

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

THURSDAY 24TH MARCH 2016

PORT PIRIE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:57): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Goyder:

That this house calls on the member for Frome to take advantage of his position as a cabinet minister and compels the Labor government to immediately address the jobs crisis and economic decline impacting the Port Pirie community; and—

- (a) provide residents with job certainty;
- (b) stem the flow of young people out of the region and South Australia;
- (c) ensure vital industries are sustainable and have the opportunity to grow;
- (d) give our regions the attention they deserve and desperately need;
- (e) recognise that Port Pirie can play an important role in South Australia's economic recovery; and
- (f) avoid the social harm caused by unemployment.

As we have heard from the previous speakers today, apart from the member for Newland who tried to move a ridiculous amendment in regard to this motion, all of the issues in Port Pirie are happening not just in Port Pirie but right throughout South Australia.

I want to go back to the election, where I think some people in Frome thought so much of the current member for Frome that I believe they thought, 'If we elect the member for Frome, Mr Brock, we will get him and we will get the Liberal Party as well in government.' Well, we only have to look at how history unfolded, where the Leader of the Opposition, from what I understand, was told a decision would not be made until the Wednesday, yet we see the supersized ham and pineapple pizza that was purchased in Port Pirie did the job over the weekend. A few slices of pizza have cost this state a great price.

If people believed that they were going to get the Liberal Party because polling was supposedly looking so good, and also elect Mr Brock as their member, I hope they have a good, hard look at what happened. It is exactly what happened in Hammond way back in the 2002 election, when the former member ran as a so-called Independent liberal and then put the Labor government in power. People need to be absolutely certain of who they are voting for and why they are voting for them, because it can come unstuck very, very quickly.

Look at what has happened with regard to Port Pirie, where we have 19.4 per cent youth unemployment and 12.9 per cent general unemployment, with a recent 2 per cent increase. This is disgraceful. There needs to be job certainty in that region, and not just there, but in all the regions.

There are all these comments about Nyrstar and what was going to happen, and whether they would have been underwritten. The member for Frome basically embarrassed the state government into underwriting the Nyrstar redevelopment proposal because he said so on the radio. This immediately forced the Labor government to do the underwriting—

Mr Griffiths: ABC radio!

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, ABC radio—to several hundred million dollars. Our federal government was let off the hook. It was fantastic for them; it was just a gift. The Premier had to come up with the price of probably several hundreds of thousands of ham and pineapple pizzas to underwrite the Nyrstar redevelopment. It would have absolutely happened from our side of the chamber.

We on this side of parliament have had an interest in Nyrstar and what has gone on there in previous years. In fact, when my wife was an environmental scientist, she worked up there when Pasmaenco operated the facility. We all know how critical it is. Some friends of mine who work in jobs related to the Nyrstar facility are in the trucking industry, and they freight material from around Broken Hill down to Nyrstar. Certainly, when the Strathalbyn Terramin mine was operating, the ore was carted to Nyrstar. Not only does the result impact on Port Pirie, but it is felt right throughout South Australia, and certainly affects people based in and near my electorate.

As has been mentioned earlier, there needs to be more done in the regions so that we can achieve growth in other industries such as agriculture. What really scares me about this Labor government, which the member for Frome is happy to support, is that they say one thing but they say it with forked tongue.

We have the Premier going out there and saying, 'The clean, green image of South Australia is fantastic,' and now it is supposedly backing the farmers of this state. This is only because mining has collapsed, and everything else has collapsed. The Olympic Dam proposal did not go ahead, as far as the big open-cut mine, and there are a lot of other factors that come into play.

The Premier was a bit under the pump when we delivered our manifesto the other day and he had a crack at our side of the house. He said that the Liberal Party was full of 'retired farmers, failed businessmen and Pyne apparatchiks'. That is a disgraceful comment from a Premier who is supposedly putting the future of this state in the hands of the farmers. All he can do is talk about who he thinks represents the Liberal Party in this state.

People need to be quite aware of the government that the member for Frome has supported. What we also need to be aware of are the things that have happened within this government since the member for Frome supported them, and the things that have not. For example, the \$25 million diversification fund. Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria took their \$25 million each, but where was South Australia in that mix? Gone and forgotten, because it did not affect Labor electorates. That is the simple cut and dried of it, and that is as simple as the Labor Party in this state runs its politics, right down the line. If there is not a vote in it, they absolutely do not want to know about it.

They put out this story that it was going to cost so much GST and that we would only have got \$4 million. At the worst case scenario, the state would have been \$4 million better off if we had taken the \$25 million diversification fund. That money was vitally needed throughout the Riverland and, certainly in the Murraylands, which missed out on previous bequests of the \$20 million that went into the seat of Chaffey.

That is fine. Now was the time for the Murraylands and the Lower Murray to shine, but, no—the government decided it would just cut that off, even after the terms of the millennium drought and what happened to the people in my area and the destruction that went on with the river. The Premier bleats on about 3,200 gigalitres of water being put back into the river, but when we get past all those fine words that he can put out, action is severely lacking when it gets down to the ground floor of what really needs to happen in the Lower Murray region.

When we look at blackspot funding for phone towers, where was the Labor government? Where was the member for Frome advocating for this? What was he saying around the cabinet table? I would love to know why every other state put in submissions for mobile phone tower funding, yet South Australia did not. This is how this Labor government treats regional South Australia: they just do not care. I urge the member for Newland to drive around South Australia and see how often his phone does not work. He will realise how bad it is.

The Hon. T.R. Kenyon: You know I do.

Mr PEDERICK: That's good. I just hope he fully understands the threat to safety when mobile towers go out. Recently, the tower at Yumali was not functioning appropriately and we had a fatal accident just out of Coomandook, between Coomandook and Cooke Plains. Sadly, the person was already deceased, but if we had needed instant calls to get people there to save people, it could have been another matter. Also, we have seen these huge rises to the emergency services levy, and the natural resources management levies are going through the roof.

We have seen basically the shutdown not only of Leigh Creek but also the Port Augusta power station as well. I believe some of those residents would have come from Port Pirie and would have had jobs in that area. These are errant proposals that the government has been running, that the government has forced on this state and I would just like to know what the member for Frome has been doing advocating for regional South Australia, because my end of the river and my electorate and Port Pirie and the rest of the state deserve a lot more.