

record of action and achievement that is unequalled in the modern era. No government has made as many hard decisions and has remained as strong as the Howard government. John Howard also represents what everyone wants in a Prime Minister. He is across the detail of policy, understands the issues in their totality and does not shoot from the hip to grab a quick headline.

Mark Latham, on the other hand, prefers to play the boofhead in a desperate attempt to empathise with the common man, because he has never had a real job. He has been either a political hack or on the taxpayer payroll. I believe this country has much to fear from a man who lists Gough Whitlam and Paul Keating as key influences. The Labor Party has held many press conferences and stunts to try to convince voters that they will not ruin the economy and send interest rates through the roof, as if signing giant cardboard promises is some kind of protection. If Labor is elected and interest rates start to reach the heights they did last time Labor was in, one should try taking the cardboard promise to the bank and telling them that one does not have to pay, because Mark Latham signed that piece of cardboard.

What really counts is results, and the Howard government's results are outstanding: inflation of 2.5 per cent this year compared with Labor's average of 5.2 per cent, an extra 1.3 million jobs compared with Labor's 'recession we had to have', unemployment at 23-year lows, 280 000 work for the dole places, and nearly four times as many apprentices and trainees as there were in Labor's last year.

John Howard has committed \$40 billion to give the Australian Defence Forces the resources they need to protect Australia and defend Australians from terrorists and other global threats. The average home owner now saves \$500 a month on interest payments, with interest rates now averaging around 7 per cent compared to the dark days of Labor's 17 per cent interest rates. Families are better off under the Coalition, with \$19 billion extra, including the \$600 family tax benefit, part A. Pensioners now have more and have had their pensions linked to the high male total average weekly earnings. Low income earners get a helping hand with the superannuation co-contribution to look after them in retirement.

Medicare has been not only preserved but also strengthened with Medicare Plus, a \$2.85 billion plan to put 1 500 more doctors and 1 600 more nurses into the system. The Medicare safety net will protect against major out-of-pocket expenses provided outside of hospitals. Of course, only the Coalition unreservedly supports the 30 per cent private health insurance rebate. If more patients take up private health insurance, Medicare will be better able to provide even more care. John Howard has the experience, knowledge and the understanding of details to lead this country. Mark Latham concerns himself with trendy issues and glib slogans but does not really have the patience or attention span to run a \$800 billion economy.

NARACOORTE LUCINDALE COUNCIL

The Hon. R.K. SNEATH: It was interesting to hear that the last speaker could only fill in four minutes of his five minutes on how good the Howard Liberal government is. The last time I spoke about the Naracoorte Lucindale Council, I told honourable members about the bullying and intimidation of some council staff, council members and the public by the CEO and Mayor. Since then I have received a lot of feedback regarding the council. I can repeat only that the bullying and

intimidation continue and that the council is in disarray, with low morale amongst the staff and many good staff being sacked or resigning. It is interesting to note that neither the CEO or the Mayor answered any of the questions I raised about their activities in recent editions of the *Border Watch* or the *Naracoorte Herald*. I invite the CEO and the Mayor to answer the following questions about the practices of the Naracoorte Lucindale Council:

- Why has nothing been done about the town toilets, and where are the minutes of the decisions made about the toilets?
- Why does the CEO fail to reply to people's letters and, indeed, the media?
- Why did the CEO and the Mayor allow bulldozers to enter the local quarry, eroding a valuable geographical profile dating back hundreds of years; and why were the letters sent to them by the university professor about this valuable site never responded to by the CEO?
- Is it true that secret meetings are going on amongst the CEO, the Mayor and a few of the councillors to the exclusion of other councillors?
- Are some councillors leaving council meetings in tears and others being victimised for asking questions on behalf of ratepayers?
- Has any councillor been paid for secret sweetheart work deals with the CEO?
- Why did the finance manager, Mr Barry Gale, throw his hands in the air and resign? This highly respected man was passionate about Naracoorte and wanted to retire there, but we have lost him from Naracoorte to Murray Bridge. Why?
- Why did the CEO hire a person with a criminal record in the first place, only to fire him a few weeks later? Does not the CEO believe in giving people a second chance in life?
- Why was the Naracoorte Caravan Park sold to developers under a cloak of secrecy, with 14 acres of prime land flogged off for just \$600 000?
- Are the successful purchasers of this bargain allies of the Mayor and the CEO?
- Why were the people managing and leasing this caravan park for 12 or 14 years never given a fair go when seeking to purchase it?
- Why was not the survey of 740 ratepayers considered when 88 per cent of them did not want the park sold?
- Why was not the survey of 631 ratepayers considered when 61 per cent of them wanted traffic lights installed at an intersection instead of a roundabout?

Why has the council not taken heed of an agreement signed between itself and the National Bank of Australasia in 1918 regarding the land where a war memorial monument honours those who lost their lives in war? This agreement says that the land donated by the bank should be used only for garden areas and roundabouts, yet this will interfere with this memorial that honours our heroes. I would like to read from this deed that was signed in 1918 by the council and the bank. It states:

[the said land] shall be forever held and used by the Council for the following purposes and no others namely as and for a garden or ornamental ground for the use and enjoyment of the public. . . should the ratepayers of the Council so decide for the purposes of erecting thereon [an] appropriate monument to soldiers from the District of Naracoorte who shall have [fallen during] the war now being waged with Germany and its allies AND FURTHER that the Council will with the consent in writing of the Bank erect or allow to be erected

or any buildings. . . on the said land other than the said monument and will at all times keep and maintain . . . paths [and gardens].

With that agreement they meant that there should be no roundabout put there. Sixty-one per cent of those surveyed wanted traffic lights. They decided on the traffic lights and then changed their minds, and now they are going to interfere with that monument and interfere with the wishes of the RSL. Why did the council not give a fair hearing to the RSL and its members when they raised concerns regarding the interference with the monument and also the dangers that the monument would face in the middle of a roundabout? Traffic lights certainly would have been a sensible way to go. Why have council lawyers not turned up for the industrial relations hearings in the commission regarding the unfair treatment of Penny Fairweather? Why has the *Naracoorte Herald* been full of letters to the editor mainly complaining about local council issues? When will the council listen to the majority of its ratepayers? I raise these matters on behalf of the ratepayers who have contacted me and I ask that they be answered truthfully by the CEO and the mayor.

UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: Today I wish to speak about the 13th anniversary celebrations of Ukrainian independence organised by the Association of Ukrainians in South Australia on Sunday 12 September 2004. I was privileged to receive an invitation to share in these celebrations with many of my friends from the Ukrainian community. The Ukrainian Independence Day honours the Declaration of Independence which gave Ukraine the freedom to be a sovereign nation. It also represents a momentous occasion in the history of the Republic of Ukraine and for thousands of Ukrainians living around the world.

The record books tell the terrible story of the reign of terror and human suffering forced on the Ukrainian people by Stalin when, through a forced famine, 7 million were starved to death. But today the spirit of Ukrainians has survived and triumphed. As we can all recall, it was an unforgettable occasion when, in 1991, after more than 50 years of the oppression of the Russian invaders, the national flag of Ukraine was hoisted throughout the nation. The people from the captive nations were moved by a driving force and vision for freedom and a better future. The 48 million people of Ukraine defied the imperial forces which had imposed upon them years of economic stagnation. Overcoming the world's most horrific nuclear disaster at Chernobyl, the people of Ukraine have worked hard to rebuild the nation and to achieve greater economic stability.

In South Australia, in 1949, the Ukrainian community proudly established the first Ukrainian organisation in Australia to assist Ukrainian immigrants arriving from Europe. The association has grown to become a major focal point for the Ukrainian community. The Ukrainian people who migrated to South Australia were from many diverse professional backgrounds and skills. However, their professional qualifications were of little use to them because they were not recognised and because they experienced language difficulties. Nevertheless, South Australia has given the many Ukrainian immigrants great opportunities to build a better life for themselves and their families. At the same time, Ukrainians have given much in return to our state as outstanding citizens over the past 55 years.

Since their arrival, Ukrainians have contributed in many areas of commercial activities, including the manufacturing

industries. In sport, first generation Ukrainians and their children have represented Australia in many codes. In the arts, they have given Australia some outstanding artists, as well as opera and ballet performers. Many second generation Ukrainians have achieved responsible positions in the Public Service, in business, in the professions and in the armed forces.

The South Australian Ukrainian community has maintained a strong commitment to the mother tongue and to the core values of cultural and family traditions through the Homin Choir and the Kashtan Song and Dance Ensemble, which was established by Stephen Misajlo. I have been fortunate to attend numerous performances presented by the Ukrainian Kashtan Song and Dance Ensemble which has thrilled many Australian audiences with its spectacular performance and stage productions in prestigious concert halls, theatres and convention centres.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere congratulations to the President, Boris Potiuch, and to all members of the South Australian Ukrainian community for celebrating the independence of the Ukraine. I also pay tribute to the significant contribution it has made to the development of our state. I wish them continued success for the future. Slava Ukraine!

WOMEN'S HOUSING ASSOCIATION

The Hon. KATE REYNOLDS: Last week, I attended the annual general meeting of the Women's Housing Association, which provides safe and stable housing for both women and children. I am sure that all honourable members would fully understand that housing is not simply a roof over one's head: it is a need inextricably linked to all aspects of daily living. Above all, good housing is essential for the most basic wellbeing of women and children. The absence of safe, accessible, affordable and secure housing impacts on every other area of living and is the main contributing factor to the poverty trap, where the majority of those caught are women.

With this in mind, I listened closely while the Chairperson of the Women's Housing Association, Karen Burnes, took us on a trip back in time over the way in which the issue of women and housing has been treated during past years. In recent times, there have been reviews, consultants' findings, implementation plans and lists and lists of recommendations about proposed changes to the organisation. All those reports looked at women's housing and asked questions such as: why does it cost so much; how can it be made better and more cost-efficient and so on.

In recent years, the association's challenges were to manage significant growth, particularly in country areas. When not actively managing that growth, the organisation has looked to improve its practices, update its systems and constantly be on the lookout for better, smarter and more economical ideas. The Women's Housing Association has gone through many changes in the past 10 years and has progressed from a mortgage based system in partnership with the Housing Trust and building societies to a perpetual debenture system with the South Australian Community Housing Authority. It has also had major structural changes, particularly in management. It has moved from a representational based board of management to a skills based board of management, and it has changed its name from the Women's Shelters Housing Association to the Women's Housing Association. It has grown from having 140 properties to almost 300 properties in erratic and often intense periods of