall the Hon. Bob Sneath asking those questions—and I can readily refer him to them—where he acknowledged my open door policy when he was the AWU secretary. We would sit down and talk through issues. No matter what advice I had been given by Transport SA (and I did not always take that advice), I generally listened fairly to the Hon. Mr Sneath and regularly took his advice, and we came to reasonable compromises—

The Hon. R.K. Sneath: Only because it was good advice.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: It was good advice, but I am not too sure why you are not prepared today to provide that same advice to this government and take some initiative and seek to take delegations of AWU members and other contractors to the minister, a former AWU member and organiser, as I recall—

The Hon. R.K. Sneath: No, he was an employee of the AWU.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: He was simply an employee; he was not good enough to qualify? Well, perhaps that is his trouble now—that he never actually understood the issues in relation to either the Far North or generally. Therefore, it is even more important that the Hon. Bob Sneath helps the minister to understand his responsibilities and the consequences of his decision, and that the minister should not just readily accept the advice of Transport SA. Certainly, I did not accept its recommendations to cut road gangs in the Far North over a period of some three years, and I am particularly pleased that I did not.

I know what has unfolded now with this minister so readily accepting the first suggestion from Transport SA to cut budgets. This road transport budget of approximately \$14 million a year for the maintenance and upgrade of roads in the Far North is the one very direct benefit these people gain from state government services. I never accepted Transport SA's advice, and this minister should never have done so.

The Hon. Bob Sneath should not just be sitting on the back bench relaxing and putting on weight. He should get out there and represent his former membership and be as diligent as a backbencher in government as he was on the opposition back bench. He is slothful and lazy. What else can we think of? We could think of a lot of things to get him off his backside to take up the issues on behalf of the AWU and its members, because they are very anxious and upset.

No-one in their most unreasonable moment would anticipate that two gangs of 26 individuals can maintain in a safe and proper condition 15 000 kilometres of road—and that is on the basis that there is no bad weather or adverse environmental conditions. This area is prone to violent winds, sand drift and floods. I know that, even at the time when we had maximum resources of dollars and men and women working in the area, it took what I thought were unreasonably long periods of time, and we required extra workers to make the proper repairs to these roads.

In the Year of the Outback, the government has not allowed in this budget, even with increased tourism to this area, for safe road conditions. In fact, it is reprehensible in terms of liability. I think that the government is exceedingly vulnerable in terms of the work force and budget that it is prepared to put into these roads. If crashes and deaths occur, I would be happy to be part of any claim against this government because of the way in which it has been so highly irresponsible in under-resourcing the work force and the community to maintain these roads in the proper condition. I suspect in such an event this government may be up for much more in terms of liability than it would have been if it had just maintained the roads in a proper, safe condition.

The Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins: The department says that there will be no impact on the quality of the roads.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: That is absolutely extraordinary. It must be in cuckoo land—and for some officers that is probably right. Nevertheless, a minister must take ultimate responsibility, and it is absolutely distressing to me that he has been so prepared to accept the easiest option, that is, the government is prepared to take the out of sight and out of mind easiest option. I asked a person in Transport SA the other day when the Hawker-Orroroo road—

The Hon. P. Holloway interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Well, listen to this. I will tell you what a problem this is for the Minister for Transport. The Hawker-Orroroo road has been funded under the sealing of rural arterial roads program. It is a fantastic road service and it has been supported widely by the community, including the Aboriginal community. I asked a transport officer the other day when the road will be opened, and he said, 'It won't be,' because the advice to the minister is not to go north of Port Augusta because people are so angry.

The Hon. P. Holloway interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: That is their advice: the honourable member should go and ask them. The minister has been advised not to open the road, not to go north of Port Augusta.

The Hon. R.K. Sneath interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: What he will do is probably send the Hon. Bob Sneath—

The Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins: Bob's going to open it.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Yes, well that's right. When I went to the opening of the Eudunda-Robertstown road it was the Hon. Bob Sneath who went, not the minister, because the minister does not care. The minister will send the AWU former organiser, and the former organiser can only go with the current organiser. Yet when that organiser needs support—as he does now with the Far North road gangs—all Mr Sneath does is sit on his backside in this chamber putting on weight.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Silence!

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Hon. Mr Sneath is not doing our image a lot of good. I express that disappointment. I highlight that disappointment in the context of the minister's decision to champion the fact that he has found \$92 million to buy buses in the metropolitan Adelaide area. There is absolutely no need for this government to provide 1¢ of that dollar for the new buses. The government knows that. The only reason why the government is handicapped in this fact is that it is not prepared to work with the private sector for the provision of buses. This government, through the PTB, reached an agreement with Transitplus for the purchase of 33 new buses for the Adelaide Hills. It is a

public-private partnership agreement. The same agreement could be reached by this government with Serco and others.

Mr Stephen Bradford from Serco and other parties, including Torrens Transit, have been to the minister arguing that they would wish to put up the upfront costs for the purchase of buses. The private sector is prepared to do it. The PTB is prepared to amend the contractual terms so that, if they fail in their contracts for the provision of bus services, the government would immediately assume responsibility for those buses. It is an easy, straightforward transaction. This government need not provide \$92 million for buses. That money could go into schools, education, Far North roads and a range of other important projects.

The Hon. R.K. Sneath: The arts!

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Even the arts. I would love to see it go into the arts, but I ask, in particular, the Hon. Paul Holloway, who was the former minister for finance, whether he has time with his other portfolio responsibilities, to just dig a little more deeply. I can tell him as a fact—and I have had it confirmed most recently—that the private sector is out there as a public-private partnership keen to buy those buses. That is the way in which the former government was proposing to advance the purchase of buses in the future.

The Hon. P. Holloway interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I know you do—and that is why I cannot believe that this government has fallen for the purchase, through government capital expenditure—\$92 million over the next five years. That is some \$20 million a year that I know the government would love. I know how I wanted \$20 million whenever I could possibly get it for anything.

The Hon. P. Holloway interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: No, I am saying to the honourable member that Torrens Transit already has such an arrangement. Treasury officers hate it because they would argue there are longer term lease costs, but Treasury officers seek to—

The Hon. P. Holloway interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: No, just listen to me for a moment; I am giving you a few tips in terms of Treasury—

The PRESIDENT: I do not think this is the occasion for the proffering of advice.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: But I want to say to the honourable member that what Treasury officers do in their calculations to make public-private partnerships bad for buses—and they may do it for other areas of assessment; and the government will want get private sector funding for a range of things because in this state we cannot generate the wealth to do everything we want to do—is that they depreciate over a very limited time, namely, eight years. The private sector does not depreciate over that time: it depreciates over 12 to 13 years. If you depreciate over that time, the buses are a good deal—but not on the basis of Treasury's calculation which officers will feed into Mr Foley and Mr Foley will kill off these issues.

If members opposite have a moment, they should be very suspicious of Treasury advice on these public-private partnerships. I am just saying that I was saddened to see the announcement by this minister that he had been so completely taken in by Treasury officers and others, and had ignored the wonderful opportunities that the private sector would immediately provide this government with public-private partnership for the purchase of buses. If depreciated over a period that the private sector would see as a normal transaction, it would be an outstanding deal for this state.

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: The formula sounds too good; it must be illegal.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: No, it is there. Treasury officers do not like not having complete control of the finances—and members opposite will find this. They will find every reason to say no to almost every single proposition the government proposes. They are a powerful force. I just ask members opposite to look at some of the matters I have raised today. I want new buses for this state: I just do not want to see \$92 million of state taxpayers' funds spent on this when there are alternative ways of financing these buses. That is why the former government did not have them provided for in the forward estimates—because it was not my intention to ever fund them in that way.

I wanted to use the successful example of Transitplus, with the support of Serco and other bus operators. This is the practice in Western Australia and other places. What I am suggesting is not novel. The Western Australian Labor government has already taken this course and done it successfully. This minister has been taken in, and it is a poor priority for this government to be spending \$92 million of state taxpayers' funds on the purchase of new buses when that money could be better spent on a range of other things, including not only the government's priorities but also mine—which is Far North roads.

I now want to talk about arts and the Barossa Music Festival, ticket subsidies and the regional arts event. In the estimates committee, the Premier and Minister for the Arts again placed a heavy emphasis on the ticket price of the Barossa Music Festival as one of the reasons for abandoning that festival. I think that is a very poor basis for assessing the success of an arts event. It ignores the fact that this subsidy is, in fact, a jobs subsidy. Every arts event where there is a subsidy goes to the employment of people in the arts, and that is no different from the industry development subsidy that is provided through the Department of Industry and Trade for Mitsubishi jobs or a whole range of other jobs. I would argue that the minister is on very vulnerable ground if he starts quoting ticket subsidy prices to make a judgment about whether or not to fund an arts event in the future.

In terms of the Barossa Music Festival, I think it is important (and I place on notice now and look forward to an answer to my questions) to know how much the ticket subsidy is for a range of arts organisations in this state, and whether the Premier and Minister for the Arts will use the ticket subsidy as a basis for the future funding of the State Opera, the State Theatre, the Australian Dance Theatre, the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust, Vitalstatistix, Doppio Parallelo, Junction Theatre (although I think that has been defunded by this government), Leigh Warren Dancers, the Australian String Quartet, Brink Productions, Mainstreet Theatre, Feast Festival and Country Arts. I name not only the performing arts but also, for instance, the visual arts—the Experimental Art Foundation and Contemporary Art Society. I would like to know the subsidy per person in terms of ticket prices for the performing arts and also for those visual arts organisations that I mentioned.

I would like also to know, in terms of public transport, the subsidy per ticket for rail services overall. I ask in addition for the subsidy per ticket for the Belair, Outer Harbor, Grange, Gawler and Noarlunga lines in the following categories: weekday peak, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., evenings and weekends. I would also like to know the subsidy ticket price for the bus operations and for trams. I

would also like to know, in terms of ticket fares, whether this government intends—and, if so, when—to introduce the weekday inter-peak ticket fare structure for all weekend travel and whether it supports—and, if so, when—the introduction of the free carriage of bicycles on all trains at all times.

In terms of the Kowalick report on the taxi subsidy scheme and Access Cabs, I would like advice from the minister on the timetable that the government will apply for providing the government's response to all the recommendations in that report. I would like to know (and again refer to the buses) what are the current lease terms between the Passenger Transport Board and the various operators for the buses that are owned by Transport SA and leased through its unit PTAM to the contracted operators, what are PTAM's maintenance costs and, by contrast, what are the terms for Transitplus and the contract operating costs for operating the 33 new buses that it has purchased in its own right for the operation of the Adelaide Hills service.

Lastly, in relation to all the departments that I used to represent (that is, arts, Transport SA, TransAdelaide, Passenger Transport Board, Planning SA and Office for the Status of Women), I would like to follow up the issue that the Treasurer raised in Budget Paper 1, Budget at a Glance 2002-03, where it states on page 10:

The government has announced its intention to conduct a comprehensive review of expenditure in all portfolios during 2002-03. This review will ensure that public sector resources are used in the most effective way to address high priority needs. The 2002-03 budget makes no allowance [I emphasise 'no allowance'] for any savings that will arise from these expenditure reviews.

I wish to know what target the government has set for each of the agencies that I used to represent in terms of future savings that must be made to meet future budget targets, that is, in addition to the savings that all those agencies have been required to make in this budget.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH secured the adjournment of the debate.

NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE FACILITY (PROHIBITION) (REFERENDUM) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 20 August. Page 686.)

The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS: I rise to speak against this bill. Labor has a glowing record of adopting as its own policy any popular public perceptions, regardless of whether that perceived public opinion is correct, based on fact or in the best interests of the state. This issue is yet another example of Labor being a populous government. For many months during 2000, certain sections of the media led a media driven campaign against the establishment of a low level radioactive waste repository in South Australia. The low level waste repository was referred to as a 'nuclear waste dump' by the media concerned. This phrase was perhaps coined as part of its campaign to unnecessarily alarm South Australians and to lift the ratings of the respective media outlets.

The ensuing 'I'm with Ivy' campaign ran for several weeks and ensured that South Australians were exposed to the full range of propaganda from the anti-nuclear movement. Soon after this media driven anti-nuclear campaign concluded, independent media monitors Reham appraised the 'I'm with Ivy' media coverage and confirmed that it was overwhelmingly biased, non-factual and promoted only the anti-

nuclear point of view. Reham's analysis showed the whole media campaign was 97 per cent emotive and 3 per cent neutral or fact.

ABC's *Media Watch* also roundly criticised the 'I'm with Ivy' media campaign for promoting unnecessary fear and confusion about radioactivity in the community. One of the most glaring examples of non-factual reporting on the 'I'm with Ivy' segment that I saw was when a drum of bright green fluorescent liquid spilt all over the road. This, according to the reporter, was low level radioactive waste. Interestingly, the Labor member for Torrens also must have been fooled by this image—

An honourable member: West Torrens.

The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS: —no, the member for Torrens—when she spoke in the House of Assembly, because she said:

... there was a suspected leak of [radioactive] waste on one of our roads. Fortunately, it turned out to be rainwater coming off the drums that were being transported but, nonetheless, it highlighted the fact that we do need to be very concerned about this issue. If we have this stuff travelling on our roadways and there is an accident, not only does it pose a danger to passengers in the vehicles that may be involved in the accident, but it contaminates the soil and the environment. As we know, those contaminations are not easily remediated, if one can do so at all.

For the benefit of the member for Torrens, the facts are that low level radioactive waste is solid and includes materials such as paper, laboratory glassware, clothing, industrial smoke detectors, exit signs, watches, compasses, and solid waste from Australian hospitals, research institutions and industrial premises. These articles do not leak and do not flow into ground water and contaminate the soil.

The shipment of flammable and toxic materials such as petrol and insecticides on our roads carries far more risk than the transport of radioactive waste. I ask the member for Torrens: how does she think over 30 000 packages of radioactive instruments and radioisotopes are transported safely to their destinations all over Australia to where they are to be used for beneficial purposes? Public misinformation peddled by the member for Torrens does not help the public make responsible decisions about radioactive waste management. These are precisely the sorts of non-factual images that Labor is keen to promote.

Why do Premier Rann and his party not come clean and tell the public of South Australia that the 'I'm with Ivy' campaign he was so keen to support was biased and not factual? Why does he not identify the types and levels of radioactive waste he is referring to, and the true method of storing each of the various levels of radioactive waste, instead of feeding the public misperceptions by lumping all types of waste together and referring incorrectly to these establishments as 'nuclear waste dumps'? We have nuclear medicine and nuclear power stations. The levels of radioactivity and radioactive waste involved in each case are at either end of the spectrum and trying to roll the two into one nuclear dump type image is simply mischief making.

In mid August, soon after the 'I'm with Ivy' campaign, which culminated in a public rally on the steps of Parliament House, a poll was conducted by the *Advertiser* which asked, 'Do you want a nuclear waste dump in South Australia?' Unsurprisingly, in response to that poll some 87 per cent of the respondents said 'No'. If South Australians had been asked, 'Do you want your radioactive waste left lying around in the basements of hospitals and universities—even on North Terrace in South Australia and in Sydney and other capital cities—or put in a purpose-built national facility?' I suspect

that the answer to the question might have been quite different.

About the same time as this poll, Labor in opposition and, more importantly, its leader Mike Rann, appeared to be especially keen to adopt the anti-nuclear banner for political point scoring. What the now Premier of this state (Mike Rann) could see in this poll was an opportunity—an opportunity to further poison the minds of the public against anything nuclear and then use this perception for his political advantage. It did not matter at all that the media driven campaign against having a centralised national low level repository was based on all the 1980s anti-nuclear propaganda and was not at all factual.

I go through this scenario because it shows just how far the Labor Party will go to score political points and hopefully win those much needed votes. The Labor Party is more interested in short-term political gain at the expense of the people of this state. Labor continues to encourage the anti-nuclear perception in the community and went to the state election promising to stop the nuclear waste dump. Labor knew the word 'nuclear' would continue to conjure up negative images of nuclear power and nuclear weapons in the public's mind—the same reason, one would assume, for the persistence today in using the word 'dump'.

Now Labor in government wants to push through legislation for a possible referendum on the establishment of a nuclear waste dump. I ask Premier Rann whether he is going to frame the referendum question in the same terms that the Adelaide tabloid paper did, or will he do what all we politicians should be doing, that is, tell the public the facts and give them a real chance to make an informed judgment? We know the facts, as they have been stated time and again.

Politicians have a duty to ensure that South Australians have the opportunity to look at this issue objectively. The simple facts of the matter are these: South Australia's low level radioactive waste is currently housed at more than 50 locations around the country, including 10 at medical centres and factories across Adelaide. These include the Royal Adelaide Hospital and Adelaide University on North Terrace. Half Australia's total radioactive waste is already stored at Woomera. It was moved there by the previous federal Labor government in 1994 and 1995. I repeat that: it was moved there by the previous federal Labor government in 1994 and 1995. It consists of 2 000 cubic metres of lightly contaminated soil together with some intermediate level defence waste. An Australia wide search for a low level repository was commenced in 1992 by the federal Labor government. Eighteen possible sites in four states were initially identified. By 1997, scientific experts determined that the Central North of South Australia was the best region because of its stable geology, deep and unusable ground water, remoteness and good transport links.

After a detailed process of investigation including drilling, the final site was determined, and this is the best and safest site for the storage of low level radioactive waste. I ask the government: why did Labor change its mind? What is wrong with having one well managed, effectively run repository for Australia? Why would we not want the Commonwealth of Australia to pay the bill to establish a low level waste facility and to manage it properly to ensure that this material is housed in the best possible way at least expense to the taxpayers of South Australia?

Only last week, the Environment Protection Agency concluded the audit of existing radioactive waste sites in South Australian suburbs and towns, and they include: the

suburb of Adelaide, Angaston, Bedford Park, Birkenhead, Burra, Camden Park, Daw Park, Elizabeth West, Glenside, Highbury, Kent Town, Lonsdale, Loxton, Mawson Lakes, Mount Barker, North Adelaide, Norwood, Nuriootpa, Olympic Dam, Osborne, Regency Park, Roseworthy, Snuggery, Thebarton, Urrbrae and, dare I say it, Whyalla—and I must say I am not happy about it being in Whyalla. In over half of these communities, intermediate level radioactive waste is also stored. Of course, this is considerably more dangerous and includes long-lived spent radiation sources such as soil moisture gauges and stored thorium waste from the processing of mineral sands, and sealed radium sources used in industry and medicine. I ask the people in all these communities: are they happy to have this low and intermediate radioactive waste stored for many centuries within their neighbourhoods? I challenge Labor to include this question in its referendum if it does, in fact, come to pass.

Labor should also ask whether the taxpayers of South Australia want to pay for the upgrading and strengthening of the state's 50-plus temporary storage facilities for our low level radioactive waste and then also pay the cost of individual and constant monitoring for hundreds of years. We certainly would not let the federal government pay for that in that best sited facility, would we! We would sooner spend our own money rather than putting it into schools and hospitals! Or will the Labor government establish one South Australian low level waste radioactive repository and, if so, will it continue to call it a 'nuclear waste dump' and in whose backyard—literally—will it locate it? What does Premier Rann propose to do with the small but significant amount of intermediate radioactive waste currently stored in 14 different neighbourhoods? Is he going to build a second purpose-built facility for our intermediate waste, a separate above ground solid concrete bunker for this, and will he personally safeguard it for the next few thousand years?

Again, why does he want to spend our money doing it when we do not have to? Does Premier Rann intend to ask the commonwealth whether our little bit of waste can go into the new national store for intermediate waste when it is established, wherever it might be established? If South Australia does not do its bit in the national interest by providing the best location for shallow burial of low level waste on a site kilometres out of Woomera on commonwealth land, we cannot really expect to use the national storage facilities for other materials. I do not particularly like the thought of radioactive waste left lying around, largely unchecked in our neighbourhoods. I do not particularly like radioactive waste at all, but I am a realist. We all benefit in some way from the use of radioisotopes, and we must all accept that we need to securely store the waste and responsibly monitor its decay process over the centuries. The best way to do that is to have a national purpose-built safe storage facility.

I do not support the first part of this bill, that is, to change South Australia's position so that it will now not accept other states' radioactive waste; in other words, ban all low level radioactive waste coming from other states. Nor do I support the second part of the bill proposing the option of a \$6 million state referendum to show the commonwealth that South Australians do not want to be part of the national radioactive waste solution. I am sure that we could spend the money in other ways that would be of more benefit to South Australians.

A referendum would be a total waste of taxpayers' money, especially while the Labor government continues to use the emotive term 'nuclear waste dump' and is not prepared to

fully and honestly inform South Australians about the whole radioactive issue. It is nothing more than a \$6 million, expensive political stunt.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: I rise to indicate that I will not support the bill. I share the view of my colleagues that this bill is no more and no less than a political stunt on the part of the government. I read with interest last week an article in the *Advertiser* of Thursday 15 August 2002 in which we discovered that nuclear waste is being stored at 130 sites in 26 South Australian towns and suburbs. I also was very interested to read the comments of the minister (Hon. John Hill), who stated:

The presence of this waste highlights the need for South Australia to develop a strategy to deal with our own waste.

Then he goes on to say:

It seems logical bringing it together and looking after it properly.

As we begin our journey through the 21st century, we have an obligation to future generations to use world's best practice in almost everything we do, including the storage of radioactive waste. If in South Australia we have the site that is safest for its storage of anywhere in Australia, we have a responsibility to take a national approach and to provide a facility that is in the nation's best interest for the storage of radioactive waste.

The process to deal with this waste began some 10 years ago when the federal Labor government in 1992 started the search for a site for a repository. It appointed scientific experts who were given the task to determine the safest place in Australia to build a repository. In 1997, the scientists decided that the central north of South Australia was the safest place, as my colleague said a few moments ago, due to its stable geology, unusable ground water and good transport links.

I am sure that this government will look back on its term in office with great pride as having made a contribution to the future of South Australia and having shown some leadership and responsibility in decision making. Members such as the Hon. John Gazzola, the Hon. Gaol Gago, the Hon. Terry Stephens and I have just started our parliamentary careers. Along with our colleagues, I am sure we represent our constituents with pride on the basis of what is best for our constituents and what is best for South Australia and not just taking a position for maximum political gain at the expense of our constituents and the state of South Australia

It seems a very sad day for South Australia when important issues such as this are trivialised and politicised in this way. There seems to be a very unfortunate trend emerging with this government. Despite its criticisms of the former government about consultants and inquiries, in the first five months in office this government has exceeded all previous records. The introduction of this bill is no exception: the government has not had the courage to do what is right for South Australia and has politicised the issue by calling for a referendum designed to have maximum impact on the federal Liberal government rather than address the important issues we face today.

I wonder whether this government has forgotten the Australian Labor Party's involvement in supporting the storage of radioactive waste in South Australia. In 1991, the then Labor Deputy Premier of South Australia Don Hopgood agreed that there was a need for central storage facilities for radioactive waste. In 1992, the federal Labor government and primary industries minister Simon Crean decided that

Australia needed a central repository for low level waste. In 1994, the federal Labor government short-listed the central north of South Australia as one possible site for the repository.

In 1994, the federal Labor government moved 2 000 cubic metres of low level waste to Woomera without public consultation. And, as my colleagues have said earlier in the debate, half of Australia's radioactive waste is now stored at Woomera. In 1995, the federal Labor government moved 35 cubic metres of intermediate level waste to Woomera, again without public consultation. In August 1999, the parliamentary Public Works Committee, which included Labor Party members, unanimously recommended that a new research reactor be built at Lucas Heights and further recommended:

The removal of all radioactive waste from Lucas Heights for disposal or storage at a national repository must be a high priority and is dependent on the timely provision of the repository and store.

On 19 November 1999, the federal Labor Party's resource spokesman and member of parliament from South Australia, Mr Martyn Evans, was reported in the *Advertiser* as follows:

The opposition resources spokesman Martyn Evans said he agreed with the dumping of medium level waste in South Australia if it met geological and scientific requirements and the public were consulted. It has to go somewhere and just because it's in South Australia we can't have a 'not in my backyard' view.

This intermediate nuclear waste has been generated to the benefit of many South Australians in diagnosing and treating illness, manufacturing goods for export and in scientific research. In South Australia 20 000 people annually benefit from the use of radioisotopes. Even today, the federal Labor Party supports the establishment of a radioactive waste repository in South Australia. This highlights the great hypocrisy of the Labor Party shown in this debate. As you can see, the minister's comments last week prove that this government is just using this issue as a political stunt.

A commonsense and practical approach to the storage of nuclear waste is the only logical way forward. Every day of our life we practice safe storage of toxic and hazardous products in our own homes, farms and businesses. We practice safe storage of a number of chemicals, family medicines and garden and cleaning products. We do not leave them scattered all over our properties: we store them in purpose-built storage areas, whether that be a medicine cabinet in the bathroom, a chemical storage shed on a farm or a hazardous products store in a mine or a factory.

There has been quite a lot of misinformation about the transportation of radioactive waste and a scare campaign running for some time about truck loads of nuclear waste rolling through our streets past our schools and family homes and creating a potential environmental disaster. In fact, 30 000 packages of radioactive materials are transported throughout Australia every year, and there has never been an accident that has affected human health or the environment. The transport of waste is subject to a strict code of practice that ensures that the transport is safe.

Once a low level repository is established in the central north of the state, radioactive waste will be transported there once or twice a year. It will be no more radioactive than the shipments of yellowcake that have regularly passed through Port Augusta with no effect on health or the environment. The shipment of flammable and toxic materials such as petrol and insecticides carry far more risk than the transport of radioactive waste.

I draw the attention of members to an article in the *Weekend Australian Financial Review* headed 'Argentina's Nuclear Reaction'. The Argentinians have a nuclear reactor right in the middle of a national park and are fortunate that some of the world's rich and famous have bought properties in that national park. The article states:

The world's super-rich have discovered the Bariloche region—media magnate Ted Turner, actor Sylvester Stallone and the president of fashion label Benetton, Luciano Benetton, have bought land in Patagonia. 'We chose it because there isn't a more beautiful place in the world'.

The article also states:

'Most tourists who come here are not even aware that we have a nuclear reactor. . . they don't understand how a nuclear reactor can be inside a national park.'

That indicates how safe nuclear power and nuclear waste are. The image of South Australia is important to us all. It has been suggested that the presence of a radioactive waste repository in South Australia will affect our clean and green image. There are two reasons to be certain that this reputation will be undiminished. First, as I have said already, South Australia already has 130 sites across the state where radioactive waste is stored, including half of Australia's radioactive waste at Woomera. The presence of this waste has not affected our image.

Secondly, and significantly, nuclear industries in many countries around the world have not affected the reputation of produce from those countries, as mentioned by my colleague the Hon. Angus Redford last night. For instance, France produces 70 per cent of its electricity from nuclear power at power stations and other nuclear facilities all around the country. The presence of these facilities has not sullied the reputation of French champagne or the \$42 billion worth of produce that it exports every year. With the uncertainty about the current status of the 130 sites that are located all over South Australia, why would we leave low level waste and a small amount of intermediate level nuclear waste in temporary storage sites around Adelaide instead of putting it in a purpose-built national facility where it can be properly managed?

Leaving waste in 50 sites is not in the best interests of this state, nor is the suggestion that we could do as Labor has done in Victoria and fund a specific centralised store for low-level waste right in the middle of the city. It makes far more sense to take this waste out of the city and house it in one central facility in non-metropolitan South Australia where proper storage protocols, record keeping and monitoring are carried out. It is time this government stopped looking inwards, stopped adopting the ostrich approach by ramming its head into the sand and hoping the problem will go away.

After eight years in opposition one would have thought that this government would have been prepared to show some leadership to recognise that we are part of this great nation and that South Australia has the safest site in the nation in which to store such waste. South Australia has an obligation to all the other states in Australia to provide this facility and thereby minimise any personal or environmental damage to future generations of South Australia. As I stated at the beginning of my contribution, I will not be supporting this bill.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I oppose this bill, although I do not intend to delay the chamber for too long this evening, because I know that a number of my colleagues have put their

concerns about the bill. In fact I think that the Hon. Diana Laidlaw's opening remarks are worth repeating. She stated:

The safe and secure disposal of nuclear waste is a most serious matter. It is therefore of grave concern to me that with this bill the government has sought to politicise and trivialise this important issue.

I commend the Hon. Iain Evans (the member for Davenport in another place) and the Hon. Angus Redford for the manner in which they have handled this debate on behalf of the opposition. I was interested that, as part of a substantial second reading contribution in another place, the member for Davenport sought from the minister details of the locations in South Australia where low level short life nuclear waste and intermediate level nuclear waste is currently stored.

We have heard from a number of members in this chamber about the media reports that followed the minister releasing that information in the House of Assembly last week. While I was interested to look at the various locations (in some of them it is quite obvious where the waste would be stored, although in other locations it is not quite as apparent), I thought it might be useful for the sake of the debate just to indicate how many state electorates are actually the hosts for this nuclear waste at the current time.

The suburbs of Adelaide and North Adelaide are in the electorate of Adelaide; Glenside is in Bragg; Loxton in the seat of Chaffey; Regency Park in Enfield; both Olympic Dam and Whyalla are in the electorate of Giles; Roseworthy is in the seat of Light; Snuggery in MacKillop; Elizabeth West in Napier; Kent Town and Norwood are in the seat of Norwood; Birkenhead and Osborne are in the seat of Port Adelaide; Mawson Lakes is in Ramsay, the Premier's electorate; Angaston is in Schubert; Burra in Stuart; Urrbrae in the seat of Waite; and Thebarton is in the seat of West Torrens. And we heard a bit about the member for West Torrens earlier this evening.

Nuriootpa is another that is in the seat of Schubert, and Bedford Park is in the electorate of Davenport. Some other localities are actually shared between two electorates. Obviously it depends on the actual site, but in Mount Barker it could either be in the seat of Kavel or in Heysen; Highbury is either in Newland or Torrens; Camden Park is in West Torrens or Ashford; Daw Park either in Elder or Waite; and, finally, the location in Lonsdale is part of either Bright or Reynell. I thought it would be interesting actually to put on the record the number of state electorates that are currently affected. While we have looked at locations, members would not have been aware of the large number of state electorates that currently are the location for nuclear waste.

I would also like to make just a brief comment about the questions that might be asked in a referendum. I think the Hon. Terry Stephens and possibly the Hon. David Ridgway also referred to the fact that you can set questions to get a desired result. There is no doubt that if you ask a question about whether people are happy to continue to have nuclear waste in the electorates of Adelaide, Enfield, Norwood, Napier, Port Adelaide, Ramsay or a range of other electorates that are held by various parties, then the answer would be that they do not want that to continue. I think it is appropriate that it should be stored in an area that is suitable rather than in high concentrations of population.

I am also intrigued that there are some people who say that they do not mind if nuclear waste is stored in the desert somewhere as long as it is not in South Australia, so that if it was actually a mile over the border into Western Australia, New South Wales, the Northern Territory or Queensland, that

is all right. I find that an intriguing view that some people have about our state boundaries and South Australia's sovereignty. Yesterday in this debate the Hon. Sandra Kanck quoted from a media release put out by Senator Nick Minchin in July 2000. She quoted one paragraph out of a multi-paragraph statement. I thought that it might be worth while to put the full context of that media release on the record, because to quote one paragraph could be misleading.

At that time the minister was the federal minister for industry, science and resources. The media release, which is headed 'Beazley supports government on radioactive waste', states:

The Minister for Industry, Science and Resources, Senator Nick Minchin, today welcomed the Leader of the Opposition's support on the need to responsibly manage the disposal of radioactive waste. Appearing on Adelaide talkback radio, Mr Beazley was specifically asked by the compere to rule out South Australia as a site for the national low level radioactive waste repository and the national store for long-lived intermediate level waste. In his response, Mr Beazley refused to rule out South Australia as a possible site and supported instead the commonwealth government's position that the disposal of waste was a national issue and that 'safety' was the major concern.

The media release then quotes the then federal leader of the opposition as follows:

Well, we're obviously going to have a look at an appropriate location for the disposal of nuclear waste. Nuclear waste has to be held safely. . . We will have some waste here in Australia disposed, we must find the correct location. I doubt whether we have found it yet.

Mr Beazley further states:

. . . the nuclear waste will have to be disposed of safely somewhere but we'd want to make absolutely certain that we'd found the right location.

The media release then states:

What else could Mr Beazley say? After all, it was the then Labor South Australian deputy premier, Don Hopgood, who wrote to the then Labor primary industries minister, Simon Crean, in 1991,

accepting the need for central facilities for disposing both low level and intermediate level radioactive waste. 'The search for a low level waste repository should not be confused with the search for a store for intermediate level waste,' Senator Minchin said. The search for the store has not yet commenced—when it does, it will involve a nationwide search and further public consultation. No decision has been made to collocate the store at the site of the repository. That is why I am disappointed that the South Australian government has decided to respond prematurely to the state ALP leader Mike Rann's deliberate scaremongering campaign.

The next paragraph, quoted yesterday by the Hon. Sandra Kanck, states:

All states and territories benefit from the use of radioactivity in medicine, industry and research. All states and territories should continue to cooperate in the search for a store for the resulting intermediate level waste. It is simply irresponsible to want all the benefits of radioisotopes but then to walk away from dealing with the waste.

The media release from the Hon. Nick Minchin continues:

South Australians have nothing to fear from measures proposed by the commonwealth government in managing responsibly the disposal of radioactive waste. Mike Rann has sunk to a new low in exploiting this issue for short term political gain. It needs to be noted the Labor government, of which Mr Rann was a member, supported a responsible national approach on this important issue. 'Mr Rann should accept some responsibility and support his federal leader's lead on this issue', Senator Minchin concluded.

As I said, I oppose this bill. It is a stunt. It is designed to arouse public opinion, and I think that when people come to realise the number of localities within those electorates where the waste is currently stored they will see this for what it is, a stunt. I register my strong opposition to this bill.

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.31 p.m. the council adjourned until Thursday 22 August at 11 a.m