

GRAFFITI VANDALISM - 28 February 2008

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (12:29): I move: *That this house notes the slow progress in dealing with graffiti vandalism and calls on the state government to be more active in dealing with this blight on our community.*

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (14:48): I rise to commend the member for Fisher for putting forward this motion, because graffiti is a blight on our state—on public and private facilities. I recall several years ago that a volunteer group ran a tourist train in the seat of Goyder from Wallaroo to Bute, and I guess they still do so.

Mr Griffiths: They still do.

Mr PEDERICK: They do, I am advised by the member for Goyder, of whom I will not speak unkindly again. It was very disappointing for the volunteers who operate that train because, when we got there to take our trip on the Saturday, I think it was, we found out that the railcars had all been vandalised by graffiti. The police were on the scene and had a very difficult task rounding up the offenders. It certainly knocks the volunteers in the community who are actually doing something they have a real attraction to. A lot of these people are retired railway people. The train has to operate on a low speed line, and it is quite an enjoyable trip.

Apart from that, you notice graffiti every day in rural areas on grain wagons and passenger railcars and throughout council areas, on pavements, buildings, concrete walls, etc. Perhaps these people could have their energy channelled somewhere else. I know councils spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on this problem. The Rural City of Murray Bridge has just installed a skate park which, hopefully, might eat up the energy of some people. I am not saying that skaters are all graffiti vandals, but it will certainly give them the opportunity for more recreation in utilising this additional facility in Murray Bridge. People certainly need to find ways to keep busy. Under the Graffiti Control Act 2001 you can be fined up to \$2,500 or six months in gaol for carrying a graffiti implement or for marking graffiti.

The Hon. R.B. Such: You have to catch them first.

Mr PEDERICK: The member interjects that you have to catch them first. The member for Fisher had a list of hundreds of people who had been fined with basically a slap on the wrist. And here we have the state government that is tough on crime. It will have all the bikies out of this state by Christmas, I would assume, with its tough on crime laws.

Members interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: There is a little bit of jocularly on the other side. I am sure that they are all worried about graffiti. The only way that we can dissuade anyone from doing illegal acts is to fine them appropriately. Hundreds of people have been caught and, obviously, they are not being fined appropriately and the situation is not being addressed. I commend the work of

some volunteers in Murray Bridge. There is a group led by Bob Weir, who has been commended for his action locally. This group goes around cleaning up graffiti. It has all the ideas on how to get rid of unwanted graffiti. Only last Monday morning I flew into my office in Murray Bridge where someone had obviously decided to leave a message for me on the door of my office—I think it had something to do with sex and travel.

Mr Griffiths: Please explain.

Mr PEDERICK: No, that will do for *Hansard*, I think. My trusty PA advised me—and this may be of assistance for other members in this house; I am sure that members on the other side have been told where to go and how far—that, if you use a bit of Aerogard, it comes off woodwork brilliantly. I have been advised that it does not work as well on concrete. So, keep the Aerogard handy. I appreciate the assistance of the government in setting up my new office. I have a lovely heritage office in Murray Bridge, and, when these vandals give me unwanted advice, I know where I need to go and I know how far to travel. I commend the motion.