

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Monday 11 October 2004

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

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:
By the President—

Report of the Auditor-General and Treasurer's Financial Statements, 2003-04—Parts A and B.

STATUTORY AUTHORITIES REVIEW COMMITTEE

The **Hon. R.K. SNEATH**: I bring up the report of the committee for 2003-04.

Report received and ordered to be published.

QUESTION TIME

ANANGU PITJANTJATJARA LANDS

The **Hon. R.D. LAWSON**: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation a question about the APY lands.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. R.D. LAWSON**: On 4 October this year an election was held on the AP lands under the auspices of the State Electoral Office. Some 703 eligible persons participated in that election, which was conducted at 10 separate communities across the lands. The new Chairman of the APY Executive is Mr Bernard Singer from Indulkana. Mr Singer replaces Mr Gary Lewis who was elected at the end of 2002 and whose term expired at the end of 2003, yet he remained in office. Earlier this year the Premier established a task force, which has been meeting regularly for the purpose of considering recommendations and implementing proposals, presumably arising out of, amongst other matters, the results of the Coroner's inquest into petrol sniffing deaths, which was announced as long ago as September 2002.

The opposition has received many reports that the task force is bogged down in bureaucratic issues and that it has delivered little. My questions are:

1. Has the minister personally attended any meetings of the Premier's task force?
2. Who comprises the members of that task force; and what positive responses have emerged from its activities?
3. Has the minister written to Mr Bernard Singer to congratulate him on his election as chairman?

The **Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation)**: I thank the honourable member for his questions and the spirit in which he has asked them. I have written a congratulatory letter to all APY executive committee members who were elected or re-elected. The election, which was conducted by the Electoral Commission, went as smoothly as possible. There were some complaints, but inevitably with elections of that kind there will always be and there always have been complaints by one side or another—

The **Hon. Kate Reynolds**: As in every election!

The **Hon. T.G. ROBERTS**: As in every election—about process and outcomes. As yet, I am not aware of any

complaints of any serious note being filed which need to be followed up, but some complaints have been raised. As I have said, I have written a letter to each member of the executive committee congratulating them, and I suspect the standing committee will do the same. We will work with the committee and the new chair, Bernard Singer. I have also written a letter to Bernard congratulating him and advising him of the responsibilities and the engagement that will be required by government to change the circumstances of people's lives in that particular area and to continue the work with the APY. We have also outlined to the members the responsibilities that the government has and raised the issues that the government will have in working in partnership with the new executive. I have done that.

I have also drafted a letter to Mr Gary Lewis to thank him for the work that he has done in the past, and I look forward to working with Gary Lewis in whatever capacity he has within the lands, given that he is a senior member of the communities in the area and he has a leadership role. We will be working with all the elected leaders within the communities and all the tjilpis, the older members who have rights in Aboriginal standing to be engaged in changing the circumstances of the people up there. I look forward to the next 12 months, because many issues need to be discussed and solutions developed in relation to the governance questions concerning improvements to human services and infrastructure, and certainly we will be discussing issues in partnership with all community members in relation to lands management and land use issues.

We will not force change on the communities. We will discuss the issues, work our way through them, and within the next 12 months come back with recommendations for change to the way in which we as a government engage the APY executive and the communities and the justice issues which carry across borders. In this way we can begin to make positive initiatives work, and by taking the issues away from bureaucratic offices and putting them back on the ground the results will be able to be measured. My department and my CEO, Peter Buckskin, will be heavily involved in that. The task force and the cross agencies will play a role. In relation to the other parts of the question, for instance, whether I have personally attended any of the task force meetings, the answer is yes.

The people who attend those meetings are departmental heads or the representatives of the cross-agencies that have responsibilities in delivering services and infrastructure within the lands. There have been a number of positive outcomes since the time that the task force was set up. We went from Tier 1 to Tier 2. These were inherited structures that we took over from the previous government. We collapsed Tier 1 and Tier 2 into one single task force.

As members know, we employed the services of Bob Collins to be a coordinator on the lands. Bob Collins has since resigned due to the horrific accident he had in the Northern Territory. We now have Tim Costello and Lowitja O'Donoghue advising the task force and the Office of the Premier and Cabinet in relation to some of the issues that they see as being important to bringing about change. We will be advising the new APY executive of ways in which local governance models can be looked at to try to bring about change in the nature of local government in a way which is educative and not coercive.

I look forward to working with the opposition in bringing about all these changes. Certainly, the Democrats have indicated their support in bringing about these changes, and

I would hope that in the next 12 months, with positive support from the standing committee and with the cross-agency support, we can bring about change that can hopefully be a model not just for South Australia but for other states to follow, and we can start to get improvements to people's lives within that particular area of South Australia.

The Hon. R.D. LAWSON: I have a supplementary question. To what leadership role was the minister referring when he said that Mr Gary Lewis would have an ongoing leadership role on the lands? Secondly, has the minister spoken to Mr Lewis on any matter since the election result?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: The leadership role I refer to is that Gary Lewis is a senior Aboriginal man within his own community and within his own language group, and I look forward to working with him in that role. He plays a leading role within the Pukatja community as a senior Aboriginal man, and I look forward to advice that he will be able to give, as well as any other senior man within the 16 main communities that we will be dealing with and from whom we would be seeking some participation. I have not spoken to Gary personally, but I will be speaking to him. I am visiting the lands in another capacity to celebrate the setting up of tertiary education services through NTEP on the lands within a few weeks, and I hope that I will be talking to a wide cross-section of the leaders on the lands and the broader communities in general.

EXTRACTIVE AREAS REHABILITATION FUND

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Mineral Resources Development a question about the Extractive Areas Rehabilitation Fund.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: On 15 July and 21 July, I asked the minister questions about the Extractive Areas Rehabilitation Fund. On 21 July, the minister, in part, said:

So, I am very keen that the new scheme should be up and running as quickly as possible. I would have preferred it to have been at the start of this month. However, following the issues that have been raised with me, I wish to further that matter as soon as parliament rises. Finalising the EARF is one of my top priorities for next week.

I will read a letter, dated 24 September, sent to the Hon. Paul Holloway, a copy of which, as I say, was sent to me. It states:

Dear Minister,

We are writing again on behalf of ourselves and our clients. Many clients have contacted us to follow up on progress with lifting of the moratorium on EARF projects and issues with Greg Marshall, Chief Inspector of Mines.

Important issues in brief:

- Operators resent paying into a fund that does not deliver. Some are opting to cease payments altogether.
- Operators are mining outside the Mining Act, which they can do legally under certain conditions. This is due to the inaction of PIRSA and difficulties in dealing with some staff members.
- When is the moratorium going to be lifted? Operators have had no opportunity to apply for new rehabilitation work for 18 months. We are now 3 years behind to catch up on immediate rehabilitation around the state.
- We are starting to erode the environmental and community gains made prior to the current Chief Inspector's contract. Conservation elements are voicing disquiet about the uncertainty of on-ground work in the future.
- Clients are phoning me to seek progress on their applications for mining which are not being assessed. Some have been waiting for years before a contact is made by PIRSA. These include applications for new leases and approvals for mining programs, as well as rehabilitation project applications. Work is brought to

a standstill while PIRSA reinvents the wheel or sits on their hands. This is detrimental to business and the economy.

Why do we have to wait for new EARF guidelines to be developed before the Chief Inspector can act? Business cannot stop while a government department tinkers with changes. The industry reaction to the first round of information sessions shows how unfair and unworkable the changes are—it could take years to resolve. Is everything going to wait indefinitely?

We await your immediate response.

My questions are:

1. Has the minister replied to that letter?
2. When indeed will the moratorium on the EARF be lifted?
3. When will we get some truthful answers to our questions?

The PRESIDENT: Objectionable comments such as that are not helpful.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Mineral Resources Development): They are certainly not helpful, Mr President. I would have thought that, if members opposite want to talk about truth, it is perhaps something that does not—

The Hon. A.J. Redford: You can't handle the truth!

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: It may very well be that after 9 October there are new standards for truth in this country. I wonder, therefore, why the Hon. Caroline Schaefer should do it. The comment at the end of those questions was completely unwarranted.

An honourable member: As are most of your answers.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Is that so? If members opposite do not want to have answers to questions, we can soon deal with that. What I told the member who asked the question on a previous occasion was that the matter was before cabinet. That matter is still before cabinet. In relation to one issue that I am pursuing, unfortunately one of the officers I need to consult with from the Local Government Association has been on leave for several weeks and that has delayed the matter longer than I would like. However, I believe that that officer is back this week, or early next week, and I hope that I can then proceed and make an announcement. The discussion paper on this matter was released over 12 months ago, and I would dearly like to see it resolved.

The question of the Extractive Areas Rehabilitation Fund has been ignored by governments for many years. The funds that go towards rehabilitation have not been increased for many years and, for that reason, there is quite a significant backlog in relation to the work that needs to be done. However, over the past 18 months, when new works from the fund have been frozen, the revenue is still going into the fund, so ultimately that money will still be there to deal with rehabilitation. Of course, the whole objective of the review of the Extractive Areas Rehabilitation Fund is to ensure that more money will be available for that fund to address the backlog and potential liabilities for which I have seen various estimates. It could be that anywhere between \$50 million and \$100 million of work is required, depending how one assesses it, to deal with the future liabilities.

The proposal I will be announcing fairly soon, I hope, will enable me to do that work, and it is important that we consult with all the people involved. I am sure the honourable member who asked the question would be the first one in this place to grizzle, complain and whinge if I did not consult with all the particular groups about every issue. Indeed, it was as a result of some of the concerns that were expressed that I have made a number of changes to the proposal to try to address the concerns. I now have some confidence in saying

that I think the industry at large—and not only the larger extractive industry employers, who are represented by the Extractive Industries Association—will be happy with the proposal I am putting forward, but I also believe that most of the smaller parts of the industry will also be happy with the proposals we put forward, because they do seek to strike a balance between requiring the industry to take some ownership of these problems, as well as ensuring that there is a fund to deal with those problems that have been around for many years.

When we talk about funding the work that is required under the Extractive Areas Rehabilitation Fund, it is worth noting that quarries generally have a life of about 40 years. Obviously, if a quarry has been in operation for 35 of those 40 years and is coming to the end of its working life, the costs of rehabilitation might be more significant than a quarry that is, say, just five years into its 40 year life. What the government is trying to achieve with its changes is not only to have the certainty we had with the old Extractive Areas Rehabilitation Fund to provide for rehabilitation works but also that we should be encouraging those quarries to take more responsibility as they go through, with better mine programs, to rehabilitate, or consider rehabilitation, as they conduct their operations. That is the balance we are seeking to achieve. As I have said, I am awaiting a response in relation to several issues from a Local Government Association officer. However, I hope I will be in a position to announce the details of this fund in the near future.

Again, I make the point that, for many years, governments of all persuasions have ducked this issue, and we do have a significant backlog in terms of the rehabilitation work that needs to be done that can be addressed only by reaching agreement with the industry on providing more resources for how that will come about. I believe that we are on the verge of achieving that agreement, and I look forward to being able to provide more specific details in a week or two.

SCOOTERS, MOTORISED

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Industry and Trade, representing the Minister for Transport, a question about motorised scooters.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: Honourable members would be aware that there has been an increase in the use of motorised two-wheel scooters. These scooters, which are sold by many retailers, are propelled by a battery motor not exceeding 200 watts. There are also motorised bicycle scooters, which are driven by a petrol motor with a very small capacity. I am advised that many motorised scooters have been sold to purchasers who have been advised that these scooters are not required to be registered and insured and that the user is not required to hold a driver's licence but must wear a bicycle helmet.

Recently, a constituent was stopped by the police and booked for riding an unregistered scooter and for not having a current driver's licence. Information I have received appears to be in total conflict with the information retailers of motor scooters are providing to purchasers. The information I have received from Transport SA indicates that scooters with a power output of 200 watts or less can be used by a person who must hold a current driver's licence, not being a learner's permit. The owner of the scooter must also apply for a permit from the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and the rider

must wear a safety helmet. The scooter must be fitted with a warning device and must not be ridden at night or at times of low visibility.

It appears that many unsuspecting South Australians have purchased these scooters and are not aware of the specific requirements in relation to their use and therefore run the risk of being prosecuted by the police. The police appear to be confused also because at times they have given varying advice to the information that I have obtained from Transport SA. In view of this situation, my questions are:

1. Will the minister undertake to widely publish through the media the exact requirements to be fulfilled by the owners and riders of motorised scooters?

2. Will the minister ensure that South Australian retailers are properly informed regarding the obligations that are to be met by potential purchasers of motorised scooters at the time of sale?

3. Will the minister provide accurate information to the police regarding these requirements so that a consistent approach is adopted by the police when dealing with riders and owners of motorised scooters?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Industry and Trade): I found the last bit of the question surprising, that is, that the police would require accurate information. I would have thought that, as the enforcers of the law, the police would be well aware of what the law requires. Nonetheless, the honourable member has raised an important matter and I will refer it to my colleagues the Minister for Transport and/or the Minister for Police to investigate the situation and bring back a reply.

ADNYAMATHANHA ELDER

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation a question about an Adnyamathanha elder.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: In September, I asked the minister a question about the passing of Mr Artie Wilton, who was an Adnyamathanha elder. The minister informed the chamber of a commemoration event that would see the unveiling of a memorial and a community celebration of the life of Mr Artie Wilton. Given this, my question is: will the minister report to the chamber on the commemoration event?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation): I thank the honourable member for her question because I made a promise to give a report to the chamber on the dedication of the memorial to the Adnyamathanha elder Mr Artie Wilton. I attended the service by the Adnyamathanha people, who came from the metropolitan area and from Leigh Creek, Copley and Port Augusta. It was well attended. It was a very emotional dedication service and it was something that I will remember for a long time.

The dedication was made at Mount Serle Station, where I met some of the people who were part of the dedication service, and then I travelled a few kilometres to the site of the plaque, which is on the road between Copley and Iga Warta or Nepabunna. It is well placed. It overlooks a valley and the mountains of Mr Wilton's birthplace and it points in the direction of those mountains, which was the request of the family. Many members of the Wilton family made very emotional speeches in their own language of Adnyamathanha and in English, and I was very privileged to be part of that ceremony on the Saturday of the long weekend.

I thank Tom Rich from the department and the other departmental people who assisted the Adnyamathanha people to put this large rock and the dedication together, and others who supplied support and assistance to the communities to allow the ceremony to go ahead.

EIGHT MILE CREEK

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, representing the Minister for Environment and Conservation, a question about Eight Mile Creek.

Leave granted.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: Eight Mile Creek is a vital part of the greater Ewen's Ponds system. In order to lower the watertable to enable the conversion of the surrounding wetland to dairy pasture, drains were run into Eight Mile Creek some 40 years to 50 years ago. To facilitate the drainage, dredging of the creek began. The South-Eastern Water Conservation and Drainage Board continues this practice today.

The Conservation Council describes Eight Mile Creek as being the most significant freshwater creek in the South-East due to its biodiversity and beauty. The council's August E Brief states:

... many of the fish that live in Eight Mile Creek, including the Ewen's pygmy perch, the Yarra pygmy perch, the Galaxias and the Australian Grayling, are listed as 'vulnerable' nationally. There is also damage caused to the native aquatic vegetation from the dredging, as well as the damage caused by the in-flow of nutrients and/or salt.

My questions to the minister are:

1. Have studies have been conducted, and what are they, to ascertain the feasibility of draining the adjacent land through means that do not interfere with this natural environment?
2. If so, what are the recommendations of those studies?
3. If not, will the minister commit to undertaking such a study?

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 creek is an unusual watercourse in that, as wet as the lower South-East gets, no natural creeks flow east-west: it is all done by artificial drainage. Competitive use of land between horticulturalists and graziers is a big issue, and constantly there are arguments about the rate at which the lands should be drained to make the water available for agriculture, horticulture or grazing. Those competitive issues have flared up from time to time, and I have certainly been down there with the dairy farmers to discuss some of the flooding issues that they experience, but I am also aware that there has to be a balance between the environment and agricultural and horticultural use that needs to be constantly monitored. There has been a lot of cooperation between environmentalists and land users down there and I hope that that will continue. I will refer the questions to the minister and bring back a reply.

EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Industry and Trade, representing the Minister for Emergency Services, questions about the emergency services levy.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: *The Advertiser* recently reported that firefighting and emergency services volunteers are warning that equipment will become substandard unless their operational budgets keep pace with inflation. Brigades and units in the northern and western suburbs and the Adelaide Hills have said rising fuel, utility and insurance costs are absorbing more of the annual budgets, leaving little money for protective clothing and firefighting equipment. The captain of the Tea Tree Gully CFS, Mr Greg Mason, was quoted in *The Advertiser* as saying its budget has never been as low as the current \$36 000. Mr Mason said the operating budget for the fire brigades in the Para group had effectively remained unchanged for the past five years. Concerns also have been raised over the ageing CFS fleet. That fleet was largely bought after the 1983 Ash Wednesday fires and is now reaching the end of its 20 year to 25 year life.

I was under the impression that the emergency services levy was established so that this sort of situation would no longer occur and that emergency service volunteer brigades could be confident of receiving the required funding to meet any operational and equipment needs, particularly protective clothing. Therefore, my questions to the minister are:

1. What is the breakdown of the moneys collected by the emergency services levy each year since its inception? What are the key areas in which funds have been spent, and how much has been collected in total?
2. Have any of the funds collected by the emergency services levy gone into general revenue and, if yes, how much and when?
3. Is there any truth to the rumours that the government has been looking at changes to the emergency services levy and will introduce these before the next election?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Industry and Trade): I am aware that my colleague the Minister for Emergency Services has responded in the media to some of those statements that were made. However, I will refer the question to my colleague and bring back a full reply.

DEPARTMENTAL FUNDS

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Leader of the Opposition): I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Leader of the Government a question about public accountability for taxpayers' funds.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: In his report tabled today, a number of serious concerns are expressed by the Auditor-General not only about public accountability of taxpayers' funds but also processes for managing the transfer of funds between various government departments and accounts. Mr President, you will be aware, as will other members, of some publicity in relation to serious concerns of the Auditor-General in relation to the Attorney-General's Department and the Crown Solicitor's trust account. Obviously, I understand that that issue will be pursued in another place, and publicly as well.

The Auditor-General's Report also highlights a concern (amongst other concerns) about a payment made on 1 July 2003 by DAIS to the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation. The Auditor-General describes this transaction as being contrary to law, and raises serious concerns regarding the adequacy of the internal control processes within both DAIS and the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation. Further, the Auditor-

General highlights the fact that this has substantially changed the nature of the audit risk associated with the controls within both these agencies in the 2003-04 financial year.

The Auditor-General notes that both the responsible ministers and chief executives have maintained that they were unaware that this \$5 million transaction had taken place within their departments and agencies. The Auditor-General went on to say that it was only as a result of following audit requesting advice that ministers and chief executives were aware. Mr President, I am sure that, with your knowledge of public sector finances, you would find, as I do, that issue extraordinary. I ask the Leader of the Government whether the processes that he has set in place in relation to departments and agencies reporting to him are such that a \$5 million transfer could be made between departments and agencies without his express knowledge and approval.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Industry and Trade): Certainly, I would hope that that would not be the case, nor would I expect it to be, given the procedures envisaged. I have regular meetings in relation to my department. All I can say is that I regularly have meetings with not only the chief executive but also the finance officer in relation to the budget. I keep a very close eye on what happens within the budget office of my agency. As the former treasurer would well know, requirements and Treasurer's instructions are in place in relation to the transfer of money which need to be reported. It is the enforcement of those various guidelines and rules that all ministers would ensure their chief executives observe, and that is exactly what I do.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: As a supplementary question, is the minister indicating to the chamber that he is unable to give an assurance that he has established protocols within his departments and that either he or his chief executive are aware of transfers of the size of \$5 million between departments and agencies?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: I said that there are rules in place.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: You said that you hoped.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: There are rules in place to do that. Yes, of course, there are. I forget what the exact figure is, whether it is \$5 million or \$4 million. There are a number of different levels of approval and delegations necessary under financial controls—and I am sure the Leader of the Opposition is well aware of their existence—and, yes, I expect them to be observed, which would mean that such a situation should not happen without the chief executive and the minister being properly notified.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I have a supplementary question. Is the minister therefore indicating that there has been no transfer of any sum of \$5 million or more with any department or agency reporting to him without his knowledge since his assumption of his ministerial position in 2002?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: I am not going to answer that question without notice. Certainly, when I became the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries two years ago, there were some changes between departments. The Leader of the Opposition would be well aware that part of the new Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation was part of the old PIRSA department and funds were transferred at the appropriate time in 2002. I will not give an off-the-cuff answer in relation to what—

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: So there might have been transferring of funds.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Of course there might have been, in the budget for that particular agency, given that officers were transferred from one department to another, but it is my belief that all appropriate guidelines were kept in relation to those matters.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: As a supplementary question; given the minister's response, is he therefore indicating that the two ministers referred to by the Auditor-General did not establish the appropriate protocols required by Treasury in relation to payment transfers of \$5 million or more within their departments and agencies?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: This is really incredible, isn't it? The Auditor-General's report has just been tabled. The government does not receive it any faster than anyone else. I have not read that report yet. I have been answering questions while the Leader of the Opposition has been reading the report. I will take the matter on notice and I will see exactly what has transpired in this case, but I have no intention whatsoever of answering some hypothetical question from the Leader of the Opposition about events of which I have no particular knowledge. I have not read the report of the Auditor-General. I do not know the exact details of this particular situation, so I am certainly not going to pass an opinion on what might have happened some years ago in relation to this when I have not even had a chance to read the report.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: As a supplementary question: are the controls that the minister indicated that he was required to follow, as laid down by the Treasurer, not applicable to all ministers, including himself, in the Rann government?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The Treasurer's instructions, as they apply at the time, apply to all departments and so on, but what I am not prepared to concede are allegations made by the Leader of the Opposition in relation to what ministers may or may not have done.

CENTRE FOR APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation a question about the Centre for Appropriate Technology.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I recently became aware of the Centre for Appropriate Technology (otherwise known as CAT), which is based in Alice Springs. The centre is Australia's national indigenous science and technology organisation. It focuses on developing technology to suit remote communities. The centre has worked closely with federal government agencies to assist in the development of solar power facilities for remote Aboriginal communities and station properties which previously relied on diesel-powered generators. It has also worked with the Queensland health department in the area of environmental health. Other matters taken up by CAT recently include the adaptation of wheelchairs for indigenous people who wish to sit on the ground during meetings, welding training and range lands management. I understand that the centre also works with the CRC for desert knowledge and the desert people's centre. My questions are:

1. Is the minister aware of the work of the Centre for Appropriate Technology?

2. Will the minister indicate whether the work of the centre in relation to adapting technology to suit remote outback localities is relevant to the power and water needs of isolated communities in South Australia?

3. If the work is relevant, will the minister take action to ensure that his department is aware of the work of CAT?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation): I thank the honourable member for his questions and his roving interest in all matters technology, and particularly applications into remote Aboriginal communities. The linkages to many of the communities in the APY lands are powered by large solar collectors that are electronically timed and linked to follow the sun across the horizon. That linkage has been completed. I think that something like \$40 million has been spent on that particular project; perhaps I could get an update for the honourable member. They are linked and maintained into the main grid on the APY lands. I think it is one of the biggest solar electricity providers in the remote regions.

My understanding is that the CAT centre also has a bush light project running which is responsible for identifying and transferring technology applications, along with other commonwealth funded programs, into remote regions. There are many applications of solar panels within the South Australian section of the APY lands, and I expect those applications to also be provided across the Northern Territory border. I have not visited them.

I will make further inquiries into the latest updates for the applications and, certainly, DAARE has, at least, been visiting the CAT centre. I will get a progressive report on the department's contact with the centre. Under the Hon. P.F. Conlon, the infrastructure portfolio may also have some contact. I will endeavour to get some information from the Minister for Infrastructure.

MINING EXPLORATION

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Mineral Resources Development a question about mineral exploration.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: In April this year, the government released its plan to accelerate exploration. Its target was to increase mineral exploration to \$100 million per year in order to facilitate mineral production to \$3 billion per year, and to increase mineral processing by \$1 billion per year by the year 2020. My question to the minister is: is there any evidence that the amount of exploration in South Australia is increasing?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Mineral Resources Development): I thank the honourable member for his question. I am very happy to tell the council that mineral exploration in South Australia has reached its highest level in five years. Expenditure grew to \$41.7 million in 2003-04—a 14 per cent increase from the \$36.7 million expended in 2002-03, according to Australian Bureau of Statistics figures recently released. The expenditure for the June quarter was \$15.7 million—more than double the previous quarter, and 43 per cent higher than the corresponding quarter in 2003.

Even better than that result, South Australia now has a 5.3 per cent share of the national expenditure on minerals exploration. It makes me very happy to be able to say that this the highest percentage share figure on record. I expect further growth in this figure to occur as a direct result of the state

government's new Plan for Accelerating Exploration. Last month, we awarded \$1.75 million (matching a further \$1.87 million of industry direct drilling costs) to 27 exploration projects in the first year of this new program. I am advised that add-on exploration expenditure (as opposed to direct drilling costs) in the order of a further \$3 million can be expected to accompany this drilling.

Minerals exploration is a significant area of growth for South Australia, and our new initiative is a collaborative approach between government and industry to stimulate further investment. The minerals industry in South Australia employs some 9 100 people—up from 6 000 in 2002. We have set ourselves an ambitious target in the State Strategic Plan to treble exploration expenditure in South Australia by 2007. This government is committed to work with industry on achieving that goal and has committed \$14.7 million over four years to the task.

We are seeing a high level of interest in South Australia from exploration companies, as evidenced through an oversubscription for the drilling partnership program in the Plan for Accelerating Exploration. A raft of major new investments are in the pipeline, including a further \$50 million investment from Western Mining Corporation to undertake a feasibility study into the expansion of copper production at Olympic Dam. OneSteel has completed work on the relining of the blast furnace, which is an \$80 million project, and it has announced a major mine expansion to add a further 20 years to the life of the operation. Recently, we also opened up further areas of the Cooper Basin for exploration, and there have been new discoveries of oil and gas in the region. South Australia is booming, and these latest figures from the ABS on mineral exploration prove that.

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: I have a supplementary question. Will the minister provide the council with any details of interests Mr Robert Champion de Crespigny might have in future exploration or in the expansion of what has taken place, as the minister has outlined in his answer?

The PRESIDENT: Does that question arise from the answer?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: I will take that question on notice. I really think it a rather offensive question. Mr Robert Champion de Crespigny devotes significant time at no cost to the taxpayers of this state. He has made an enormous contribution to the state. Mr Champion de Crespigny had a company that was involved in the state, but his former company was not involved in mining in the state.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Her Majesty's loyal opposition will come to order.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

The Hon. IAN GILFILLAN: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister for Industry and Trade, representing the Attorney-General and the government in general, a question about the Constitutional Convention.

Leave granted.

The Hon. IAN GILFILLAN: On 8, 9 and 10 August last year, this place played host to the Constitutional Convention. It was an occasion when people from all around the state came together to discuss ways of improving our parliamentary system and our system of government. A report was tabled in parliament from Issues Deliberation Australia on the

results of the convention. The key recommendations from that report were, as follows:

- reduce the current eight-year terms for members of the upper house to four years;
- increase the independence of the Speaker of the lower house;
- increase citizens' involvement in the parliamentary process; and
- introduce optional preferential voting, so that voters vote only for those candidates they wish to elect—no more and no less.

Further to this, another report was tabled on 16 February this year, namely, the Delegates Report of the Constitutional Convention, which included a number of draft bills for:

- full optional preferential voting for all elections;
- citizens initiated referenda; and
- four-year terms for the Legislative Council.

To date, no legislation has been introduced into parliament by the government, nor has it made any statement on either of the reports. My questions to the minister are:

1. Will the government respond to these two reports and, if so, when?
2. Will the government introduce legislation to bring into effect the recommendations of the Constitutional Convention?
3. Does the government support four-year terms for the Legislative Council?
4. Does the government support optional preferential voting for the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council?
5. Does the government support any form of citizens initiated referenda?
6. Does the government believe that the role of the President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the House of Assembly should be filled by an elected member of parliament or a person from outside parliament?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Industry and Trade): I will refer those questions to the Attorney and bring back a reply.

CHILD CARERS FOR THE DISABLED

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, representing the Minister for Disability, a question about child carers for those with disabilities.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: In a recent media report in *The Advertiser* of 6 October, the Executive Director of the Carers Association of South Australia, Rosemary Warmington, estimated that at least 500 to 600 children under the age of nine are caring for their parents in South Australia. The report also stated that the Minister for Disability was aware of about 20 children of different ages, including quite young children, who were caring for their disabled parents. The report went on to say that young children, even as young as six years of age, were being forced to stay home in order to care for their parents. They were missing out on school and were having to wash, clean and cook, and organise medication for their family. My questions are:

1. In circumstances where young children are looking after their disabled parents on a long-term basis, what funding or service assistance is available for them?

2. Of the 20 children caring for their disabled parents of whom the minister is aware, what assistance has the minister provided for them?

3. What plan does the minister have to assist young children, particularly those under the age of 10, in not missing out on the education that is provided for them because they are caring for a disabled parent?

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. However, I would be surprised if those carers under the age of 10 were included in the bidding war between the two major parties at the commonwealth level, and I am sure the state will have to pick up the responsibility for these carers. I thank the honourable member for drawing our attention to a much under-discussed area of concern.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, STAFF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister for Correctional Services a question about staff disciplinary action.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Members may recall that earlier this year I raised the issue of *Hogan's Heroes* escapes from Port Augusta Prison. Members may also recall that I asked questions of this minister regarding whether or not any disciplinary action had been taken against the Director of Custodial Services, Ms Eva Les, regarding an alleged failure to report the security breaches to the CEO of the department and to the minister. I also asked whether the minister had received a full report. I asked when the full briefing he promised me in relation to that matter would be provided, and I was told that it was coming. Indeed, like a federal Labor Party victory, it is still coming. I also asked whether or not the officer had been suspended and, if not, what duties she was performing. The minister reported to this place that she had not been suspended and had been re-assigned.

I have now been informed that another officer is now the subject of disciplinary proceedings regarding a sick leave fiddle at the Adelaide Remand Centre. I am informed that there are pending disciplinary proceedings and that the officer concerned has been suspended pending those proceedings. This has been reported to me by a number of people as a double standard, that is, the suspension of this officer versus the non-suspension of the other more senior officer. In the light of this, my questions are:

1. Are there any rules or criteria in the minister's department as to when officers are or are not to be suspended pending disciplinary inquiries and, if so, will he publicly release them?
2. Why have the two officers to whom I have referred been treated differently?
3. When will the inquiry into the conduct of the Director of Custodial Services be commenced, and when does the minister anticipate its finalisation?
4. Who has been given the responsibility of conducting those proceedings, given that the CEO of the department, Mr Peter Severin, will be giving evidence in the matter?

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS (Minister for Correctional Services): I thank the honourable member for his many questions. In relation to the promise I made, I supplied to the honourable member a confidential report that was given to

the chief executive on the escape of the prisoner from the Port Augusta gaol and the subsequent return.

The Hon. A.J. Redford: I got that one; I apologise.

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: That is okay, as long as *Hansard* got the apology. In relation to the proceedings against officers in particular investigations, each case is taken on its merits, and investigations tend to take different courses. If it is a clear breach of policy in relation to suspected rotting of sick leave, that investigation would take a particular disciplinary path different from breaches of protocols in relation to escapes. I do not have the full operating procedures regarding discipline in relation to the breach of those rules, objectives or procedures. I will bring them back to the honourable member.

The Hon. A.J. Redford interjecting:

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: There would be rules laid down in relation to the way in which somebody would be treated if there were breaches of protocols that led to escapes. I am sure that there would be, and there are, rules that prison officers have to follow as they go about their work to prevent escapes. I am sure that, if any of those were breached or ignored, that would have a certain impact on that officer or administrator if it can be shown that there was a breach of those protocols or rules. In relation to the breaching of sick leave requirements, I am not quite sure exactly how the rotting occurred, whether it was deliberate, whether it was a mistake or whether it was a misunderstanding of how rules are applied, but I will wait for a full report from the CEO.

The Hon. A.J. Redford interjecting:

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: I am waiting for a full report from the CEO to enable the CEO and me to look at how those investigations are progressing and why there are different methods of applying a disciplinary process to that. It is possible that it is not the first occasion that this has occurred in relation to the leave, but I will wait until I get full information. I will keep the honourable member informed because I know that he is very interested in the portfolio of correctional services and I will keep him up to date as much as I can.

The PRESIDENT: The time having expired for the asking of questions, call on the business of the day.

The Hon. A.J. Redford interjecting:

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: I had not finished, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: A member is finished when he sits down. That is when he is finished. Call on the business of the day.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: On a point of order, Mr President, he had not finished, whether he sat down or not. There are two questions that were completely unanswered.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is no point of order. When a member is called he rises to his feet; he then commands the chamber. When he sits down, he loses command of the chamber. The minister had sat down. Call on the business of the day.

REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

In reply to **Hon. A.J. REDFORD** (21 October 2002).

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The Premier has been advised as follows:

1. and 2. The following figures indicate how the State Government has changed the way taxpayers' money is spent on government advertising. The total SA Government spend on advertising—including both campaign and non-campaign spending—has fallen

considerably from the amount spent by the previous Liberal Government in its last year in office.

2001-02 \$23 889 178

2002-03 \$21 583 119

2003-04 \$21 210 071

3. (a) Yes

(b) The recipients of the government funding are Starcom (which pays the media on behalf of the SA Government), creative agencies, public relations, direct mailing and market research companies.

(c)

	(\$) Value (1 March 2002- 30 September 2002)
Adelaide Festival Centre Trust	594 143
Adelaide Festival of Arts	60 427
Art Gallery of SA	184 442
Arts SA	40 086
Adelaide Shores	8 632
Administration & Information Services, Dept for	49 668
Adelaide Symphony Orchestra	88 887
Australian Science & Mathematics School	5 884
BreastScreen SA	1 286
Clare Valley Tourism Marketing	1 752
Consumer and Business Affairs, Office of	5 050
Public Trustee	39 616
Environment & Heritage	7 297
Adelaide Institute of TAFE	41 585
Interchange	11 487
Flinders medical Centre	9 500
SA Ambulance Service	20 085
CARA	5 001
Child & Youth Health	24 345
Human Services, Dept of	37 895
Health Promotion SA	1 347
HomeStart Finance	209 704
SA Housing Trust	54 448
History Trust of SA	94 765
Investigator Science & Technology Centre	21 380
SA Water Corporation	131 626
WorkCover	51 076
Land Management Corporation	4 160
National Wine Centre	70 704
Noarlunga Health Centre	340
Premier & Cabinet	78 382
Planning SA	2 988
SA Police	233 291
Primary Industries	8 730
Repatriation General Hospital	10 534
SA TAB	17 174
SA Lotteries Commission	1 435 503
SA Metropolitan Fire Service	27 952
SA Motor Sport Board	24 092
Office of Economic Development	280 898
State Library of SA	1 488
Adelaide Convention Centre	31 841
Clipsal 500	90 947
Transport SA	540 704
Motor Accident Commission	7 045
Passenger Transport Board	329 661
SA Tourism Commission	1 407 446
Tourism, Victor Harbor	13 248
Water, Land and Biodiversity Conversation, Dept of	107 792
Women's & Children's Hospital	7 220
Grand Total	\$6 533 554

This compares with expenditure by the previous Government during the same period of the previous year which, I am advised, totalled \$7 762 275 and broke down as follows:

	(\$) Value (1 March 2001- 30 September 2001)
Adelaide Festival of Arts	7 934
Adelaide Festival Centre Trust	439 718
Adelaide Convention Centre	90 717
Adelaide Institute of TAFE	7 450
Art Gallery of SA	63 422
Adelaide Symphony Orchestra	66 796

Australian Dance Theatre	5 000
Australian Major Events	58 392
Cervix Screening	111 844
Child and Youth Health	29 619
Clare Valley Tourism Marketing	2 936
Clipsal 500	181 607
Come Out Festival	30 803
Administration & Information Services, Dept of	99 662
Attorney General's Dept.	3 900
Education, Training & Employment, Dept of	1 724
Environment & Heritage, Dept of	2 384
Human Services, Dept of	215 011
Industry & Trade, Dept of	164 072
Premier & Cabinet, Dept of	160 304
Energy SA	25 441
Flinders Ranges & Outback	14 498
HomeStart Finance	169 753
History Trust of SA	86 810
Interchange Inc.	12 017
Land Management Corp.	67 794
National Wine Centre	42 756
Consumer and Business Affairs, Office of	1 980
Employment & Youth, Office of	16 905
Small Business Advocate, Office of the	11 360
Recreation & Sport, Office for	11 457
Premier, Office of the	105 572
Motor Accident Commission	20 077
Passenger Transport Board	260 925
Primary Industries & Resources	9 316
Public Trustee	59 226
Quit SA	449 892
Repatriation General Hospital	15 763
Regency Institute of TAFE	13 948
SA Ambulance Service	20 844
SA Centre for Manufacturing	18 045
SA Housing Trust	49 309
SA Lotteries Commission	912 922
SA Government Radio Network	166
SA Police	85 192
SA TAB	394 854
SA Tourism	1 263 717
SA Water	174 135
Sensational Adelaide	77 434
State Library of SA	6 951
State Opera	102 146
Tourism Victor Harbor	34 790
Tobacco Control Unit	201 053
Transport SA	863 337
Women's & Children's Hospital	28 731
WorkCover Corporation	389 864
Total	\$7 762 275

(d) See answer to 1 and 2.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT

In reply to **Hon. KATE REYNOLDS** (3 June).

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The Attorney-General has provided the following information:

A comprehensive review of legislation, particularly when that legislation affects the rights and obligations of citizens, can be expected to take a long time. The Review Working Party, which was established under my direction, has been examining the submissions received after the review of the Residential Tenancies Act 1995, and has extensively researched interstate tenancies law.

To date, the Review Working Party has sent two reports to the Minister for Consumer Affairs for deliberation. The first report contained recommendations about introducing legislation setting out the rights and responsibilities of residents and operators of caravan and mobile home parks in South Australia. In April 2004 I received the second report, containing further recommendations about the Residential Tenancies Act 1995. The Government is now considering the need for amending legislation.

When draft legislation is prepared, there will be further consultation to allow interested parties who responded to the review to comment on any proposed legislation before it is tabled in Parliament.

ENERGY COOPERATIVE

In reply to **Hon. A.L. EVANS** (19 July).

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The Minister for Energy has provided the following information:

1. The South Australian Energy Co-operative first contacted the Government in late December 2003. A response was prepared to the Co-operative providing basic advice on aggregation and offering further assistance, when required.

A representative from the South Australian Energy Co-operative has since been in contact with the Government through the Office of the Minister for Energy. Additional administrative and research support has also been offered to the South Australian Energy Co-operative through the Energy Consumers' Council.

2. While the Government does not offer financial assistance to energy co-operatives, it does offer assistance and advice about establishing such co-operatives. Generally, the Government recommends that energy co-operatives:

- Seek independent advice on the legal and financial implications of their proposed arrangement, particularly given the unique arrangements in the electricity industry;
- Contact the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) for specific details regarding the Energy Codes and market contracts as well as licensing;
- Seek information from Energy SA with respect to facts about retail competition information (available on their website);
- Contact Contract Services, Department for Administrative and Information Services (DAIS), who negotiated the whole of Government electricity contract for its small customer sites last year; and
- Contact aggregators and co-operatives that have been operating successfully in other jurisdictions. As an initial point of contact the relevant jurisdictional regulators may have further details, for example, the Victorian Essential Services Commission (ESC) and the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

The Energy Consumers' Council may provide advice, administrative support and research assistance to energy co-operatives, for example, engaging with the above contacts and information sources, on a case-by-case basis. In the first instance, contact should be made through the Office of the Minister for Energy.

LAND TAX

In reply to **Hon. J.F. STEFANI** (25 June).

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The Treasurer has provided the following information:

1. Land tax collections in the last three years are as follows:

	Land tax paid by:		
	Private taxpayers	Government entities	Total
	\$m.	\$m.	\$m.
2001-02	76.1	63.8	139.9
2002-03	90.7	66.7	157.4
2003-04 *	121.7	81.3	203.0

*Estimated result as at May 2004 Budget; actual results yet to be finalised.

2. Taxable site values, by land tax bracket, for each of the last three years are provided below:

Site-value ranges	Site value by tax bracket		
	2001-02 \$ billion	2002-03 \$ billion	2003-04 \$ billion
\$50 000 to \$300 000	6.8	7.9	9.6
\$300 000 to \$1 million	2.6	3.3	4.6
Over \$1 million	1.7	2.0	2.4
Total	11.0	13.2	16.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

In reply to **Hon. J.F. STEFANI** (21 October 2002).

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The Premier has been advised as follows:

The total spend on advertising by each government agency from 1 March to 30 September 2002 is given by portfolio below. Please note the expenditure below includes both 'campaign' and 'non-campaign' advertising. Non-campaign advertising includes public notices, recruitment advertisements, calls for tenders and so on.

	Expenditure 1 March 2002- 30 September 2002 (\$)
Portfolio*	
Administrative & Information Services	1 936 703
Education & Children's Services	939 496
Environment & Heritage	436 686
Human Services	2 530 537
Justice	586 682
Premier & Cabinet (includes SA Tourism)	1 826 875
Primary Industries & Resources	243 188
Transport, Urban Planning & The Arts	2 411 478
Treasury & Finance/Industry & Trade	402 116
Water Resources	111 758
Total	\$11 425 519

*New portfolio names not reflected in the Master Media Agency client listing.

This total figure of \$11 425 519 compares with \$11 771 807 spent during the corresponding period of the year before under the previous Liberal Government.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.
(Continued from 23 September. Page 185.)

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: I wish to continue my reply to the Lieutenant-Governor's address and, in particular, to note several aspects of the address in which various agendas of the Rann government were outlined. I note that the Lieutenant-Governor briefly outlined the government's plan to reintroduce legislation during the session to cut 3 000 gaming machines.

I note briefly that I share the concerns of many others that this legislation will make only a small impact on the serious levels of problem gambling in this state and that the government has, I believe, forecast no loss of revenue from poker machines in the coming year. Indeed, it has been suggested that the so-called 'poker machine barons' are unlikely to suffer any losses, either, as a result of the reduction. Some of these have actually stated that they are not worried by the impending legislation because the value of their licences and, hence, their businesses were increasing as a result.

I have been urged to support this bill nonetheless by various groups working to reduce problem gambling. They have expressed a view that these reductions will help a little by reducing the ready availability of machines around the community. This bill will probably only scratch the surface of a significant social problem. A reduction of 3 000 machines is not really much. The bill is not attempting to ban gambling, or even limit it in any significant way, but the Rann government proudly announces that its members will be given a conscience vote on the issue.

I find this sudden magnanimity towards the requirements of conscience intriguing. Where is the serious moral, religious or social issue in cutting machine numbers by 3 000? I recall that only a few months ago liquor licensing amendments were passed to allow the extension of trading into Good Friday morning. There was no allowance then for a conscience vote in this matter, even though it must have been clear that several members of the government felt very strongly about the issue. It is not surprising that this issue

would have been important to some members of the government.

It was not just a matter of the religious convictions that place great value on the solemnity of the day. Many ALP members who understand the roots of the Labor movement will know that the principle of protecting certain holidays and feast days, as well as Sundays, was vitally important for the condition of working people's lives and the wellbeing of their families and communities. No conscience vote was given, yet, on the matter of a minor reduction in poker machine numbers in the state, conscience is suddenly important.

Traditionally, the ALP has allowed conscience voting on questions pertaining to core bioethical issues and also on serious social, moral and religious issues. There have been calls for a greater allowance of conscience voting from within the ranks of the ALP. In 2001, Senator Jacinta Collins, Senator John Hogg and Mr Joe de Bruyn, National Secretary of the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association and a member of the ALP National Executive, called for more freedom in regard to conscience votes in response to the government's proposed amendments to the Sex Discrimination Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2000. They argued that greater freedom would better accommodate the real diversity of views on many social and moral issues in both society and the party.

The ALP requires its members to abide by the party platform and decisions of the caucus and party room. Some scope for conscience voting historically has been recognised in regard to gambling and liquor trading. No doubt this reflected some of the strong cultural and religious divides over the question of liquor consumption and gambling that characterised the world views of the various denominational groupings of working class Australia. More recently, the ALP has recognised the need to allow a conscience vote on matters of abortion and IVF. However, ALP members are never able to assume that they will have it until the party room decides.

The Liberal Party, too, experiences tension between the need for party discipline and cohesion and the freedom to vote according to conscience. It is interesting to note that at the commonwealth level much vigorous debate took place over many weeks about whether there would be a full opportunity to vote according to conscience on all aspects of the bill to ban human cloning and experimentation on human embryos. A number of members were contemplating the possibility of defying party unity because of their strength of conviction on these matters. Luckily, a conscience vote was allowed on all sides eventually. Commentators noted that, once granted, the conscience vote in that instance had the effect of reinvigorating the parliamentary lives of many members. Many thoughtful, researched and passionate speeches were given by members from all perspectives of the debate.

The capacity of each parliamentarian to behave with integrity is crucial to the health of our democratic process. On the other hand, as a member of a party there is recognition that team work, research and analysis are needed to arrive at the best decisions. Each party has a core philosophy and perspective on issues, and party membership would be meaningless without that cohesion. In many circumstances, in life as well as in politics, each individual may need to acknowledge that they do not always have all the answers and that great expertise lies with others, hence, party discipline has a clear role in political action.

Each party will have core components of its platform that are integral to the identity of the party, and party members

would have implicitly or explicitly agreed to them when joining. It is hard to see how a member can maintain membership in good conscience in such circumstances where there was a fundamental disagreement with core party positions. However, in other matters—going to issues concerning convictions about grave moral, social and religious questions—the member would morally be required to follow their conscience even against party discipline. A lack of an opportunity to vote according to deeply-held convictions simply forces conscientious members of integrity to buck the party line.

Insisting on party unity over issues of grave concern to members works only to undermine party unity in the long run. I wonder whether the government is planning to give a conscience vote to its members over the serious matter of the proposed legislation to bestow *de facto* marriage status on same sex partnerships. This bill will be addressing matters that have been recognised traditionally as appropriate for conscience voting. This government failed to do so in regard to previous same sex relationship legislation. These matters are within the scope of core moral and social issues regarded by many as far more serious than a minor reduction in poker machine numbers.

I also want to comment on another aspect of the Lieutenant-Governor's speech in which he outlined the government's plans for the continuation of the Every Chance for Every Child initiative. The government in this initiative wants to focus 'on early intervention and prevention in an effort to improve the health and wellbeing of children and families'. Under the program, said the Lieutenant-Governor, every family with a new baby receives a visit by a nurse in the family home during the first weeks of the baby's life. I am pleased to see that special culturally appropriate versions of this policy are being implemented for Aboriginal families.

I believe that this is an excellent start and will achieve many benefits for improving the parenting of newborns. This is a very stressful time for most young families, and a home visit may pick up and deal with problems of feeding, attachment, domestic stresses and maternal depression. However, the best and, indeed, the bulk of evidence is mounting to support a much greater commitment to the support of much more extensive home-visiting programs over the whole preschool period of a child's life. I call on the government to get really serious about the most effective innovation yet proven to have positive impact on health and nutrition, mental health for both parents and children and rates of child abuse.

A comprehensive home-visiting program for all families with young children and more focus on interventions for families at risk will have far-ranging and positive benefits for children now and into adulthood. Professor Fiona Stanley (Australian of the Year 2003) has been issuing warnings about the urgent need to restore supports and quality family environments for the sake of our children. Professor Stanley notes:

In spite of Australia's increasing wealth and generally high level of education we are witnessing adverse trends in developmental health and wellbeing amongst children and adolescents, including increased inequalities in health, educational and other outcomes.

The professor further states:

Many serious costly health conditions and social problems are rising including diabetes, low-birth weight, asthma, mental health morbidities, obesity and juvenile crime. Some of these problems (such as asthma and suicide) have trebled over the last 30 years and are higher than at any time in Australia's history.

Early childhood in particular is a crucial time in which a child's life course and long-term health is more or less established. Maternal depression, poor parenting styles and bonding and poor nutrition have profound and deep formative effects on a young child's physical and psychological make-up that will last a lifetime.

The problem is urgent, and Professor Stanley has referred to it as a major public health crisis with grave long-term ramifications for our society and economy. I encourage the government to pursue an expanded model of home visiting programs within South Australia as one of the most effective strategies for addressing problems of early childhood. Professor Stanley has echoed the concerns of many child health nurses, primary schoolteachers and other key child assistance sector workers in expressing regret at the decline in support that both the federal and state governments gave parents in the 1970s and 1980s.

Comprehensive home visiting programs have been the subject of a growing body of research, and the results are showing that it is the most effective strategy yet devised to address family and child problems in the pre-school years. Studies are under way in New South Wales presently (interestingly, under the name 'Families First') and various trials are taking place. I understand that these types of initiatives are being introduced or explored and trialled around all the states. This approach is being adopted in many overseas countries, again with promising outcomes. In the United States, the City of New York runs various programs, including a healthy families home visiting program for high-risk parents and pregnant women until their children enter kindergarten. The goal of the program is to prevent abuse and ensure that all parents have the support they need to raise healthy children who enter school ready to learn and become productive adults.

In a report called 'Building Foundations', home visiting programs are discussed as a viable option in supporting parental involvement in a child's first years. The home visiting programs presented in this report have a trained professional or para-professional visiting a family's home on a regular basis and working one on one with the parents and children. The home visitor builds a trusting, personal relationship with the parents and children, tailoring services to the family to meet their needs. These programs have numerous benefits, including comprehensive family support, referral to social services, monitoring of the family's and children's health care, assisting parental skills and development of positive relationships. Other services such as home management, financial advice in regards to child maintenance and assistance in preparing children for their first year in school can all contribute to the wellbeing of the family as a whole.

Some studies emphasise the importance and effectiveness of visits by well-trained nurses to achieve these outcomes. Nurses trained in child development might also assist in picking up developmental delays or other health problems much earlier and play a role in prompt referral to the appropriate services. Children are benefiting from these types of programs across a range of outcomes, including cognitive development and also in social, emotional and psychological development. In addition, these types of programs have been proven to be the most effective strategy yet devised for the prevention of child abuse. If the government is serious about addressing child abuse and the economic and social decline in our state, it should look to do a lot more in this area.

Better outcomes are possible for child-parent bonding and relationships, improved parental skills, early detection and intervention for developmental problems or mental health problems. This approach has been shown to be highly effective in the long-term prevention of child abuse. Our state's future requires a much greater commitment to early childhood now. Professor Stanley has reiterated that the need is serious and urgent. She said:

This is an issue that's bigger than just the early years or parenting programs. This is an issue that's really, really important for Australia. It's important for our future. It's important for our future economy, it's important for our future culture, artistic, sporting and economic capacity that we put children first.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: I take this opportunity to respond to the Lieutenant-Governor's address on the occasion of the opening of this session of parliament. That speech, made on behalf of the government, indicated that Trans-Adelaide will carry out its largest capital works program for many years. It will include improvements to the rail network infrastructure, an increased focus on security and safety, and the transformation of the Glenelg tram into a modern light rail transit line. There is a hint—but only a hint—of welcome news in this. If all has gone according to plan, in the past couple of weeks the state government will have signed a \$47.4 million contract with the German manufacturer Bombardier for the provision of nine FLEXITY Classic trams. A further \$24 million has been budgeted for upgrading the track, the power supply and the terminus in Victoria Square.

The Lieutenant-Governor's speech observes that this is the first major discretionary capital investment in Adelaide's public transport infrastructure for 24 years. It is a sad indictment of successive governments that this lengthy period of neglect of Adelaide's public transport network has left us with a fragmented system that, obviously, is stuck in the seventies given that nothing has happened for 24 years.

In April this year, *The Advertiser* carried a report by Greg Kelton that the Rann government would be announcing light rail projects as the central element of a new transport infrastructure plan to be unveiled by the end of this year. The article states:

It is understood the extension of the Glenelg tram line to North Adelaide and a new light rail system to Port Adelaide are long-term considerations.

I sincerely hope that this is the case. The news from last week that the Victoria Square 'terminus' would be upgraded gives me little hope of an extension occurring. The word terminus is extremely ominous. If the government had said the 'Victoria Square Station', I might have had some hope that we were going to see an extension of the line.

With increasing fuel prices and the moral obligations we have to reduce greenhouse gas impacts, we need more dedicated transport corridors. Yet, last year's draft transport plan floated the absurd idea of ripping up the Outer Harbor line and converting it to a dedicated corridor for heavy road transport vehicles because it is under-utilised. It is under-utilised basically because of the way the system operates with not enough stops for trains. One wonders about the minds of those who concoct such a plan. Were they not aware of the construction of the Port River Expressway, the plans for a new rail bridge across that same river and the improvement of heavy rail infrastructure on LeFevre Peninsula which will reduce the need for heavy trucks to be on that route?

We have been waiting all year for the release of the government's response to public input into its draft infrastructure plan. It was supposed to come out in December last year, I believe. It seems so long ago that I have almost forgotten the timeframe. We are now told that we will have to wait until the end of this year, so nobody really knows what this government intends. Given the time that it has spent on it, it had better be something particularly spectacular. If what Greg Kelton reported in April is correct, it will have my and the Democrats' full support. The Democrats have been advocating the extension of the tram line from Victoria Square to the Adelaide Railway Station as a first step in rejuvenating Adelaide's very limited light rail system. It would mean that a passenger catching a train at Gawler would be able to travel through to Noarlunga with only one change at one station, that is, Adelaide Railway Station. This is the sort of thinking the government needs to employ. We need to integrate our existing rail network so that we can plan for additional track.

The Australian Electric Traction Association recently issued a study reviewing the Bay tram. It recommends extending the line along King William Street and then along North Terrace to a city terminal at the corner of West and North Terraces. I am also willing to consider that option. What is certain is that we need to begin planning for our future transport networks, and we need to be doing that planning right now.

The possibility of extending a light rail track to the northern and eastern suburbs must also be investigated. A few weeks ago, when the government did its trite little imitation of public consultation on the colour of the new trams, I issued a media release suggesting that, whilst commenting on the colour, competition entrants should also take the opportunity to tell the Premier that they want the line extended to the Adelaide Railway Station. It brought an email response from a constituent that an even better idea would be to extend the line further up Hampstead and Bridge Roads and along to Salisbury station. My response to that constituents was: why not?

There are many creative solutions that could and should be considered. Just some of the options available are: a light rail system from the airport to the city, or, indeed, a loop around from Glenelg; an extension of the line out to Northfield, once it has been extended to North Adelaide; or an extension of the line up to Norwood Parade. None should be rejected in finding ways to stop transport gridlock in our city and reduce South Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

A few weeks ago, *The Advertiser* carried a report on peak hour traffic, from Pooraka in the north and Blackwood in the south, to and from the city. It showed that the northern route average morning peak hour speed has dropped from 40 km/h in 1995 (only nine years ago) to just 33 km/h this year. As a consequence, the travelling time has increased by almost 3½ minutes. The same survey indicates that servicing the growing population in the south of Adelaide is also an enormous challenge. Afternoon peak traffic to Blackwood travels at an average of just 28 km/h, and the journey takes 7½ minutes longer than it did in 1995.

For the southern coastal suburbs, the Southern Expressway has reduced travelling time to and from Darlington but has created an even tighter gridlock on the plains below. Time saved on the expressway is lost on Marion Road, South Road and Goodwood Road. In 1994, when the Liberal government began the planning for the Southern Expressway, we and other transport activists labelled it the 'Darlington chokeway',

because we predicted (accurately) that that is what it would become. It demonstrates that all roads are not the answer—in fact, light rail is the answer.

Public transport is good for social equity, for the environment and for the economy. Australians spend a very high percentage of our national income on transport; drive down that cost and everyone benefits. Citizens of countries with good public transport systems spend much less per capita on getting around and obviously spend much less time getting around. That must be our goal. To achieve that, we need to integrate our planning laws with our public transport infrastructure. Higher density living should be created around dedicated public transport corridors. We need to get people to work and play in more environmentally friendly and economically sensible ways. That will require long-term planning and high investment costs. We recognise that, but we know that it can and, ultimately, must be done. Those costs are an investment for the future.

I will read the following email from a constituent about his problems with the public transport system:

The outer suburbs of Adelaide are not properly serviced by frequent public transport services, and in many cases capacity on existing services is not large enough during peak times. An example is the Belair train line. By the time the 7.45 a.m. train reaches Coromandel Station, it is standing room only, and there are eight more stops before the train reaches the city. My local MP, Dr Bob Such, has written to the transport minister requesting that more carriages be added to the line during peak times—a request that was refused by TransAdelaide.

Patronage on the Belair line has skyrocketed since the development of Blackwood Park Estate at Craighburn Farm. What also exacerbates the peak hour rush is the fact that people from my area (Flagstaff Hill and Aberfoyle Park) have given up on unreliable and slow buses for the much quicker trains and drive to Blackwood or Coro stations to catch the train. It only takes about 20 minutes on the train, in stark contrast to over an hour by bus (non-express) to 45 minutes express.

I interpose that, of course, this is the difference between having a dedicated transport corridor and trying to mix it with everybody else on a road. My constituent continues:

I would imagine that the problems further south in terms of travel times are worse.

This email shows that the government's left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. A large subdivision such as Craighburn Farm was always going to put pressure on transport infrastructure. The previous Liberal government seemed, at least in theory, to understand the crucial links between transport and urban planning.

The Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins interjecting:

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: Exactly—with Diana Laidlaw holding the then newly created portfolio of transport and urban planning. The Labor government divided these areas into two separate ministries when it formed government in 2002 but, to its credit, brought them back together at the time of a ministerial reshuffle earlier this year. However, even with the combining of the two into one portfolio, the proof does not appear to be there that either this government or the previous government has grasped the links.

The example I read out in relation to the Belair line shows that the previous government failed to take adequate action in regard to transport to cope with a new urban planning subdivision. When we go back further to the Bannon government, which sold off the Golden Grove land and signed an indenture with the developers, no-one had the basic commonsense to set aside some land to allow the O-Bahn track from Tea Tree Gully to be extended. Instead, we have thousands of people living in a development where cars have

to be a way of life. To be sure, there are buses that go some of the way, but the very nature of the design, with narrow, winding streets and cul-de-sacs, is bus unfriendly. Why were our planners unable to see the implications? The problem is that we keep repeating the same mistakes. Any planner with a bit of savvy would have understood the need to have a dedicated public transport route associated with the Seaford development. Land is still set aside for the extension of the Noarlunga line, but nothing is happening.

The new subdevelopment at Nairne is another example, where housing is being constructed well beyond walking distance from any shops, and no public transport appears to be even contemplated. It is concerning to see a new housing subdivision in the extreme northern part of Adelaide's urban sprawl at Roseworthy, and it is not being constructed with any dedicated transport corridor in mind. Late last year, I met with the former transport minister, Michael Wright (in fact, I am having a meeting with the new transport minister along the same lines in just a few weeks), and I suggested to him that a farsighted government would be buying up land to ensure that a rail line from Roseworthy can be connected into the Gawler line, otherwise we will see more cars on the road between Roseworthy and Adelaide each day.

Last year the Environment, Resources and Development Committee reported on the government's urban growth boundary. In speaking to the tabling of that report, I indicated that that boundary was a two-edged sword. One of the downsides is that the boundary forces up land prices within the boundary, leaving many people for whom housing affordability is an issue to go significantly beyond the boundary for suitable land. We are seeing this not only with sub-developments at Seaford, Nairne and Roseworthy, as mentioned, but also at places such as Mount Barker and Littlehampton, where, again, we see no evidence of transport planning.

It is not just Sandra Kanck and the Democrats who are critical of this state of affairs; that august organisation the Urban Development Institution was told at a very recent seminar of the problems associated with the urban growth boundary and the outer sprawl and the need to be focusing on increasing transport infrastructure in regional areas, allowing for commuting to the CBD but not by car.

In April, in association with the revisit of the government's first economic summit, much was made of connections with Portland, Oregon as an example of the way in which Adelaide could do things. Having visited Portland, I can only concur. However, this government simply does not get it; it is not learning from the Portland example. Portland has an extraordinary public transport system, which is constantly being upgraded. There is always construction going on.

TriMet operates MAX, the Metropolitan Area Express, which is a light rail service. When I visited Portland in 2000, there were 33 miles of completed track and more was being built. When the west side MAX opened in 1998, it exceeded a predicted average ridership of 55 000 passenger journeys per week by 22 per cent in the first week of its operation. There is absolutely no doubt light rail excites people. People use light rail if it is there. At the time of my visit, an extension of MAX to the airport was under construction and the interstate MAX was about to begin construction. The people of Portland are justly proud of the MAX and I was very surprised to find that, when I asked the taxidriver who picked us up at the airport about the extension of the light rail system to the airport and whether taxidrivers resented it, he said that,

quite to the contrary, they believed it was one of the best things that was happening.

That 5.5 mile airport line was opened in 2001 and it operates on a 15-minute frequency between 5.30 a.m. and 11.30 p.m. It leaves our system in Adelaide looking very much like second cousins. If I look at the bus routes to my area, after 7 at night the service is hourly, and that means basically that I cannot use the bus because, for the most part, I cannot put my time use down to hourly intervals in this way so that I can always catch the bus. A few times I have missed the bus by two minutes, and the only recourse for me under those circumstances with hourly frequency is to use a car.

From checking the web yesterday on the progress of light rail in Portland, Oregon, I see that the additional 5.8-mile system of the interstate MAX has been completed and was opened ahead of schedule on 1 May this year. It is operating on a frequency of once every 10 minutes in peak hour and once every 15 minutes outside that. When I checked the web, I found that yet another line is being planned right now, the south corridor line, which will add another 6.5 miles to the system. Construction on that line will be complete and the extension opened in 2009. No doubt like the other extensions, it will be opened on time, if not before time, and under budget.

Figures given to me by TriMet when I was there (whose motto, it appears, is 'How we get there matters') were that two-thirds of its patrons have a car but make the deliberate choice to use the MAX. That is what we want to see in Adelaide. We want to see people getting out of their cars and getting onto public transport. In developing the system, TriMet has worked hand-in-hand with local government, which has set higher commercial and residential densities closer to the MAX stations. Successive governments have failed to do anything like that in Adelaide. Portland, Oregon's convention centre was built to cater for attendees arriving by the MAX. The front door faces the MAX station. Its Rose Garden Entertainment Centre, which caters for 20 000 people at a time, has provision for only 3 400 car parks because they envisage that people will be arriving on the MAX.

What Portland has demonstrated is that urban planning and transport go hand in hand and that people will use public transport if they are provided with a service that is reliable and frequent. Portland knows how to do it. If the Premier wants to compare us with Portland then let us see him do something about having a decent public transport system with dedicated transport corridors, with frequency of service and designed to locate homes and businesses close to the stations. To bumble on as we have done and rely on the private car remaining the predominant form of transport is to condemn South Australians to a future of higher transport costs and greater environmental damage. That can only be exacerbated if urban planning and transport planning are not linked. It has been disappointing to see such a lack of visionary thinking on issues of urban planning and transport over a 24-year period. This government has made the right noises about the greenhouse gas effect, saying that it presents more of a threat to this state than terrorism. The Premier is right but, until we see some decent forward-thinking about our transport system, it will be nothing more than talk.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply and personally thank the Lieutenant-Governor, His Excellency Bruno Krumins, for his speech when launching the Fourth Session of the Fiftieth Parliament. I also pass on my gratitude to the Governor, Her

Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson, for the way she governs our great state with dignity and grace.

I also pass on my condolences to the friends and families of former members of parliament who passed away during the last session; and the family of Legislative Council messenger Sean Johnson, whose untimely passing was a shock to us all.

I also inform the council about and put on record the passing of my father, Ted Sneath, in the past couple of months. My father was somebody to whom I was very close. I worked with him as a rabbit trapper for a number of years and also in the shearing sheds that he ran. All of dad's friends knew him as and nicknamed him Sunshine because he was always a happy-go-lucky fellow. I am sure that he had a wonderful life. He was 89 years when he passed away and was always in good health until the day he died. I know that he would not have missed this past weekend but would have been devastated by the result of the election because he was a very one-eyed Labor supporter.

After the dust had settled on this disastrous weekend election, my wife asked me this morning when I left to catch the train whether I was looking forward to going to work today. My reply was that I have always looked forward to going to work since I was 15 years old, and that life goes on. Just like Port Adelaide supporters, the Liberal Party would be justified in gloating because winners are grinners, but who will be the losers out of this, especially if the Senate is stacked in the Howard government's favour? We are about to find out where the weapons of mass destruction really are and where they have always been: they have been hidden in the Howard cabinet. We will see the privatisation of Telstra at the expense of country people and jobs, and we will see young people working in small business with no protection against unfair dismissal.

If abolishing the unfair dismissal laws for small business is fair for families who need their children and partners working, then I will go 'he' for chasey. We will see AWAs forced upon workers and spread across the nation. Those workers in Tasmania with the short memories of the wharf disputes, of the problems of Ansett workers and of this Howard government's record in industrial relations will not know what hit them. They might finish up with their trees to harvest, but they will not have much joy harvesting them under AWAs. Have these workers forgotten the inquiry into the CFMEU by this government and this government's desire to continually deregister the CFMEU? It is strange behaviour for working class Tasmanians when the fact is that the Labor Party policy was not designed to put them out of jobs but to save the forests for future generations. This in turn secures future jobs for the forest workers and their children.

It is fantastic to see our state government implementing long-term strategies. This is in stark contrast to the former Liberal government's policy backflip privatisation plan. What a great idea it was to sell off ETSA! Now our pensioners are doing it harder than ever, trying to pay for enormous increases in their power bills—increases of almost one-third of what they were paying before privatisation. This privatisation strategy extends well into the federal Liberal government's policy framework. Even though the Liberals were keeping quiet about the proposed sell-off of Telstra during this election campaign, let us not forget that just a few months ago the Prime Minister was once again spouting the supposed benefit of selling off one more of our dwindling public assets. The supposed 'efficiency improvements' from selling off our public assets translates to job losses, price

increases, and the cutting of services to the bush in an endeavour to increase profits for shareholders of these now private companies.

The federal Liberal government intends to go against the best interests of the people of Australia once again, with Telstra's head well placed on the chopping block. When will the Liberals learn? It did not work for ETSA, it did not work for the TAB, it did not work for SA Water and, as we heard in the past couple of weeks, it did not work for Ports Corp. So why do they think it will work for Telstra? Where are the supposed benefits for the people of South Australia? I am yet to see any improvement in these privatised services and I am sure that our pensioners will be thinking the same thing this summer when they are roasting in their homes unable to afford to run their airconditioners.

The Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins interjecting:

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: The Hon. John Dawkins interjects, Mr President. He is not concerned that the bush will not have telephones that work. He is not concerned about the bush. He has never been concerned about the bush.

The Medicare restructure was another poorly thought-out idea of the federal Liberal government. We now have doctors and specialists able to manipulate legislation by increasing their fees which, in turn, must be paid for out of the public pocket. I am sure these doctors and specialists are not short of a penny and their skill level demands fair remuneration, but to have the Howard government hand them legislation with such a large loophole is madness. How does the federal government intend to monitor these increasing fees? If it had thought about it properly in the first place, it may have come up with the simple idea of putting a cap on payouts. This would ensure that doctors and specialists cannot abuse the system and drain much-needed health funds into their own pockets.

It is a pity the Australian public has missed an opportunity to look after its elderly—those over 75 years who were offered Medicare Gold by the Labor Party (a party that cares for those people who have been neglected for so long by the Howard government). This would have been a wonderful way to reward these people for years of hard work and tax payments. I hope this remains a committed policy of the Australian Labor Party, and I challenge the Prime Minister to introduce it for the aged people that he has forgotten for so long.

I am interested. I am filling up the council. The Hon. Mr Lucas is present. He is always interested to hear what I have to say. I know he is learning a lot from some of my speeches, and I am sure he will learn a lot from this speech. It is very nice to see that he has rolled up.

The entire Iraq war was hinged on the existence of weapons of massive destruction hidden somewhere in Iraq, but so far these weapons have remained extraordinarily elusive. No-one can find them, so much so that the only weapons of mass destruction of any danger to which I have referred is John Howard and his cabinet. The Prime Minister made a laughable statement a few days ago that a Labor government would be unable to defend Australia adequately. Does he dismiss so quickly the great John Curtin (prime minister of Australia from 1941 to 1945) when he was widely regarded as one of the finest prime ministers?

Curtin's greatness rested on his leadership of the nation during much of the Second World War. Curtin's rejection of the British strategy for Australian troops enabled the successful defence of New Guinea and, ultimately, Australia. That is a true leader. He refused to toe the line of the British

government and saved Australia in the process. If only Prime Minister Howard was able to demonstrate such foresight instead of getting on the phone to the President of the United States for his instructions. Despite the fact that Australian spies knew that the US was lying about the weapons of mass destruction, Prime Minister Howard persisted with his inflated rhetoric about Iraq's capability to build and house these weapons.

Australian intelligence agencies made it clear to the government from the start that Iraq did not have a massive weapons program, and there was no indication that Iraq was intending to pass weapons of mass destruction to terrorists. The US wanted to go to war for its own interests and not those of Australia, yet Howard and his cronies decided on full support for the Bush administration and set about sourcing widespread public endorsements by manipulating the Australian public through a torrid media campaign. When it became obvious to people around the world that these weapons of mass destruction probably did not exist (thus giving the US, British and Australian governments no legitimate reason for waging war on Iraq), the focus shifted to ousting Saddam Hussein.

There is no doubt in my mind (and in the minds of Australians) that Saddam Hussein was one of the worst tyrants in history, but I do not recall the US government ousting Idi Amin when he cast his deadly shadow over the people of Uganda. Is this due to the fact that Uganda has considerably less mineral wealth than either Afghanistan or Iraq? The old US adage of 'what's in it for me' turned up a resounding answer of 'not enough to bother with'. Mr Stephen Fitzgerald and Mr Richard Woolcott (two of Australia's most senior former diplomats) initiated a decisive attack on what they termed the Australian government's 'sustained and critical management of the truth', saying that it is without precedent in the history of Australian foreign policy and threatens the integrity of the nation's democracy.

Obviously, the Bush administration is convinced that it and only it knows what is best for the entire world, and that it is its ordained duty to impose these fixated views on others. Never before has this been more obvious to the people of Australia than when we heard President Bush putting in his two bobs' worth on the subject of the upcoming federal election. His blatant suggestion that a vote against the current federal government was a vote in favour of terrorism drove home the point that John Howard is, indeed, Mr Bush's sheriff. It must strike most Australians as strange that Australia attacked a country against the advice of the United Nations for what turned out to be no other reason than being led by a terrible dictator. In other circumstances, we have seen Australia send cricket teams to countries ruled by dictators against the wishes of the people of that country. Prime Minister Howard is not averse to a lie or two of his own, and we saw this in the last federal election with the children overboard scandal.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I rise on a point of order, Mr President. That language is unparliamentary. The Prime Minister is a member of parliament, and he was last time I looked after Saturday. That term is unparliamentary and I ask the honourable member to withdraw it.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: And apologise.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: And apologise.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Sneath does realise that the term 'liar' is unparliamentary. I find it a little precious that some members, who have been interjecting for 10 or 15 minutes, call points of order. However, the accepted protocol

is that the word 'liar' is unparliamentary. The honourable member should withdraw the word and express his opinion in another form.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: Thank you, Mr President, I withdraw the word 'liar'. I would say that, at times, the Prime Minister of Australia has been untruthful.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I rise on a point of order, Mr President. That term is also unparliamentary, and I ask the honourable member to withdraw it.

The PRESIDENT: The term 'untruthful' is not necessarily unparliamentary. I think that if the Hon. Mr Sneath could get off this track and proceed with the content of his speech it would be a worthy thing to do.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: Thank you, Mr President. As I said—

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I am not clear. Is the honourable member being asked to withdraw, given that he described the Prime Minister as untruthful and that is unparliamentary? Or are we going down to new standards in this place; and I am happy to get down there, as you would be aware, Mr President?

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Redford has been there before and no-one has challenged him. From a technical point of view, I think that the Hon. Mr Redford is referring to standing order 193, which refers to objectionable language. It is unparliamentary on the basis that it is objectionable, at least to the Hon. Mr Redford and others. The Hon. Mr Sneath should withdraw the word 'untruthful'. I think that he has made his point. At this stage, the prudent course would be for the Hon. Mr Sneath to continue his speech.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: I withdraw the word 'untruthful', but I remind the chamber that Stephen Fitzgerald and Richard Woolcott said that the war is 'without precedent in the history of Australian foreign policy'. They talked about the Australian government's 'sustained and critical management of the truth'. What a disgusting deception of the Australian people. The Howard government rode the coat tails of this tragedy all the way to the election, and it was not until after Australians had gone to the polling booths the last time that the truth of the government's dishonesty came to the surface.

I must say that I am not surprised that it strikes a nerve with members on the opposition benches when one refers to some of their federal colleagues and the way in which they have handled themselves in representing South Australia in particular. They have got very sooky since being in opposition. They have a lot of trouble accepting being in opposition. From the way they are behaving in South Australia, they will be in opposition for many years to come.

Prior to the last federal election, in an article in *The Bulletin* of 7 November 2001, political commentator Laurie Oakes said:

The key feature of this election campaign has been a clever use of what professionals call 'dog whistle politics'. A dog whistle is pitched so high that dogs hear it but humans do not. Dog whistle politics involves pitching a message to a particular group of voters that other voters do not hear. John Howard wanted One Nation voters back. He also saw a chance to attract some traditional 'blue-collar' Labor voters with similar concerns. The *Tampa* episode provided him with the dog whistle he needed.

One such 'dog whistle' the Howard government has come up with in this federal election campaign is the 'Values for Life' initiative. Emblematic of this attack on public schools and their supposed—

The Hon. A.J. Redford interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Mr Redford will cease to breach standing order 193.

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: —lack of 'values' is an Australian flag fluttering from a flagpole—something that the Howard government deems a prerequisite for funding. The words 'flag' and 'flagpole' do not appear in the legislation itself. This little surprise was reserved for a media release from the education minister Brendan Nelson on 22 June, the day before the funding bill was introduced into parliament. The Howard government declaring that 'Every school must also have a functioning flagpole, fly the Australian flag and display the values framework in a prominent place in the school, as a condition of funding,' contributes about as much to public education as the infamous fridge magnet did to the war on terror.

On the subject of contributing, I refer to an article in *The Advertiser* entitled 'Business lobby groups get \$60 million reward'. How is it that Australia's peak community welfare sector, the Australia Council of Social Services, receives only \$458 000 a year when the South Australia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (which lobbies government on behalf of 350 000 business owners) has received more than \$37 million since 1996? The Howard government was certainly happy to 'contribute' to these profiteering business groups. Unfortunately, after the weekend's election, I am sure that the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and business groups will put their hands out for more at the expense of working-class people and those who represent working-class people who do not get any benefits from the federal Liberal government. I cannot see equal handouts going to trade unions as they do to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and those businesses. It is a one-way street where the gap between rich and poor will get wider in the next three years.

I headed off to work this morning, pleased that I was going and thinking that, most working days, whatever job you do, there is not a lot of difference. As I made my way to the train a number of comparisons came to mind between parliament and the shearing sheds. Some examples I thought of as I boarded the train included the following. When they are counting the sheep in the pen and the leading sheep jumps, so do the rest of them—not dissimilar to John Howard because, when he jumps, so do the rest of the Liberals. The comb and cutter becoming blunt and needing replacing reminded me of what happened to the Democrats in this election. Of course, the night-time card games after work reminded me of the Hon. Nick Xenophon. The songs which we used to sing (including some Slim Dusty) after work and on the weekends reminded me of Family First on the front page of today's *Advertiser*.

There is not much difference between politics and the shearing sheds and, of course, politics is talked about continually in the shearing sheds. I did think that the one thing you might not see is too many politicians sweating in the parliament, but then I thought of Steve Georganas, Simon Birmingham, David Cox and Kym Richardson and some of the candidates waiting for the sixth Senate spot—they are probably sweating. So, there is a time when politicians actually sweat as well.

Off to work I went, fully aware of the opposition's bragging rights. However, I will slot this weekend into the furthest corner of my mind until the next election and continue to celebrate the wonderful victory of Port Power in the grand final, which brought so much joy to the people of South Australia, all except for a chosen few led by the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Rob Lucas), who, I understand, is

devastated by the win. I also take this opportunity to congratulate all the people who have a position with the Port Power Football Club and their top sponsor, Mr Allan Scott, for a fantastic result.

It has been a pleasure being part of the Rann government in the 2003-04 financial year, a government which has strived to achieve its goals in building the social, economic and community wealth of the state of South Australia and which has successfully achieved many of those objectives. Under the Rann Labor government, we have seen South Australia saved from earning the dubious title of the 'Nuclear Waste Dump State'—much to the displeasure of the federal Liberal government, which would have been happy to dump the entire country's nuclear waste in our backyard. Thankfully their dirty tactics and attempted compulsory acquisition did not pay off and the people of South Australia had their voices heard.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: It is a shame that the four South Australian federal cabinet ministers did not bother speaking up on behalf of the majority of South Australians, and I find it astonishing that the opposition sitting before me could have supported something so obviously detrimental to our state. Shame on them! Under the Rann Labor government we have witnessed the signing of two historic COAG agreements: the national water initiative and the Murray-Darling Basin agreement. These agreements are a firm step in the right direction towards restoring and preserving the resources of our precious River Murray. It is quite amazing that the Liberal opposition found the River Murray not important enough practically to ignore it for all the years it was in government. I do not recall hearing a great deal about its efforts to improve the flow and condition of the River Murray.

I am proud to say that the Rann Labor government is committed to creating opportunities for all South Australians and not just the fortunate few so often favoured by the federal Liberal government. Our state government intends to achieve this by implementing the State Strategic Plan, which was created and documented by way of extensive and bipartisan public debate and consultation. Is that not the way a state plan should be created? It is quite different from the federal Liberal government's bullying tactics, would you not say? The Rann Labor government is committed to achieving sustained economic growth by way of a statewide work force development strategy, the main purpose of which is to create a labour market of workers with an increased skill base. A review of traineeship and apprenticeship systems will accompany this strategic plan. This will be a fantastic opportunity for South Australian workers to remain competitive in the world market.

The Lieutenant-Governor's opening speech outlined the first steps for the initiative of the Rann Labor government's blueprint for health reform. This is a fine plan that concentrates on three key issues: building better governance, building better services and building system supports. In the area of building better governance, three regional health services have been formed: the Central Northern Adelaide Health Service, the Southern Adelaide Health Service and the Children, Youth and Women's Health Service. These innovative new health service boards will play a key role in the execution of reform in the delivery of health services.

The Mental Health Act will also be audited and brought up to date with current requirements, with the intention of

improving relations between the justice system and offenders with mental illnesses. As part of the state government's plan to improve the wellbeing of all South Australians, initiatives have been designed to achieve improved conditions in the work place. New targets will be set to increase occupational health and safety work site inspections; Workplace Services will commence a targeted auditing program of high risk places that affect public safety such as amusement rides, lifts and pressurised vessels; and greater awareness will be brought across all industries to the issue of asbestos compliance. It is great to see our state headed in such positive direction.

The Rann Labor government is committed to implementing policies and programs that are fundamental to achieving a better future for all South Australians. These are policies that increase opportunities, build communities, foster creativity, preserve our environment, strengthen the morale of young people and provide for our ageing population. This is a strong state government which is united and committed to the people of South Australia. This is in direct contrast to the Liberal opposition, which really does not have much to offer the state at all. Surely, it is time for a leadership change; they could not any get more stagnant if they waded out into the middle of the Bolivar waste management plant and sat there in the middle of the summer heat. I support the motion.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I thank His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor, for opening this parliament and, indeed, his commitment to South Australia, and I also thank Her Excellency the Governor for all the work she does.

On Saturday, I had the opportunity to attend the opening of Refugee Week for which His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor, provided a speech. It was very interesting to hear his comments as a former refugee when he first came to this country many years ago. It is interesting to note that, when speaking to a substantial audience of recent refugees to this country, he pointed out quite emphatically that it is now much easier to be a refugee in this country that was 30 or 40 years ago when he first arrived, in that services have improved significantly, and the attitude of Australians at large in terms of welcoming new arrivals into this country has also improved markedly. I urge any members, if they can, to get a copy of that speech, because I thought it was a fairly wise and insightful view of how things have changed in terms of refugees over the years. I suspect that many people, particularly some opposite who want to make political gain out of some of these issues, tend to ignore that terribly important fact.

I briefly want to talk about WorkCover, as I have a shadow responsibility for that portfolio. The Hon. Terry Roberts will be relieved to know that I do not propose to make any comment about corrections in this contribution. On 22 September this year, WorkCover issued a press release entitled, 'WorkCover turnaround but claim issues remain serious'. The press release states:

WorkCover has achieved a turnaround of about \$400 million in the year ended 30 June 2004.

It points to the fact that it achieved a \$42 million surplus, or \$19 million after allowing for some negative adjustments—I am not sure precisely what that means—compared with a loss of \$368 million in 2002-03. It goes on to state:

The final result means WorkCover's unfunded liability has fallen to \$572 million at 30 June 2004 down \$19 million from \$591 million as at 30 June 2003.

It then goes on to make some positive comments about the performance of WorkCover. In the last paragraph Mr Carter states:

He said the outcome showed the importance of improving claim management and return to work outcomes and warned 'these will only be achieved with the cooperation of everyone involved in the scheme—injured workers, their employers, claims agents, service providers and stakeholders.

I know that Mr Carter is a well-respected business person and an accountant in this state, but I think that his gloss on that WorkCover media release can only be described—and I think I am understating it, which is not normally my habit—as a little over the top. When one looks at the figures in relation to WorkCover, they do not paint a very rosy picture at all.

First, it is important to note that WorkCover increased its income by \$184 million, such that last year its total income from operations was \$400 million and that this year it was \$583 million. In terms of income, that is an increase well in excess of 25 to 28 per cent. Indeed, the levies employers have to pay on behalf of their employees went up by \$97 million—from \$382 million to \$479 million. So, what we have is an increase in levies on employers of \$97 million, which is a whopping 25 per cent increase in the last 12 months. Yet, having collected a whopping \$97 million from the pockets of the workers and the employers in this state, the total financial position of WorkCover was improved by only a lousy \$19 million. On any analysis, that is not a good performance and is one that should not be described as anything but disappointing.

One of the interesting issues is that, whilst claims costs declined, the operating costs of managing the WorkCover Corporation went up 18.5 per cent. I am not sure that any business in this country can afford to have its ongoing management costs go up by 18.5 per cent. Again, despite the gloss put on this press release by the Chair of WorkCover and, I assume, the minister (although he has been conspicuously silent, because he has probably been doorknocking in the northern suburbs, judging by the result on the weekend), on any analysis that is a poor outcome. To collect an extra \$97 million in levies on jobs, to improve the bottom line by \$19 million is not good enough.

The Chair of WorkCover provided some riders to the more optimistic statements to which I referred by indicating that the position may get worse before it gets better. When we look at those figures, I am not sure it is the case that we ought to be all that excited about the management of WorkCover under minister Wright's stewardship. The Chair of WorkCover also states that the scheme will be fully funded by 2012-13, so he has given himself 10 years to get this scheme back on track and, at the same time, has announced that it will get worse before it gets better, in a time when this country is experiencing an unprecedented economic boom.

If we are to pay off the WorkCover debt at the rate of \$19 million per annum, it will take more than 30 years for the unfunded liability to be wiped off. Quite frankly, in my view that is not good enough. I have not seen the projections in terms of income and expenses, nor, indeed, what the estimated unfunded liabilities are over that period of time. However, I think it is incumbent upon the minister to give us that information. In terms of the WorkCover performance, it would have to be better, and I do not believe that the opposition, or indeed this parliament, should accept that the funding position should get any worse than it currently is; if it does, this minister, and those he appointed to fix the problem, should be held accountable.

In the context of what happened at the weekend, I now want to turn to a completely different topic, namely, some of the comments made by other members. I note that the Hon. Carmel Zollo made her speech some three weeks ago, when she indicated that the most important event since we last sat was the calling of the federal election. She went on to assert that middle Australia was absolutely forgotten by the Howard government. Based upon the result on Saturday, I find it hard to accept that statement, because, if it had been absolutely forgotten, in my humble opinion there would not have been a swing to the Howard government in every state in this country. So, on this side of the chamber we say that, when members make such statements and the public judge those assertions (which were in the ether in the community before they voted), we have to take what the Hon. Carmel Zollo said with some degree of salt.

She alleged that it was the highest spending government in our history and that it had been acting irresponsibly. However, unfortunately for the Hon. Carmel Zollo, the people of Australia came to a significantly different conclusion. She also used unparliamentary language, with respect to the Prime Minister and honesty, which was not picked up. Coming from the Government Whip, that is extremely disappointing. Perhaps we on this side should have picked her up but, generally speaking, we desert the chamber when she rises to her feet.

The Hon. Carmel Zollo: I said that one of your lot used those words.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Did you pull it up? No; you did not. You ought to know better, and it is disappointing. I suppose that we must have a roster when the Hon. Carmel Zollo gets to her feet just in case she uses quite inappropriate language, as she did on that occasion. In his contribution, the Hon. John Gazzola mentioned that there is a tide of change coming to Australia in the seats contested in this election. I suppose that if one talks to David Cox, in particular—

The Hon. Caroline Schaefer interjecting:

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Yes, and Martyn Evans. They would be feeling this tide of change at this point in time. Perhaps it did not happen in the way in which the Hon. John Gazzola felt it might happen, but certainly that has happened. He also went on at great length about the level of uncertainty and fear; he described it as 'public anxiety and fear in industrial relations'. However, notwithstanding that level of public anxiety and fear the working man had, we saw in all the working class suburbs in this state—and in Adelaide—a significant swing to this government.

The Hon. Carmel Zollo interjecting:

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: The Hon. Carmel Zollo should talk to her factional leader, because the Attorney-General, who is the great numbers man, was on radio all morning pointing out that 44 per cent of people in Smithfield Plains voted for the coalition government, up from—

The Hon. Carmel Zollo interjecting:

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins): Order! The Hon. Carmel Zollo has made her contribution.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: —33 per cent at the last federal election.

The Hon. Carmel Zollo interjecting:

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Carmel Zollo has made her contribution.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I did not respond to her interjection, so it was not recorded in *Hansard*. So, it was up 11 per cent. However, what we saw on election night—and we saw it repeated earlier today—is this single inability on

the part of the government to accept and acknowledge that Prime Minister Howard won this election fair and square. As Mr Croger said on television on Saturday night, it is about time the Labor Party, when it loses elections, stopped running around saying, 'We was robbed' and had a good hard look at itself in relation to its policies. There has not been an election since 1996 where the Labor Party has not run around saying, 'We was robbed.' We now face the fourth term of a Howard government and, given the extraordinary swing, an unprecedented potential fifth term. My best advice to the Labor Party would be that it has a significant look at what it has done.

The point I would make in relation to the Hon. John Gazzola's speech is that he spent his whole time quoting academics (in a way the Hon. Gail Gago could never do when she was a candidate for Adelaide) as to why the seat of Adelaide has possibly been won by the Labor Party. However, from what I can see, these same academics were also espousing a model that lost Hindmarsh and possibly lost Wakefield, and I would not be putting too much money on a Labor win in Kingston. So, it may well be that we have a 9-2 result.

The Hon. Gail Gago made an extensive speech, saying how bad this Howard government is for women. Indeed, it would appear that, when one looks at the post polling, women voted for our side of politics at a far greater rate than did the men. Obviously, the only thing I can glean from that is that the Hon. Gail Gago is completely out of touch with her own sex, because women could simply not take to the fact that Mr Latham might become our prime minister.

When we look back at some of the speeches that were made the week before last by members opposite, we see just how far out of touch they are with the community. Indeed, having read the speeches of the Hon. Gail Gago, the Hon. John Gazzola and the Carmel Zollo, I would have to say that they would be the last three people I would approach to get any understanding of where the voters out there might be in terms of the issues they perceive as important. It is disappointing that the Labor Party continues to preselect people who are so far out of touch with reality when it comes to the Legislative Council.

The Hon. G.E. Gago: We are sitting on this side of the chamber and you are over there in opposition.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: The Hon. Gail Gago is sitting over there on 49 per cent of the two party preferred vote. The Labor Party snuck into government with the help of a couple of Independents, so she should not get too excited. As former senator Chris Schacht said, one has to go back to 1986 before one sees an actual vote on a Saturday where the Labor Party scored more than 50 per cent of the two party preferred. So, whichever way the honourable member looks at it, in terms of determining where the popular vote is—

The Hon. G.E. Gago interjecting:

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Again, through the interjections—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Gail Gago is out of order.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: —the honourable member misunderstands the point I make. The Hon. Bob Sneath probably gave one of the better speeches I have heard from the other side, because he touched upon the magnificent Port Power win only last Saturday week. However, other than that—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member is tempting the chair.

The Hon. T.J. Stephens interjecting:

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Some honourable members have had bad weeks. I had two good Saturdays in a row; the Hon. Terry Stephens has had only one good Saturday. I looked at the trade on the weekend, and I suspect that he will have to wait two or three years before he gets close to having another one. In any event, he touched on a number of issues. Again, we had a series of statements—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I promise that what I have to say from now on will not relate to the Crows. It was just sour grapes, as Mr Croger said. He referred to Curtin as a great Australian prime minister, but he overlooked the fact that it was General MacArthur who told him that he had to abandon some of his policies. He missed Whitlam, he missed Hawke and he missed Keating in terms of the contribution that some of those men made, other than to a rather accurate brochure that appeared in my letterbox during the course of the campaign about what they did to interest rates when they were in government. He talked about the shearing shed, and I must say that I missed what he really meant there.

What did he not talk about is the economic performance of this state. Last year, this state's economic growth declined—I am talking about the year before last, not last financial year—and my understanding is that the reports of economic growth in this financial year are something of the order of 1 per cent, which is about a fifth of the economic growth that the rest of this country is experiencing.

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: A quarter.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I stand corrected and I am grateful for that correction. We are performing at about a quarter of the rate in terms of growth of any other state in this nation. When we look at economic growth at those rates, we have to say that what is driving this economy at the moment is consumers borrowing against increased equity in their houses and spending. Even some members opposite understand that you can only do that for so long and, unless this state makes some serious attempt to address issues of economic growth, as opposed to having a series of summits, we are going to further deteriorate in our relativities to other states. Indeed, the biggest decline in terms of our relative position in other states has always happened when members opposite are sitting on the government benches.

In closing, let me say that the Labor Party has some real work to do. When we look at the fact that at this stage there appear to be only two members of the lower house who are going to Canberra—Mr Sawford MP, who, according to most people I talk to in the right and left factions, is in the twilight of his career, warming a seat for Mark Butler or the Hon. Patrick Conlon, and a 28 year old former electorate officer—it does not auger well for the contribution that South Australians might make in the unlikely event that the Labor Party assumes the Treasury benches in Canberra any time this side of when Bruce Carter fixes up the WorkCover deficit. I suspect that they have to have a real hard look at their preselection practices and how they are going to be able to develop a message that is acceptable to the broader community.

Let me also say in a serious sense that the rule of thumb with election policies has been to release them as late as possible. I remember in the dark days of the 1980s when John Howard was constantly criticised for not releasing policies and, when he did so, some of those policies were picked apart. The best one was when John Hewson released his Fightback package more than 12 months before the election and, over a lengthy period, the package was picked over and

he lost that election. From that point on, the prevailing wisdom by political pundits and commentators has been that oppositions should not release their policies until shortly before or during election campaigns.

I do not believe that that is a wise course, and this message applies to this opposition as much as it does to the federal opposition. I think that policies should be released in sufficient time to enable the electorate to come to grips with those policies and for debates to take place in relation to those policies. If those policies are well thought through and if there is broad consultation in relation to the development of those policies, that would only enhance political debate. I think it was unfair on the Australian people to expect them to understand and debate properly some of the policies that were issued by the Latham-led opposition. I say to my colleagues, and I put it on the record quite deliberately—

The Hon. G.E. Gago: What about Howard's old growth policy?

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: She barks—a three-time loser who sneaks in here on the back of a ticket vote that did not go to a convention. What I am saying in a serious sense is that it is my view that we in opposition—

The Hon. G.E. Gago interjecting:

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I am talking about opposition, which is something that you will get to know and become comfortable with, I am sure. It is appropriate to release policies much earlier during the electoral cycle than we saw this time.

The Hon. Kate Reynolds: Like the Democrats do.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: The Hon. Kate Reynolds said that the Democrats do, but I am not sure that is a great example right now. For argument's sake, I think that, in the lead-up to the 1996 election, John Howard did release his policies fairly early.

The Hon. G.E. Gago: What about his old growth policy released on the eve of the election?

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: The Hon. Gail Gago interjects about the old growth policy, and I like that, because I thought he was being fair to you guys. He wanted to give you clear space so that the world could see the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Latham, fly to Tasmania without any interruption, sneak through the back door, crawl his way underneath the car park, have a quiet meeting with the Leader of the Government, make an announcement to about five people, and then sneak out on a plane.

The Hon. Bob Sneath talks about how he cares for workers, but he shafted those workers.

The Hon. G.E. Gago interjecting:

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Sir, I am happy if she wants to get into this. Then, when John Howard did go in, because he wanted to give the CFMEU and those hardworking blue collar workers time to digest the impact of the Latham policies on their towns, lives and jobs, he was met with a standing ovation. What were first the two seats to fall? I was still handing out how to vote cards standing next to the member for West Torrens, Tom Koutsantonis, who was battling his heart out to win the seat of Adelaide, when Labor had lost two seats before voting had finished; and it was all on the back of the CFMEU. So, if I was the Hon. Gail Gago, I would be quiet for a little while and listen, because she is a three-time loser and every time she opens her mouth she reminds me that she is a three-time loser.

I think it is appropriate for oppositions to release policies much earlier than did Latham, and I say in a public forum that I hope my party will, over the next six to eight months, start

releasing policies and principles so that the public has an opportunity to digest some of the offerings. We take the risk that this review-driven government wants to pick up or steal some of our policies, but so be it. At the end of the day, that is the best outcome for our community.

I really enjoyed the arrangement that the Greens had with the ALP. It was great seeing Senator Bob Brown on television on Saturday night cock-a-hoop. It looked as if he thought he was going to win some seats but, as we watch the numbers coming in now, I cannot see the Greens winning a Senate seat in South Australia. I think it looks as if the Labor Party will win the seat here.

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: Hear, hear!

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: And the honourable member interjects 'Hear, hear!'

The Hon. T.G. Cameron: It will be a very popular win with the Labor Party, too

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I understand it will be popular with the Hon. Terry Roberts: his faction has just increased by 33 per cent if the Labor Party candidate gets up. But, to watch the Leader of the Opposition (Latham) do a deal with the Greens (I understand it was done quite some time ago in secret), announce at the last minute that he would shaft all the blue collar workers (the people whom the Hon. Bob Sneath says he cares about), and hope that he picks up a couple of leafy green seats (and Labor might have picked up Adelaide on the strength of it), I think was an extraordinary political effort, and the sheer incompetence of the people on the other side is breathtaking.

The PRESIDENT: I am sure Her Excellency will be waiting to read that speech.

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: I take this opportunity to join my colleagues in thanking the Governor for her untiring efforts for the betterment of South Australia and South Australians. I also thank the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr Bruno Krumins, for delivering the Governor's speech when opening the forthcoming parliament and for his and Mrs Krumins' hard work on behalf of the state. I pay my respects to those former members who have died and their families. It is not the fault of the Lieutenant-Governor that the speech he delivered said absolutely nothing for some 20 minutes.

My colleagues have outlined many of my concerns, but I want to highlight some of the issues which most concern me. Probably the major issue that people who have left their address in reply speech as late as I have today have chosen to speak about is the victory of the Liberal government across Australia. I, along with my colleagues in this house, am very proud of the very small part that we played in that victory. However, I think most of us have been here too long to gloat for very long. It was a hard-won victory, and it is disappointing to hear bitter remarks coming from those who were not successful. It takes a lot less to be a good winner than it takes to be a good loser.

Sir, I was amazed to read that your Premier said how much better the vote in South Australia was than anywhere in Australia, particularly when I looked at some of the Labor heartland booths. I, sir, would not be terribly relaxed if I were this government. I think, rather than grizzle about why they lost, perhaps they should look to some of the seats where some of the major swings were, including an across-the-board swing of five per cent in every booth in Whyalla. Perhaps it is time to see who is actually representing the workers of South Australia. I cannot let the Hon. Bob Sneath's comic

review go past without a quick comparison. He loved to dwell on his experience in the shearing shed and replacement of combs and cutters, etc. He failed to mention the character that he most reminds me of, and that is the old dog who is no longer any use but has to be tied in the back of the shed to keep him getting in the way, and he still keeps barking.

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway interjecting:

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: I actually thought it was very kind.

As I said in previous speeches, this is a government with very little substance. It has a strategy for everything but no plan of action. By its own admission, its policy framework is the state's strategic plan but, when we look at the actual plan, it is developed over 10 years and there are no steps along the way. It is to be measurable, but by what yardstick? In fact, this government is long on strategy and short on substance. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but let me mention a few of this government's strategic plans. There is the Economic Development Board's Framework for Economic Development in South Australia—a five-year plan that is now a four-year plan, because we are 12 months in and the public is still waiting to see any action or any steps along the way. For instance, I have been told that, at this stage, the Venture Capital Group has not assisted anyone in the private sector with seed funding.

The opposition has been told that some members of the EDB are becoming frustrated with the constant rhetoric with no accompanying action. There is the Generational Health Review—a 20-year plan. Just ask those on the waiting lists whether they have noticed any improvement in the first two years; or ask those struggling in the regions; or ask the Mount Gambier Hospital or the charity that last week released a report saying that we have the worst mental health service in Australia; or ask the single mother in Auburn who has no respite and a severely handicapped daughter who, when she reaches school leaving age at the end of the year, will have to be kept in a cage while her mother goes to work.

In transport we have been promised a 40 per cent reduction on road fatalities by 2010. Well, we are at the end of 2004 and we are still waiting. Also, according to the Hon. Mr Rann, we are going to increase internet usage by 20 per cent within 10 years. No-one has bothered to say how or whether, in fact, that will be any different from normal growth across the nation or the world. According to the Rann government, we will also treble investment in mining by 2007, even though funding is over five years, not 3½ years. We will also 'reduce energy usage in government buildings by 25 per cent by 2014', but there is no mention of how much by 2010 or 2006, or how we will achieve those targets.

Strategic plans are also on the way for inner city communities, public housing and so on and so on. Now we are told there is to be a statewide work force strategy, a strategic infrastructure plan, a state manufacturing strategy and a private equity program. No-one can tell me or anyone else what action is taking place. The government is almost two-thirds of the way through its term and it has done nothing but plan. In fact, it has not yet finished planning; it is still developing plans. This is like having a house plan without the internal walls being drawn, and definitely with no specifications.

This state has built a ladder to the sky with no rungs in it. The Rann government has not yet learned that, in order to support those in need in society, we must first have a sound business base. The government continues with the glossy headlines but without substance. Worse still, if anyone

criticises the government it cries foul. Last week, Access Economics had this to say:

Australian growth is great, prosperity is high, unemployment is low. The states with the highest export exposure (Western Australia, Tasmania, Queensland and the Northern Territory) are being buoyed by galloping global growth with no sign that momentum may falter over the next year or two. But South Australia's economy is running on an increasingly heavy track. South Australia may stay stuck in the slow lane for a while in or near the caboose of the national output growth train.

Our exports are going backwards, as I have just said. Surely these sorts of reports should send alarm bells ringing but, no, what does this government do? It simply says that that is not right and gets its mate Professor Blandy to say, 'No, that can't be right,' and then goes back to sticking its head in the sand. One area of particular concern to me is the demise of the State Food Plan. Certainly, on the surface, the Rann government has committed to its continuing with the changes necessary for it to go forward, but it seems to me that the government has changed its name and its web site address and that is about all—certainly, nothing positive.

In various ways the government has not continued to support the real purpose of the plan. A strategy which was developed by our government and which is now used nationally and by other departments for economic benchmarking was the State Food Scorecard. The 2003-04 scorecard has just been released and it makes alarming reading. I will paraphrase some of the key findings. Overseas exports (the normal engine for growth) fell by \$143 million (6.2 per cent). As all members would know, overseas market development, high quality product and value-adding were the key planks to achieve the stated goal of \$15 billion by 2010.

To reach that target we need to grow gross food revenue by \$600 million average per year. Last year (2002-03) we achieved half that. We can blame the drought for some of it but, certainly, in 2003-04 we cannot. The next excuse will be the rising dollar. We need to remember that, prior to recent years, the 10-year average against the US dollar was 70¢. Indeed, the report goes on to say that those hardest hit by the rising dollar (notably the seafood industry) were able to adjust quite quickly. The report mentions the drought of 2002-03, but goes on to say that below average growth for 2003-04 has widened the target gap to \$1 billion; and the accompanying graph shows the actual growth line deteriorating dramatically in the two years of the Labor government.

The graph would look even worse if net interstate and overseas imports had not declined by 15 per cent; that is, the trend line looks better because we imported less, not because we exported more. Another chart shows a performance comparison between 1996-97 (when the program started) and 2003-04. Surely, even without a program, we could anticipate some growth over a six-year time frame; and, indeed, the graph shows an historic growth per annum in the food sector of 4.9 per cent and the growth after the introduction of the plan at 7 per cent. What do we have now? A 6.2 per cent fall in overseas exports.

In further detail it is revealed that processed exports fell by 8 per cent in total and as follows in sectors: grain products were down by 7 per cent; fruit and vegetables by 10 per cent; seafood by 11 per cent; meat by 10 per cent; dairy products by 15 per cent; and other by 31 per cent. Formally, South Australia was well ahead of other states on percentage terms, but the scorecard report says:

South Australia's performance over the year is significantly below that of the national average in all value added and commodity categories.

And, believe me, South Australia was not affected as badly as other states by the drought. Our drought was not as severe as the other states, so the government cannot blame its abysmal performance on the weather.

I have always found the scorecard valuable reading in its detail and never more than this time. The report summarises why we should all be concerned with the following: \$143 million (6 per cent) less than was exported in 2002-03; and total merchandise exports fell at the same time by 9.2 per cent. This is not exclusive to the Food Plan—the Food Plan is simply the issue that I know best. Therefore, if the food industry's \$15 billion target is to be met by the end of this decade, substantial and continuous export is required. Based on scorecard projections, to meet the gross revenue target, overseas exports would need to grow at an average of 11 per cent per annum. While the export driven growth on 2000-01 and 2001-02 put the food industry beyond what was required to meet the food target, poor export performance over the past two years has resulted in below average growth trends. To date, overseas export growth has averaged 6.9 per cent per annum, with current levels of exports around \$690 million short of reaching the export benchmark progress target.

Over the year, falls were evident in both value-added foods falling by \$93 million as well as commodities down by \$50 million. Why have I chosen to yet again highlight my concerns in this Address in Reply? Because I think this government has either forgotten the purpose of the Food Plan or it has never understood it. One of the main causes of the original success of the food strategy was the development of real working partnerships between industry and government. Notably Flavour SA was a networking group which identified market opportunities for smaller businesses to export interstate. Its collective knowledge was significantly able to educate new entries in packaging, advertising, marketing and identifying potential customers. It also hosted and organised interstate exhibitions such as Fine Foods with the help of seed funding from the government. Under the new State Food Plan, Flavour SA has been relegated to a regional food group and, as I understand it, it has received virtually no funding for the past two years.

While I commend the formation of the regional food groups, I also recognise that they are at many different stages of readiness to move to the next level of expansion, whether regionally, interstate or overseas, and I wonder with the downgrading of Flavour SA where they will be able to go for the advice needed. I for one do not believe that such advice is better provided by bureaucrats than by those who work in the private sector and have learned the necessary lessons personally. Similarly, the main focus for overseas market development was via Food Adelaide. They are the larger corporate exporters who gave countless hours of free advice to new entries into overseas exporting. They identified new market opportunities, shared containers with smaller exporters and by working collaboratively with government made a real difference to value-added food exports from this state. An example of this is the development of our markets into Japan.

I was very involved at the time with the State Food Plan when Food Adelaide asked the government to set up a warehouse in Osaka. The public servants at the time said that we could never make significant inroads into Japan, it was a mature market and so on. But private enterprise which actually makes its living from exporting persevered and, because we worked as a true partnership, it succeeded and a warehouse was set up in Osaka. It is gratifying to read in the

scorecard that Japan remains the single largest destination of value-added exports, comprising 39 per cent of total trade. Together with the USA and Hong Kong, these three key markets absorb 64 per cent of all value-added food exports—and those three were the areas which were significantly targeted by Food Adelaide. Food Adelaide, I believe, is largely responsible for the development of those markets overseas, but again, on reading the new State Food Plan, I find that Food Adelaide has been pushed aside.

Their involvement now can be described only as peripheral at best. In fact the plan says that some market development will be outsourced to them. Outsourcing does not signify a partnership in any sense of the word. This is controlled by government. I understand that many of the people involved in Food Adelaide are at the stage where they can very nicely exist without government help, but I doubt whether our State Food Plan can continue to exist and expand in the way in which it is designed to do without significant input from Food Adelaide. This is just one example of why I cannot see how the Rann government will achieve its grand 20-year vision. It is all very well to have a vision, but if it is actually to convert to a plan, as I say, there needs to be some concrete steps along the way. It appears to me that this government is in a total void as to how it will do that. I also mention another concern in regional South Australia; that is, the intervention and inspectorial role that is increasingly becoming evident from the EPA.

The EPA has a very valuable role to play but, surely, it should be an advisory role, not a policeman's role. Increasingly, we hear of country refuse dumps which are being fined or threatened with closure. Some of the remedial work demanded of those country councils is impossible for them to achieve in the time. I have one example of the changes that are required to a very small country town to upgrade its effluent ponds. The costs demanded by EPA for that upgrade are greater than the annual rate revenue for that council. I have countless examples of dairy farmers who, as much as they have tried to explain to the EPA that they cannot do anything about their effluent dams during the middle of a wet winter, have been fined anyway with no explanations taken into account. I think this is a travesty of the duties of the EPA and, again, it stands in contrast to anything which talks about commonsense, and in the end it will backfire because nothing will happen.

The other area mentioned by the Lieutenant-Governor was the introduction of a new Fisheries Act. The Fisheries Act has now been under review for about three or four years. It has been announced that it is going to be introduced on numerous occasions by this government. It will be interesting to see how it reads when it is finally introduced. I understand that some sectors of the fishing industry have had an advanced briefing, and they are not pleased with much of what they hear, because there is no guarantee of any method of title, and that then precludes those people from borrowing money against what is their largest capital asset. However, we will deal with that act when it comes in and, hopefully, be able to broker within the upper house such commonsense amendments as are needed.

I conclude by again saying that this is a government with numerous plans, but it is a government which is over halfway into its term, and there are no actions following from the plans. I am getting sick of it and so are the people of South Australia. I support the motion.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Industry and Trade): I would like to thank those members of the council who contributed to this debate. The government has put forward for this session a very bold and imaginative legislative program for 2004-05. I am sure that, over the course of this session, we will have the opportunity to discuss in detail, as they arise, those many legislative and other measures outlined by the Lieutenant-Governor in his speech. I could say much, and there were many things said on a whole range of issues, but I will leave my responses to those for another day. Again, I thank members for their contributions, and I thank the Lieutenant-Governor for his speech to this parliament. I look forward to the presentation of the Address in Reply to Her Excellency the Governor tomorrow.

Motion carried.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Industry and Trade): I lay on the table a copy of a ministerial statement relating to the Auditor-General's Report made earlier today in another place by my colleague the Deputy Premier.

STAMP DUTIES (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 21 September. Page 134)

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Leader of the Opposition): I rise to support the second reading of the Stamp Duties (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill. On behalf of Liberal Party I indicate that we have no major concerns with any of the provisions of the bill, although there are some areas about which we will seek further advice from the government. It is essentially a technical measure which covers approximately 11 proposed amendments to the stamp duties bill, and I will work my way through each of those as quickly as I can.

The first amendment relates to ensuring the electronic lodgment of an application to register or transfer the registration of a motor vehicle being subject to duty. We are advised by the government that this amendment is proposed to ensure that electronic communications are taken to be instruments executed by the applicant and chargeable with duty as an application for registration or transfer of registration of a motor vehicle.

In discussions with government officers we sought advice from Revenue SA and the government on the position in relation to electronic communications in other states. I received a letter from the Commissioner of State Taxation, who advised me that the position in relation to electronic communications in other states is quite different and varied from South Australia due to different provisions of the Duties Act and the Taxation Administration Acts in other states. Through the minister, we seek a more detailed response from the government on this issue. Just advising the parliament that the position is varied in other states due to different provisions does not really answer the question of whether or not electronic communications in this area do or do not attract stamp duty. I think that is a simple question.

It is this government's intention that electronic communications will attract stamp duty, and we ask simply whether or not that is the case in other administrations. I hope that the minister can obtain that information and indicate in some detail the position in relation to other states. We accept the

fact that there are different provisions of the Duties Act and Taxation Administration Act in other states; if that is the case, we are happy to receive the detailed explanation from Revenue SA and through the minister. We indicate that we would certainly like to see that information prior to the committee stage of this bill.

At the briefing, we also asked whether or not telephone communications were covered under electronic communications. Intuitively, we believed that that would be the case, and I place on the record that the Commissioner has advised me that an 'electronic communication', as defined in the Electronic Transactions Act (SA) 2000, includes:

... a communication of information in the form of sound by means of guided or unguided electromagnetic energy, or both, where the sound is processed at its destination by an automated voice recognition system.

The Commissioner advised that, as he understands it, Transport SA allows a limited number of registrations to be renewed over the telephone via the use of an interactive voice response system. He advised that these registrations would be covered by the amendments as they currently stand. I do not think that that raises any additional concerns for us at this stage, but we want clarified on the record that telephone communication will be covered and therefore will be dutiable, as opposed to the current arrangements.

I understand that the current situation is that electronic communication is already allowed when registering or transferring the registration of motor vehicles, but, to comply with the requirements of the current act, government departments and agencies require written confirmation after the electronic communication; that is, the individual has an electronic communication to transfer registration but must confirm it through some written means later on. I assume that it is the written means that has been deemed to be dutiable for stamp duty purposes. We understand that this provision will allow the written communication or confirmation to be removed in future, and only electronic communication will be relied on for stamp duty purposes. As I said, in principle the opposition is prepared to support this amendment. However, we seek further information in relation to the interstate position.

The second amendment removes the requirement that stamp duty payable on an application to register or transfer the registration of a motor vehicle be separately denoted on the certificate of registration of a vehicle. We are advised that this is correcting an anomaly within the current act to ensure that the act reflects current practice. The current motor vehicle registration process displays the total fee receipted for a transaction. It does not contain a cash register imprint of the stamp duty paid (as a separate component of the total fee), as is required under the technical reading of the current provisions of the act. It is proposed that the act be amended so that the stamp duty payable in respect of an application to register a motor vehicle, or to transfer the registration of a motor vehicle, does not have to be shown separately as a cash register imprint on the certificate of registration. The total fee payable, consisting of stamp duty, a compulsory third-party premium and administration fees, will continue to be denoted on the certificate of registration.

From the opposition's viewpoint, we accept that this appears to bring the provisions of the act in line with current practice. Certainly, it would involve additional cost to government departments and agencies if the strict provisions of the Stamp Duties Act were insisted upon. From the consumer's viewpoint, it is probably sufficient that they know

the total government charges, as opposed to the individual components of that, in relation to a cash register imprint of the stamp duty payable. On balance, the opposition is prepared to support that amendment as well. The third amendment limits the exemption currently available in respect of a motor vehicle held in the name of a totally and permanently incapacitated person to only one motor vehicle owned by that person. The Commissioner of Taxation advised me that all jurisdictions have a broadly similar exemption to the TPI exemption proposed here, and all (other than the Northern Territory) restrict this to only one vehicle. As you will note from the second reading explanation, Mr Acting President, the government also argues that this brings the TPI exemption into line with exemptions in the act for persons with certain disabilities. On both grounds, we are prepared to support this amendment.

The fourth amendment provides relief from stamp duty for spouses or former spouses where the registration of a motor vehicle has lapsed and an application to register a motor vehicle is lodged. On a strict interpretation of the exemption, we are advised that spouses are not entitled to an exemption in circumstances where the registration of a motor vehicle has lapsed and subsequently an application to register a motor vehicle is lodged with Transport SA, as opposed to an application to transfer the registration. The government has advised that this is an unintended consequence and is a technical difficulty in the act.

This provision is intended, in broad terms, to cater for circumstances where there has been a marriage breakdown, and where, in the sharing of the property between the spouses, one partner passes the ownership of a vehicle to another partner. In those circumstances where it is a transfer, there is an exemption from duty if it is part of this arrangement. The technical problem appears to be that, if the registration lapses, as you transfer the vehicle to your former partner, stamp duty exemption does not apply. Evidently, that is an unintended consequence of the drafting of the legislation, and we think that the proposed amendment is sensible and would be supported by most people who are involved in these sorts of potential transactions.

The fifth amendment removes the potential for double duty where another instrument transferring property and the motor vehicle exists but has not been lodged for stamping prior to an application to register or transfer the registration of the vehicle. This is essentially a quite technical provision and, in discussions with the Commissioner, I admit I found it difficult to envisage that there are too many circumstances where this might occur, but the Commissioner believes that, technically, there might be some examples where there is a potential for double duty. Given that the Commissioner and his officers are much more knowledgeable in this area than we are, we are prepared to accept his advice on the issue. Given that the design is to reduce the potential for double duty, we are obviously generally sympathetic to that. If the Commissioner is right, under the current provisions of the act, someone might be lobbied for duty twice for one transaction, and the Commissioner is suggesting that, in those circumstances, there would be only the one payment of stamp duty. For those reasons, we are prepared to support it.

The sixth amendment removes the potential for avoidance of stamp duty by primary producers in circumstances where conditional registration of a vehicle has been obtained under the Motor Vehicles Act. The Commissioner for Taxation has advised me that section 25 of the Motor Vehicles Act allows for conditional registration of farm vehicles, other than a

tractor or agricultural machinery, that are driven between specified farm blocks. A wide range of vehicles are currently registered under this provision, including goods carrying trucks. I asked some questions of the Commissioner in relation to this provision, and he indicated that Revenue SA and Transport SA have no evidence of the conditional registration provisions being used for avoidance since they were introduced in July 1996, but the government believes that the amendment should be made to close off a potential loophole. On that basis, the Liberal Party has indicated its willingness to support this amendment as well.

The seventh amendment provides for a pro rata refund of stamp duty on renewal certificates for compulsory third party. The Motor Vehicle Act provides the Registrar of Motor Vehicles with discretion to refund part of a registration fee where the owner of the vehicle becomes entitled to an exemption from, or reduction of, registration fees at any time during the period for which the vehicle is registered. It is proposed to provide a similar pro rata refund of the stamp duty on renewal certificates for compulsory third party insurance. Again, this provides further potential relief for a limited number of persons in South Australia on the basis that further relief, albeit minor relief, is provided, and the opposition is prepared to support it.

The eighth amendment merely ensures that councils continue to receive an exemption from stamp duty on the registration, or transfer of registration, of their motor vehicles following the enactment of the Local Government Act. The opposition is prepared to support this amendment; it is essentially a technical amendment.

The ninth amendment gives the Commissioner of State Taxation power to appoint a valuer where the Commissioner is of the view that the amount declared in an application is not the true value of the motor vehicle. The current motor vehicle provisions in the act do not provide the Commissioner with the discretion to obtain a valuation or appoint a valuer in these circumstances. After discussions with the Commissioner's staff, the Commissioner has advised me in the letter that Revenue SA will seek to recover the costs of the valuation from the taxpayer only if the value submitted varies from the independent value by more than 10 per cent. They have also advised me that Revenue SA will accept the independent valuation in all cases other than when the consideration paid for the vehicle is higher than the value, which is not likely to be a frequent occurrence. This situation may arise, as stamp duty under the act is charged on the consideration or the value, whichever is the higher. This might be an area we will further explore in the committee stage, as I intend to give further consideration to this response from the Commissioner between the second reading debate and when we move into the committee stage.

Amendment No. 10 seeks to align the exemption provisions in the act with the recent amendments to the Family Law Amendment Act. Those parts of the commonwealth act came into operation on 27 December 2000 and 28 December 2002. These amendments also extend the exemption provisions to include cohabitation agreements made pursuant to the South Australian De Facto Relationship Act 1996, where persons have cohabited continuously as de facto partners for at least three years. The proposed amendments exempt from stamp duty instruments that affect the disposition of property, including interests in superannuation, between married parties and de facto partners during or after dissolution of marital or de facto relationships.

The opposition is broadly sympathetic to the amendments that have been proposed by the government and is prepared to support them. The eleventh amendment seeks to amend a drafting matter arising from an amendment made to schedule 2 of the act by the Statutes Amendment (Corporations-Financial Services Reform) Act 2002. It is essentially a technical provision and the opposition is prepared to support it.

In summary, I put some questions to the government advisers in relation to what the revenue effect of all these measures would be and the advice I have received I place on the record as follows. The revenue effect of the measures will be negligible as the amendments are mostly technical changes and closures of potential loopholes. In relation to some of the provisions, there may be a minor negative impact, for example, the family law changes, but these changes are considered to be too small to be quantified in any meaningful way. Broadly, it is largely a technical matter. We are advised

that there is no major impact in terms of the total stamp duty that might be collected under the proposed changes and, for the reasons that I have outlined earlier and for those reasons, we indicate our support for the second reading.

As I said, there might be one or two limited matters that we pursue in greater detail in the committee stage. We again repeat our wish for the minister to bring back prior to the committee stages answers to the questions on the amendments that relate to electronic communications and their potential to be subject to stamp duty in South Australia compared with other state and territory jurisdictions.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.40 p.m. the council adjourned until Tuesday 12 October at 2.15 p.m.