VICTORIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

(HANSARD)

Second Session of the Forty-sixth Parliament.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, September 10, 1974.

OPENING OF THE SESSION.

The Second Session of the Forty-sixth Parliament was opened this day.

At 2.30 p.m., the CLERK read the following—

PROCLAMATION

By His Excellency the Governor of the State of Victoria and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia, &c., &c., &c.

Whereas the Parliament of Victoria stands adjourned until such day and hour as may be fixed by the President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly respectively: Now I, the Governor of the State of Victoria, in the Commonwealth of Australia, do by this my Proclamation prorogue the said Parliament of Victoria until Tuesday, the tenth day of September, 1974, and I do hereby fix Tuesday, the tenth day of September, 1974, aforesaid, at the hour of half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, as the time for the commencement and holding of the next session of the said Parliament of Victoria, for the despatch of business, in the Parliament Houses, situate in Spring Street, in the City of Melbourne: and the Honorable the members of the Legislative Council and the members of the Legislative Assembly are hereby required to give their attendance at the said time and place accordingly.

Given under my hand and the seal of the State of Victoria aforesaid, at Melbourne, the twenty-ninth day of August, in the year of our Lord One thousand nine hundred and seventy-four, in the twenty-third year of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

(L.S.) HENRY WINNEKE.

By His Excellency's Command,

R. J. HAMER,
Premier.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

The Usher of the Black Rod announced the approach of His Excellency the Governor.

His Excellency entered the Chamber attended by his suite.

The Legislative Assembly, with their Speaker, attended in response to His Excellency's summons.

His Excellency addressed the following Speech to both Houses of Parliament—

MR. PRESIDENT AND HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

You have been called together at this opening of the Second Session of the Forty-sixth Parliament of Victoria to consider legislative and financial matters of great importance to the people of this State.

Since the First Session of this Parliament ended, my distinguished predecessor, Major-General Sir Rohan Delacombe, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., K.St.J., completed his term of office and has returned to England. During his period of over eleven years as Governor of Victoria, Sir Rohan fulfilled his high position with great distinction, travelling to all parts of Victoria and meeting people in every walk of life. He endeared himself to all Victorians, whilst upholding the dignity and honour of the Crown.

It is fitting that I pay tribute to him on behalf of the people of this State. I will do my utmost to maintain the high standard he has set.

I refer with regret to the death earlier this year of His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester. He enjoyed many associations with Australia, including two years as Governor-General.

I refer also with deep regret to the deaths, since you were last called together, of two former Ministers of the Crown: The Honorable Sir Gilbert Chandler and the Honorable James Manson, and a former member of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Russell Stokes.

In introducing the First Session of this Parliament, my predecessor set out the Government's objective of promoting the happiness and well-being of the people of Victoria, with special emphasis on the quality of life.

Several measures were enacted in pursuance of this objective. In this new session the Government will bring before you further measures aimed at consolidating and furthering its achievements and objectives in education, welfare, youth, decentralization and conservation, as well as in many other fields.

First priority will continue to be given to education, particularly in the provision of additional teachers and ancillary staff, the improvement of disadvantaged schools, and the provision of libraries, science blocks and arts and crafts rooms.

The Government intends to proceed towards its objective of at least one year's free pre-school education for every Victorian child who wants it. Already Victoria has 936 kindergartens and play-centres, providing for some 65 per cent of Victorian pre-school children. This year a further 50 new centres will be built and staffed.

Reference was made at the last opening of this Parliament to the threat of inflation. The reality is now with us, and inflation, coupled with increasing industrial unrest and rising unemployment, is the greatest single threat at present to growth and production, and the living standards and well-being of every Australian family.

The Government has made several offers to the Commonwealth to take action in concert aimed at halting or slowing down the vicious spiral of wage and price increases now threatening the whole economy of the nation. These offers have not so far led to positive action, but the Government stands ready to introduce any necessary complementary legislation this session.

The Government has co-operated with the Federal Government to the full in the development and implementation of programmes and projects involving both Governments which are for the benefit of Victorians. It is, however, greatly concerned that the powers vested in the State by its own Constitution and reserved by the Commonwealth Constitution shall not be eroded away by unwarranted Commonwealth intrusion into fields for which this Parliament is responsible to the people of Victoria.

The response to the Government's initiatives in promoting decentralization and restraining the growth of Melbourne has been extremely encouraging. There are now more than 1,396 approved decentralized industries in Victoria, of which over 150 have been established in country centres within the last two years. The Federal Government's actions in cutting back tariff protection and restricting credit have been most detrimental to some country industries, especially clothing and textiles, footwear and electrical goods, and the Government has been actively seeking support for them.

During the past year, the Government has co-operated with the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments in the commencement of the Albury-Wodonga growth centre. Already land costing over $5 million has been acquired in Victoria for this important project.

Geelong has been nominated as a further growth centre, and intensive studies are under way to define the areas to be set aside for new urban development in this region. Melton and Sunbury were nominated as satellite towns, and legislation will be presented to Parliament to establish a development corporation for each one.

Tourism is an important decentralized industry, and the Government has been active in promotion activities, in conjunction with regional tourist committees. Legislation aimed at further encouragement of tourism will be presented to Parliament this session.

Decentralization of Government departments is proceeding with the appointment of regional directorates, notably in social welfare and education, and this process will continue under plans already approved.

Regeneration of native forests is proceeding, with the treatment of over 20,000 acres this year. A further 1,000 acres of fire-damaged forests will be reforested by the hand-planting of eucalypts.

The creation of the Ministry for Conservation last year brought together the agencies concerned with the Government's conservation activities, and the protection of the environment.

The Environment Protection Authority has already made great advances in the control of pollution, especially of the atmosphere and waterways, through the setting of standards and the issue of licences.

The authority is pioneering a programme aimed at reorganizing refuse disposal in Melbourne on a regional basis, and the Government expects to be able to submit legislation on the control of noise.

The Ministry is also co-ordinating multi-disciplinary environmental studies of Port Phillip Bay and Western Port Bay and their catchments, and will shortly extend its activities to the study of the Gippsland Lakes.

The Government regards the Yarra Valley, the Dandenongs, and the Mornington Peninsula as the most sensitive and vulnerable areas in the State, calling for special protection. Each is covered by a Government Statement of Planning Policy directing that it be preserved primarily for recreation and conservation. In each area the Government has embarked on an extensive "buy-back" programme so that key areas can be returned to public ownership and

permanently preserved. Extensive protection is also being given by planning controls and, in addition, the Government is considering ways of improving the protection of these vital areas against further subdivision and urban type development which would destroy their character.

In the Mornington Peninsula the Federal Government is giving welcome financial support to the programme for the preservation of open space and large areas of scenic beauty.

A completely new wildlife Bill to replace the present Game Act will be introduced. The Bill will be based on new philosophies, will give protection to virtually all species of native birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and will encourage increased public involvement in wildlife preservation.

The Historic Buildings Act, passed last session, is being brought into operation, and an amending measure, based on experience to date, will be introduced. New legislation will also be proposed to give protection to whole areas of historic or architectural interest.

Government policy is firmly opposed to any form of discrimination on grounds of sex, colour, race or religion. Several objectionable practices have already been abolished, but some areas of prejudice remain, and it is intended to establish a special bureau in the Premier's Department to investigate any cases brought to notice, and recommend legislative or administrative changes.

The Government also believes that migrants to Australia suffer special disabilities, principally on account of language and unfamiliarity with our way of life, and it is intended to establish another special bureau to help and advise migrants, supported by a Migrant Advisory Council staffed by members of foreign communities in Victoria.

The Housing Commission has continued its task of providing low and medium-cost housing, and expects to produce over 4,700 dwelling units this year at a cost of some $76 million, as well as building blocks for low income earners. Further sums will be spent on urban renewal schemes, including the Emerald Hill project in South Melbourne, in co-operation with the Commonwealth Government and the South Melbourne City Council.

Co-operative housing societies are expected to spend over $18 million, the Teacher Housing Authority will provide some 50 new residences, and the Decentralized Industry Housing Authority will increase housing finance for approved decentralized industries.

Irrigation areas in northern Victoria have suffered severe flooding for the second time in twelve months. The Parliamentary Public Works Committee, which is investigating methods of mitigating such flooding, is expected to report soon to Parliament.

The heavy rains in these areas have also caused grave increases in groundwater levels and salinity, and the Government provided funds for an emergency pumping scheme in some horticultural areas of the Goulburn Valley. Longer term remedial measures are being studied by an interdepartmental committee.

The Millewa pipeline scheme in the far north-west was opened in August. It provides a piped water supply from the Murray to 137 farms and two small settlements, replacing an earth channel system which was wasteful of water and labour.

The diversion tunnel for the Dartmouth dam in north-eastern Victoria is well advanced and a contract has been let for the main dam, due to be completed in 1977.

Significant developments for town water supplies include the virtual completion of Rosslynne dam, for Sunbury and Gisborne; substantial progress on the Otway pipeline for Warrnambool and other towns; work on the Lake Merrimu project second stage for Melton (and the Werribee and Bacchus Marsh irrigation areas);

and good progress on the new Mornington Peninsula trunk main from Tarago reservoir.

Late last year the Government decided to recommence the allocation of land settlement holdings in the Heytesbury and Rochester projects. This will provide for some 150 farms to be allocated over the next five years. Housing contracts have been let for the first phase of the scheme.

Oil and gas production from the Bass Strait reserves continues to increase. Nearly 18 million tonnes of petroleum were produced last year. Plans to develop new fields are well advanced.

The Government has approved the construction by the Gas and Fuel Corporation of a natural gas pipeline to serve the country centres of Seymour, Benalla, Wangaratta and Shepparton and the new growth complex of Albury–Wodonga. This $18 million project is due for completion by the middle of 1976.

The Government is looking ahead to the energy requirements of Victoria in the future. Accordingly, the Ministry for Fuel and Power is preparing for presentation to Parliament a White Paper on the expected needs of the State and the resources available from fossil fuels, solar energy, nuclear power and elsewhere. It is also proposed that a Select Committee of the Parliament be set up to inquire into means of conserving energy.

The Government is pursuing a firm policy of encouraging the use of public transport and reducing the dominance of the motor-car, especially for commuter travel. This policy requires continuing action on several fronts:

Provision of new, faster and more comfortable trains, trams and buses. All are on order and new trains are being delivered at a steady rate. The first new trams will be delivered early next year.

Preventing fare increases. In spite of inflation the Government actually reduced rail and tram fares last year, which led to a substantial increase in patronage.

Construction of the Melbourne Underground.

New stations, express tracks, and automatic signalling.

Building of car-parks at suburban stations, and modal interchanges. Planning for the first two, at Box Hill and Frankston, is well advanced.

The Government is very pleased at the continuing reduction in the road toll. The number of road deaths this year to the end of August, 1974, was 531, a reduction of 205 compared with the same period in 1970. This is due in large measure to the reduction in the maximum speed limit to 100 kilometres per hour, and to concerted action against drinking drivers, strong enforcement by the police, compulsory seat belts, and strong support from the media. The Government will continue to introduce road safety measures of demonstrated value, and maintain Victoria's leadership in this field.

A new scheme is to be proposed for improved supervision of school crossings, requiring joint action by State and local governments along the lines of the scheme operating in Great Britain.

The Motor Accidents Board has received more than 14,000 applications for compensation under the no-fault scheme since it commenced operations in January, 1974. It expects to authorize payment of approximately $7 million this year.

The Government is not satisfied with the present organization of the Road Safety and Traffic Authority, and legislation will be presented to make substantial changes. Control over traffic signs and signals and road marking will be transferred to the Country Roads Board.

It is intended that a proper scheme of priority roads will operate throughout Victoria as soon as possible.

The Police Department has continued the reorganization recommended by Colonel Sir Eric St. Johnston and this should be completed in less than two year's time.

Police strength is being steadily increased, communications are being improved, additional vehicles are being put into service, and an independent patrol group has been formed for emergency support of local police. The results are already evident in a significant reduction of crime over the past two years.

Planning is proceeding for the new Police Training Academy at Mount Waverley which will make it the finest of its kind in Australia.

The tunnel through the Great Dividing Range to bring water from the Thomson River into the Melbourne system has been completed by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works and will enable more rapid filling of the new Cardinia dam. This dam has doubled the water storage for Melbourne and already contains 17,500 million gallons. The very large South-Eastern Water Purification Plant at Carrum is expected to be in operation early next year to commence treating approximately 20 million gallons of sewage per day.

The activities of the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation will be extended through continued regionalization and the provision of subsidies for municipal recreation officers.

Subsidies are also being provided for detached youth workers, for sporting association programmes, for fostering the community use of schools and for the development of community centres.

The Ministry of the Arts, in completing its first year of full operation, has made significant strides towards establishing the State's performing arts companies on a firm basis, and has developed a wide range of new activities including community arts.

The Victorian Council of the Arts is now considering a number of exploratory programmes in such fields as development of regional centres for drama and music throughout Victoria and the light entertainment industry.

The school building programme has been delayed by shortages of basic materials, recurring industrial troubles and cost increases due to inflation. However, it is expected that the construction of seven more primary schools will be completed almost immediately.

Tremendous improvements have been effected in teacher-pupil ratios. The Government has undertaken the biggest recruitment programme of overseas teachers that Australia has ever seen, over 1,600 teachers having been brought to Australia from the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. This programme will continue.

The schooling of handicapped children, which has been taken over by the Education Department, will be boosted by the early appointment of 100 speech therapists, psychologists and social workers, and the release of 230 teachers for specialist instruction at a new college in the teaching of these children.

The Government has approved of the use in all schools of a simple course of sex instruction for children in the 11-12 years of age group. This decision was taken only after consultation with educational, medical and religious organizations, and the introduction of the course in any particular school is at the discretion of the principal.

The Government intends to drive ahead with the current five-year programme to improve mental health in Victoria. There are now 56 day-training centres for intellectually handicapped children, providing for

2,762 children, and four more centres are planned for this year, catering for an additional 102 children.

The Queen Victoria Hospital will be rebuilt on a site at Clayton adjacent to Monash University, an excellent location for a teaching hospital. This will be a major step in improving hospital services for the south-eastern suburbs.

The Ombudsman opened his office on 30th October, 1973, and already has received 1,334 complaints for investigation, of which 78 have been found justified. Legislation to amend the Ombudsman Act in the light of experience will be presented.

The new tribunal on compensation for victims of criminal assault received its first applications in June, 1973. It has already made 508 awards involving $430,000 in compensation.

The Small Claims Tribunal has also been operating since February, 1974, and has had wide acceptance.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Detailed Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the 1974-75 financial year will shortly be presented to you, together with the necessary Appropriation Bill and other Budget measures.

MR. PRESIDENT AND HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

During this session of Parliament a heavy programme of legislation will be introduced on a wide variety of subjects. In addition to those measures I have already mentioned, the programme will include:—

Commercial fisheries, with increased involvement of fishing interests.

A completely new National Parks Bill, reorganizing the service and providing for additional national parks.

Cluster titles, to provide a new form of subdivision.

Registration and advertisement of contraceptives.

The Liquor Control Act.

Increased workers compensation.

Electoral redistribution.

A new Constitution Act for Victoria.

A completely new Act on land drainage.

Improved superannuation for married women in the Public Service.

Aboriginal Affairs (Transfer of Powers) Bill.

Construction of special accommodation units for elderly couples by the Housing Commission.

I have given you a brief outline of the major matters to be presented for your consideration in this session.

In opening this Second Session of the Forty-sixth Parliament of Victoria, I wish all members a productive and rewarding sitting.

I trust that your deliberations will be guided by Divine Providence towards the advancement and welfare of this State.

Copies of the Speech were handed by the Governor's Private Secretary to the President and the Speaker.

His Excellency and suite withdrew, and members of the Legislative Assembly retired from the Chamber.

The sitting was suspended at 3.5 *p.m. until* 4.58 *p.m.*

The PRESIDENT **(Sir Raymond Garrett)** took the chair, and read the prayer.

VAGRANCY (INSUFFICIENT MEANS) BILL.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): In order to preserve the privileges of this House,

and in accordance with the Standing Orders, I move that I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Vagrancy Act 1966.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): With great pleasure, I move—

That chairs be provided on the floor of this House for the Honorable Sir Harry Vincent Budd, President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, and Mr. Anthony George Worsley Greatorex, O.B.E., M.C., President of the Legislative Council of the Northern Territory.

It must surely be a unique occasion to have two Presidents of other Upper Houses in the Chamber at the one time. They are men who have given a lifetime of service in their particular fields. Sir Harry Budd has been President of the Legislative Council of the mother House of the Parliaments of Australia since 1966. He has had a most remarkable career in the newspaper world, and has been a member of Parliament for more than 28 years.

The other distinguished guest has been President of the Legislative Council of the Northern Territory since 1969. He has had a long and distinguished military career, and a colourful career in the Northern Territory.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province): I have much pleasure in applauding the motion moved by the Leader of the House. I welcome these distinguished guests to the Legislative Council of Victoria.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province): I also have much pleasure in supporting the motion moved by the Leader of the House and extending a welcome to the two distinguished gentlemen.

The motion was agreed to.

VICTORIAN INLAND MEAT AUTHORITY BILL.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare) (*By leave*): In the last session of Parliament, during the debate which authorized the sale of the assets of the Victorian Inland Meat Authority to the Co-operative Farmers and Graziers Direct Meat Supply Ltd., I undertook, in response to a request from Mr. McDonald, to provide copies of the documents relating to the transaction which took place. I wish to inform the House and Mr. McDonald that the documents will be available on the table of the Library for one week from tomorrow.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province) (*By leave*): I thank the Minister.

COMPANY TAKE-OVERS COMMITTEE.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That the Honorables M. A. Clarke, J. W. Galbally, and Haddon Storey be members of the Company Take-overs Committee.

The motion was agreed to.

HOUSE COMMITTEE.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That the Honorables the President (*ex officio*), A. K. Bradbury, D. G. Elliot, H. M. Hamilton, A. W. Knight, and S. R. McDonald be members of the House Committee.

The motion was agreed to.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That the Honorables the President, M. A. Clarke, R. J. Eddy, F. S. Grimwade, and J. M. Walton be members of the Joint Committee to manage the Library.

The motion was agreed to.

OSTEOPATHY, CHIROPRACTIC AND NATUROPATHY COMMITTEE.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That the Honorables I. B. Trayling and H. R. Ward be members of the Osteopathy, Chiropractic and Naturopathy Committee.

The motion was agreed to.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That the Honorables the President, B. P. Dunn, S. E. Gleeson, O. G. Jenkins, A. W. Knight, and I. A. Swinburne be members of the Printing Committee; three to be the quorum.

The motion was agreed to.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That the Honorables the President, W. M. Campbell, J. W. Galbally, K. S. Gross, C. A. M. Hider, S. R. McDonald, G. J. Nicol, I. A. Swinburne, and J. M. Tripovich be members of the Select Committee on the Standing Orders of the House; three to be the quorum.

The motion was agreed to.

STATUTE LAW REVISION COMMITTEE.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That the Honorables W. M. Campbell, M. A. Clarke, J. W. Galbally, F. S. Grimwade, Haddon Storey, and J. M. Tripovich be members of the Statute Law Revision Committee, and that the said committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

The motion was agreed to.

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That the Honorables K. S. Gross, I. A. Swinburne, and H. A. Thomas be members of the Subordinate Legislation Committee, and that the said committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

The motion was agreed to.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER No. 77.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That so much of Standing Order No. 77 as requires a member giving notice of a question to read it aloud to the House be suspended for the remainder of this session.

The motion was agreed to.

SESSIONAL ORDERS.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

That Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in each week be the days on which the Council shall meet for the despatch of business during the present session, and that the hour of meeting on Tuesdays be half-past four o'clock, on Wednesdays four o'clock, and on Thursdays eleven o'clock; that on Tuesday and Thursday in each week the transaction of Government business shall take predence of all other business; that on Wednesday in each week private members' business shall take precedence of Government business; and that no new business be taken after half-past ten o'clock.

The motion was agreed to.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province) (*By leave*): Mr. President, in another place Ministers answer questions orally but that is not the custom of this House. Will the Government consider a procedure by which Ministers who represent the various departments in this House answer oral questions about their departments?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): That would be a matter for consideration by the Government and the Ministers concerned.

HOUSING (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the

Housing Act 1958 to make provision with respect to the hiring of movable units to certain persons and for other matters.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

NEWMARKET SHEEP SALES BILL.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the regulation of the sale of sheep at the Newmarket sale-yards in the City of Melbourne.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

POUNDS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Pounds Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (EMPLOYÉS LONG SERVICE LEAVE) BILL.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Local Government Act 1958 to make further provision with respect to long service leave for municipal employees and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

MILDURA IRRIGATION AND WATER TRUST (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Mildura Irrigation and Water Trust Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

MELBOURNE AND METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (RATES) BILL.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Act 1958 in relation to rates made and levied thereunder and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

RIVER IMPROVEMENT (MINIMUM RATE) BILL.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 36 of the River Improvement Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

LATROBE VALLEY (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Latrobe Valley Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

GROUNDWATER (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Groundwater Act 1969.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION BILL.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to establish an electoral commission for dividing the State of Victoria

from time to time into electoral provinces for the Legislative Council and electoral districts for the Legislative Assembly and to amend The Constitution Act Amendment Act 1958 in connection therewith.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT BILL.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to abolish capital punishment.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL LANDS (DETERMINATIONS) BILL.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 6 of the Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963 with respect to the determination of questions, differences or disputes as to the application or operation of the said Act.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CRIMES (INHUMANE PUNISHMENTS ABOLITION) BILL.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to abolish certain inhumane punishments and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

VAGRANCY (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Vagrancy Act 1966.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

YARRA VALLEY (PROHIBITION OF HIGHWAYS) BILL.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make provision with respect to the preservation of the Yarra Valley by prohibiting the construction of streets and roads along the River Yarra.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CRIMES (SENTENCES) BILL.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Crimes Act 1958, the Justices Act 1958 and the Social Welfare Act 1970 with respect to sentences of imprisonment.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett) laid on the table his warrant nominating the Honorables A. K. Bradbury, W. M. Campbell, D. G. Elliot, H. M. Hamilton, V. T. Hauser, A. W. Knight, and H. R. Ward to act as Temporary Chairmen of Committees whenever requested to do so by the Chairman of Committees or whenever the Chairman of Committees is absent.

COMMAND PAPERS.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization) presented, by command of His Excellency the Governor, the report of the Judges of the Supreme Court for the year 1973.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare) presented, by command of His Excellency the Governor, the report of the Parole Board for the year 1971–72.

It was ordered that the reports be laid on the table.

PAPERS.

The following papers, pursuant to the directions of several Acts of Parliament, were laid on the table by the Clerk—

Country Fire Authority—Report for the year 1972-73.

Crimes Compensation Tribunal—Report for the year 1973-74.

Education Act 1958—

Primary Teachers Registration Board Regulations 1974.

Resumption of Land at Doveton—Certificate of the Minister of Education.

Secondary Teachers Registration Board Regulations 1973.

Technical Teachers Registration (Amendment) Regulations 1974.

Evidence Act 1958—Evidence (Examination of Shorthand Writers) Regulations 1974.

Exhibition Trustees—Report for the year 1973-74.

Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners—Statement of accounts for the year 1973.

Government Buildings Advisory Council—Report for the year 1973-74.

Grain Elevators Board—Report for the year ended 31st October, 1973.

Groundwater—Report of the investigation programme for the year 1972.

Hospitals Superannuation Board—Report for the year 1972-73.

Land Act 1958—Schedule of country lands proposed to be sold by auction.

La Trobe University—

Report of the Council, together with Statutes approved by the Governor in Council, for the year 1973 (seventeen papers).

Statements of income and expenditure for the year 1972.

Law Reform Commissioner—Report for the period 18th December, 1973, to 30th June, 1974.

Marketing of Primary Products Act 1958—

Proclamation declaring that oranges, mandarins and grapefruit shall become the property of the Citrus Fruit Marketing Board for a period of two years.

Proclamation declaring that tobacco leaf shall become the property of the Tobacco Leaf Marketing Board for a further period of two years.

Melbourne University—financial statements for the year 1972.

Mental Health Authority—Report for the year 1972.

Mines Department—Report for the year 1972.

Monash University—Report of the Council, together with Statutes approved by the Governor in Council, for the year 1973 (eleven papers).

National Gallery—Report of the trustees, together with statements of income and expenditure, for the years 1971-72 and 1972-73 (two papers).

National Parks—Report of the Advisory Committee for the year 1972-73.

Police Service Board—Determinations Nos. 219, 220, 221, 224 and 225 (five papers).

Publications—Report of the State Advisory Board for the period 6th September, 1973, to 30th June, 1974.

Public Service Act 1958—

Public Service (Public Service Board) Regulations.

Public Service (Public Service Board) Regulations — Regulations amended (Nos. 766 to 768; and Nos. 1 to 114) (one hundred and seventeen papers).

Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act 1959—General abstract of the number of live births, still-births, deaths and marriages registered in Victoria during the year 1973.

River Murray Commission—Report for the year 1972-73.

Statutory Rules under the Prerogative Powers of the Crown—Nos. 157 and 378.

Statutory Rules under the following Acts of Parliament—

Aerial Spraying Control Act 1966—No. 405.

Agricultural Lime Act 1958—No. 142.

Apprenticeship Act 1958—Nos. 342 and 399.

Audit Act 1958—Nos. 132 and 240.

Boilers and Pressure Vessels Act 1970—Nos. 341, 393, 394 and 406.

Children's Court Act 1973—No. 237.

Clean Air Act 1958—No. 252.

Coal Mines Act 1958—Nos. 125, 209 and 404.

Companies Act 1961—No. 303.

Consumer Protection Act 1972—No. 276.

Co-operation Act 1958—No. 145.

Co-operative Housing Societies Act 1958—No. 146.

Country Fire Authority Act 1958—Nos. 172, 247 and 376.

Country Roads Act 1958—Nos. 205, 206, 215 and 306.

County Court Act 1972—Nos. 162, 336, 369, 379 and 389.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1972—No. 299.

Discharged Servicemen's Preference Act 1943—Nos. 141, 169, 220 and 381.

Dried Fruits Act 1958—No. 277.

Education Act 1958—Nos. 160, 170, 272 and 357.

Education Act 1958, Teaching Service Act 1958—No. 308.

Egg Industry Stabilization Act 1973—No. 180.

Environment Protection Act 1970—No. 150.

Explosives Act 1960—No. 211.

Farm Produce Merchants and Commission Agents Act 1965—No. 129.

Films Act 1971—Nos. 138 and 312.

Firearms Act 1958—No. 219.

Fisheries Act 1968—Nos. 179, 254, 280 and 371.

Forests Act 1958—No. 131.

Friendly Societies Act 1958—No. 334.

Fruit and Vegetables Act 1958—No. 126.

Game Act 1958—No. 337.

Gas Act 1969—No. 382.

Grain Elevators Act 1958—Nos. 390 and 402.

Health Act 1958—Nos. 208, 267, 291, 292, 293, 294 and 295.

Health (Fluoridation) Act 1973—No. 370.

Home Finance Act 1962—No. 144.

Hospitals and Charities Act 1958—No. 391.

Inflammable Liquids Act 1966—Nos. 153 and 304.

Instruments Act 1958—No. 353.

Labour and Industry Act 1958—Nos. 127 and 340.

Land Conservation (Vehicle Control) Act 1972—No. 167.

Legal Profession Practice Act 1958—No. 347.

Lifts and Cranes Act 1967—No. 395.

Liquor Control Act 1968—No. 333.

Local Government Act 1958—Nos. 236, 263, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 307, 343 and 392.

Magistrates' Courts Act 1971—No. 178.

Magistrates' Courts Act 1971, Justices Act 1958—No. 363.

Marine Act 1958—Nos. 216, 251, 344, 345, 346, 355, 367 and 408.

Marketing of Primary Products Act 1958—No. 168.

Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Act 1958—Nos. 249 and 250.

Melbourne Harbor Trust Act 1958—No. 207.

Mental Health Act 1959—Nos. 221, 296 and 398.

Metric Conversion Act 1973—Nos. 128, 133, 134, 135, 137, 140, 151, 152, 154, 158, 163, 164, 166, 174, 175, 176, 177, 203, 214, 239, 241, 242, 243, 244, 246, 253, 255, 256, 258, 260, 261, 262, 266, 269, 271, 274, 278, 281, 282, 283, 290 and 302.

Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958—No. 259.

Milk and Dairy Supervision Act 1958—No. 397.

Mines Act 1958—No. 130.

Motor Accidents Act 1973—Nos. 245 and 377.

Motor Boating Act 1961—Nos. 165, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 301, 313, 314, 315, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326 and 327.

Motor Car Act 1958—Nos. 139, 147, 156, 171, 181, 298, 300, 305, 311 and 330.

Motor Car Traders Act 1973—Nos. 217 and 218.

Mt. Hotham Alpine Resort Act 1972—No. 238.

National Parks Act 1970—No. 257.

Nurses Act 1958—No. 248.

Pesticides Act 1958—No. 279.

Police Offences Act 1958—No. 328.

Police Regulation Act 1958—Nos. 159, 212, 213, 297, 310 and 383.

Printers and Newspapers Act 1958—No. 349.

Private Agents Act 1966—No. 329.

Property Law Act 1958—No. 350.

Protection of Animals Act 1966—Nos. 331 and 332.

Public Service Act 1958—No. 143.

Racing Act 1958—Nos. 372, 373, 374 and 375.

Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act 1959—Nos. 273 and 360.

Religious Successory and Charitable Trusts Act 1958—No. 351.

Road Traffic Act 1958—Nos. 173, 264, 268 and 270.

Scaffolding Act 1971—Nos. 338, 339 and 364.

Second-hand Dealers Act 1958—Nos. 136, 222, 316, 358 and 359.

Seeds Act 1971—Nos. 380 and 396.

Stamps Act 1958—Nos. 335 and 352.

State Development Act 1958—No. 356.

State Savings Bank Act 1958—Nos. 149, 161 and 309.

Strata Titles Act 1967—No. 354.

Sunday Entertainment Act 1967—No. 317.

Supreme Court Act 1958—Nos. 148, 204, 361, 362 and 366.

Teaching Service Act 1958—No. 210.

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—No. 401.

Transfer of Land Act 1958—No. 348.

Transport Regulation Act 1958, Commercial Goods Vehicles Act 1958—No. 265.

Valuation of Land Act 1960—Nos. 155 and 400.

Vegetation and Vine Diseases Act 1958—No. 403.

Victorian Development Corporation Act 1973—No. 365.

Weights and Measures Act 1958—Nos. 275, 368 and 407.

Stock Foods Act 1958—Proclamation altering the chemical standard of bran and pollard.

Teaching Service Act 1958—

Teaching Service (Classification, Salaries and Allowances) Regulations (Nos. 11 to 14, and 53 to 56) (two papers).

Teaching Service (Classification, Salaries and Allowances) Regulations—Regulations amended (Nos. 281 and 284) (two papers).

Teaching Service (Teachers Tribunal) Regulations — Regulations amended (Nos. 273 to 280, 282 and 283, and 285 to 288) (fourteen papers).

Tourism—Report of the Director for the period ended 30th June, 1972.

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—

Ballaarat and District Planning Scheme 1966, City of Ballaarat—Amendment No. 5, 1973.

Ballaarat and District Planning Scheme 1966, Shire of Ballarat—Amendments Nos. 1 and 2, 1973 (two papers).

City of Ararat Planning Scheme 1953—Amendment No. 14, 1973.

City of Bendigo Planning Scheme 1962—Amendments No. 13, 1973 and No. 14, 1974 (two papers).

City of Croydon Planning Scheme—Amendment No. 51, 1971.

City of Hamilton Planning Scheme—Amendment No. 5.

City of Knox Planning Scheme 1965—Amendment No. 59A, 1972.

City of Mildura Planning Scheme—Amendment No. 8, 1972.

City of Shepparton Planning Scheme 1953—Amendment No. 29, 1973.

Cranbourne Planning Scheme 1960—Amendments No. 4, 1973 and No. 8 (two papers).

Geelong Planning Scheme 1959, City of Geelong—Amendment No. 22, 1973.

Geelong Planning Scheme 1959, Shire of Corio—Amendments No. 16, 1973 and No. 15, 1974 (two papers).

Geelong Planning Scheme 1959, Shire of South Barwon—Amendments No. 38, 1972 and No. 41, 1973 (two papers).

Lara Planning Scheme 1961—Amendment No. 8.

Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme—Amendments No. 27, Part 2, with twenty maps, No. 44, with map, No. 46, and No. 48, with map (twenty-six papers).

Morwell Planning Scheme 1954—Amendment No. 43, 1972.

Ocean Road Planning Scheme 1955, Shire of Barrabool—Amendment No. 13, 1973.

Seymour Planning Scheme—Amendment No. 17.

Shire of Flinders Planning Scheme 1962—Amendments No. 43, 1972, Part 1, and No. 63 (two papers).

Shire of Lillydale Planning Scheme 1958—Amendments Nos. 26 and 27, 1971, and No. 38, 1973 (three papers).

Shire of Maffra Planning Scheme—Maffra Township, with maps (two papers).

Shire of Mornington Planning Scheme 1959—Amendments No. 49, 1970 and Nos. 88 and 89, 1973 (three papers).

Shire of Sherbrooke Planning Scheme—Amendments Nos. 52 and 53, 1972, Nos. 55, 57, 63, 67 and 68, 1973, No. 71, 1974 (eight papers).

Shire of South Gippsland Planning Scheme—Amendment No. 8, 1973.

Shire of Werribee Planning Scheme 1963—Amendment No. 18, 1971.

Town of Stawell Planning Scheme—Amendment No. 6, 1973.

Water Supply—Report of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission for the year 1972-73.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): I have to report that His Excellency the Governor attended the House this day, and was pleased to make a Speech, of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy. As the Speech is printed, I take it that honorable members do not desire that I should read it to them.

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER (Western Province): I move—

That the Council agree to the following Address to His Excellency the Governor in reply to His Excellency's opening Speech—

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, the Legislative Council of Victoria, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign,

and to thank Your Excellency for the gracious Speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

It is indeed a privilege for me to move the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech, especially on the occasion of Sir Henry Winneke's first Speech to Parliament as Governor of Victoria. As a former Chief Justice and Lieutenant-Governor of the State, Sir Henry is no stranger to these environs. Today we have welcomed him officially as Her Majesty's representative, and, as such, the custodian of a long and honoured tradition. It may seem appropriate, at least to some of us on this occasion, to reflect that at a time when in many parts of the world the image of government is tarnished and the fortunes of Parliamentary Government are at a low ebb, we in this State, as the inheritors of a long and ancient tradition — some would say an archaic system — may yet attract men of the highest integrity and distinction to the highest offices of Government, aloof from the partisanship of party politics. I have no doubt that Sir Henry Winneke will prove a worthy successor to Sir Rohan Delacombe, whose years of service to this State will long be remembered by its citizens.

In outlining the aims of the Government in the forthcoming session, His Excellency felt constrained to remind us of certain problems that beset us in this State and confront the Governments of all States. The first of these is long standing. Federalism implies co-operation, and although His Excellency pointed out in his Speech that the Victorian Government has co-operated with the Federal Government in the development and implementation of programmes and projects involving both Governments which are of importance and benefit to the people of Victoria, it is nevertheless greatly concerned that the powers vested in the State by its own Constitution and reserved by the Commonwealth Constitution, shall not be eroded away by unwarranted Commonwealth intrusion into fields for which this Parliament is responsible to the people of Victoria. If this were just an isolated incident, it would be of sufficient concern to all those who value the concept and reality of the Federal system. In effect, however, it is not an isolated incident but a continuous onslaught mounted by those dedicated, amongst other things, to the eclipse and final destruction of the States.

A prime example of this mania for the centralization of the decision-making process was provided recently by the Commonwealth roads legislation. This legislation, as honorable members no doubt recall, was intended to give the Federal Minister for Transport the power to approve or veto any road project in Australia. The consequences of this would have been incalculable. Fortunately the Senate, in its proper role as a State's House, was able to delete the more objectionable features of the legislation, and it has since been toned down.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: That was done on a party basis. The Senate was not acting as a State's House.

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER: As honorable members are well aware, the functions of the Senate are two-fold—firstly, as a House of review; and secondly, as a State's House.

The Hon. I. B. TRAYLING: I take it that members of the Labor Party will be given the same privileges as have been extended to Mr. Crozier in dealing with Commonwealth matters?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): In general, in this Chamber, debate is not permitted on Commonwealth matters. Honorable members are permitted only to touch on them, and I do not think Mr. Crozier has done more than that. Mr. Trayling will certainly be permitted to do exactly as Mr. Crozier has done,

which was to mount a not very determined attack on another Government.

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER: Thank you for your ruling, Mr. President. I was about to add that in money matters Canberra's stranglehold on State revenues continues to frustrate planned programmes in many areas, notably in the fields of education, hospitals, and — honorable members on the opposite side of the Chamber may be interested in the final category — mental health services. The reduction of, and disruption to, the school building programme is nothing short of calamitous.

I have long believed that the only answer to this sort of situation is the return to the States of some measure of real fiscal responsibility, at least on the Canadian pattern. I realize that, in the present circumstances, in the short term there is no possibility of that happening.

The most significant passage in His Excellency's Speech was the reference to the eroding effects of inflation. Despite the differing views on the subject expressed by several Federal Ministers and despite being told only a few months ago—at the time of the May Federal election—that inflation was no longer a problem, that it was declining and that the position was quite satisfactory, and recently from a more prestigious source that the problem was an attitude of mind—the expression used, if I recollect correctly, was "hoo-ha"—the ugly reality remains that Australia can boast of having one of the highest rates of inflation of all the so-called developed countries.

Inflation is the product of gross financial mismanagement of our economy, which is declining daily. The problems of the States have been enormously exacerbated by inflation that is running wild. If I may make so bold as to use an analogy, the economic direction of this country may be likened to the actions of a pilot of an aircraft who has strayed into adverse weather conditions beyond his flying skills and who quickly finds himself totally disorientated. Despite the constant and often fluctuating advice of his co-pilot and crew, the aircraft continues on a rapid descent while the pilot continues to try to interpret his wildly gyrating instruments. In your Air Force days, Mr. President, confronted with such a performance, you would have grounded the pilot permanently.

His Excellency referred to the success of the Government's decentralization policy. Since the inception of the ten-point plan two years ago, at least 150 new industries have moved to country areas. There are now almost 1,400 approved decentralized industries in the State. In Western Province, which Mr. Gross and I have the honour to represent, there are some prime examples of successful decentralization, notably in the major centres of Warrnambool, Hamilton and Portland. This is testimony of the effective partnership of local initiative and commercial expertise backed by the imaginative programme of the Division of Industrial Development. However, this programme has been clouded by Federal policies, particularly in relation to tariffs.

I agree that there are some merits in a tariff policy, but I feel constrained to remind honorable members once more that the effects of the present tariff policy have been devastating to many decentralized industries. It is well known to honorable members that many decentralized industries are concerned with the production of textiles and footwear, and they have been hardest hit. Only this morning further evidence of this was reported in the *Age* and other national daily newspapers in an announcement that another 240 employees in two woollen mills, one in Ballarat and one in Warrnambool, were being retrenched. Because of what has already happened in this area as a result of the Federal Government's tariff policies since last June, the number of employees who have lost their jobs is

now nearly 7,000. Members of the Labor Party could ponder on this fact.

Other formidable problems face decentralized industries. There is no doubt that the prohibitive trunk line and telex charges inhibit other industries from moving to the country. If honorable members have some doubts, they could ask representatives of decentralized industries what is the real impediment to decentralization. They would be given the universal answer that a more equitable system of telephone charges is needed.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD: Mr. Crozier could give some comparison between the charges for city members and country members.

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER: I thank Mr. McDonald for his comment. That is another fact which is sometimes forgotten by some of our city counterparts. Western Province covers an area of 12,009 square miles, and it is proposed to be expanded by the forthcoming redistribution. At present it encompasses some of the best agricultural, grazing and dairying land in Australia. Honorable members might expect with the prospects of a bountiful spring in most areas with the exception of the inundated areas in the north of the province, that a mood of cautious optimism prevails in most areas of Victoria. But all country members are aware that exactly the opposite is the case.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE: We have never had it so good!

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER: I understand that my colleague, Mr. Long, was present at a large and representative gathering which was told that the rural producers had never had it so good. Mr. Kent will well remember that occasion. This is a quaint appreciation of rural prospects, and it is no wonder that primary producers do not have a mood of optimism but exactly the opposite. Farmers and businessmen alike are preparing themselves for further economic shocks. It is difficult to imagine what further Draconian measures the Federal Treasurer can bring out of his Pandora's box. The State Government has somehow to work within the constrictions of an overriding Federal policy. I do not have to catalogue the series of dismal measures that have exacerbated the situation.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: Are you by any chance a cousin of Joh Bjelke-Petersen?

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER: I should be happy to supply Mr. Elliot with a suitable family tree. The Federal Government's rural policies have been a total disaster and about the only affliction that has not been inflicted on the farming community of Australia has been foot and mouth disease. Even this final calamity may be in prospect unless the quarantine regulations are more stringently enforced.

The second sessional period of the Forty-sixth Parliament commences against a sombre backdrop of plunging rural incomes, shattered business confidence, recurring industrial dislocation, rising unemployment and exploding inflation. Despite the present difficulties, as outlined in His Excellency's Speech, the Government intends to press on with important legislation. I thank His Excellency for his Speech; I have no doubt that this sessional period will continue to provide the sort of lively debate that we have come to expect in this Chamber. I hope those flashes of humour, which from time to time enliven the Parliamentary process, will also be in evidence.

The Hon. R. J. LONG (Gippsland Province): It is an honour for me to support Mr. Crozier by seconding the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. Firstly, I pledge my loyalty and that of the electors of Gippsland Province to Her Majesty the Queen. I congratulate His Excellency, Sir Henry Winneke, on his appointment to the high office

of Governor of the State of Victoria and I trust that he and Lady Winneke will have a long term in office. I pay tribute to His Excellency for the work that he carried out whilst he was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

I have always believed, and will continue to do so, that the most important virtue of any person who aspires to the office of a judge of the Supreme Court is that of courtesy. Litigants and others who appear in our courts are entitled to be treated courteously and should not be treated as though they were humbugs. When His Excellency occupied the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, on every occasion he showed this virtue of courtesy. It speaks volumes that I have never heard a complaint about him and that this virtue is extolled by people who are connected with or have been involved in the processes of the law. His Excellency treated everyone alike. I remember one notable occasion when, in an appeal case, an appellant appeared before him in person. He obviously showed a great mistrust, to say the least, of our legal system. As usual, His Excellency afforded this person every courtesy, which I do not think he was used to receiving. He won his appeal and has hardly been heard of since. If people who appear in court are treated courteously and fairly, their estimation of our legal system is enhanced. One often hears a person say, "I had a fair hearing". Such a person is happy, even though he lost.

In his Speech His Excellency said that the creation of the Ministry for Conservation last year brought together the agencies concerned with the Government's conservation activities and the protection of the environment. In the *Age* newspaper this morning a heading on page 1 reads—

Bush Fires Rob City of Water.

The article referred to a report which is alleged to have been prepared by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works and which is expected to be released soon, wherein it is stated that the 1939 bush fires were costing Melbourne about $2 million a year in lost water. More than 10 per cent of Melbourne's annual water consumption is being lost through regrowth of bushland following the 1939 fires. The article also states that before 1939 near the Maroondah catchment there were about 25 eucalypts and mountain ash gums to the acre, but after the fires the trees seeded and between 150 and 400 new trees an acre grew in the same area.

The financial loss as a result of bush fires does not stop in the Maroondah area; it extends over the whole of Victoria. The Australian Conservation Foundation advocates declaring millions of acres of Crown land national parks with the object of preserving the bush in its natural state and preventing erosion by prohibiting cattle grazing on the highlands. The object is laudable but the methods of achieving it are senile. It represents the view of conservation theorists, so-called experts.

I support a true and experienced conservationist, Merv. Pearson of Omeo, who has lived in the area for many years. He had a letter published in the *Bairnsdale Advertiser* of 20th June, 1974, in which he pointed out that there is no bush in its natural state. In the original forests the forest floor was covered in pasture and was the natural habitat of native fauna. However, this floor has become a wilderness of useless scrub that is not only a potential fire hazard but also is quickly restricting the natural function of our watersheds. Victoria's mountain ranges are largely basalt and slate, both of which are porous and absorb the water from the melting snow in spring without permitting much run-off. This water filters out through the rock crevices and feeds the springs lower down the mountain side.

The tragic state of Victoria's watershed is the direct result of man's intrusion and his ignorance of the consequences of fires that were

started both by design and accident. These fires forced the germination of seeds, resulting in excessive growth of trees and scrub, each successive fire permitting the growth of scrub and debris to make progressive fires more destructive until the whole environment of the bush rapidly deteriorated and some of the original flora and fauna became extinct. Before the growth of this scrub and debris, the bush provided pasture for cattle. Today there is little grass, and cattle can be grazed only on the clear country near or above the snow line.

The factors that led to the devastation of Victoria's catchment areas were, firstly, the terrific growth of scrub, the direct result of bush fires, particularly in 1939 and, secondly, the almost complete extermination of pasture on the lower ranges through the years of the rabbit plague. In 1939 fires raged through the catchment areas causing irreparable damage. The terrific growth that followed has not only disturbed the natural function of the watersheds but has created a fire hazard more dangerous than has ever previously existed. Billions of young trees which have grown up to 50 feet high and in many cases as densely as between 3,800 and 4,000 an acre since 1939 have absorbed most of the rain water that has fallen and a vast number of springs and minor creeks have ceased to flow. An honourable member asked how we could remedy this situation.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: I did.

The Hon. R. J. LONG: The solution is obvious. We must continue to make multi-use of our forests. This is the only way in which we can conserve them for future generations.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: What do you mean by multi-use?

The Hon. R. J. LONG: Over the years officers of the Forests Commission have shown a perfect understanding of this problem. More money must be poured into the Forests Commission so that it may farm the forests in the way that it has been advocating for some time.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: What about the suggestion that the commission retain some of its revenue, its royalties?

The Hon. R. J. LONG: That should be looked at. The Forests Commission is the best conservationist in this State and I have no doubt that it will carry on the work of preserving our forests for future generations.

On the motion of the Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until the next day of meeting.

VAGRANCY (INSUFFICIENT MEANS) BILL.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is a short Bill to amend the Vagrancy Act to enable a distinction to be made between social vagrants and those who might properly be termed criminal vagrants. The Bill envisages that those who are vagrants in a social rather than a criminal sense shall be entitled to care and protection rather than be sentenced to terms of imprisonment. The Bill is identical with Bills twice previously introduced into this Chamber, firstly during the final session of the last Parliament, and later in the first session of the present Parliament. Each of those Bills was referred to the Statute Law Revision Committee for examination and report. That committee is in fact well advanced with its inquiry and is nearing the stage when it will present a report. The effect of the prorogation of Parliament was to terminate the committee's inquiry at that point. The purpose of reintroducing the Bill is to enable the Statute Law Revision Committee to continue its inquiry.

On the motion of the Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until the next day of meeting.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): By leave, I move—

That the proposals contained in the Vagrancy (Insufficient Means) Bill be referred to the Statute Law Revision Committee for examination and report.

Tomorrow Mr. Galbally proposes to introduce a further Bill affecting the Vagrancy Act and it is proposed that the same course be taken in respect of that Bill so that the Statute Law Revision Committee can have the whole question before it for consideration.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province): The Opposition appreciates and applauds the action of the Minister and the interest that he has taken in this matter which has arisen from a Bill introduced some time ago. I feel that something constructive may come out of this matter which would not have occurred had the Minister not decided to take the course which he has.

The motion was agreed to.

NEWMARKET SHEEP SALES BILL.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Some honorable members will no doubt recall my ill-fated Bill relating to the same subject in 1972 when I made a very short speech advocating repeal of the Act. However, representations were received from the Bendigo area, certain thoughts were adopted and the matter was investigated by the Meat Industry Committee, which made a report last November.

The first recommendation of the Meat Industry Committee was that the provisions restricting sheep sales at Newmarket to Tuesday and Thursday should be amended to permit sheep sales on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. I should mention that the Bendigo market holds sheep sales on Monday and therefore would not be affected by this recommendation. The second recommendation of the committee was that the provision for the Melbourne City Council to determine another day for sheep sales when a public holiday falls on a sheep sale day should be retained. The third recommendation was that the provision exempting the sale of stud and store sheep from the other provisions of the Act should be retained; the fourth was that the provision fixing a penalty for the sale of sheep in breach of the Act should be retained; the fifth that the provisions requiring sheep to be booked for sale and limiting the number of sheep for sale on any one day should be repealed; and the sixth that the provision authorizing the Victorian Railways to refuse to carry sheep intended for sale at Newmarket should be repealed.

The Government acceded to those recommendations and the Bill gives effect to them. I commend it to the House.

On the motion of the Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until the next day of meeting.

MILDURA IRRIGATION AND WATER TRUSTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to change the depreciation provisions contained in the Mildura Irrigation and Water Trusts Act in so far as they apply to the First Mildura Irrigation Trust. The provisions will remain unchanged for the Mildura Urban Water Trust.

Section 132 of the Act requires both trusts to raise depreciation moneys unless the Minister is satisfied that sufficient funds exist in the depreciation account to finance all necessary replacements. It is also a requirement

that these depreciation moneys must be applied only towards replacing those assets on which depreciation was raised.

For the First Mildura Irrigation Trust in respect of its irrigation district, the Bill proposes a new arrangement placing this district on a par with the irrigation districts under the control of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission in regard to depreciation. However, there is one essential difference; for the latter districts, district cash surpluses are credited to the commission's Irrigation District Maintenance Equalization and Renewals Account whereas for the First Mildura Irrigation Trust's district, annual depreciation contributions will be charged against the trust's revenue and credited to the similar fund proposed for the trust.

This fund will be known as the First Mildura Irrigation District Maintenance Equalization and Renewals Account which will operate under the supervision of the Minister in the manner of a banking account for the First Mildura Irrigation Trust.

Payments to the account are to be made annually by the trust in accordance with Ministerial direction after certification by the Auditor-General. Withdrawals up to the total amount authorized by the Minister for any one year may be made at any time by the trust to meet the cost of the maintenance, renewal and replacement of works under the trust's control.

In the case of the Water Commission's Irrigation District Maintenance Equalization and Renewals Account, annual payments are made to this account by the Treasurer after certification by the Auditor-General, and the amounts withdrawn to meet maintenance and renewal costs are determined by the commission with the approval of the Minister.

The creation of the proposed account for the First Mildura Irrigation Trust will place the trust on a similar footing to the commission and will give it much greater flexibility in the application of depreciation funds to its works.

The Bill also contains an unrelated consequential amendment to section 170 of the principal Act which should have been made at the time the Act was amended in 1971. I commend the Bill to the House with pride, because the First Mildura Irrigation Trust is a very old trust, indeed an ancient trust, dating back almost to the days when the Chaffey brothers founded the area. In my opinion the trust is well-managed and a very business-like body which is dedicated and conscious of its duty to the community. The trust is well led by its chairman and its executive officer, Mr. Syd. Nice. However, I leave the history of the area to the local member, Mr. Wright, who has been very forceful on behalf of the trust in his representations to the Premier, the Water Commission and myself.

On the motion of the Hon. I. B. TRAYLING (Melbourne Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until the next day of meeting.

The sitting was suspended at 6.8 *p.m. until* 8.10 *p.m.*

RIVER IMPROVEMENT (MINIMUM RATE) BILL.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This is a small Bill to amend section 36 (3) of the principal Act. The section provides that the minimum rate levied on any property shall be 50 cents. However this minimum is very low and probably does not even cover the administrative costs involved in its collection. The River Improvement Trusts Association has been seeking an increase in the minimum rate for some time and, while the number of

assessments involved is small, an increase is considered justified. The proposed amendment will give the trusts some flexibility as it provides that the minimum rate shall be not less than $2 nor more than $4 as fixed by by-law. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of the Hon. A. W. KNIGHT (Melbourne West Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 17.

MELBOURNE AND METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (RATES) BILL.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its main purpose is to raise the present limits on the amounts in the dollar of the four rates which the Board of Works is authorized to make and levy.

The present high rate of inflation, the Commonwealth Government's decision to provide funds for backlog sewerage works by means of loans and the current high interest rates make inevitable an increase in rate charges for 1974-75 and for successive years while the inflationary trend continues. The sewerage and drainage rates are already at the statutory maxima and the other two rates are approaching their maxima. The board must find an additional amount of about $25 million during 1974-75, because of increased interest charges of $11 million and wage and material costs of $14 million. Increased rates are therefore essential to enable the board to finance its operations during the current financial year. The proposed new maxima are—

Rate	Amount for 1973–74	Present maxima	Proposed maxima
	cents	cents	cents
Water	3·2	3·75	7
Metropolitan, general (sewerage)	6·66	6·66	13
Metropolitan, improvement	1·4	1·66	2
Main drainage and river improvement	1·25	1·25	2
	New areas included in the metropolis under section 3 (5)		
Water	4·3	5	9
Sewerage	10·75	12	22

Since 1957 a number of areas have been included in the metropolis for water supply or sewerage, or both, by Order in Council pursuant to section 3 (5) of the board's Act. In the Bill these areas are referred to as "included land". At first such areas pay higher rates than the rateable properties in the original metropolis which financed the undertakings in the beginning. In due course, however, their rates become uniform with those in the original metropolis.

As I indicated earlier, the increases in the maximum amounts in the dollar for the four rates are the main provisions in the Bill, but there are a number of other incidental provisions which I shall describe briefly.

Firstly, the legislation will be deemed to operate from 1st July, 1974. This will ensure that the board can levy its rates for the whole period of the financial year from 1st July, 1974, to 30th June, 1975.

Secondly, the board will be authorized to fix the minimum amount payable under any water or sewerage rate in the included land and also under the metropolitan improvement and drainage rates. The position with respect to minimum amounts under the various rates varies considerably at present and is as follows—

Rate. *How Minimum Amount Fixed.*

Water—Fixed by board.

Sewerage—Fixed by board.

Metropolitan Improvement — No minimum.

Drainage—Fixed at 25c by the Act.

Included Land.

Water—Fixed by Governor in Council.

Sewerage—No minimum.

Uniform provisions are now proposed which will permit the board to fix the minimum in every case.

Thirdly, the present provisions in section 3 of the board's Act, which permit the inclusion of areas in the metropolis for water supply or sewerage purposes, or both, are to be amended. The amendment will transfer the special provisions for water and sewerage rates in section 3 to the general provisions in the Act, that is, to section 99 for water rates and section 175 for sewerage rates. This does not affect the board's present powers.

Provision for an increase in the ceiling on the board's rates was included in a Bill submitted to Parliament in April last but not passed. The matter is now one of considerable urgency. Apart from the difficulty of billing and collecting rates for some 800,000 properties in the remaining portion of the financial year the board faces the problem of financing its operations until rates commence to be received. I commend the Bill and strongly urge honorable members to give it a prompt passage through the House.

On the motion of the Hon. R. J. EDDY (Doutta Galla Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 17.

ADJOURNMENT.

RAILWAY FREIGHT RATES—HOUSING COMMISSION—LINGA-PINK LAKES ROAD—SNOWFIELDS—WATER COMMISSION WORK FORCE—TOMATO INDUSTRY.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North-Western Province): I rise to outline a decision taken by this Government which will cast some sort of shadow over Parliament. Country Victoria in particular has been dealt a disastrous and severe blow by a decision made by the Government last week. I refer to 22·5 per cent and up to 22·5 per cent increases in rail freights across the board. The announcement was made last week.

The Hon. O. G. JENKINS: Who said that?

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: Government back-benchers are miles behind because they do not read the newspapers. It is unfortunate that back-bench members of the Government party are kept in the dark about such important matters which it appears they have not had the opportunity of discussing in the party room or anywhere else.

The Hon. O. G. JENKINS: How would you know?

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: We will give Mr. Jenkins and other members the opportunity of standing up and being counted.

The Hon. C. A. M. HIDER (Monash Province): I take a point of order, Mr. President. I seek a ruling from the Chair whether this is a matter of Government administration because the alleged increases to which Mr. Dunn has referred have not been outlined in detail. An announcement has been made that there will be some increases. I do not

see how the honorable member can criticize a matter of administration when at this stage he is not aware of the actual details.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): I should like to uphold the point of order in part. What Mr. Hider has said is strictly correct, that the final decision has not been made. I ask Mr. Dunn to restrict his comments to what has appeared in the newspapers, but there is no indication that this is the final word and opinion of the Government. Mr. Dunn may complete his remarks.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North-Western Province): Mr. President, this statement was made by the Chairman of the Railways Board appointed by this Government. This is a good enough indication for me. Surely the railways are answerable to the Government and to the Minister of Transport, who has the ultimate responsibility over and above the railways administration. Therefore, the matter is in the hands of the Government.

Last Friday it was stated in the Melbourne *Sun News-Pictorial* by the Chairman of the Railways Board, Mr. Gibbs, that the Victorian Railways will increase freight charges by up to 22·5 per cent on 7th October this year. When I saw that statement I immediately contacted railways headquarters and spoke to the general manager, Mr. Hodges. I asked him for information on how this would affect country people and freights on grain and other produce. In a later telephone call I was given the following details. I was told that the statement in the press was correct, that there would be an up to 22·5 per cent increase in freights which would apply to all grain and produce with the exception that there would be certain rebates on wool and a rebate on livestock. I was informed that there would be an increase of 20 per cent in freight on livestock with a 10 per cent rebate where ten van lots or more were consigned in one lot to the one destination. There would be very few such consignments. I was told that the freight on general merchandise would increase by up to 15 per cent, which affects groceries and all other goods supplied to the country.

The Hon. C. A. M. HIDER: And the city.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: I shall come to the city. A week before, the Premier said that there would be no increase in fares. On 28th August the Melbourne *Herald* reported that the Premier said that fares would not increase in the foreseeable future. In the same statement the Premier went on to outline that no over-all freight increases would be introduced in the Budget. It appears that the increases will come whether they are included in the Budget or not.

It is a hypocritical action when there is no increase in fares and charges for one part of the Victorian community to increase the charges paid by the farmers and country people. The position is as simple as that. The Government is asking country people and primary producers to subsidize travel in the city. I invite Mr. Hider to visit the country; I will take him around.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): Order! There are far too many interjections. Matters raised on the adjournment should be brief and to the point. There should be no interjections.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: I wish some of the interjectors would come to the country to see what the farmers and country people think of this Government's decision.

The Hon. C. A. M. HIDER: The decision has not been made. I do not know what they think.

The Hon. A. K. BRADBURY: Who is running the country?

The Hon. C. A. M. HIDER: It is not the Country Party.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There are far too many interjections. I ask Mr. Dunn to continue but to make his remarks as brief as possible.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: This is one of the most important matters of concern to country people to come before this Parliament for a long time. Freight increases on merchandise will have a great effect in the country. Country people are the big payers of freight; they pay it both ways—on their produce and on goods returned. I invite Mr. Hider to come into the electorate.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE: I only wish Mr. Dunn would attack the Socialist Government in Canberra.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: I am sick of this Government laying all the blame at the foot of the Government in Canberra.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE: I hope that statement gets some publicity in tomorrow's press.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: The Victorian Government wants the best of both worlds.

The PRESIDENT: I hope Mr. Dunn is wishing to round off his remarks.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: Mr. President, I have not fully dealt with this item, which is of great importance to this State and to the people of Victoria, and with your blessing I intend to continue.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Matters raised on the adjournment should be brief. I have been rather tolerant, but I think Mr. Dunn should now try to round off his remarks.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: Several points should be raised in this forum. This Parliament is the only place in which members can express these sorts of views and this is the only opportunity we have of doing so. I do not consider that the freight increases, particularly as they affect primary producers, can be justified.

In October last year there was an increase of 5 per cent in the cost of transporting grain, which means that in two years there has been an increase of 27·5 per cent.

The Hon. C. A. M. HIDER: By rail?

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: By rail; primary producers are not allowed to cart by road.

The Hon. C. A. M. HIDER: I am fully aware of the limitations. There have been some increases in road transport costs.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: Primary producers are not allowed to cart wheat by road to the seaboard. This decision has been made just in time to catch all the superphosphate traffic and all the wheat and grain harvest. The railways convey wheat and grain simply from point A to point B. The proposed increases will add from 4 to 5 cents a bushel on freight from country areas. Most country areas pay 19 or 20 cents a bushel for the railways to deliver wheat and grain from its point of delivery to the seaboard. In the past, an average grower who delivered 10,000 bushels would pay approximately $2,100 in rail freight. The increase will add at least $500 to his payment for freight. Perhaps retailers can pass on this extra cost, but the farmer is at the end of the inflation line and has no one to whom he can pass it on.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE: Do you believe that the Commonwealth Government has done anything to hurt the farmers?

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: The Minister of Housing wants to take the credit for everything that is good and blame the Commonwealth Government for everything that is bad. The increase in freight rates is a disaster. It is most regrettable that the Government, in one week, can offer concessions to the city and, in the next week, make the country people of this State, particularly the primary producers, subsidize it.

An examination of the figures for 1970–71, which are the latest that I could obtain—I would have to ask a question to obtain later information—reveals that 29 per cent of rail freight income was derived from grain. In fact, 16 per cent of the total railway

revenue was obtained from grain traffic. It is the country people who will pay dearly under this scheme.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): I have been tolerant with Mr. Dunn on the question of time and I ask him to round off his remarks. Mr. Dunn is not making a second-reading speech; he is raising a matter on the motion for the adjournment of the sitting.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: I am echoing the views of all wheat growers in the country, and in rounding off my remarks I express the hope that the Liberal members who represent country Victoria will stand up and be counted on this issue and will rebel against their Government's decision. Irrespective of whether it likes doing so, the Government must ultimately accept the responsibility for the situation to which I have referred. The Government should review the proposed increases with a view to doing away with them completely or making some other adjustment.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province): Most honorable members, and perhaps you, Mr. President, would have read in this morning's newspapers an article concerning a Mrs. Gregory, who had an unfortunate experience with the Housing Commission. While Mrs. Gregory was absent from her residence—flat No. 2, 181 Elizabeth Street, Richmond—members of the commission saw fit to break into the flat and take away her furniture, clothes, soft furnishings and, in fact, everything. Some of the items were dumped at a tip and have not been seen since. In all fairness, I feel I should read the complete reply furnished by the Secretary of the Housing Commission, Mr. L. F. V. Symes, in answer to a telephone query by me this morning.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): Did Mr. Elliot telephone the secretary and is the letter he proposes to quote a written reply received from the secretary as a result of the telephone call?

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: That is correct.

The PRESIDENT: The letter would bear today's date?

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: Yes, Mr. President; it was delivered to me at the instance of Mr. Symes, for which I thank him, just before Parliament met this afternoon. The letter reads—

> I refer to your representations and inquiries in respect to the matter of Mrs. Dorothy Gregory, formerly of flat 2, 181 Elizabeth Street, Richmond.
>
> The commission have considered the circumstances of this case, the facts being—
>
> Mrs. Gregory was not evicted—no notices at all had been served on her—

That is an important point—

> as her tenancy had been satisfactory and the rent account was in credit.
>
> Some time in July Mrs. Gregory had mentioned to a commission officer that she was intending to vacate and on Saturday, 17th August, 1974, at 6.30 p.m. the commission's resident estate officer noticed a car and trailer loaded with household furniture outside 181 Elizabeth Street.

There are many high-rise flats in the immediate area.

> Some days later an officer of a Commonwealth department contacted the estate supervisor asking whether the tenant of 2/181 Elizabeth Street had vacated as he had made several visits to the flat without being able to make contact and indicating that the flat appeared to be vacant.
>
> The resident estate officer visited the flat on Thursday, 22nd August, 1974, was unable to make contact, gained the impression the flat was vacant and noticed that the commission lock had been removed and replaced with an uncoded cylinder which practice is in contravention of a clause of the conditions of tenancy.
>
> The flat was observed over the next few days and as it still appeared that the unit was unoccupied the opinion was strengthened that the tenant had vacated.
>
> On Monday, 26th August, 1974, the resident estate officer discovered three other flats on the Richmond estate which had been abandoned—

I do not know how this is relevant to Mrs. Gregory, but I am quoting it from the letter—

> the tenants having vacated without having given any notice to the commission or without having returned the keys but this is not an uncommon occurrence.

In view of the circumstances related above in relation to flat 2 the resident estate officer made a judgement on Wednesday, 28th August, 1974—

With that statement, I heartily concur—

that Mrs. Gregory had also vacated and accordingly he arranged for the maintenance officer to replace the lock, remove any contents of the flat and prepare the unit for reletting.

I suppose it is normal practice, if the officers are doing their job properly, to ascertain whether the flats are occupied as they are sorely needed in the community.

It is normal policy to take into store items of any value and dispose of the balance and this procedure was followed in this instance.

On Sunday, 1st September, 1974, Mrs. Gregory with a friend called at the estate supervisor's flat inquiring why the lock on the flat had been changed and requested access to pick up her clothing. The circumstances were explained to her and she was given access to the flat. Mrs. Gregory at this interview indicated she was living at Brunswick and at no time requested possession.

I understand Mrs. Gregory was in the process of moving from one address to the other.

The items of value taken into store at South Melbourne were handed over to Mrs. Gregory on Monday, 2nd September, 1974, and the items disposed of are the subject of a claim submitted by Mrs. Gregory's solicitor and the claim is at present under consideration by the commission.

In accordance with normal procedure any rent credit at the time of vacation will be refunded to the ex-tenant.

The actual value of the clothing that was disposed of at the tip by the Housing Commission is possibly a moot point; I readily accede that it could be a matter for argument. Through her solicitor, Mrs. Gregory has claimed $1,500 for the relevant articles. However, it is a matter for discussion and should be referred to the men who disposed of the material at the tip. I suppose their word would count for something. What amazes me is that a woman with three children should have to go to the supervisor of the Housing Commission area to ascertain the whereabouts of the key with which to gain access to her flat, especially when she had paid rent for the flat and the stage had not yet been reached when the rent was overdue. In fact, there was a rental credit of $5 or $6 in Mrs. Gregory's favour for the occupancy of flat 2, 181 Elizabeth Street, Richmond.

I do not want to lay it on thick, although I could do so, but the House is entitled to an explanation of the inner workings of the Housing Commission which would create such an embarrassing situation for this woman. Mrs. Gregory has obviously been mistreated. The mistreatment may not have been deliberate, but I do not think the system is right when it creates a set of circumstances such as I have stated and heaps this injustice on Mrs. Gregory and her three children.

I ask for an explanation as soon as possible; maybe now. The Minister may have further knowledge pursuant to the letter I received from the commission this afternoon. I am sure honorable members will agree that the Housing Commission should adopt a system which would allow more humanitarian treatment than that given to Mrs. Gregory.

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province): I want to refer to a matter of urgent Government administration which any one of three Government departments could rectify. I refer to a horror stretch of road in the Ouyen–Murrayville area of the North-Western Province between Linga and the Pink Lakes. The road is about 10 miles in length, 3 miles of which is private property, and 7 miles of which is shire property. In this area there are three main industries. Tourism is one of the industries, and tourists drive along this road to the Pink Lakes. At this time of the year the water starts to turn pink, as the name of the lakes denotes. It is a beautiful sight during the summer; the shallow water evaporates and turns into salt, and this does have commercial value. There are no homes in the area, but

there are some wheat farmers who use the road to transport their harvest to the Linga rail siding.

The third industry is salt mining. During the summer, after evaporation of the water, the salt is scooped up and placed in heaps. It is later transported by truck from the lake to the Linga railway siding. In the old days camels performed this function; they were tied head to tail with bags of salt over their backs. Subsequently, a small gauge railway was used but this proved to be uneconomical, and the work is now performed by trucks. The road surface at the moment is in a deplorable condition.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: What is the status of the road? It may help us if we know whose business it is.

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT: I shall come to that aspect. With the incoming shire president, councillor Jack Kinnersly, councillor Bernie Brown, and engineer Mr. Robert Hocking, I inspected this road recently. It will cost $7,000 to put the road in working order. Cheetham Salt Ltd. has the right to mine the salt. The company pays the local council only $35 a year in rates, and the shire is understandably not prepared to meet the cost of building up the road. I understand that the council applied to the Country Roads Board for a special grant with which to do the work. The board replied that for various reasons the shire would have to fit the work in with its normal programme of unclassified roads work. The shire which does not have adequate money to complete its existing priorities felt that it would not be fair to alter these priorities. Therefore the Country Roads Board could not assist.

The shire asked me to take up the matter and I raised it with the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, who is also Minister for Tourism, the Hon. Murray Byrne, because not only is this area a tourist attraction, but also the salt mining industry is carried on there as an approved decentralized industry. Approximately 22,000 tonnes of salt are produced each year and at $10 a tonne this represents earnings of about $220,000. In reply to my representations, the Minister for State Development and Decentralization wrote to me on 30th May, 1974, as follows—

Dear Mr. Wright,

Re Shire of Walpeup—Access Road Subsidy—Sunray Salt Pty. Ltd.

Actually, the incorrect reference to Sunray Salt Pty. Ltd. was later corrected to Cheetham Salt Ltd. The letter proceeded—

Thank you for your letter of 6th May, 1974, concerning the reconstruction of Linga North Road in the Shire of Walpeup at an estimated cost of $7,000.

I regret to advise that my department's policy on access road subsidies precludes assistance towards maintenance and reconstruction work of any kind.

I then approached the Minister of Lands because I realized that there was a royalty of 75 cents a tonne on the salt which, for 22,000 tonnes, would yield revenue, according to my arithmetic, of $16,500. I wrote to the Minister suggesting that it would not be unworthy of the Government to allocate 25 cents of that royalty of 75 cents towards the upkeep of the road, because without the road the industry would not exist. The Minister of Lands replied to me on 23rd August, 1974, and stated—

Re Linga–Pink Lakes Road.

I refer to your personal representations of 7th August, 1974, on behalf of the Shire of Walpeup concerning the maintenance of a road serving an area of Crown land in the Parish of Mamengoroock held under lease by Cheetham Salt Ltd. for the collection and removal of salt.

The suggestion is that part of the royalties collected by this department for salt extraction be applied towards road works but it is my opinion that any such diversion is simply not possible within the existing legislative and financial structure.

I am led to believe that in 1966 the Shire of Wycheproof through the Mallee Regional Committee, sought assistance from the then Division of State Development for the construction and/or maintenance of roads to give access to Lake Tyrrell. I am not aware of the precise outcome of such representations but I think it was established at the

time that if Government financial assistance for road construction etc. was considered to be desirable, then this should be given by a grant through an appropriate body and not by the diversion by this department of royalty revenue, which is required to be paid to Consolidated Revenue.

I regret therefore that the shire's request that say 25 cents per tonne royalty be paid towards road works, cannot receive further consideration by my department.

The Victorian Railways also benefit from this. The freight on 22,000 tonnes—it might be closer to 25,000 tonnes—at $5.15 a tonne is worth over $110,000 to the railways. It is possible that the freight will be increased by 20 per cent in October and that would result in the railways receiving $135,000.

The situation is an unhappy one for the Shire of Walpeup and its ratepayers. The Government receives all this revenue but it cannot find the sum of $7,000 so that the enterprise can continue. As I have pointed out, after processing, this is worth $250,000 to the decentralized industry. It is worth $16,000 to the Lands Department and over $100,000 to the Victorian Railways. Yet the municipality is unable to obtain additional funds to do the necessary work at a time when the Government is receiving this vast revenue. Surely the Government can afford the necessary $7,000 to prevent this road from becoming unusable. The Minister is well known for his interest and support of these projects and I hope he will give some consideration to what I have said.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province): I address this matter to the attention of the Minister for Tourism. An announcement appeared in the *Age* of 31st August to the effect that the State Government had set up a committee to plan and co-ordinate development of Victoria's commercial snowfields. The State already has the Land Conservation Council which is charged with the responsibility to tell Parliament what should be done with Victoria's alpine areas. Presumably by direction of Cabinet, the State Development Committee is at present investigating the development of our snowfields in relation to tourism. I had the pleasure of meeting the members of the committee at Mount Buffalo the other day during their visits to these areas.

We also have the Alpine Resorts Development Advisory Committee, known as ARDAC, a body set up by the Government to advise it on the development of these areas in all the ways which are raised in the press statement, including the provision of sewerage, drainage, roads, and other services. The committee had been advising the Government for several years. A former member of this House, Mr. Bridgford, was a member of the committee which visited each mountain and made a report on it. We also have an Alpine Resorts Committee which reports on these matters to Government departments.

Now, the Minister has announced that this new committee will be set up and that it will have representatives of the Victorian Ski Association, the Ministry for Conservation, the Forests Commission, the Department of Health, the Lands Department, and the Ministry of Tourism. It seems that this will be another committee whose work will overlap that of the present committees investigating these important matters. Nobody is more interested than I in the development of the alpine areas, but I should like the Minister to inform the House who are the members of the committee and what are its terms of reference to undertake these investigations.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province): The matter I raise concerns the Minister of Water Supply and the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission. There is a possibility of retrenchments within the commission's work force in country areas, and even at its head office. In the past few years, two factors have developed. Mr. Ward mentions that there is now plenty

of water. This has a bearing on the irrigation maintenance account. It contains about $600,000 less this year than it did last year for this very reason. Consequently, the work of officers financed from this account is under considerable pressure, and in some areas which I represent there is great speculation about what will happen. The second factor is that because of the over-all problem of shortage of loan funds the construction branch of the commission is in the same situation of not having adequate finance, and I understand that there is also a possibility of retrenchments there.

Reports in today's press state that in some country areas the percentage of the work force unemployed is as high as 2·5. This is serious. The Commonwealth Government has indicated that it may be prepared to allocate finance for expenditure on water and sewerage works for the relief of unemployment. I ask the Minister of Water Supply whether he has taken account of this and what the result has been.

No honorable member underestimates the gravity of the unemployment situation, but I have no doubt that in some country areas it will get worse before it gets better. If the Victorian Government, by itself or with the assistance and co-operation of the Commonwealth Government, can provide additional finance to the commission, it may mean that members of the commission's work force will not be retrenched.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province): I raise a matter which comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Agriculture and I ask the Minister for Social Welfare to convey my remarks to him. It relates to the operation of the Tomato Processing Industry (Uniform Agreement) Act which was passed in 1973. That Act provides for a contract which has brought a great deal of stability to the tomato industry in overcoming disputes between the growers and processors. Unfortunately, this season there has been a dispute about the price to be paid by the processors for the tomatoes.

Last season, the first price offered by the processors was 90 cents a 48-lb. case but as a result of a disastrous season the price became $1.20 a case. Now, the processors are offering $1.51 a 48-lb. case, which represents a 25 per cent increase on last year's price. The growers are asking for $1.60 a case which represents a 33·3 per cent increase. This is in line with the increase in the price of tomatoes in the shops. At present, the situation is deadlocked with the growers insisting on $1.60 a case and the processors sticking to their offer of $1.51.

I ask the Minister, as a matter of urgency, to appoint an independent arbitrator who can establish the present cost of production, particularly the cost of labour. Last year, the cost of picking was 40 cents a case. With inflation, higher wages, and the fact that this year the pickers will be unionized and working under an award, the cost of picking may be considerably more than 40 cents a case. Tomatoes are grown under irrigation and it is possible that the cost of water will increase although the Minister has not yet indicated that.

If a price could be established now by an independent arbitrator to settle the dispute between the growers and the processors, the position could be reassessed at the beginning of February. Tomatoes will be picked in February, March and April and there may be a different financial climate then because of the effects of inflation. I think the growers would be prepared to come to terms with the processors under these conditions. I suggest that the price of $1.60 is reasonable, particularly as the price in California has increased by 60 per cent this year and because there is a world-wide shortage of tomatoes.

Probably someone in the Department of Agriculture would make a suitable arbitrator. Under the Act,

the Minister is responsible for the supervision of the industry and as far as I know there have been no complaints about the administration of the department. An economist within the department could work out the cost of labour, superphosphate, fuel and water and re-examine the position on, say, 1st February, to see how costs had risen and allow an increase in price to compensate the growers.

I appeal to the Minister for Social Welfare to direct this matter to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture as soon as possible with the view of having such an independent arbitrator appointed now to assess the present cost position and to reassess costs at a later date before picking starts.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare): I first refer to the matter of reported great increases in freights, as Mr. Dunn put it, for country areas. As all honorable members know, there will be a serious deficit in railway finances this year. If it were not for the railways deficit there would be no budgetary problems in this State. However, the Government sees the railways deficit as a cost which they should not be required to balance because of the many beneficial results of subsidizing rail transport for both city and country people. When we are considering passenger rail fares in Melbourne one important point to remember is that a rise in fares is counter-productive because patronage and railway revenue fall and the users of the railways for freight have to raise their prices to meet the resulting increased freight charges. Therefore, nothing is achieved by increasing passenger rail fares in the city.

The second point is that there will be an increase in freight carried by road. The increased charges have not been decided on. Mr. Dunn should not bring up this subject on the adjournment as a matter of Government administration when he does not know what the proposed freight increase will be. Mr. Dunn quoted 22·5 per cent. The freights may rise up to 22 per cent but there will certainly not be an across-the-board increase of 22 per cent in rail freight. In any event freights for city manufacturers and city users will rise in exactly the same way as the freights for country users. It is also true that the returns of wheat producers this year will be higher than last year.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: I did not say that.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: I have said it and if the honorable member cares to contradict me I shall be interested. It would not be improper if some of the extra revenue which will flow to wheat growers this year were provided by them to help in a minimal way to contain this year's deficits.

Mr. Wright referred to a road from Linga to Pink Lakes. The road to which he referred was an unclassified road which is the responsibility of the municipality. When the municipality wishes to upgrade its priorities for the construction of this road, it will be entitled to funds which may be contributed by the Country Roads Board to unclassified roads, but I point out that the total funds which will be available from the Commonwealth Aid Roads Fund for road construction this year will build fewer roads than last year.

Mr. Clarke alluded to tomato contracts. If my memory is correct, the Act provides for a voluntary conference between growers and processors on tomato contracts to decide on a price. I presided for a whole day over one of these conferences and I have seldom engaged in a more useless exercise. There is little possibility that this type of conference will work. I understand that the Minister proposes to introduce an amendment to the Act which will provide for compulsory arbitration to decide on the price that should be contracted between the processors and the growers of tomatoes. However, I will direct this matter to the attention of the Minister.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): Mr. Elliot mentioned a news item that appeared in the Melbourne *Age* this morning. I preface my remarks by saying that I am the Minister responsible for the Housing Commission, whose record is second to none. Since the commission was established in 1946 it has housed a third of a million people in the Victorian community and has built 80,000 home units. I should like all honorable members to remember those figures. This morning the following article appeared in the *Age*—

MOTHER OF THREE EVICTED FROM HER FLAT.

A deserted wife and her three children have been evicted from their Housing Commission flat in Richmond and most of their belongings dumped on a rubbish tip.

Mrs. Dorothy Gregory, 38, left the flat in Elizabeth Street, Richmond, on August 29, to take her three children away for three days. When she returned the commission had changed the lock on her front door and removed the family's clothing, personal belongings, furniture and carpets. "The boards were bare," Mrs. Gregory said last night.

The report goes on to say that supposedly the commission dumped some of Mrs. Gregory's belongings on a tip, that she was claiming $1,500 for wrongful eviction and for the value of goods which have been disposed of from her flat, and that the matter was in the hands of a solicitor.

I read this report on the way to my office this morning. Immediately I arrived there I requested a full inquiry. Mr. Elliot read to the House the result of the inquiry and I appreciate that he did not omit one word. However, I must emphasize some points more than did Mr. Elliot in the reply that has been submitted to me by the commission. Mrs. Gregory was not evicted. The purpose of the news item was to denigrate the Housing Commission. The heading read, "Mother of Three Evicted from Her Flat". Mrs. Gregory was not evicted.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province): Mr. President, I rise on a point of order. The Minister, who from time to time is given to making interjections and rather nasty remarks, to put it kindly, is reflecting on my integrity by suggesting that I did not accentuate properly the fact that the Housing Commission said quite unequivocally that Mrs. Gregory was not evicted. He is making mountains out of molehills for purely political purposes.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): Order! The Minister did not indicate in an unpleasant way that Mr. Elliot was withholding anything contained in that letter. The honorable gentleman merely stated that he wished to emphasize certain parts that had not been accentuated.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: Why does not the Minister answer the question?

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE: I will answer the question. Mrs. Gregory was not evicted, as the news item claims. No notices were served on her as her tenancy had been satisfactory. Her rent account was in credit. Mrs. Gregory was a very good tenant. Some time in July Mrs. Gregory mentioned to a commission officer that she intended to vacate. On Saturday, 17th August, 1974, at 6.30 p.m., the commission's resident estate officer noticed a car and trailer loaded with household furniture outside her flat at 181 Elizabeth Street. Some days later an officer of a Commonwealth department contacted the estate supervisor asking whether the tenant at 181 Elizabeth Street had in fact vacated as he had made several visits to the flat without being able to make contact and he indicated that the flat appeared to be vacant.

The resident estate officer visited the flat on 27th August, 1974. I remind honorable members that in this morning's newspaper report Mrs. Gregory said that she did not leave the flat until 29th August. The resident estate officer visited the flat on 22nd August, 1974, and was unable to make contact. He gained the impression

that the flat was vacant and noticed that the commission lock had been removed from the door and replaced with an uncoded cylinder lock which is in contravention of the conditions of tenancy. During the next few days the flat was observed and as it still appeared that the unit was unoccupied the opinion was strengthened that the tenant had vacated because she had already told the commission that she intended to vacate.

On Monday, 26th August, 1974, the resident estate officer discovered three other flats on the Richmond estate which had been abandoned. This is a regular feature. People leave these flats without giving the commission any notice. Their rent may be paid.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: The Minister should go into the record.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): Order! The Minister is attempting to reply to the question. If Mr. Elliot continues to interject I shall suggest to the Minister that he does not reply. Does Mr. Elliot wish to hear the Minister's reply?

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: Not particularly. It is a lot of boloney.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE: I want to answer the question because at lunchtime today I was interviewed by *This Day Tonight* on this subject. I gave the answer. I did not listen to the programme but tonight I was telephoned by a person I have never met. She said, "Mr. Dickie, on *This Day Tonight* you answered accusations by Mrs. Gregory and all they did was put your face on and blank out your voice. Mr. Peach announced that this is what Mr. Dickie said". I thank Mr. Elliot for allowing me the opportunity of providing the exact answer that I attempted to get over the media tonight without success.

Three other estate homes were found to be abandoned on the same day. This is happening all the time. Tenants vacate flats without giving notice to the commission or returning the keys. This is not an uncommon occurrence. In view of the circumstances that I have related, the resident estate officer made a judgment on Wednesday, 28th August, that Mrs. Gregory had also vacated the premises. Accordingly he arranged for the maintenance officer to replace the lock that she had changed illegally. He removed the contents of the flat and prepared the unit for reletting. It is normal policy to take into store items of any value and dispose of the remainder. In this instance this procedure was followed.

On 1st September, 1974, Mrs. Gregory, with a friend, called at the estate supervisor's flat, inquired why the lock on the flat had been changed and requested access to pick up her clothing. The circumstances were explained to her and she was given access to the flat. At this interview Mrs. Gregory indicated that she was now living at Brunswick and at no time did she request possession. The items of value taken into store at South Melbourne were handed over to Mrs. Gregory on Monday, 2nd September, 1974, and the items disposed of—for which Mrs. Gregory claims $1,500—are now the subject of a claim between her solicitor and the Housing Commission, and we will pay the full $1,500 if Mrs. Gregory can prove that that was the value of the goods she left.

All this has blown up out of an issue which is not correct. This mother of three was not evicted. The newspapers and the media have tried to keep this story running but it has been a fizzer. As I said, I tried to give an answer on television tonight, and was not permitted to do so; they blanked me out by letting my lips move without voice, and then Mr. Peach gave the answer. I thank Mr. Elliot for having raised the matter in the House tonight, because it has given me the opportunity of providing a correct answer.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): I am also grateful to Mr. Swinburne for raising a matter

concerning the snowfields of Victoria. Mr. Swinburne has for a long time made a valuable contribution to the snowfields, and would have some knowledge of their value as a tourist industry, which last year was $30 million. At present more than 15,000 people are ski-ing in the snowfields, which are a rarity in the southern hemisphere.

Six months ago I received representations from members of Parliament, municipalities and people associated with the Victorian snowfields about the problems which they face with rationalization, control and their relationships with municipalities. I met with members of the Alpine Resorts Development Advisory Committee, on which are represented about eight Government departments directly concerned with the snowfields, including the departments of conservation and health, the State Electricity Commission and others, as well as people involved directly with the resorts and snow bodies.

The snowfields have sprung up chaotically over many years, and the multitude of Government bodies and instrumentalities involved in their development has blocked real progress. Mr. Swinburne and others have known of this for a long time, and the way in which the snowfields have been developed has not been a credit to the Government. I asked the advisory committee to examine all aspects of the snowfields and issue a general report. There was total agreement between all Government departments represented on that body of hard-working, dedicated people. The committee was asked, firstly, to rationalize its own over-all control; secondly, to have discussions with the municipalities because the snowfields come within certain municipalities but do not receive the benefits of municipalities, and thirdly, to investigate ways in which the Government could back the snowfields, particularly by Government guarantees, and to give protection to the preservation of alpine areas generally. The committee did a great deal of work, spoke to many people and dealt with one of the Parliamentary Counsel, an enthusiastic skier, Mr. George O'Brien.

Not long ago I was surprised to see a reported press statement by Dr. Mosley, who I understand is the director of the Australian Conservation Foundation, that the Government was going to take over some areas, develop new areas and interfere with conservation and other matters. I asked people associated with my department to make public statements that new areas are not being opened up. The responsible bodies are being asked to meet with the authorities and present a report for the department and the committee that is looking into the various aspects of tourism.

It would be of some value if the committee presented an over-all report. It has made suggestions and shown copies of a proposed measure to many people. My answer to Mr. Swinburne is that there is no new body, but I have asked the Alpine Resorts Development Advisory Committee to advise the public of what is happening and, when the views of the community have been heard, to present proposals for rational control. I want to make it clear that no new fields are being opened up.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply): Mr. McDonald raised the humane matter of possible retrenchments of staff within the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission. When it became evident to me and the Water Commission that retrenchment of staff may become necessary, I immediately sought a conference with the Premier and pointed out to him the adverse effects this would have on the staff and on supply and maintenance of the Water Commission's installations in country areas.

The Premier took up my point quickly and stated that it was not Government policy to dismiss staff. He has now indicated that there are

to be no retrenchments on a large scale. There may have to be odd retrenchments in districts where people cannot be gainfully employed, but I assure Mr. McDonald and other members of the House that I will do my best to see that no retrenchments take place.

On the suggestion of making representations to the Commonwealth Government for funds to assist unemployed people in country areas—which is a matter of concern to members representing country districts—I have advised the Premier that we should consider this with a view to starting further sewerage schemes. Mr. McDonald can be assured that I will watch the matter closely and keep the Water Commission and the Premier fully informed.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.24 *p.m.*

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, September 10, 1974.

OPENING OF THE SESSION.

The SPEAKER **(the Hon. K. H. Wheeler)** took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read the prayer.

The CLERK read the Proclamation by His Excellency the Governor convoking Parliament.

The Usher of the Black Rod of the Legislative Council brought a message from His Excellency the Governor desiring the attendance of honorable members in the Chamber of the Legislative Council.

The House, headed by the Speaker, proceeded to the Council Chamber.

The sitting was suspended at 2.35 *p.m. until* 4.33 *p.m.*

DEATHS OF THE HONORABLE JAMES WILLIAMSON MANSON AND RUSSELL NEWTON STOKES ESQUIRE.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I move—

That this House expresses its sincere sorrow at the death of the Honorable James Williamson Manson, and places on record its acknowledgment of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as a Member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Hawthorn from 1955 to 1958 and for the electoral district of Ringwood from 1958 to 1973; and Minister of the Crown from 1965 to 1970.

I also move—

That this House expresses its sincere sorrow at the death of Russell Newton Stokes Esquire, and places on record its acknowledgment of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as a Member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Evelyn from 1958 to 1973.

It is not often that the Parliament has to place on record its sorrow at the death of two members—both fairly recent members—of this House. Perhaps it is a reflection on the short life which some of us may expect after we leave these noble halls.

The late Jim Manson was elected in May, 1955, for the electorate of Hawthorn and changed to the electorate of Ringwood when it was created in 1958. He held that seat until April, 1973, when he retired from the Parliament. He was Parliamentary Secretary to the Cabinet from 7th July, 1964, to September, 1965; Minister without portfolio from September, 1965, to December, 1965; Minister for State Development from September, 1965, to June, 1970; and Minister for Tourism from February, 1970, to 11th June, 1970. He was also a member of the following committees of this House—the Library Committee; the Statute Law Revision Committee from 1955 to 1964 and from 1971 to 1972—he was chairman of that committee from 1956 to 1964; and the Standing Orders Committee.

Jim Manson was a member of this Parliament for eighteen years until his retirement and devoted himself in an exemplary way to Parliament and

to his duties as a member. He was a very friendly person—I do not believe he had an enemy anywhere in the Parliament—and his Scottish burr was well known in the party room, in this House and elsewhere. It became very much deepened when he was excited. He was an extremely hard worker on behalf of his constituents, was well known in the electorate of Ringwood, and a great fighter for the causes he took up and for the individual constituents who sought his help. He was a devoted family man, and an efficient administrator. I served under him as chairman of the Statute Law Revision Committee and I believe he did much to set that committee on a path from which it has not since deviated. It is a major and hard-working committee of this Parliament which does much constructive work. A good deal of the credit for that work is due to Jim Manson's chairmanship.

As a Minister he was eminently approachable. He was the first ever Minister for State Development, and set that department on its path. In particular he is remembered for his chairmanship of what has become known as the Manson committee. That committee brought in a valuable report on decentralization and made recommendations, which the Government accepted in principle, that we should aim at new cities of at least 100,000 people in Victoria. That figure was said to be the self-generating level. It was also suggested that we should concentrate on a limited number of those cities without withdrawing any advantages that could be afforded to decentralized industry generally. That led to the designation of the five cities which we are attempting to build up to the magic level of 100,000.

In his personal health Jim Manson suffered severe handicaps. We all know the courage and dignity with which he faced those handicaps and overcame them. He leaves a daughter and two sons who are devoted to him and to his memory. To them we express our sympathy in their loss and ours.

The late Russell Stokes was a member of this Parliament for the electorate of Evelyn for fifteen years until he retired in 1973. He was in his own right a successful businessman and brought his expertise into this Parliament. He spoke many times on subjects on which that expertise was valuable. He had many ideas, some novel and all interesting. He contributed widely to the work of his party and this House, and at the same time was a very vigorous local member, travelling widely in his electorate, which spanned the Divide and spread from the Yarra Valley crossing to the Goulburn Valley and from the outskirts of the metropolitan area to townships such as Yea and Warburton. He leaves a widow, a son and a daughter and to them again we should like to express our sympathy in their loss and the premature death, as we must certainly believe it to be, of a member who was among us so recently.

To both our former colleagues we owe a great debt, and the Parliament should express its sense of loss to and sympathy for their families.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): I support the expressions of sympathy and condolence moved by the Premier. Those of us who were members of this Parliament when Jim Manson was a member—perhaps I can except honorable members who won their seats during the latest election—will realize that although he had a quiet, unaffected manner and style, he left a real mark on the Parliament. For any "politician", a term that is often used as one of abuse, there are four loyalties —to the party, to a member's own political principles, to his electorate, and finally to the Parliament of which he is a member. On all four of those counts, Jim Manson set an example which could well be emulated by all honorable members. He was always

a man of kindness and personal generosity. In the heat of debate he could take as well as he could give, but afterwards he was always ready to understand the failings of others and to forgive unkindnesses that might have been expressed.

Jim Manson served his party, his electorate and this Parliament faithfully and well. That is probably all that anyone can say of any man who comes into this place. He left his mark upon us, and we are the worse for his passing. On behalf of the Opposition, I express my party's sympathy to his family.

Russell Stokes was a man similar in mould and character to Jim Manson. In many ways he was something of an old-world figure, having many of the qualities of a generation where kindness and a more gentle approach to politics were admired and respected. He, too, was a man of unfailing loyalty to both his party and the Parliament. He had a wide diversity of interests, which, as the Premier said, meant that many of the propositions heard from the corner bench, although possibly novel in approach, were always stimulating and worthy to be considered by members of this House and by the community at large. The people of Victoria and members of this Parliament can ill afford the loss of a man of the calibre of Russell Stokes. To his widow and family I extend the condolences of members of the Opposition.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): I support the expressions of sympathy of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition on the passing of James Williamson Manson and Russell Newton Stokes.

Jim Manson was held in the highest regard by all who knew him. He was a man of outstanding courage who suffered extreme ill health for many years, but to my knowledge he never complained and always made light of his suffering when a person inquiried how he was feeling.

Mr. Manson held the portfolios of State Development and Tourism at a time when the budget was small, and the portfolios were more difficult to handle than they are today. He was loyal to his Government and could always be depended upon in a vote of want of confidence or an adjournment motion to give loyal support to his fellow Ministers.

He was a man to whom religion meant a great deal, and no doubt this was of immense comfort to him, firstly after the loss of his son, and later after the loss of his wife. Jim Manson was highly respected by the members of this Parliament. I convey the sympathy of my party to his daughter and two sons.

As the Premier mentioned, Russell Stokes brought to this Parliament an outstanding knowledge of business affairs. He was widely known in business circles throughout Australia, particularly in the manufacturing field. It has been said that perhaps he belonged to another generation. He was a man of gracious dignity and integrity. To his family the Country Party expresses its deepest sympathy.

Mr. LACY (Ringwood): I join the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country Party in their expression of sympathy and tributes to the late James Williamson Manson. I do this on behalf of the constituents of the electorate of Ringwood, whose thoughts I believe I am expressing.

James Manson will be remembered by the people of Ringwood chiefly for his work as their local member. Indeed, I believe he was one of the most effective members that this House has had in recent decades. He was totally devoted to his electorate, a devotion which was expressed by the fact that he lived among his constituents and worked full-time on behalf of them. James Manson's door was always open to his constituents and they made use of it. His efforts on behalf of organizations in his electorate were well known to Ministers of the Crown and members of the Public Service.

James Manson served the electorate of Ringwood for fifteen years from 1958 to 1973. The significance of those dates is that during that period there occurred the greatest growth in the municipalities of Ringwood, Croydon, Doncaster and Templestowe and Lilydale that they have experienced. In that time James Manson was totally involved in representing his constituents and gaining for them community facilities when they were most needed. He was well and affectionately known to the committee of every school and pre-school centre in his electorate. He was closely associated with the establishment of the Maroondah Hospital; sadly, that hospital was not completed before his untimely death.

As a journalist, James Manson was conscious of the value of the written word. Because of this consciousness he indicated a desire for every school in his electorate, as well as every community, to have the benefit of a library. The result was that when he retired more than half the primary schools in his electorate had a library. He was a man who was able to balance his responsibility as a member of Parliament with his responsibilities towards his family, a unique quality which honorable members could well emulate.

As has been mentioned, during the later years of his life James Manson suffered great tragedy in that both his eldest son and his wife unexpectedly died at early ages. Personally, I have lost a good friend. Although our friendship was of a short duration, it was one which I valued immensely. I have also lost a friend who was an adviser to me during the early period of my membership of this House.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity today, on behalf of the constituents in the Ringwood electorate, of indicating my support for the motion before the House.

Mr. MITCHELL (Benambra): I associate myself with the remarks of the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Country Party and the honorable member for Ringwood, and express my regret at the loss that the State has suffered with the departure of James Manson. He was a Scot, born under adverse conditions in a poverty-stricken glen far north of the Highland line. He knew the bitterness of life but it never soured his sunny outlook. The Mansons were part of the Gunn clan. Gunn or Gunna was an old Norwegian name for war. Jim Manson followed his clan tradition by being a fighter. He fought poverty in Scotland and also out here. He arrived in Australia with exactly two shillings and sixpence in his pocket but with his fighting spirit he threw himself into the task of making a niche for himself in his new, adopted, and loved country, and he rose to high office in it.

He had difficult times with the national parks. He experienced a most distressing period as Acting Attorney-General when Ronald Ryan was hanged. He did not like it any more than I did when I faced a similar situation. However, never once did he deviate. He had a shocking time. He would pick up his 'phone at 7 a.m. and a voice would say, " Is that Mr. Manson? I think you are so-and-so ", and a stream of filthy abuse would be directed at him and his wife because of this hanging. Not once did he falter in these challenges and during difficult periods of ill health, Jim Manson was the epitome of the successful immigrant. He was an inspiration to this country.

I knew Russell Stokes for many years before he was a member of Parliament. He also was an example to us all. He planned his life from his earliest days. Firstly, he believed in tradition, which some of us could do with advantage. He wanted to carry on his grandfather's firm. He planned that he would be managing director when he was 29 years of age and succeeded in doing so. He then planned to enter Parliament. He had to overcome a particularly distressing vocal handicap but he undertook

elocution lessons and training and overcame this disability. He studied the game and studied the political handbooks with sincerity. He knew exactly what he was going to do. He joined the Young Liberals or Young Nationalists and eventually was elected to this House.

As previous speakers have said, both in his exemplary character and his speeches Russell Stokes made his mark in the House. He went further than that. His whole life was the family industry. He studied relations with his staff, many of whom were third-generation employees. He studied modern relations between the staff and the firm. He introduced improved firm activities, insurance schemes, socials, and so on. He proved himself a real Australian. I add my tribute of respect and sadness to his widow and family.

Mr. PLOWMAN (Evelyn): I also pay tribute to the late Russell Stokes and should like to associate myself with the remarks of the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Country Party and the other two speakers. Russell Stokes will be remembered by the electorate of Evelyn as a man of great dignity, gentility and understanding.

As has been stated, he was a man of many interests within the Evelyn electorate, and both his business and farming interests were of value in serving the community. He established and maintained perhaps the most successful dairy Shorthorn stud in Australia and also established an Aberdeen Angus stud which has been greatly improved in recent years. I believe this gave Russell Stokes a balanced outlook, and because of this and the sensitive way in which he handled the problems that he encountered he will be well loved and remembered by people in the electorate. On behalf of those people and myself, I express condolences to the widow and family of the late Russell Stokes.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I also join with honorable members in expressing the sympathy of the House to the family of the late Honorable James Williamson Manson, who was elected to this Parliament on 28th May, 1955. Mr. Manson was a small man in stature but big in heart and spirit. He had a clear brain and, until he became ill, had a great capacity and love for his work. He was a dedicated member who had a keen desire to see that the rights and privileges of all honorable members were preserved at all costs. Following the tragic death of his son and the untimely death of his wife, and his service to the community and the State being completed it appeared to me that it was clear to him that his race had been run. Now he has taken his place in the great beyond.

The late Mr. Russell Newton Stokes, who was elected to this Parliament on the same day as I was elected, was a quiet man who was independent by nature and an exacting businessman who was admired and respected by his many hundreds of employees. As an employer, he believed that good employee conditions and relationships increased efficiency and could lead generally to increased productivity.

As has already been stated, Mr. Stokes had a diversity of interests. He was a successful farmer and stud stock breeder, and much of his stud stock made a significant contribution to the standard of stock being bred in Victoria. Whatever he undertook, he did well, and no man could do more.

The motions were agreed to in silence, honorable members signifying their unanimous agreement by standing in their places.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler) laid on the table his warrant nominating Mr. Edmunds, Mr. A. T. Evans, Mr. B. J. Evans, Mr. Ginifer, Mr. Lind, Mr. McCabe, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Reese, Mr. Stephen, Mr. Suggett, Sir Edgar Tanner, C.B.E., E.D., Mr. Templeton,

Mr. Trewin, and Mr. Wiltshire, to act as temporary Chairmen of Committees whenever requested to do so by the Chairman of Committees.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

AREA IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Can the Premier inform me what arrangements the Victorian Government has made with the Australian Government in regard to the area improvement programme that has been outlined by the Australian Government? Has the Government put any proposal to the Australian Government in respect of the proposals that have been discussed within the ambit of this plan?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): So far as I am aware nothing has been put forward by the Commonwealth Government which could be described as an area improvement plan as such. A good deal of information and statements have been emanating from Canberra indicating that money is available for the purchase of land. The Victorian Government is prepared to co-operate with the Federal Government in the purchase of land in certain areas, particularly for two purposes—firstly, to promote the growth of country centres; and secondly, to provide land at low prices for low-income earners. To some extent these programmes have already commenced. If this is not the area improvement programme to which the honorable member refers, I would ask the honorable member to place his question on the Notice Paper and I shall give him the correct answer.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): Will the Minister for Conservation inform the House of the contents of a letter he received recently from Dr. Gilpin, Chairman of the Environment Protection Authority? Did Dr. Gilpin resign in the letter; did he indicate that he was going to resign at some future date; did he indicate that he might resign; or did he merely say that he was looking for another job?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation): I did receive a letter from Dr. Gilpin in which he indicated that he would be looking for a job, preferably with an international agency, but that he hoped to be domiciled within Australia. In his letter he indicated that, as he lacked the status of the position of a permanent departmental head and therefore could not deal directly with the Treasury or the Public Service Board, he felt that he lacked job satisfaction and believed that his efficiency was impaired. He also indicated that he was unhappy that as at this moment he is not my representative on the Standing Committee of the Australian Environmental Council. He also pointed out that in coming to this conclusion he had the full support of his family.

I strongly believe that the chairmanship of the Environment Protection Authority cannot be left in limbo because this is a vital position. Leadership and the ability to give leadership are tremendously vital questions. Therefore, I have written to Dr. Gilpin and as a matter of urgency have sought his advice about the date on which he intends to resign because if the position of chairman is to be filled we should have the opportunity of advertising throughout the world for a successor, with the minimum delay.

RAILWAY FREIGHT RATES.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Can the Minister of Transport inform me whether the freight rates for the cartage of grain by the Victorian Railways have been increased by 22·5 per cent? If that is so, can the Minister indicate what effect this will have on the grain producers of

Victoria? I understand that this increase will add about 3 cents a bushel to their costs.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The announcement has been made that the Government has been forced by financial stringencies to increase rail freight rates in Victoria. It is a fact that the freight rate for grain is to be increased by 22·5 per cent. I stress that this must be considered in the context of the general increases in costs throughout the community which, in the case of the Victorian Railways, have been to the order of 37 per cent in the past two years, during which freight rates have increased by only 5 per cent and that only in October of last year. I further stress that the a basic reason why the Government has been forced to obtain further revenue from the railways is the action of the Commonwealth Government in returning to this State by way of reimbursement a mere 8 per cent increase compared with a 25 per cent increase in revenue which it received as the result of inflation.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Following the answer the honorable gentleman gave to the Leader of the Country Party, can the Minister for Conservation, in his concern to terminate the services of Dr. Gilpin, say that it is the intention of the Government to advertise throughout the world for an applicant for the position of Chairman of the Environment Protection Authority who is more politically receptive to the Government?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation): The allegation of the Leader of the Opposition could not be further from the truth. The question has nothing to do with the open inference of the Leader of the Opposition. I merely pointed out to the House that Dr. Gilpin advised me that he was looking for another job. I have asked him to give me some indication when he intends to resign.

NATIONAL ROADS.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN (Dundas): Can the Minister of Transport comment on reports that have been circulated to some rural councils that the Federal Government is planning to take full responsibility for all national roads, thus freeing Victorian funds for urban and rural roads?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The Commonwealth Government, at my suggestion, has proposed to take full responsibility for what has been designated as the national highway system which comprises roads linking the various capitals. The Commonwealth Government has claimed that this will free considerable sums of money for State needs and for greater allocations to municipalities.

The fact is that the Commonwealth Government first deducts from the total handout of the petrol tax those amounts that it will spend on the national roads. Therefore, action in keeping contributions from the petrol tax constant for the next three years and making no allowance for inflation, will mean a reduction in the amounts that are available to the State.

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE FEES.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds): Is the Minister of Education aware that higher school certificate students must pay $6 to sit for the examination and a further $6 for each subject which is taken, making an average total of $36 for each student? Will the honorable gentleman inform the House why it is necessary to charge this amount and how this money is spent? Could the Minister reply briefly and in plain English?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): Higher school certificate examinations are conducted by the Victorian Universities and Schools Examinations Board, a body

set up under the University Act, which consists of a majority of representatives of the university and a minority of representatives of the school system. Through the years it has been the practice to meet the costs associated with the examination, such as the payment of supervisors and examiners and the rental of the headquarters building, from the fees paid by students.

In approximately July of this year I received a visit from Professors Derham and Mathieson who pointed out that they were worried about the escalating costs caused by inflation and felt that a further substantial increase in fees might be necessary this year unless the State Government was prepared to make a contribution. The State Government agreed to contribute approximately $100,000 to avoid a further increase and as a result of that contribution to the funds of the Victorian Universities and Schools Examinations Board a further increase in fees will not take place this year.

TOILET FACILITIES IN SCHOOLS.

Mr. BAXTER (Murray Valley): In view of the apparent shortage of funds for school buildings, can the Minister of Education assure the House that the programme for replacement of derelict toilet blocks in some Victorian schools will be continued and not deferred, as some of these blocks are a health hazard?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): There was a temporary cessation in the letting of further school contracts because this year, owing to inflation and to the slow completion of buildings, we were obliged to over-commit school building funds to the tune of $40 million instead of $20 million as was the case in previous years. We were then obliged to give priority to urgent projects. As soon as it is possible to resume the letting of contracts in the area mentioned by the honorable member for Murray Valley we shall do so. We have been awaiting an answer to the detailed case for additional loan funds which we made to the Federal Government and which was initially favourably received. When that reply has been received we shall analyse our priority list and see which projects can proceed immediately.

BROWN COAL.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): Can the Premier inform the House of the discussions he has had with the East German Government on the question of the exploitation of Victoria's brown coal resources? Can he also indicate what benefits to East Germany the East German Government sees in the proposal and what contractural arrangements or agreements have been or will be made with the East Germans and the East German Government on this proposal? Will the honorable gentleman be prepared to lay on the table of the Library all files, correspondence and memoranda dealing with this proposal?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): Every member of this House will recognize that in the brown coal deposits in Victoria, not just those in the Latrobe Valley, we have one of the greatest energy resources in the world. East Germany is a country which, although it has much less than we have in the way of resources of brown coal, has been forced by circumstances to use and exploit them to a far greater extent than other countries. Indeed in technologly, engineering and design it probably leads the world. This has led the Victorian Government to examine along with the East German Government—I pay it a tribute for the way that it has been forthcoming with information and help—the brown coal resources of the Latrobe Valley to see whether there is a possibility of making greater use of them.

To date those resources have been used for generating power, for manufacturing briquettes and for a while for producing gas. The East Germans, on the other hand, claim that they are producing from their brown coal more than 300 different products

in the chemical and plastics fields and in the production of metallurgical coke and a number of other products.

What has been done is simply an exploratory examination by five experts from East Germany, who were here in January as the honorable member for Morwell will be aware, and by three of our own experts who went to East Germany in May.

An agreement was signed by the Minister for Fuel and Power, who was with me in East Germany in July, to this effect: Firstly, East Germany would make a technical evaluation of brown coal briquettes from Morwell. For that purpose the Government air freighted to East Germany a ton and a half of briquettes, somewhat to the astonishment of the air transport authorities. The East Germans are to put the briquettes through their laboratories at Freiburg and then to give a technical report on what can be made from our brown coal briquettes using their processes.

Secondly, the next part of the agreement is something for the Government to carry out at this end, namely, to conduct a market survey based on that report to ascertain what markets there would be for the various products and at what prices. Nothing else has been signed or decided upon other than those two steps. Fundamentally, the inquiry has to be made first and this will take some months but by the end of this year the Government and this Parliament will be able to make an evaluation of the prospects available in the Latrobe Valley.

I believe if all goes well and these processes can be adapted and used in the Latrobe Valley, there is the possibility of a large industry, which will be of benefit to Victoria and to the whole of Australia.

SPECIAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION.

Mr. McLAREN (Bennettswood): Can the Assistant Minister of Education indicate what progress has been made in the plans for the development of a Special College of Education to be erected in Burwood Highway, Bennettswood, and when it is expected this college will be available for the training of teachers?

Mr. DIXON (Assistant Minister of Education): Considerable developments have occurred surrounding the establishment of the Special College of Education. Its establishment was considered by the Senate of the State College of Victoria. The State College of Victoria at Burwood, in conjunction with the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind, which has 42 acres of land together with a further 10 acres of land purchased by the State Government for the purpose of establishing the Special College of Education, has offered to have as part of its establishment an Institute of Special Education.

The proposal of the State College of Victoria at Burwood is slightly different from the one originally proposed by the Government when it decided to establish an independent Special College of Education. However, the proposal is interesting because it could possibly include the type of institute which the Government would wish to be established. This is because at the site in Burwood there is already a primary school, a high school, an existing tertiary institute and the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind. It is conceivable that on the area of approximately 80 acres a pre-school centre could be established, together with a special school. So, there would be all the elements for a continuing education of a unique kind which has never occurred before in the world.

However, within the 80-acre site certain development has already taken place and it is not known whether a plan could be devised which would enable the establishment of an Institute of Special Education along the lines proposed by the State College of Victoria at Burwood. In an endeavour to ascertain whether it is feasible and will cover

all the requirements, the Government is asking for a feasibility study to be undertaken by the major parties to the development, including the municipalities concerned. The Government believes these bodies should be brought together to see whether a plan can be devised for the 80-acre site which would enable these bodies to satisfactorily develop the area. When that study has been concluded the Government will be in a position to evaluate whether the plan ought to be as proposed by the State College of Victoria at Burwood. If the proposal is viable and if it is accepted by the Government, a start could be made in 1975.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): I ask the Minister for Conservation whether it is a fact that another very senior officer of the Environment Protection Authority has indicated publicly that he is dissatisfied with his conditions of work, particularly about the manner in which the Environment Protection Authority may be pressurized by the Ministry of Conservation. If this is a fact I ask the Minister what steps he is taking to find out what the difficulty is which is causing the State to lose some of its fine officers, or whether he is taking the "I couldn't care less" attitude, which he appears to have taken with the chairman?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation): I have read in the press the comments attributed to Mr. Colin Porter. Recently I had a meeting with him for two hours. Mr. Porter did not indicate to me the views that were attributed to him in the press. I have a high opinion of the technical capacity of Mr. Porter and I believe it would be unfortunate if the State were to lose his services.

FLOOD RELIEF.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura): Has the Premier heard a statement by the Federal member for Mallee that this Government has not yet made approaches to the Commonwealth Government for flood damage relief funds? If the Premier has heard the report, is this a fact? If he has not heard the report, will he make investigations into the allegations?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): It is not a fact in substance that we have not made an application to the Federal Government. What we have done is to keep it informed of our expenditures on flood relief. The honorable member will understand that under the requirements proposed by previous Federal Governments, and continued by this one, the State is obliged to spend $3·5 million of its own funds for flood relief, bush-fire relief and disaster relief before the Federal Government will come into the picture.

I make this exception, that for expenditures on personal hardship, replacement of such things as clothing and furniture in a home, and so on, the cost is shared dollar for dollar. We have kept the Federal Government informed of our expenditures in that respect and we expect it in turn to refund half the cost of personal hardship expenditure, but we have not yet reached the level of $3·5 million from our own funds on flood relief generally. We have told the Federal Government that we expect the final total will be in the vicinity of $8 million and that as soon as we reach the limit of our responsibility we will be looking to it to take up the expenditure in accordance with the undertakings already given.

SPECIAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray): I direct a question to the Assistant Minister of Education following his previous answer to the question asked by the honorable member for Bennettswood. Firstly, in determining the form and location of the proposed institution for the preparation of special teachers, has the Ministry

considered consulting its own advisory council on tertiary education on the form and location of such a centre? Secondly, has it consulted the Australian Government, which obviously will be a relevant party in view of its role in the funding of tertiary education? If the Government has not consulted these bodies, could the Minister indicate why? Hopefully, such consultation will lead to the end of the madness in recent years of mono-purpose institutions in Victoria.

Mr. DIXON (Assistant Minister of Education): I do not understand the concluding remarks of the honorable member on mono-purpose institutions. I should have thought an institution that has an educational purpose would be described as mono-purpose. I do not understand the honorable member's apparently disparaging comments.

Consultation is taking place with the Australian Government; the Senate of the State College of Victoria has had a deal of consultation with that Government. The Minister of Education has consulted the Australian Government on tertiary education. Personally, I have not had consultation with the tertiary advisory committee, but I should be surprised if the Minister of Education has not done so.

The Government has been at pains to ensure that whenever a special college of education is established, it is sited in the best possible area and the Government certainly considers that the site at Burwood satisfies many of the parameters that are required in the best interests of special education in Victoria.

PENTRIDGE GAOL.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne): Can the Minister representing the Minister for Social Welfare inform me whether the Government has made a decision on the appointment of a new Governor at Pentridge Gaol; if so, has a decision been made that the appointment shall be made from outside the present staff of Pentridge and, further, can the Minister advise the House of the identity of the new appointee?

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): I will take up the questions raised by the honorable member with my colleague in another place and furnish the honorable member with a written reply.

BUILDING INDUSTRY.

Mr. BURGIN (Polwarth): I address my question to the Minister of Labour and Industry. It has been alleged recently in newspapers that certain building unions have demanded indemnity payments from employers in the building industry and that the unions have threatened strike action if the payments are not made. Has the Minister of Labour and Industry authority to investigate the allegations; if so, will he undertake the investigation?

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): I think the honorable member is adverting to an allegation that I saw somebody make on a television station. I do not know of any reference in the press and no such allegation has been referred to my department. If these matters were referred to the department I doubt whether I would have power to take any specific action unless the subject differed from the matter referred to on the television programme. If the honorable member has any information that he thinks is of sufficient importance to refer to the department, I shall have it examined.

FLEMINGTON RACECOURSE.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North): In view of the doubts concerning the future of the land on which the Flemington racecourse is situated, following the recent near destruction of the course by flood waters and the plans of the Victoria Racing Club to spend many millions of dollars on badly-needed improvements on the course, is the Minister for

Youth, Sport and Recreation concerned that the present site may not be ideal for this multi-million dollar development? Moreover, what action has been taken or will be taken to prevent a recurrence of flooding of the course as occurred earlier this year?

Mr. **DIXON** (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation): The Government believes the Flemington racecourse is the site for the major future development of racing in Victoria. It also believes the spring racing carnival is the primary motivating force for the expansion of racing in this State and from which most of the racing industry obtains its impetus to expand and go to bigger and better things. Therefore, the Government is determined to do what it can to ensure that the Flemington racecourse develops appropriately.

A report on the flooding of the Flemington racecourse has been prepared by the Victoria Racing Club and that report will find its way to the Racecourses Licences Board, which will make recommendations concerning any allocation of funds or any other matters that would be desirable to alleviate the situation. The report from the Racecourses Licences Board has not yet come to me.

COMMAND PAPERS.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture) presented, by command of His Excellency the Governor, the reports of the Parole Boards (Adult) for the year 1971–72.

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General) presented, by command of His Excellency the Governor, the report of the Supreme Court judges for the year 1973.

It was ordered that the reports be laid on the table and be printed.

PAPERS.

The following papers, pursuant to the directions of several Acts of Parliament, were laid upon the table by the Clerk—

Country Fire Authority—Report for the year 1972-73.

Crimes Compensation Tribunal—Report for the year 1973-74.

Education Act 1958—

- Primary Teachers Registration Board Regulations 1974.
- Resumption of Land at Scoresby and Doveton—Certificates of the Minister of Education (two papers).
- Secondary Teachers Registration Board Regulations 1973.
- Technical Teachers Registration Board (Amendment) Regulations 1974.

Evidence Act 1958—Evidence (Examination of Shorthand Writers) Regulations 1974.

Exhibition Trustees—Report for the year 1973-74.

Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners—Statement of accounts for the year 1973.

Government Buildings Advisory Council—Report for the year 1973-74.

Grain Elevators Board—Report and statement of accounts for the year ended 31st October, 1973.

Groundwater Advisory Committee—Report for the year 1972.

Hospitals Superannuation Board—Report for the year 1972-73—Ordered to be printed.

Land Act 1958—Schedule of country lands proposed to be sold by auction.

La Trobe University—

- Report of the council for the year 1973; together with statutes approved by the Governor in Council during 1973.
- Accounts for the year 1972.

Law Reform Commissioner—Report for the period 18th December, 1973, to 30th June, 1974—Ordered to be printed.

Marketing of Primary Products Act 1958—

- Proclamation declaring that oranges, mandarins and grapefruit shall become the property of the Citrus Fruit Marketing Board for a period of two years.
- Proclamation declaring that tobacco leaf shall become the property of the Tobacco Leaf Marketing Board for a further two years.

Melbourne University—Financial statements for the year 1972.

Mental Health Authority—Report for the year 1972—Ordered to be printed.

Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board—Report for the year 1972-73.

Mines Department—Report for the year 1972.

Monash University—Report of the council for the year 1973; together with statutes approved by the Governor in Council during 1973.

National Gallery of Victoria Council—Reports for the years 1971-72 and 1972-73.

National Parks Advisory Committee—Report for the year 1972-73 (two papers).

Police Regulation Act 1958—Determination Nos. 219, 220, 221, 224 and 225 of the Police Service Board (five papers).

Public Service Act 1958—

Public Service (Public Service Board) Regulations.

Public Service (Public Service Board) Regulations — Regulations amended — Nos. 764 to 768 and 1 to 114 (one hundred and nineteen papers).

Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act 1959—General abstract of live births, still-births, deaths and marriages during the year 1973.

River Murray Commission—Report for the year 1972-73.

State Advisory Board on Publications—Report for the year 1973-74.

State Rivers and Water Supply Commission —Report for the year 1972-73—Ordered to be printed.

State Development Act 1970—Report of the Director of Tourism for the year 1971-72.

Statutory Rules under the Prerogative Powers of the Crown—Regulations governing expenditure of Commissions and Boards of Inquiry Nos. 157 and 378.

Statutory Rules under the following Acts of Parliament:—

Aerial Spraying Control Act 1966—No. 405.

Agricultural Lime Act 1958—No. 142.

Apprenticeship Act 1958—Nos. 342, 399.

Audit Act 1958—Nos. 132, 240.

Boilers and Pressure Vessels Act 1970—Nos. 341, 393, 394, 406.

Children's Court Act 1973—No. 237.

Clean Air Act 1958—No. 252.

Coal Mines Act 1958—Nos. 125, 209, 404.

Companies Act 1961—No. 303.

Consumer Protection Act 1972—No. 276.

Co-operation Act 1958—No. 145.

Co-operative Housing Societies Act 1958—No. 146.

Country Fire Authority Act 1958—Nos. 172, 247, 376.

Country Roads Act 1958—Nos. 205, 206, 215, 306.

County Court Act 1958—Nos. 162, 336, 369, 379, 389.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1972 —No. 299.

Discharged Servicemen's Preference Act 1943—Nos. 141, 169, 220, 381.

Dried Fruits Act 1958—No. 277.

Education Act 1958—Nos. 160, 170, 272, 357.

Education Act 1958 and Teaching Service Act 1958—No. 308.

Egg Industry Stabilization Act 1973—No. 180.

Environment Protection Act 1970—No. 150.

Explosives Act 1960—No. 211.

Farm Produce Merchants and Commission Agents Act 1965—No. 129.

Films Act 1971—Nos. 138, 312.

Firearms Act 1958—No. 219.

Fisheries Act 1968—Nos. 179, 254, 280, 371.

Forests Act 1958—No. 131.

Friendly Societies Act 1958—No. 334.

Fruit and Vegetables Act 1958—No. 126.

Game Act 1958—No. 337.

Gas Act 1969—No. 382.

Grain Elevators Act 1958—Nos. 390, 402.

Health Act 1958—Nos. 208, 267, 291 to 295.

Health (Fluoridation) Act 1973—No. 370.

Home Finance Act 1962—No. 144.

Hospitals and Charities Act 1958—No. 391.

Inflammable Liquids Act 1966—Nos. 153, 304.

Instruments Act 1958—No. 353.

Labour and Industry Act 1958—Nos. 127, 340.

Land Conservation (Vehicle Control) Act 1972—No. 167.

Legal Profession Practice Act 1958—No. 347.

Lifts and Cranes Act 1967—No. 395.

Liquor Control Act 1958—No. 333.

Local Government Act 1958—Nos. 236, 263, 284 to 289, 307, 343, 392.

Magistrates' Courts Act 1971—No. 178.

Magistrates' Courts Act 1971 and Justices Act 1958—No. 363.

Marine Act 1958—Nos. 216, 251, 344 to 346, 355, 367, 408.

Marketing of Primary Products Act 1958 —No. 168.

Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Act 1958—Nos. 249, 250.

Melbourne Harbor Trust Act 1958—No. 207.

Mental Health Act 1959—Nos. 140, 221, 296, 398.

Metric Conversion Act 1973—Nos. 128, 133 to 135, 137, 151, 152, 154, 158, 163, 164, 166, 174 to 177, 203, 214, 239, 241 to 244, 246, 253, 255, 256, 258, 260 to 262, 266, 269, 271, 274, 278, 281 to 283, 290, 302.

Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958—No. 259.

Milk and Dairy Supervision Act 1958—No. 397.

Mines Act 1958—No. 130.

Motor Accidents Act 1973—Nos. 245, 377.

Motor Boating Act 1961—Nos. 165, 182 to 202, 223 to 235, 301, 313 to 315, 318 to 327.

Motor Car Act 1958—Nos. 139, 147, 156, 171, 181, 298, 300, 305, 311, 330.

Motor Car Traders Act 1973—Nos. 217, 218.

Mt. Hotham Alpine Resort Act 1972—No. 238.

National Parks Act 1970—No. 257.

Nurses Act 1958—No. 248.

Pesticides Act 1958—No. 279.

Police Offences Act 1958—No. 328.

Police Regulation Act 1958—Nos. 159, 212, 213, 297, 310, 383.

Printers and Newspapers Act 1958—No. 349.

Private Agents Act 1966—No. 329.

Property Law Act 1958—No. 350.

Protection of Animals Act 1966—Nos. 331, 332.

Public Service Act 1958—No. 143.

Racing Act 1958—Nos. 372 to 375.

Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act 1959—Nos. 273, 360.

Religious Successory and Charitable Trusts Act 1958—No. 351.

Road Traffic Act 1958—Nos. 173, 264, 268, 270.

Scaffolding Act 1971—Nos. 338, 339, 364.

Second-hand Dealers Act 1958—Nos. 136, 222, 316, 358, 359.

Seeds Act 1971—Nos. 380, 396.

Stamps Act 1958—Nos. 335, 352.

State Development Act 1958—No. 356.

State Savings Bank Act 1958—Nos. 149, 161, 309.

Strata Titles Act 1967—No. 354.

Sunday Entertainment Act 1967—No. 317.

Supreme Court Act 1958—Nos. 148, 204, 361, 362, 366.

Teaching Service Act 1958—No. 210.

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—No. 401.

Transfer of Land Act 1958—No. 348.

Transport Regulation Act 1958 and Commercial Goods Vehicles Act 1958—No. 265.

Valuation of Land Act 1960—Nos. 155, 400.

Vegetation and Vine Diseases Act 1958—No. 403.

Victorian Development Corporation Act 1973—No. 365.

Weights and Measures Act 1958—Nos. 275, 368, 407.

Stock Foods Act 1958—Proclamation altering the chemical standards of bran and pollard.

Teaching Service Act 1958—

Teaching Service (Classification, Salaries and Allowances) Regulations (Nos. 11 to 14 and 53 to 56) (two papers).

Teaching Service (Classification, Salaries and Allowances) Regulations—Regulations amended (Nos. 281 and 284) (two papers).

Teaching Service (Teachers Tribunal) Regulations—Regulations amended (Nos. 273 to 280, 282 and 285 to 288) (fourteen papers).

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—

Ballaarat and District Planning Scheme 1966, Amendment No. 1, 1972, 2 and 5, 1973 (three papers).

City of Ararat Planning Scheme 1953, Amendment No. 14, 1973.

City of Bendigo Planning Scheme 1962, Amendment Nos. 13, 1973 and 14, 1974 (two papers).

City of Croydon Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 51, 1971.

City of Hamilton Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 5.

City of Knox Planning Scheme 1965, Amendment No. 59A, 1972.

City of Mildura Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 8, 1972.

City of Shepparton Planning Scheme 1953, Amendment No. 29, 1973.

Cranbourne Planning Scheme 1960, Amendment Nos. 4, 1973, and 8 (two papers).

Geelong Planning Scheme 1959, Amendment Nos. 15, 1972, 16 and 22, 1973, 38, 1972, and 41 (five papers).

Lara Planning Scheme 1961, Amendment No. 8, 1974.

Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme. Amendment Nos. 27—Part 2, 44, 46 and 48 (four papers).

Morwell Planning Scheme 1954, Amendment No. 43, 1972.

Ocean Road Planning Scheme 1955, Amendment No. 13, 1973.

Seymour Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 17.

Shire of Flinders Planning Scheme 1962, Amendment Nos. 43—Part 1 and 63 (two papers).

Shire of Lillydale Planning Scheme 1958, Amendment Nos. 26 and 27, 1971, and 38 (three papers).

Shire of Maffra Planning Scheme, Maffra township.

Shire of Mornington Planning Scheme 1959, Amendment Nos. 49, 1970, 88 and 89, 1973 (three papers).

Shire of Sherbrooke Planning Scheme, Amendment Nos. 52 and 53, 1972, 55, 57, 63, 67 and 68, 1973, and 71, 1974 (eight papers).

Shire of South Gippsland Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 8, 1973.

Shire of Werribee Planning Scheme 1963, Amendment No. 18, 1971.

Town of Stawell Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 6, 1973.

THE SPEAKER AND DEPUTY SPEAKER.

TEMPORARY RELIEF IN CHAIR.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That, during any absence of Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Speaker be authorized to call upon any of the Temporary Chairmen of Committees to temporarily relieve him in the chair, and that during any absence of Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker be similarly authorized to call upon any of the Temporary Chairmen.

The motion was agreed to.

FORESTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): In accordance with the usual practice, and in order to preserve the privileges of this House, I move for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Forests Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I have the honour to report that the House this day attended His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber, when His Excellency was pleased to make a Speech to both Houses of Parliament of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy. As the Speech is printed, and copies are in the hands of honorable members, it will not be necessary for me to read it.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN (Dundas): I move—

That the following Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor to both Houses of Parliament be agreed to by this House:—

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, the Legislative Assembly of Victoria in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the gracious Speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

It is a singular honour for me, as the member for Dundas, on behalf of the Government to move the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech to this Parliament. It is particularly pleasing as this is the occasion of His Excellency's first Speech to Parliament as Her Majesty's representative in Victoria. Of course, he is familiar with this House, having administered the oath of office to all honorable members last year in his capacity of Chief Justice of this State. He has now moved to an even higher office and steps into the shoes of many other distinguished men who have served this State well. I am confident that he will uphold the highest traditions of his office.

His Excellency indicated in his Speech that in the first session of the Forty-sixth Parliament a number of measures aimed at the happiness and well-being of the people of Victoria were introduced and that during this session further improvements will be introduced in the fields of education welfare, decentralization, youth and conservation.

As His Excellency said, this Government has co-operated to the full with the Federal Government in several major projects. However, the State Government is greatly concerned that powers vested in this State by the Commonwealth Constitution are being eroded by actions of the Federal Government and its intrusions into

fields in which this Parliament has responsibility. Unfortunately, in recent times there has been a sustained assault on the Federal system of government. The Commonwealth Constitution provides a clear division of powers and responsibilities between the States and the Commonwealth.

Section 51 of the Constitution sets out various subjects on which the Commonwealth has power to make laws; other sections set out fields in which the Commonwealth has exclusive powers. Residual powers remain vested in the States. However there is a vast difference between having the power to do something and having the financial resources to carry it out.

Today the question is often asked: Why do we need the States? Why not abolish State Governments and allow all powers and decisions to be vested in the Federal Government? Some people cite New Zealand, where there is a national Government together with local governments, as a prime example of what should be done. That analogy ignores completely the essential nature of this great country of Australia—that is, its diversity. Australia has all kinds of climates and conditions; it encompasses large deserts, plains and vast cities. The variety of opinions and desires expressed by the people are enormous. One has only to travel to Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia to gauge that the people in those States feel their separateness from other parts of the Commonwealth. They are concerned at the financial power that resides in the eastern States and they see the need to protect themselves from that power. It is nonsensical to believe that one national Government alone can cater for and balance the diverse interests that exist. The States and territories have a real role to play in protecting and preserving the rights of the individual in Australia.

The problem goes much further than that. We have seen attempts in an ever-increasing number of fields to centralize the decision-making process. A recent prime example was the action taken by the Federal Government in regard to Commonwealth roads legislation. An attempt was made in that legislation to invest the Federal Minister for Transport with power to approve or veto any road project in Australia. The ramifications of this move were enormous. If adopted, it would have caused inordinate delays in the decision-making process and would have involved a vast and unnecessarily wasteful duplication of public servants. It would also have caused rural councils to put off large numbers of their road gangs while awaiting decisions to be made. Further, it would have removed the decision-making process from the area where it is best handled, that is with local councils and State Governments. Fortunately, the Senate, acting in its true role as a States' House, removed the more odious provisions of the legislation.

With the complexity of society increasing at an enormous rate, with the passing of numbers of new statutes and regulations every day, the tendency towards the impersonalization of society is growing apace. What we are striving to do, and what this State Government is trying to do, is to preserve decision making at the level closest to the people consistent with efficiency. The Government places great emphasis on the people being involved in decisions which affect them. A prime example is to be seen in the operation of the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation. The department lays the responsibility of deciding priorities for recreational and sporting projects on local councils, which are in the best position to assess the needs of their community. A similar proposal is envisaged in the allocation of tourist funds.

One of the greatest criticisms levelled at the Education Department is that it is too big and unwieldy. After all, there are more teachers in Victoria than there are

members of the Australian armed forces. His Excellency has indicated that the Minister has recognized this problem and has set up a series of regional directorates of education with the objective of decentralizing decision making. It is important, however, that the regional directors be given real responsibility and power, and not be just another reference point in a decision-making process.

The States have a real role to play in preserving the rights of individuals and their ability to be heard as individuals.

His Excellency also pointed to the extreme dangers inherent in the current inflationary situation. The need for strong co-operation between the States and the Commonwealth is long overdue; without this co-operation the economy of the country is in danger of falling into chaos. The initiatives taken by all the States in concert have incredibly, to date, met no reaction from the Commonwealth. At the Premiers Conference in June the States were not given an increase in revenue grants by the Commonwealth because it was stated that all Governments had to exercise restraint and had to prune their programmes. It now appears, however, that the Commonwealth Government intends to renege from that arrangement and to continue its expansionary and inflationary programmes, while the States are forced to increase taxes and charges to maintain existing services.

Despite the conflicting views expressed on the subject by several Federal Ministers, I believe inflation is one of the most serious problems facing this country. Inflation, coupled with tight liquidity, has produced much uncertainty among employers and employees. Decision making on capital investment is thrown into doubt, and employment, which would normally follow on that capital investment, is also in doubt. Cost pressures on small businesses have become unbearable, and in the past twelve months there have been wage increases of up to 33 per cent. Wage increases have outstripped productivity, and unless productivity is improved inflation will get completely out of hand.

Two weeks ago I inspected a large industrial enterprise in Melbourne that is considering decentralizing. At present the decision to decentralize has been deferred because of the tight liquidity. A large amount of the floor space in that factory was taken up with partly-completed components which were dependent on parts from other industries which were delayed by industrial stoppages or material shortages.

The major factor contributing to massive wage claims is an out-dated taxation scale, which has vicious rates of marginal tax. The *Australian Taxpayers Journal* of 27th April, 1974, stated—

> Even for a man on Australian average earnings, with a wife and two bairns, the personal tax bill leapt by 34 per cent over the past year, although his income rose by only 15 per cent.

With marginal rates of tax up to 66·7 cents in the dollar, there is little incentive to make the extra effort to earn more. In these times of lagging production, there should be encouragement and not a penalty, for extra initiative and effort.

I now turn to several matters that refer to my electorate and rural affairs in general. In recent times a tremendous gap has developed between the city and the country, and this has reversed a lot of good that was achieved previously. There is a need for all members of this community to understand the problems of others. Lines of communication must be restored.

As I have said in this House before, the people in the city need to be educated into believing that decentralization is not just for the benefit of country people. The programme that this Government is embarking on is aimed at retaining the youth in the country, and encouraging city people to go to the country. This programme is for the

benefit of the metropolis because it will help to ease demand on services and facilities in the city. It is necessary to take that line of reasoning further and show the whole of Victoria that it is in the interests of everyone in the city that the problems of the whole State be recognized and tackled.

The face of rural Victoria has undergone remarkable changes in recent years. At present beef and sheep producers are receiving one-half the price for their stock that they received nine months ago. In that time costs have increased enormously; shearing and superphosphate costs are examples. But the producers have no control over the prices they receive. At long last the wool industry has adopted a sound marketing plan. I believe that after a testing initiation period this will be for the long-term benefit of the industry, despite the fact that the present floor price is unrealistically low.

The bane of rural industries has been the boom and bust prices that have prevailed. The past financial year was a good one for most producers, but any benefit was lost by large tax bills. This happened at a time when the rural industries faced a record degree of indebtedness. The need to rationalize all forms of rural marketing is now self-evident. The wild fluctuations in price are no good to the producer, and no good to the consumer.

A large cloud on the rural horizon is the very tight liquidity, which has several causes. It appears to be worse than the 1961 credit squeeze and has been aggravated by the cancellation of wool sales for almost two months, the delay in the second payment of last season's wheat crop owing to industrial trouble, the reduction by up to half by many banks of overdraft limits, and the shortage of finance from pastoral houses. Urgent action is needed to release large amounts of additional funds to meet this difficult situation. Unless this problem is tackled urgently, there will be serious repercussions.

His Excellency also indicated the success that has been encountered by the State Government in its decentralization programme. The importance attached by the Government to this programme is evidenced by the fact that it spends more in grants and loans in this field than all the other States combined. The industries this Government seeks to attract are labour intensive, particularly in the textile and clothing field.

The impact of the Federal Government's policies in this field on tariffs and quotas, together with high interest rates and tight finance, has been disastrous. Many industries, particularly in country Victoria, have been hard hit, and the problems arising from this are enormous. There is evidence that the savings which are meant to flow to the community as a result of these lower tariffs and quotas are not being achieved. In many cases these savings are increasing the margin of the middle man. The Federal Government should again look very carefully at its policy in this field. There was an example in Hamilton in my electorate where over a period of eight months, a successful pilot scheme for an industry which produced high-quality children's wear was set up. The employees proved to be satisfactory. The next step was to build a new factory, but because of the effect of the tariff and quota reductions this industry not only has cancelled its plans to go into a new factory but has withdrawn from Hamilton altogether. It will be disastrous if the good effects of the State Government's policies over the past two or three years to foster decentralization are negatived by a short-sighted and apparently thoughtless Federal programme.

An essential ingredient of any decentralization programme is the provision of housing. It is pleasing to see the increased activity of the Housing Commission in country areas, assisted by the Decentralized Industry Housing Authority, and

additional funds from the co-operative housing societies. I welcome, in particular, the arrangements recently entered into between the Housing Commission and Stawell Timber Industries Pty. Ltd. to provide up to 1,000 modular houses for country Victoria. This is an important industry in Stawell, and this scheme will guarantee employment for a long time.

This State faces many challenges, most of which can be met with leadership, determination, and hard work. The Government is prepared to meet its responsibility within the limit of the resources available to it.

I assure His Excellency of the loyalty of the people of the electorate of Dundas to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Mr. PLOWMAN (Evelyn): I am pleased to have the honour of seconding the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor of Victoria, and in doing so I firstly pledge the loyalty of the residents of the Evelyn electorate, and of myself, to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

I should also like to pay tribute to the recently-retired Governor, Sir Rohan Delacombe, who served this State exceptionally well for more than eleven and half years. Sir Rohan travelled widely throughout the State, endeared himself to the people, and retained the dignity of the vice-regal office at all times. He set a high example for any other Governor to follow. I have no doubt that all Victorians will be proud to accept Sir Henry Winneke as the New Governor. He is the first Australian Governor of this State, and he has had a distinguished career. I wish Sir Henry Winneke and Lady Winneke every success whilst in office.

The electorate I represent takes in part of the eastern segment of the Melbourne metropolis and runs out to a country area. The character of the electorate is changing rapidly, and this is due largely to the increasing population in the eastern segment. The land mass is still predominantly devoted to primary production and takes in the towns of Lilydale, Mooroolbark, Warburton, Hurstbridge, South Morang and Warrandyte. A considerable increase in the suburban population is evident.

Mr. GINIFER.—You really need a redistribution.

Mr. PLOWMAN: I will come to that. The honorable member for Dundas spoke at some length on the problems facing country people because of inflation and increasing costs. Their incomes at this stage are fluctuating downwards. Country people are facing considerable problems, and one of the ever-present problems is probate duty. This makes it difficult for people to establish and keep family properties. It is exceedingly difficult for young men who wish to continue farming businesses or who wish to take on family properties. I am therefore pleased to see the reference in His Excellency's Speech to the land settlement schemes at Heytesbury and Rochester where 150 blocks will be released over a period of five years. I support this because this is one way in which young men will be able to go on the land, whether they have lived on family properties or come with a strong desire to farm from suburban areas.

It is essential that young people be encouraged to continue to take up farming but care should be taken in relation to two matters when these blocks are distributed. The blocks must be of viable size to be a real financial proposition. In the past, under soldier settlement schemes, land was allocated in boom years in the expectation that the booms would continue. The sizes of properties have been too small for them to remain viable in times of depression or receding rural income. As the honorable member for Mildura says, people taking up these blocks also feel the effects of inflation.

I suggest also that the financial position of the application should not be the prime consideration in the

allocation of a block. What should be the key question is whether the applicant has the aptitude or ability to make a success of the project in the long run.

The Governor referred to the happiness and well-being of the people of Victoria. In the outer suburban areas developing to the east and west of Melbourne, municipalities face tremendous problems in providing necessary services, roads, kerbs and channelling, water, sewerage and other facilities. There are also problems in these areas in the provision of schools. These problems have caused much concern to the municipalities in the southern part of the electorate I represent. It is pleasing that I can say one good thing about the Federal Government in that it has made direct grants to municipalities and has taken into account the special needs and financial difficulties which some municipalities face.

The decision to provide assistance recognizes the fact that local government finance can no longer depend entirely on funds from ratepayers but that municipalities must have direct access to the tax revenue held in the Federal Treasury. The grants have been made unconditionally to the municipalities concerned. I hope that future grants to municipalities, whether country or urban, and also to States, will be made unconditionally.

His Excellency alluded to the setting up of a Yarra Valley and Dandenongs regional planning authority. He said that he considered that these areas, as well as the Mornington Peninsula, were the most sensitive and vulnerable areas in the State, calling for special protection, and that the primary concern should be their conservation for recreational purposes. The people of the Yarra Valley and the Dandenongs welcome the setting-up of this regional planning authority.

For many years, people within the Yarra Valley have been concerned that unchecked and unwise development would spoil forever one of Victoria's unique beauty spots. I am glad that the body to be set up will ensure the co-ordination of the groups interested in conservation, development, local government, and other factors.

Before such a regional planning authority is set up, cognizance should be taken of overseas experience. One part of the Yarra Valley cannot be divorced from another. The upper Yarra, the central Yarra and the lower Yarra regions are inter-dependent. The whole Yarra Valley must be considered in one total concept if guided development under a regional planning authority is to take place. Any such body should consider the experiences of the Metropolitan and Toronto Valley Conservation Authority which controls an area of more than 1,000 square miles, including several catchments, and also the Thames Conservancy and the Peak Planning Board, both of which are concerned with farming and industrial communities, and suburban areas.

His Excellency referred to the redistribution of electoral boundaries and, as one member of the Opposition suggests, a redistribution will no doubt affect my electorate because of the rapid development of its southern suburban area. Flexibility must be provided for when guidelines for redistribution are laid down. As one who represents an area of 2,500 square miles of diverse country broken up by mountain ranges, I am particularly aware of that. I also understand the problems of honorable members who represent large electorates to the north of that which I represent. In addition, migrant populations and their particular problems in highly populated areas should be taken into account.

All these factors are important in assessing the reasonable size of any electorate. The number of electors

in any electorate should not be the one criterion. What matters is the way in which a member is able to represent every person within his electorate. Obviously in some of the larger country electorates it is impossible for a member of Parliament to give the same service to his constituents that a member who represents a suburban area of a few square miles can, although, as I have said, large migrant populations and their special difficulties should be taken into consideration.

Since federation the responsibilities of members of this House have grown, and they have grown most rapidly in recent years. The calls on the time and ability of members of the House are much greater now than ever before. However, restraint must be shown in considering the remuneration paid to members so that in some way they can set an example to the community. It has been suggested to me that it is naïve to believe that any decision by honorable members not to accept higher pay will make any difference to the national or the State Treasury. But in this day and age it is the responsibility of all honorable members to set an example by restraining their desire for increased remuneration.

However the introduction of allowances for secretarial assistance to honorable members this year has enabled them to enhance the service they give to their electors. Every honorable member has welcomed the additional provisions for offices and secretaries. However, in the inflationary situation of today, these allowances should be reviewed to make it possible for honorable members to cope with the ever-increasing amount of work that they must perform. The Government of South Australia provides members of its Parliament with offices equipped to a certain degree and it pays for their cleaning and for the salaries of secretaries engaged by honorable members. This is sensible because it allows members of Parliament to do their jobs properly. The use of these facilities makes a member more accessible to his constituents and helps him to serve more effectively the people who elect him to Parliament.

His Excellency stated that the Government would give first priority to education. There is a progression in the life of young married people. First they want to establish a home and engage in work which will give them a reasonable income. Then their paramount consideration is the education of their children. They want them to have all the opportunities available to ensure their best possible progress through life. It is not unreasonable that, because of this situation, many parent groups and many individual persons become involved in pressing for improved education facilities. Every honorable member wants better education facilities.

However, the Education Department faces tremendous problems of inflation, industrial unrest and material shortages. It is unreasonable that so much criticism is heaped on the Education Department and the Minister of Education for doing what I believe is an excellent job under particularly difficult circumstances. Constructive criticism is welcome in any field but when criticism is destructive or fence-sitting it is useless. In the period of inflation and industrial unrest which the State and the nation face, we look for restraint by individuals in the community, and for leadership by State and Federal Governments, trade unions and individuals. When all is said and done, any type of leadership or example comes back to the individual. Individual rights must always be promoted. Individual improvement must always be uppermost. However, the individual also has a responsibility in the community to maintain the individuality, the enterprise and the resilience which have been a characteristic of the Australian people

in past years. That national individuality and resilience is fast being eroded and it is reflected in the national situation and the national strength in the world situation.

Finally, this individual enterprise and contribution to the community is reflected in our new Governor, Sir Henry Winneke. Sir Henry was born in Melbourne. He spent his early days in Ballarat and was educated at Ballarat Grammar School, Scotch College and the University of Melbourne. At the university he graduated as a Bachelor of Laws and a Master of Laws. He won the Supreme Court prize which is the top place in the law students of Victoria. During the war Sir Henry served his country as a group captain in the Royal Australian Air Force. He became King's Counsel, Senior Counsel for the Attorney-General and Senior Crown Prosecutor and has been Chief Justice for ten years. He represented his country as centre forward in hockey. Since then Sir Henry Winneke has retired to the more gentle sport of golf.

Mr. DOUBE: What is the point of this ridiculous speech?

Mr. PLOWMAN: The point of this "ridiculous speech" is the fact that Sir Henry Winneke is an example of someone who has always been prepared to give something to his country. The State would be better off if a member interjecting had done the same. We should be proud to have such a distinguished Australian as the new Governor of Victoria, and I wish Sir Henry and Lady Winneke every success.

The sitting was suspended at 6.20 *p.m. until* 8.3 *p.m.*

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): In addressing myself to the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech delivered today by His Excellency the Governor, I congratulate Sir Henry Winneke on his elevation to this important office. I do not propose to canvass Sir Henry Winneke's record; that is a matter of public knowledge. However, I extend to Sir Henry the best wishes of members of the Opposition for a successful term of office. He has our assurance that we will co-operate to make his important role as successful and meaningful as it ought to be to the people of Victoria.

There is one matter that I feel bound to discuss because it affects the relationship between this Parliament and the new Governor, just as it affected the relationship between former Parliaments and past Governors. I refer to the manner in which the Address-in-Reply debate has been treated in the House. As a matter of Parliamentary convention and usage—I do not need to refer you, Mr. Speaker, to the usage because I am certain you are familiar with it—the Address-in-Reply debate has been regarded as a courtesy between the House and the Queen or her personal representative, and therefore the Parliament should, as a matter of courtesy, dispose of the debate by according it a high priority.

The Address-in-Reply debate, over a period of time, has been treated in this House as a filler, something to be called on when Government business was lapsing, so instead of the debate being concluded early and the address being delivered to the Queen's personal representative at the first available opportunity, it has sometimes been delivered in the dying hours of the session. This lamentable practice was the subject of private representations and public statements in the House by your predecessor, Sir Vernon Christie. The Opposition has raised the matter and on one occasion, in order to try to address the Government's mind to its importance, members of the Opposition absented themselves from the formal presentation of the Address-in-Reply. I sent a note to the then Governor, Sir Rohan Delacombe, explaining that this was not being done from

lack of courtesy but because members of the Opposition were deeply concerned about the way in which the Parliament was conducting its business and that matters were not being dealt with in accordance with long-standing Parliamentary practice.

Now that a new Governor has been appointed, the proper traditional practice, which for too long has been abandoned in this House, should be restored. For this reason—as has already been indicated to the Secretary of the Cabinet—the Opposition will refuse leave for the introduction of proposed Government legislation. Progress must be made in this debate, and when this occurs and the Address-in-Reply has been expedited, other aspects of Government business may be proceeded with.

Mr. DIXON: That is an arrogant statement.

Mr. HOLDING: Real progress must be made. The Opposition will not delay Government business for any useless purpose.

Mr. DIXON: The Leader of the Opposition is standing on a high pedestal with one thing, and as low as the gutter with another.

Mr. HOLDING: The honorable gentleman knows that that is unparliamentary language, and I ask him to withdraw it.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The Leader of the Opposition believes that the statement made by the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation is unparliamentary, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. DIXON: I withdraw.

Mr. HOLDING: I want to deal at length with only two of the substantive matters raised in the Governor's Speech. On page 4 of the printed copy of the Speech the Government's role—or rather, its lack of role—on the entire question of inflation is dismissed in approximately three sentences. All honorable members will agree with me that inflation and spiralling costs are probably the most significant economic problems confronting the people not merely of Victoria but of Australia as a whole. I agree with His Excellency's statement that inflation is the greatest single threat at present to growth and production, and the living standards and well-being of every Australian family. There can be no argument with that statement, but the problem must be seen in a national and international context.

Inflation and the problems it creates are at present bedevilling not merely Australia but every country in what is commonly known as the Western bloc. It is small comfort for people in Victoria affected by inflation to say that the Australian unemployment level is not as high as that of America or that Australia's inflation level is not as high as that of Japan. However, it helps Parliament to keep the issue in context and to escape some of the narking, carping criticism which is a feature of the speeches of the Leader of the Federal Opposition, and which was emulated in this House earlier today. Whichever Government is in power, and whatever may be its political philosophy or predilection, no Government can truthfully say that there are simple economic answers to the problem.

Mr. WILCOX: Will the Leader of the Opposition deal with the industrial trouble, too?

Mr. HOLDING: I shall be happy to give the Attorney-General—who knows nothing about industrial relations or about his own department—an elementary lesson in industrial relations. I shall not engage in the type of public relations stunts carried out by the Minister of Education.

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I ask honorable members to cease interjecting, and I ask the Leader of the Opposition to address the Chair.

Mr. HOLDING: I have no intention of playing for the front page of the Melbourne *Herald*—not that I

would get it—by saying that I shall set a standard by donating a certain amount of my salary to some charity. The hypocritical nonsense that is engaged in by members of this Parliament is exemplified by the Minister's statement. All honorable members supported salary rises for judges and senior public servants after they received their own salary increases. Everybody knows that Parliamentary salaries rise on an average of about once every three years, and after honorable members received their own salary rises, the Minister of Education made his great personal sacrifice and the Premier came out with his public relations contribution, which was to the effect that "having received our increases, we are now going to freeze other salaries".

Mr. LACY: We all know you do not earn yours.

Mr. HOLDING: At least I do not have to talk pious nonsense to try to earn my salary. The honorable member for Ringwood should stick to trying to save souls instead of solving the problems of inflation.

Mr. CURNOW: That is a sin!

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I appeal to honorable members to cease interjecting because it is only taking up the time of the House and achieving nothing. I again ask the honorable member for Kara Kara to cease interjecting.

Mr. HOLDING: Public relations stunts will not solve the burdens of inflation as they are affecting all sections of the community. The Attorney-General referred to unions. The reason for the increase in industrial stoppages and unrest prevalent in this country is inflation because Australia's wage-fixing and industrial tribunals are incapable of processing the demands generated by constantly rising costs. The average unionist finds it easier to go on strike to get his increase than to spend time in the tribunals. Therefore, in the long term, industrial stoppages may have some spin-off effect in a contribution to inflation; but the prime cause is inflation itself. One can never become involved in a discussion on these issues without the Attorney-General and the back-bench members of the Government party talking about unions, but the problems involve those members of the community who are on the lowest levels of income.

Mr. WILCOX: Like the air pilots!

Mr. HOLDING: If the honorable gentleman knew anything at all, he would know that the average wage-earner in the community is the unionist. The reality of the economic situation is not the sort of public relations gesture made by the Premier and his deputy; it does not contribute anything except to a rather specious and dangerous concept by which the community is told that there are some short-term answers. There are no short-term answers, and the sooner responsible leaders say so the better we will all be. Australian society cannot divorce itself from or live outside the economic framework of the Western bloc. That is the economic reality. Although the Premier is vocal, I find it fascinating that this Government of State-righters is always talking about the constitutional powers of the States. The Premier and the Attorney-General know that the State has more real and effective constitutional power in dealing with the incidence of inflation than has the Commonwealth.

Mr. DIXON: You are damned by your own words.

Mr. HOLDING: I repeat that the State has more constitutional power to deal with the incidence of inflation than has the Commonwealth. It is all very well for the Minister of Education to contribute to a charity. The reality of the situation is that the escalation of price rises and control of them is clearly within the constitutional prerogative of this State. Only yesterday the Minister of Labour and Industry issued a statement to the media on this matter because it had been drawn to his attention that prices shown on the shelves of supermarkets

were not the prices charged to the consumers. So he issued a warning pointing out that breaches of the Consumer Protection Act carried severe penalties—but he did nothing. The fact that the matter was brought to his attention indicates that in many retail operations all sorts of rip-offs are taking place and they are being justified to the consumer on the basis that the retailers are also victims of inflation.

Earlier, the honorable member for Evelyn referred to the problems of farmers. The way in which meat prices have fallen and the disastrous slump in the price of beef has been public knowledge. Has that been shown in the retail stores in Melbourne? The Minister of Agriculture indicated that a serious situation existed. It might be a small consolation to farmers whose cattle prices have dropped by almost 100 per cent in some areas, if the reduction were reflected in the price paid by housewives; but it is not. The Minister of Agriculture said that the matter would be examined by the Government. The Government said that it would examine the price of land, price rises in consumer durables and commodities and so on. It is one big examination! Is it not odd that the Government, which has the constitutional power to act, has not acted?

The Government has not taken one positive action that would have any beneficial effect on the purchasing power of the average Victorian wage-earner. It is all too easy for the Government to say that it is a Commonwealth problem or that it will examine or discuss the matter. The Minister of Agriculture has recognized the problem but has taken no action. Is it not odd that this group of State-righters, who are always talking about their constitutional prerogatives, are loath to exercise those prerogatives?

Mr. THOMPSON: Do you support the Whitlam policy or the Cairns policy?

Mr. HOLDING: The one policy I do not support is the Snedden policy. The Minister of Education would be a better Federal Leader of the Liberal Party than Mr. Snedden. The Premier does not have to wait for Federal action. I shall be happy to hear from the honorable gentleman on this matter. Two previous speakers referred to the statements in His Excellency's Speech indicating that some success had been achieved in Government initiative in promoting decentralization, in restraining the growth of Melbourne, and in the establishment of 150 decentralized industries in country centres within the past two years. That statement is made in the narrow context that one could say that a measure of success has been achieved. My objection to the way in which that matter is put is that it would have been better if the Premier and his Government had outlined the dimension of the problem which confronts Victoria, instead of saying that 150 industries have been established, that that is the criterion and that that is success.

Sooner or later this Parliament will have to make up its mind about the future of Melbourne and its relationship to the regional and country areas of Victoria. On many occasions I have said, not only in this House but throughout the State, that the Victorian Government must make a clear and positive statement not only that Melbourne's growth will be limited but that action must be taken to establish targets which will provide the framework within which Government planning and policy takes place. The alarming feature of the Government's attitude is that although the Minister for State Development and Decentralization—he has a good public relations outfit—talks about a measure of achievement and says that 150 factories have been established and that some progress has been made, nothing has been done.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: Dr. Cairns has been closing them down.

Mr. HOLDING: While the Minister is doing little and while the Leader of the Country Party is making trite comments, the reality is that all the major planning decisions that are being made about Melbourne's future are on the basis that by the year 2000 Melbourne will have a population of from 5 million to 5·5 million.

Mr. HAMER: That is absolutely inaccurate.

Mr. HOLDING: I shall deal with the Premier's interjection. Either the honorable gentleman is going to be caught with his own statement, which shows that he is not facing up to the reality of the situation, or he does not know what is going on in his own departments.

Mr. DIXON: Or, alternatively, you are wrong.

Mr. HOLDING: If I am wrong I shall be delighted to hear from the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation. I repeat the statement that provoked the interjection from the loyal supporter of the Government. I said that most of the planning decisions were being predicated by Government departments and statutory authorities on the basis that Melbourne would have a predicted population of from 5 million to 5·5 million by the year 2000. An environmental study of Port Phillip Bay was sponsored by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works and the Fisheries and Wildlife Division. A number of responsible reports have been made; they are not roneod sheets but documents that cost a lot of money. At page 51 of the report to which I have just referred appears the forecast that by the year 2000 the total population of the Port Phillip Bay study area will be 6·2 million.

The Melbourne transportation survey was an elaborate study. Melbourne's transportation cannot be studied unless some parameters are accepted or endeavours are made to predict population growth. That survey predicted the future growth of Melbourne.

The report of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works to the Minister, prepared in June, 1967 — I refer to page 5025 — predicted that in the year 2000 Melbourne's population would be 5 million.

The document produced by the Board of Works on the progressive development of Melbourne's water supply programme to meet increasing demand, prepared in June, 1967, estimates Melbourne's population in the year 2000 to be 6·3 million. The Public Works Committee conducted an inquiry into Melbourne's future water supply, and in August, 1967, estimated that by the year 2000 Melbourne's population would be 6 million. According to a report published in the *Port of Melbourne Quarterly*, this State will be involved in an expenditure of upwards of $80 million to change its ports and harbor facilities. In that report it was estimated that by the year 2000 Melbourne would have a population in excess of 5 million people. The reports to which I have referred were commissioned by the Government or its authorities.

Mr. DIXON: Have you read of the current birth rate? These things change.

Mr. HOLDING: Unlike the honorable gentleman, I am not prepared to work out a forecast on the basis of what the birth rate might be. It has been done by the Government's experts. Reports have been made which have cost this State a great deal of money and upon which all sorts of forecasts are being made. I should like to hear the opinion of the Minister of Public Works on what I regard as an excellent report which says that the State must find about $80 million if the future growth of the port of Melbourne is to be dealt with. I should like to hear whether the honorable gentleman says, "That is all right. We have a plan for that money. We must make arrangements so that this plan can be implemented." Only last month evidence was given by experts from the State Electricity Commission in

the appeal concerning the future placement of the Newport power house and they predicted that the population of Melbourne by the year 2000 would be 5 million people.

Mr. HAMER: The honorable member should quote directly. He is quoting the figure for the whole of Victoria.

Mr. HOLDING: If I am wrong, the Premier should say so. I do not have the transcript with me. I have referred to the report of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, the transportation survey, and the report on the future development of ports and harbors. It is an extraordinary coincidence that all the Government authorities concerned say that Melbourne's growth and sprawl will continue uncontrolled They are working on a prediction of between 5 and 5·5 million people. However, the Minister is making a glib assertion—he is always inclined to leave these things to chance—that in these matters one need not worry because he read, in the *Women's Weekly* or elsewhere, that the population would fall.

Let us put the Government to the test on this matter. As an amendment to the motion I move—

That the following words be added to the proposed address—" and respectfully desire to inform Your Excellency that this House rejects the concept of Melbourne's growth being unlimited, and Government departments and statutory authorities acting on a population figure of 5 million by the year 2000, and express the view that Melbourne's growth should be limited and that a population for Melbourne in excess of 3·5 million is socially and economically undesirable."

I do not know why honorable members should interject when I mention the figure of 3·5 million. Is this an unreasonable proposition? The Melbourne Harbor Trust points out that if the Government policy is successful in moving about 15,000 people a year out of Melbourne—that is a tremendous number and involves the allocation of all sorts of resources which the State would have difficulty finding but could well find with support from the Commonwealth——

Mr. HAMER: We are not receiving much support now.

Mr. HOLDING: Obviously the Premier has not read the Speech of His Excellency the Governor which contains some praise because of assistance given by the Commonwealth. The Premier knows that the Albury–Wodonga project would not have " got off the ground " without Commonwealth initiatives. The Governor's Speech refers to co-operation between the Commonwealth and the State. Let us not join issue on certain things than can be agreed. Every member of this House, irrespective of his view about State rights, will welcome the initiatives and the readiness of the Commonwealth—and all sorts of arguments can be raised about how and why things are done—if it is prepared to provide back-up funds and assistance to promote decentralization throughout Australia.

Mr. HAMER: I am referring to charges by the Postmaster-General's Department and to the giving of substantial incentives by the States.

Mr. HOLDING: Of course there ought to be a reduction of charges by the Postmaster-General's Department. The real problem with my Federal colleagues in Canberra is that in power they have taken exactly the same attitude as the Liberal–Country Party Government did when it was in power. Every Liberal and Country Party Senator voted against decentralization incentives for country areas. Honorable gentlemen should look before they talk about the record and the attitude. I believe and have always argued that there ought to be incentives to industries in regional areas in telephone charges and services. Victorian Liberal and Country Party Senators, to a man, voted against a motion moved by the then Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator Murphy, when he proposed decentra-

lization initiatives, and a reduction of postal and telegraphic charges in country areas. I am happy to defend my position on this issue; it has not changed. Let us not argue that Federal Liberal or Country Party members on this issue are any better than anybody else. The public record shows that the interests of regional industries throughout Australia have not been faced up to fully by Commonwealth Governments, be they Liberal–Country Party coalitions or Labor Governments.

It is unnecessary for me to go further on that issue. I am, however, concerned to make the valid point that the Commonwealth under the Whitlam Labor Government has provided levels of finance which, for the first time, make it possible for State Governments to move in a positive way towards bringing about effective decentralization objectives.

Mr. CRELLIN: Tell that to the people in Wangaratta.

Mr. HOLDING: I have been to Wangaratta. I do not know whether the honorable member has been there.

Mr. CRELLIN: Yes, and recently.

Mr. HOLDING: Although people in Wangaratta are unemployed as a result of a policy which did not work, they are not suffering the economic hardships and having to live on the pittance level at which they had to live when a credit squeeze was imposed by the Federal colleagues of the honorable member for Sandringham. Honorable members have never before heard this plaintive, pitiful voice expressing concern about unemployment, but all of a sudden members of the Government party are concerned about unemployment. The policy of the Liberal Party to which the honorable member for Sandringham belongs is clear. There has been more unemployment under policies advanced by Federal Liberal–Country Party Governments than under any policy ever introduced by a Labor Government.

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I appeal to honorable members on the front benches, the centre benches and the back benches to cease interjecting.

Mr. HOLDING: What the Deputy Prime Minister has said is that things are going to get considerably worse before they get better and it is time economic realities were faced. This Government has not yet taken any action. If the Liberal Party has a simple policy to solve this problem, it should patent it because then it could be sold overseas. In the past the honorable member for Sandringham has been happy to have unemployment and to conscript the kids to fight the battles, so why should the honorable member now object——

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I fail to see the necessity to cast any reflection on any honorable member. It is not in the best interests of good debate. Again I appeal to the honorable member for Sandringham to cease interjecting.

Mr. CRELLIN: Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. HOLDING: The elementary point I was endeavouring to make should commend itself to all honorable members. The time has come for the Parliament of Victoria to state clearly and honestly to the people of this State that the growth of Melbourne cannot continue to develop as it has in the past. It is nonsense for the Government to refer in His Excellency's Speech to the future of the Dandenongs by suggesting that the Government's plans for the future of the Dandenongs make them safe.

No doubt the Premier has seen the excellent report prepared by a research team from Monash University. Page 20 of this excellent document points out that the population of the Dandenongs in 1961 was 30,600; in 1971 the population was 51,600, and by 1974 it will be well over 60,000. However, by existing planning schemes under which land is being

developed and sold, the population will rise to more than 245,000. There is no way by which one can put 245,000 people into the Dandenongs and not destroy the area environmentally and its future capacity to serve Melbourne. It is social and economic madness. The same is true of the Mornington Peninsula. The Government has to make a clear and decisive statement on the sprawl of Melbourne.

I am concerned about the figure of 3·5 million people as the future population of Melbourne. It should be clearly understood that the figure is a population prediction and was arrived at by the Melbourne Harbor Trust, which pointed out that by 1981, even if the Federal and State Governments could move 15,000 people a year out of Melbourne, the population would still reach 3·5 million.

That is the basis upon which I have taken the figure, and I believe its use ought to be made clear. Honorable members should be completely candid about the situation. If my concept is accepted, the Government will have to involve itself far more heavily in planning and will have to seek much more Federal assistance in order to accelerate decentralization initiatives. Unless the estimated figure of population growth is reduced, what has been achieved to date will not solve the problem or go anywhere near solving it.

I commend to the House the proposition that Melbourne's growth should be limited because a population in excess of 3·5 million is socially and economically undesirable. If the figure reached 5 million as predicted, Melbourne would be one of the largest cities in the world. I invite honorable members to contemplate the enormity of the social and economic problems which would be created if we allowed that crazy imbalance to occur. A Melbourne of that size would milk and bleed the resources of the State as a whole. What would we have achieved? We would have achieved a city unfit for people to live in—that is, if we want to maintain a reasonable living standard.

I have always been somewhat sceptical of the Premier's statements when he has spoken about the quality of life. One is entitled to be sceptical when one reads the Speech prepared by the Government for His Excellency which refers to the existing plans to preserve and protect the environment of the Dandenongs. That statement is nonsense, as the Premier knows. If population levels of the kind I have mentioned move into the Dandenongs and onto the Mornington Peninsula, the environment of those places will be destroyed.

Therefore, I hope this amendment will be the first of many to be moved in a series of debates which I believe ought to take place in this Parliament if it is to be honest with the people of the State. The Parliament should reject the concept of Melbourne's growth being unlimited and the concept that increases the urbanization of the metropolitan area. The Parliament should reject the economics involved, but most of all it should reject the social problems which a community of that size would generate. It should also reject the lifestyle which a community of that size would produce.

For those reasons, I commend the amendment to the House. I believe it will be good for the people of this State if the amendment is incorporated in the Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency because then, for the first time in the history of this State, there will be a positive statement from the Parliament of Victoria to the planners and designers setting out clearly what the future objective is to be, that the population figures proposed should be the maximum but that the Parliament wants to reduce the figures below that maximum. If that is done and the Government is prepared to accept that concept there will be a broad yardstick by which the objectives of the Government in its decentralized approach can be measured

and tested. Until that standard is created, the growth of Melbourne will be allowed to continue to sprawl, uncontrolled and unplanned, and ultimately that will be a disaster for the State. I urge the House to adopt the amendment that I have moved.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Honorable members speaking in future will be deemed to be speaking both to the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency and to the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): I move—

That the debate be now adjourned.

The House divided on the motion for the adjournment of the debate (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler in the chair)—

Ayes	.. ..	49
Noes	.. ..	19
Majority for the motion	..	30

AYES.

Mr. Austin	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Balfour	Mr. Plowman
Mr. Billing	Mr. Rafferty
Mr. Birrell	Mr. Ramsay
Mr. Borthwick	Mr. Reese
Mr. Burgin	Mr. Ross-Edwards
Mr. Chamberlain	Mr. Rossiter
Mr. Dixon	Mr. Scanlan
Mr. Dunstan	Mr. Skeggs
Mr. Ebery	Mr. Smith
Mr. Evans (*Ballaarat North*)	(*Bellarine*)
Mr. Evans (*Gippsland East*)	Mr. Smith (*Warrnambool*)
Mrs. Goble	Mr. Stephen
Mr. Guy	Mr. Suggett
Mr. Hamer	Sir Edgar Tanner
Mr. Hann	Mr. Templeton
Mr. Hayes	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Jona	Mr. Vale
Mr. Lacy	Mr. Whiting
Mr. Loxton	Mr. Wilcox
Mr. McCabe	Mr. Williams
Mr. McClure	Mr. Wood
Mr. MacDonald	*Tellers:*
Mr. McInnes	
Mr. McKellar	Mr. Baxter
Mr. McLaren	Mr. Crellin

NOES.

Mr. Amos	Mr. Lind
Mr. Bornstein	Mr. Mutton
Mr. Doube	Mr. Roper
Mr. Edmunds	Mr. Simmonds
Mr. Fogarty	Mr. Trezise
Mr. Fordham	Mr. Wilkes
Mr. Ginifer	Mr. Wilton
Mr. Holding	*Tellers:*
Mr. Jones	Mr. Curnow
Mr. Kirkwood	Mr. Stirling

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until next day.

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That Mr. Bornstein, Mr. Doube, Mr. Fordham, Mr. Hann, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Reese, and Sir Edgar Tanner, C.B.E., E.D., be members of the Committee of Public Accounts, and that the committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records, to move from place to place, and to sit on days on which the House does not meet; three to be the quorum.

The motion was agreed to.

STATUTE LAW REVISION COMMITTEE.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That Mr. Edmunds, Mr. A. T. Evans, Mr. Maclellan, Mr. Aurel Smith, Mr. Whiting, and Mr. Wilton, be members of the Statute Law Revision Committee; and that the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records.

The motion was agreed to.

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That Mr. Birrell, Mrs. Goble, and Mr. Kirkwood be members of the Subordinate Legislation Committee; and that the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records.

The motion was agreed to.

HOUSE COMMITTEE.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That Mr. Dunstan, D.S.O., Mr. B. J. Evans, Mr. Fordham, Mr. Simmonds, and Sir Edgar Tanner, C.B.E., E.D., be members of the House Committee; and that the committee have leave to sit on days on which the House does not meet.

The motion was agreed to.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That Mr. Speaker, Mr. Edmunds, Mrs. Goble, Mr. Hayes and Mr. Mitchell be members of the Library Committee; and that the committee have leave to sit on days on which the House does not meet.

The motion was agreed to.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That Mr. Speaker, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Curnow, Mr. McCabe, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Roper, Mr. Templeton, and Mr. Whiting be members of the Printing Committee; and that the committee have leave to sit on days on which the House does not meet; three to be the quorum.

The motion was agreed to.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That Mr. Speaker, Mr. Holding, Mr. Maclellan, Mr. Reece, Mr. Ross-Edwards, Mr. Stephen, Mr. Whiting, and Mr. Wilkes be members of the Standing Orders Committee; and that the committee have leave to sit on days on which the House does not meet; four to be the quorum.

The motion was agreed to.

COMPANY TAKE-OVERS COMMITTEE.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That Mr. Ebery, Mr. Hayes, Mr. McInnes, and Mr. Wilton be members of the Company Take-overs Committee; and that the committee have leave to sit on days on which the House does not meet.

The motion was agreed to.

OSTEOPATHY, CHIROPRACTIC AND NATUROPATHY COMMITTEE.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That Mr. Austin, Mr. Jones, Mr. Mitchell, and Mr. Vale be members of the Osteopathy, Chiropractic and Naturopathy Committee; and that the committee have leave to sit on days on which the House does not meet.

The motion was agreed to.

TATTERSALL CONSULTATIONS (SOCCER FOOTBALL POOLS) BILL.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): Pursuant to Standing Order No. 273D, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to provide for the promotion and conduct in Victoria of soccer football pools, for that and other purposes to amend the Tattersall Consultations Act 1958, to amend the Lotteries, Gaming and Betting Act 1966, and the Youth, Sport and Recreation Act 1972, and for other purposes.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Leave is refused.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Under Standing Order No. 273D, leave is not necessary.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the day for later this day.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

PAY-ROLL TAX (RATE) BILL.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer), pursuant to Standing Order No. 273D, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to increase the rate of pay-roll tax under the Pay-roll Tax Act 1971.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

FISHERIES BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation), pursuant to Standing Order No. 273D, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Fisheries Act 1968.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES BILL.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 76 and section 77 of the Co-operative Housing Societies Act 1958.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

THE ALFRED NICHOLAS MEMORIAL GARDENS BILL.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to make provision with respect to the transfer of certain land in the Shire of Sherbrooke from the president councillors and ratepayers of the Shire of Sherbrooke to the Forests Commission and for other purposes.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

CARLTON LAND (UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S COLLEGE) BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to revoke the reservation of certain Crown land at Carlton as a site for a residential college for women at the University of Melbourne and to provide for the permanent reservation of the said land as a general residential college at the University of Melbourne.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): Leave is refused.

VICTORIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCES BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to establish a Victorian Institute of Marine Sciences and for purposes connected therewith.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

FILMS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 15 of the Films Act 1971.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): Leave is refused.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (BENEFITS) BILL.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 26 of the Friendly Societies Act 1958.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): Leave is refused.

ROAD SAFETY (EDUCATIONAL) BILL.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to provide for the transfer of two employees of the National Safety Council to the Public Service of Victoria in connection with the

transfer of certain responsibilities from the National Safety Council to the Road Safety and Traffic Authority.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

TERANG MECHANICS INSTITUTE AND FREE LIBRARY TRUST BILL.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to enable the surrender to Her Majesty of the property of the Terang Mechanics Institute and Free Library Trust free of the trust and of a certain mortgage, to facilitate the appointment of the Shire of Hampden as a committee of management thereof under the Land Act 1958, and for purposes connected therewith.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

HARBORS AND NAVIGABLE WATERS CONTROL BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Melbourne Harbor Trust Act 1958, the Geelong Harbor Trust Act 1958, the Portland Harbor Trust Act 1958, the Harbor Boards Act 1958 and the Marine Act 1958, and for other purposes.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

MELBOURNE AND METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Act 1958 and the Sewerage Districts Act 1958, and for other purposes.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

BONNIE DOON (PUBLIC HALL) LAND BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to authorize the sale of certain land at Bonnie Doon, to provide for the application of the proceeds of sale and for other purposes.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

Mr. SUGGETT (Bentleigh): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, it appears that leave has been refused by the Opposition. Could the member refusing leave be identified so that honorable members know who is responsible for these obstructive tactics?

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! There is no point of order.

WHEAT MARKETING BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Wheat Marketing Act 1969.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

PESTICIDES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Pesticides Act 1958.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

FERTILIZERS BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the sale of agricultural limes, fertilizers and soil conditioners and for other purposes.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

DRIED FRUITS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Dried Fruits Act 1958.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

PHARMACISTS BILL.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to re-enact with amendments the law relating to the registration of pharmacists and for purposes connected therewith.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY BILL.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the Deakin University Bill.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education) moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the establishment and incorporation of a university to be known as Deakin University and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

GEELONG (LAND) BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the Geelong (Land) Bill.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to authorize the grant of certain land in the City of Geelong to the Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners to amend the Geelong Lands Exchange Act 1972 and the Geelong Harbor Trust Act 1958 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

MELBOURNE (ALEXANDRA GARDENS) LAND BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the Melbourne (Alexandra Gardens) Land Bill.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands) moved for leave to bring in a Bill relating to certain Crown lands in the City of Melbourne.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

WATER RESOURCES BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the Water Resources Bill.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to establish a Ministry of Water Resources and Water Supply for the purpose of ensuring the most efficient utilization of the water resources of Victoria and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

FORESTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It covers a number of amendments to the Forests Act 1958. Clause 2 (1) (*a*) (*i*) provides for the deletion of the words " land within the Mallee country within the meaning of the Land Act 1958 or" from the interpretation of " Fire protected area " in section 3 (1) of the principal Act. This amendment will remedy the situation of the non-application of certain fire protection provisions of the Act to State forests and national parks within the Mallee country. Exclusion of Mallee country, which is only loosely defined in the Land Act, had its origin in times when clearing of Mallee and burning in the summer months was quite extensive. In addition, at that time there was no provision to excise part of the fire protected area as can

now be accomplished under section 3 (3) and section 3 (4) of the Forests Act.

Clause 2 (1) (*a*) (ii) will enable land, within 1 mile of "protected public land"—which is defined in clause 2 (1) (*c*) of the Bill—to be included in the fire protected area, and provides for protected public land to become part of the fire protected area.

Clause 2 (1) (*b*) provides that the prohibited period for protected public land shall be the whole year, and for land within 1 mile of protected public land to be subject to the prohibited period declared by the Minister. The interpretation of "protected public land" is given in clause 2 (1) (c), namely—

"Protected public land" means any lands of the Crown not being within a State forest or a national park declared to be protected public land pursuant to the provisions of sub-section (1) of section 62 of this Act.

Clauses 2 (2) and 2 (3) contain consequential amendments. Clause 2 (2) excludes protected public land from the fire protected area which is subject to a prohibited period declared by the Minister, and clause 2 (3) provides that the Minister, after consultation with the commission, may declare any land within 1 mile of protected public land not to be a fire protected area. These amendments, together with others in clauses 7 and 8 of the Bill, will give effect to recommendations of the Land Conservation Council for the application of fire protection measures to national parks and other Crown land not being within State forest or national park.

Section 21 of the principal Act was amended by the Forests (Amendment) Act 1970, No. 8035, to provide the commission with power to close for such period as it thinks fit, or with the approval of the Governor in Council, permanently, the whole or any part of a road, track, tramway or other work constructed or maintained by the commission. It is now desired to define that the closure of roads and so on, shall be effected by the erection of barriers. In addition, the Bill provides that roads and so on, may be closed temporarily by authorized forest officers. This will enable prompt action to be taken at local district level in the event of a road being rendered unsafe and dangerous for use by the public because of heavy rain, landslip, washaway or other hazard. This amendment will make it possible to take prompt effective action to protect the public from hazardous situations on roads and tracks and so on in forest areas.

The amendment to section 23 (2) contained in clause 4 provides an increase from $3,000 to $10,000 in the amount of contract consideration, in excess of which the sanction of the Minister is required. The amount was increased to $3,000 by the Forests (Amendment) Act 1968, No. 7674, and the proposed increase to $10,000 is justified by the rate at which average weekly wages and other costs have increased since 1968.

Section 45 (2) of the principal Act contains the words "in the next succeeding sub-section". This expression is incorrect as there is no such succeeding sub-section. The amendment contained in clause 5 provides for the insertion of the correct expression, which is "section 46".

The purpose of amendment to section 50 of the principal Act proposed by clause 6 (*a*) is to strengthen the tenure of areas of forest set aside as forest parks, scenic reserves, alpine reserves, roadside reserves or special purpose reserves. Under the existing Act these reserves may be set aside and varied or revoked by the commission. The amendment gives this power to the Governor in Council in lieu of the commission. This change is considered appropriate in the light of the increasing role that such areas are playing in Victoria's system of nature reserves and parks.

Section 50 (4) of the principal Act provides for the payment of travelling allowances to members of committees of management, not being officers or employees of the Public Service, but makes no such provision for members of advisory committees. Clause 6 (*b*) of the Bill will remedy this anomaly by providing that members of advisory committees may receive travelling allowances.

Clause 7 introduces a new subsection 62 (1) into the principal Act, which will enable the Governor in Council, by order, to declare "any lands of the Crown not being within a State forest or a national park" to be protected public land on the joint recommendation of the Minister of Forests and the Minister of Lands or the Minister for Conservation and for revocation in the same manner. Hence, under this amendment protected public land as defined will be afforded the necessary protection from fire.

Clause 7 of the Bill also inserts into the Forests Act a new subsection (2) to section 62 which places a duty on the commission to carry out fire prevention and suppression work in any national park and protected public land as well as in State forests, but requires that agreement be reached with the managing authority as to fire prevention work in national parks and on protected public land. Failing agreement the section provides for determination by the Governor in Council.

Clause 8 provides for protected public land to be subject to the provisions of section 63 of the Forests Act with respect to fire-lighting restrictions, to section 65 relating to the removal of fire hazards, and section 67 concerning the prevention of spread and reporting of fires. As mentioned earlier, this section, together with clauses 2 and 7 of the Bill, give effect to recommendations of the Land Conservation Council for the protection from fire of national parks and other protected public lands in accordance with agreement reached between the Forests Commission and the Ministry for Conservation.

Section 94A of the principal Act, which provides for farm forestry agreements, was introduced by the Forests (Amendment) Act 1964. Since then a number of deficiencies have become apparent in the legislative basis of the farm forestry scheme. The purpose of clause 9 of the Bill is to remedy those deficiencies.

Sub-clause (1) deletes the words "by instalments or otherwise" from section 94A (1). The purpose of this amendment is to eliminate confusion in the meaning and use of the word "advances" in section 94A (1) and of the words "advances" and "instalments" in section 94A (7) as amended by clause 9 (5) (*b*) of the Bill.

Sub-clause (2) provides for amendments to section 94A (3) (c), firstly by replacing sub-paragraph (i) which requires an owner to plant not less than 5 acres of the area within two years of the agreement, with a sub-paragraph which will require an owner to plant the area specified in the agreement within the specified time, and secondly by inserting a new sub-paragraph (iii) which will establish the procedure to be followed by an owner in the event of the destruction of a plantation in whole or in part, by fire, disease or any other agency.

Sub-clause (3) introduces a new sub-section (3A) into section 94A of the principal Act the purpose of which is to permit the commission to lodge a caveat forbidding the registration of any person as transferee or proprietor of, or of any instrument affecting any land the subject of an agreement under section 94A. This amendment is necessary because, as the Act stands at present, dealings in land which is

the subject of an agreement or disposal of a deceased owner's estate may occur without the commission's knowledge. The lodging of a caveat will ensure that the commission becomes aware of these matters and will be able to take steps to protect loans outstanding under an agreement.

Sub-clause (4) substitutes a new sub-section for present sub-section (4) of section 94A. The present sub-section provides that any moneys owing under an agreement will become due and payable if the owner, during the term of the loan, sells transfers and so on, the land to which the agreement relates. New sub-section (4) is of broader application and provides that the balance of any moneys owing will become due and payable if the owner contravenes or fails to comply with any covenant to which the agreement is subject.

Sub-clause (5) (*a*) amends section 94A (7A) by substituting for the rate of 5 per cent per annum on advances, "a rate determined in accordance with sub-section (7A)". Sub-section (7A) is inserted in section 94A by sub-clause (6) of the Bill and provides that the rate of interest payable by owners on advances under farm forestry agreements shall be, in short, the current long-term bond rate.

Sub-clause 5 (*b*) contains a series of amendments to section 94A (7) of the principal Act the purpose of which is to enable any owner who has received more than one advance under an agreement to have the advances consolidated so that repayment may be made by one instalment, half yearly, throughout the repayment period. Sub-clause (6) inserts a new sub-section (7A) in section 94A. The purpose of this amendment is stated in the explanation of sub-clause 5 (*a*).

Sub-clause (7) (*a*) extends the meaning of the word "owner" in section 94A (*a*) to include a "mortgagor under the general law". The commission, on the advice of the Crown Solicitor, has not entered into farm forestry agreements with mortgagors of land under the general law as the Crown Solicitor has stated that such a mortgagor may not be held to be an owner within the meaning of section 94A (8). This amendment seeks to remedy that position. Sub-clause 7 (*b*) inserts in section 94A (8) a definition of the meaning of the term "the rate of yield to maturity" which is contained in new sub-section (7A) of section 94A.

Clause 3 of the Bill provides for amendments to section 21 of the principal Act in relation to closing of roads and has been explained previously. Further related amendments to section 96 of the principal Act are provided under clause 10 which will make it an offence to remove any barrier erected to close a road or to drive a vehicle on a road, track, tramway or other work constructed or maintained by the commission which is closed for use by the public.

Clause 11 proposes to amend two of the sub-sections of section 99 of the principal Act; firstly sub-section (16), so that the Governor in Council may make regulations to regulate camping in State forests as well as the establishment and conduct of recreation grounds and camping areas; and secondly sub-section 19 (*c*), to enable the Governor in Council to make regulations to prescribe the fees, expenses and allowances to be paid to representatives of the timber industry on the Timber Promotion Committee. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.

ADJOURNMENT.

SMALL ESTATES—ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC AUTHORITY—UNDATED LETTERS—CREDIT SOCIETIES—SEATBELT LEGISLATION — NATHALIA PRIMARY SCHOOL—SECOND FAWKNER SCOUT GROUP—UNANSWERED QUESTIONS—HEATHERTON LAND—WORKERS COMPENSATION—SHOP TRADING HOURS—SUPERMARKET ADVERTISING.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I move—

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until tomorrow, at half-past three o'clock.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): I wish to raise a matter with the Attorney-General. In November of last year I raised with the honorable gentleman a question concerning the Probate Office, and in particular, a matter which I referred to as "small estates". I understand there is a small estates section in the Probate Office. In a letter dated 13th February of this year the Minister informed me that a report had been obtained from the Registrar of Probate following the question asked by me in this House last November on behalf of the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia.

Mr. WILCOX: What were you raising?

Mr. WILTON: I referred to small estates and the payment of probate duty.

Mr. WILCOX: What did you want done?

Mr. WILTON: I wanted the exemption limit raised, and the matrimonial home exempted from probate duty. In addition to raising the matter in the House, I wrote to the Attorney-General on 29th January, and I received a reply from him which said that a report had been obtained from the Registrar of Probate and that the matter was under consideration.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! Is it necessary for the honorable member to read the correspondence?

Mr. WILTON: I do not think it is necessary for me to read it. The Minister would have the file, and his office could probe the matter for him. All I want to say is that this matter was first raised last November and the Minister indicated that a report had been obtained from the appropriate officer in his department. I now ask the Minister if he is prepared to finalize the matter with a view to acceding to the request that has been submitted to him.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds): I wish to raise with the Chief Secretary a matter concerning the administration of the Road Safety and Traffic Authority. On many occasions, the authority's regulations, which have been promulgated and approved by the Governor in Council, which is the Cabinet, in respect to traffic counts, appear to favour mobile traffic as against pedestrians.

In the Moonee Ponds electorate near the showgrounds in Epsom Road, is a pedestrian crossing on which there have been five fatal accidents in the past four or five years—one of them recently—and at least five other serious accidents in which people were injured. Furthermore, at least two policemen have been injured while controlling traffic near the pedestrian crossing during the course of the Royal Agricultural Show. In the vicinity of the pedestrian crossing at present there is the Royal Agricultural Showgrounds, and I remind honorable members that the show is about to take place. Also a trotting meeting is held at the showgrounds every Saturday night. Two primary schools—Ascot West Primary School and St. Mary's Catholic school—are also located near the pedestrian crossing. These two schools are situated on either side of Epsom Road. A new swimming complex is to be provided by the City of Essendon nearby. Many pedestrians cross these roads, but apparently the

pedestrian traffic count is too low to have an overpass erected. The City of Essendon has attempted, through its engineer, to have the Road Traffic and Safety Authority examine the matter in respect to traffic counts.

I submit that if a traffic count was taken on a night during the Royal Agricultural Show, or on a Saturday night when a trotting meeting was conducted, there would be an adequate count to justify the city's call for the construction of a pedestrian overpass type bridge. I know it would take some time. The matter was considered at a combined meeting of the parents of the two schools in the area. The parents are particularly concerned about their children because of so many near misses on the crossing, and also because of the latest fatal accident which occurred there.

I invite the Chief Secretary to examine the Road Traffic and Safety Authority's regulations in respect to traffic counts, as it seems that the regulations are biased in favour of vehicles and against the safety of pedestrians. I ask the honorable gentleman as a matter of urgency to consider the proposition put forward by me and the City of Essendon concerning the provision of a pedestrian overpass at Burrows Street in Moonee Ponds.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party) : I wish to direct to the attention of the Premier a question relating to undated material emanating from the offices of Ministers. I do not want to say this in any sense of criticism, and I do not want to name specific Ministers, but I receive on an average at least one undated letter a week from a Minister. When this occurs, I instruct my secretary to ring the department concerned to obtain a date for the letter. I make a note of the date on my copy of the letter because it could be important at some later stage. I believe it is the general practice for letters from Ministers to be undated when they are typed. The Ministers perhaps have good reasons for adopting this procedure—I will not discuss that aspect now—but undated material is contrary to normal commercial practice. I would not, as a lawyer, sign a letter which was undated, and I am sure my lawyer colleagues would agree with me that it is not a good practice to do so.

I ask the Premier to discuss this matter with Cabinet Ministers with a view to having letters dated before they are signed. I realize that a letter could be delayed after it is typed and therefore it is considered wise not to date letters until they are signed. However, the despatch of a letter undated only delays it further. A Minister might as well be honest about the position and say that it took a couple of days to have a letter signed. Anybody would understand that.

I bring this matter up as a piece of constructive criticism of the present system. I ask the Premier to discuss it at a Cabinet meeting to ascertain whether the system could be changed.

Mr. WILLIAMS (Box Hill) : I wish to raise with the Attorney-General the problem borrowing money is creating with credit societies in Victoria. I understand that under the Money Lenders Act credit societies are unable to charge more than 14 per cent interest. However, in view of the present ruling market, it is necessary that credit societies should be enabled to charge at least 18 per cent to be viable.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler) : Is this a matter of Government administration for which a Minister is responsible?

Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes, Mr. Speaker; the Attorney-General administers the Money Lenders Act which affects the co-operative credit societies in Victoria. Under that Act, societies in Victoria are limited to a maximum charge of 14 per cent. In Queensland, however, the maximum permissible rate is 20 per cent. Because of the high ruling rates of interest being charged on the money market, co-operative credit unions must

charge their customers—the borrowers—at least 18 per cent interest to be viable. Unfortunately, because the societies are unable to borrow on the money market, they are facing deficits and are unable to advance money to borrowers. In my community, for example, there are five or six co-operative credit societies embracing some 2,000 to 3,000 families.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Could the honorable member come to the point?

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am emphasizing how socially important co-operative unions are in our society. The advances made by co-operative credit organizations in Victoria total something like $50 million. Unfortunately, the societies are hamstrung by legislation which does not exist in other States.

If these societies are to be hamstrung by legislation that is not wanted in other States, unnecessary harm will be done to small people in the community. The co-operative credit societies are an important aspect of the financial community. I appeal to the Attorney-General to try to rectify the situation. I am sure that if his officers considered the matter, they would find that the position needs to be rectified, particularly in view of what is taking place in the Australian Capital Territory where naturally the high interest rates have been brought about by Federal Government policy.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): On two previous occasions I have drawn the attention of the Chief Secretary to the inadequacy of the motor car seat belt legislation. A situation has now been reached in Victoria where drivers have been booked by police for not having their seat belts adjusted correctly. This action by the police is completely illegal. In accordance with the regulation and the legislation they are acting improperly. I am surprised that nothing has been done by the Chief Secretary regarding this matter.

I am also concerned about the number of motorists in Victoria who are booked for wearing seat belts not correctly adjusted. If the Chief Secretary takes the time to read the legislation he will find that it refers to vehicles in motion and not to stationary vehicles. Therefore, if the police see a driver who is not wearing his seat belt, it is possible for them to pull up that motorist and say, "You are not wearing a seat belt". However if they stop a motorist on the road and say, "Your seat belt is not correctly adjusted", by the time the vehicle is stopped, all the motorist has to do is to unfasten the seat belt and under the Act he is exonerated.

The police should be informed of this situation. I shall be interested to learn how some of these cases are handled in the courts. To refresh the memory of the Chief Secretary of the provisions relating to seat belts, I refer to the Motor Car (Safety) Act. Section 31B states—

> A person shall not be seated in a motor car, that is in motion, in a seat for which a safety belt is provided unless he is wearing the safety belt and it is properly adjusted and securely fastened.

The car has to be in motion. If it is stopped, it does not matter how the belt is fitted, and there is no way in which the police can obtain a conviction.

The Act ought to be amended. The seat belt legislation is good and is worthy of its introduction by the Government. The Government ought to move quickly to amend the Act to cover a person wearing a seat belt which is not correctly adjusted. I do not wish to see a host of unnecessary cases cluttering up the courts. The Act should be amended in the interests of road safety and of facilitating the work of the courts.

Mr. BAXTER (Murray Valley): I raise a question with the Minister of Education as a consequence of a question I asked earlier in the day concerning the replacement of derelict toilet blocks in some Victorian primary schools. I appreciate the problem the Minister has had with the shortage of funds in this area

over the past year, but I draw his attention particularly to Nathalia Primary School where approval was given on 23rd October last year—about eleven months ago—for the replacement of the school toilet block. Documentation has been completed and estimates established and it is ready to go to tender but has been deferred on the ground that funds are not available. I have had the opportunity of inspecting this toilet block. It is in a deplorable condition. I am sure the House will agree that where young children are involved it is vitally important that toilet facilities be of the highest standard. I particularly ask the Minister to take steps to ensure that the tenders are called soon for the replacement of the toilet block at Nathalia Primary School.

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West): I direct a matter to the attention of the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation. It concerns the Second Fawkner Scout Group which some years ago applied for a grant of $1,800 from the then Youth Advisory Council for building purposes. The amount was comparatively small.

The association asked for this money or a portion thereof. It waited for a reply and contacted the Youth Advisory Council on a number of occasions. It appears that in the changeover to the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation a decision was made not to approve the grant but this decision was not communicated to the body concerned. If it had received a refusal it would have come back with an amended application and asked for various other forms of grant for which it was eligible.

I ask the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation to examine the reason why this application was refused, and why the Second Fawkner Scout Group was not notified, whether there are other similar cases because of the changeover and whether the honorable gentleman will be prepared to consider a fresh application even though it is late in the year, because the organization was completely unaware of the refusal until I found out about it today.

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park): I raise the matter of unanswered questions of the previous session of the Parliament. On previous occasions when Parliament adjourned questions on the Notice Paper were answered by correspondence from the various Ministers. I had a number of questions on the Notice Paper, one of which was addressed to the Treasurer. I realize that as another session of Parliament has commenced it will be necessary to place the question on the Notice Paper again. It has been five months since it was asked originally and I hope the Minister can expedite the answer to the question.

Mr. BILLING (Heatherton): I raise a matter which is becoming increasingly urgent to a number of landowners and residents of Heatherton. It concerns the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Planning and it has to do with the town planning authority of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works which nearly three years ago on behalf of the Government introduced amendments to the town planning scheme, particularly a notorious amendment known as "Amendment 21". On previous occasions I have raised the particular difficulties which confront these people who are and have been for nearly three years under a proposal for amendment of zoning and town planning. The situation in Heatherton for most landholders has reached a critical stage. They are not able to sell their land or pay their rates and many of them have exhausted their opportunities of production on unproductive land.

In three cases which have been directed to my attention the people concerned are dependent on using part of their hard-earned savings to meet their everyday obligations. This does not apply only in my electorate; it applies in every electorate in which the town planning procedures are proceeding at a snail's pace. It

is unjust that it should take nearly three years for the objections to this plan to be heard. I ask that the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Planning give an assurance that these people will be told a certain date on which the hearing of these objections will be concluded, so that they will know what their future is in holding this land.

The matter was of extreme economic importance twelve months ago and, with the escalation of costs, it is even more so today. This is particularly so because of proposals by municipal councils to raise rates and valuations. Those concerned who are primary producers are now making representations for a preferential water rate but they do not expect to get it. I implore the Minister concerned to do something to relieve the difficult position of these people who cannot work unproductive land because it is uneconomic to produce vegetables in what was once one of the best vegetable-producing areas around Melbourne.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir): I direct to the notice of the Chief Secretary a matter concerning workers compensation payments. It concerns the Chamber of Manufactures Insurance Company, St. Kilda Road, Melbourne. I have received information from the Food Preservers Union that a Mrs. Smellick, of Kensington, slipped and broke her ankle on her way home from work at Flinders Street station on 30th June, 1974. About two weeks ago her son telephoned the union office and stated that his mother had received no compensation payment. He had been in touch with her employer, Rosella Foods Pty. Ltd., and was referred to an officer of the insurance company, who told him that the company was waiting for Mrs. Smellick to attend its office for an interview before it made a payment. I point out that at the time she was suffering a broken ankle, which was in plaster. After further discussions with the officer it was finally stated that a cheque would be forwarded by mail.

Subsequently the solicitor acting for the injured worker indicated that the case would go to the Workers Compensation Board, whereupon the insurance company refused to make any weekly payment. It was only this week, when the union took action and gave the employer a month to change its insurance company, if it continued to adopt that attitude, that payment was forthcoming. I ask the Chief Secretary to investigate whether this is the normal practice of this company and, if so, to take steps to rectify the position.

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston): I present to the Minister of Labour and Industry two suggestions forwarded to me by the Preston City Council to help combat inflation. The first is that late night trading be abolished. This is long overdue, and the Minister and his advisers would probably be aware of this.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): Mr. Speaker, this is a matter of legislation.

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston): The Minister could sponsor new legislation. There is no doubt that late night trading contributes towards inflation and that the consumer must bear the cost.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): What is it that the honorable member wants?

Mr. KIRKWOOD: I ask the Minister to consider introducing amendments to the legislation.

The SPEAKER: A suggestion to a Minister anticipating a change in legislation is out of order.

Mr. KIRKWOOD: There is another suggestion which relates to the same matter. The council advises that in its opinion the Minister should consider the banning of large-scale advertising by chain grocery stores.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): Mr. Speaker, I understand that only one matter can be raised by any honorable member; this is a separate matter.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): The honorable member for Preston raised two matters but I

ruled one out of order. The second matter is in order. He is putting forward another suggestion, and until he has been heard it is not possible for anyone to say that he is suggesting certain things.

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston): The point I make is that the Preston City Council believes that the Minister should consider the effects of large-scale advertising by grocery stores. All honorable members are aware that the daily papers contain many pages of this type of advertising, and so do the suburban newspapers. This advertising adds to the costs which consumers must bear. They are a factor in inflation which affects consumers in many ways. It is proper for a municipality to have the interests of its ratepayers at heart and make such an obviously worth-while suggestion. This is something to which the Minister should give consideration.

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General): The honorable member for Broadmeadows referred to probate on small estates. I have no doubt that, as he said, he raised this matter with me in November of last year, and that I indicated that it would be investigated. I have a recollection from early this year that it came before me and it was decided that no action need be taken. My memory may be astray and I shall be happy to check and advise the honorable member whether any action will be taken.

The honorable member for Box Hill raised the problems of credit union interest rates. I agree with him about the valuable contribution which credit unions make to financing the various affairs of their members. Perhaps the position is even more simple than the honorable member stated. He suggested that it was up to the Government to allow credit unions to charge a higher rate of interest. That is not the position. If the credit unions raised the interest rate above 14 per cent the only restrictions on them would be that they would have to be reregistered as money lenders. What the credit unions object to is having to register as money lenders. That is somewhat different from the Government having authority, which it does not have in this case, to govern the rate of interest charged by credit unions. The association representing credit unions did see me and the submission that it made is under careful consideration. It is not altogether unreasonable in the present situation that if a body is lending money at 14 per cent it should be registered as a money lender. The other aspect is that 14 per cent seems to me to be a pretty high rate of interest, and it should not be encouraged to go higher.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The honorable member for Moonee Ponds referred to traffic counts conducted by the Road Safety and Traffic Authority. I will undertake to let him have a clear statement on how the authority conducts its traffic count. The honorable member referred also to the provision of a pedestrian overpass near the showground, especially for use on trotting nights and during the Royal Agricultural Show. I agree that this question ought to be examined, and I will see that this is done.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition raised a question on the seat belt legislation, one of the great achievements of this Government. If the police are acting illegally in detecting offences, of course the Government will see that the legislation is changed, and it will be done in a way that will strengthen the law.

The honorable member for Reservoir mentioned Mrs. Ann Smellick, of Flat 95, 56 Derby Street, Kensington, who broke her ankle. I do not know whether this matter can be investigated by a Government instrumentality, but I will see what I can do and will inform the honorable member.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The Leader of the Country Party referred to undated correspondence emanating from certain unnamed and unspecified offices of Cabinet Ministers. As the matter was raised generally, I shall reply in general terms. In my view all correspondence should be dated when it is prepared, and if it is not then signed promptly, the date should be changed. I will ask my colleagues to try to ensure that all correspondence carries a date. All honorable members are entitled to receive correspondence which carries a date so that it can be identified and also so that it can be referred to accurately if a reply is necessary. It should also carry a date for the information of constituents when it is passed on to them, in accordance with the usual procedure.

Concerning the matter raised by the honorable member for Deer Park, an undertaking was given by the Deputy Premier at the conclusion of the autumn sessional period that questions which remained on the Notice Paper would be answered directly by letter. If the honorable member asked a question and I have offended by not replying to it, I apologize to him. If he can give me the number of the question I shall ensure that he receives a reply.

Mr. GINIFER: I shall place the question on the Notice Paper again.

Mr. HAMER: I am offering the honorable member a quicker method of reply to his question, but if he again places it on the Notice Paper I shall ensure that he receives a prompt reply.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): In reply to the honorable member for Murray Valley, I confess that I am not familiar with the lavatory at the Nathalia Primary School. However, I am prepared to accept his word that it is an old model which has extensive ventilation, much of it in the wrong spot. Therefore, I will investigate whether it is possible to bring forward a replacement project to remedy the situation.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): The honorable member for Heatherton raised a matter concerning amendments to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Planning Scheme. I am not aware of the details of the matter he raised but he impressed me of its urgency because of the hardship it is causing his constituents. I assure him that I will immediately take up this matter with my colleague, the Minister for Local Government and request him to expedite a hearing and so try to relieve the hardship mentioned by the honorable member.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): I have taken a note of the suggestions made by the honorable member for Preston. However, both of them, in the context in which he raised them, would need legislation and the Government at present does not have any plans to legislate on either subject.

Mr. DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation): Regarding the matter raised by the honorable member for Brunswick West, I apologize if there has been any mishap to the application made by the Second Fawkner Scout Group to the Youth Advisory Council for a building grant of approximately $2,400. The application may not have been proceeded with by the State Youth Council, which makes recommendations to the Minister for the granting of money for building. I will see that the matter is looked into, and I would be prepared to receive a fresh application and deal with it accordingly.

In the past year approximately $1 million has been expended on these types of grants and $37,619 has gone to scout organizations. As I said before, the department is prepared to investigate whether an application has inadvertently not been dealt with as effectively as it should have been.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.18 *p.m.*

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, September 11, 1974.

The PRESIDENT **(Sir Raymond Garrett)** took the chair at 4.24 p.m., and read the prayer.

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province) *(By leave)*: I wish to ask a question without notice. In view of the statements by the Prime Minister that unemployment relief moneys will be made available to the extent of about $2 million a week, will the Minister for Local Government make urgent representations to the Federal Government requesting a fair share of this money for Victoria, and also requesting that the money be channelled through local government to the municipalities on the same satisfactory basis as was done with the earlier unemployment relief moneys?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government) *(By leave)*: At this stage we are aware only from press statements of the details of the plan decided upon by Federal Cabinet yesterday. We fully support the objectives announced in the Federal Government's press statement which are to provide for employment on worth-while community projects in areas of high unemployment, whether city or country.

A fortnight ago, in expectation of the need for the reintroduction of such a scheme, we called together our State committee which operated previously. That committee is geared to undertake distribution of unemployment relief in the same way as previously occurred. The previous scheme was administered extremely satisfactorily, as I think all honorable members will agree, with a minimum of fuss, without red tape and according to few guidelines. Money was made available immediately, often on the basis of a telephone call, to assist to remedy unemployment. This was done in full co-operation with local government. Our objective would be to ensure that this is what occurs again.

However we are a little disturbed by the announcement that the plan will be administered by a Federal committee of Ministers who will approve projects. This is bound to occasion delay, which we would seek to avoid. We have been told, through announcements, that State local and voluntary organizations will be invited to suggest projects. We hope we will be able to use the State machinery to get speedy approval of projects at the local level without the need to go to Canberra.

We are told, too, that the Federal Government will establish standing committees in the various States. We hope they will make use of the existing standing committee and all the machinery which worked so effectively and so promptly on the last occasion when it was necessary to introduce such a scheme. Urgent representations have been made to Canberra today and the Premier made a brief announcement this afternoon. I assure honorable members that this will be followed up. I understand that the Federal scheme is to be supplemented by legislation. It is to be hoped that those features of the scheme which need to be improved to ensure that it will work effectively and promptly will be improved.

PAPERS.

The following papers, pursuant to the directions of several Acts of Parliament, were laid on the table by the Clerk—

Public Service Act—Public Service (Public Service Board) Regulations—Regulations amended (Nos. 115 to 122) (eight papers).

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—Geelong Planning Scheme 1959—Amendment No. 13, 1972 (City of Newtown).

ELECTORAL COMMISSION BILL.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill has the modest but seemingly impossible goal of establishing democratic Government in Victoria. Electoral justice in Victoria is clamped in an iron mask. The democratic ideal of one vote, one value, has never been allowed to take root and flourish in the 125 years or thereabouts of self-government in Victoria.

In the early 1950s, there seemed to be a chance of this. The Legislative Council, having kept the popular will at bay for 100 years, gave way to adult suffrage—grudgingly, of course. Nothing it seemed, stood in the way of electing a free Parliament—but just wait and see. There was nothing but the predatory activities of a Government about to fall under the executioner's axe of the Country Party. Mr. McDonald will remember that. By no means a student of constitutional history, the hard-pressed Premier fell back on the precedent of the most despised Parliament in our constitutional history, the Long Parliament. The Long Parliament passed a law declaring its members elected for life.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: It was for eleven years, was it not?

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: It was longer than that. Its members did not attain their desires, but they passed a law that Parliament could not be dissolved without their consent which, in effect, meant that they were there for life, and so was the Parliament.

Sir Henry Bolte was not a man to be upstaged by any of Cromwell's roundheads, and he put through a redistribution ensuring that his Government—not the members of Parliament but the Government—stayed for life. Our village Hampden declared that every elector in his electorate was worth at least two electors anywhere else. Having demonstrated their sagacity in voting him into Parliament, they deserved the honour of having the smallest number of electors in any electorate in the State. That position has been altered somewhat by the introduction of voting for eighteen-year olds.

The Liberal Government has remained in office ever since, but only at the sacrifice of its honour and our freedom. It has made the Parliament of Victoria a modern Noah's Ark. No one gets in except on conditions laid down by the proprietor—I mean the Government.

When I have introduced a similar Bill before, there has been only one speaker for the Government, the Minister. The tongueless silence of honorable members who support the Government—on the principle of one vote, one value—a malady rare among public men, came about because on this issue nothing can be said to justify the injustice of the present electoral system imposed upon this State.

Members of the Government party seek the charity of silence but they forget that there have been no greater sinners against Parliamentary democracy than themselves. At a time when Parliamentary institutions are under scrutiny and threat throughout the world, there is nothing more despicable than to undermine the institution from within. We are here to guard, not to garotte, Parliamentary institutions.

This Bill gives a constitutional guarantee of a representative Parliament in both Houses in the State of Victoria, something we have never had.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE: Does it ensure that an equal number of women will be represented?

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: All that one can say is that women have the vote and their vote will not be deleted or distorted any more than that of a man. If this Bill becomes law the next election will see the first democratically elected Parliament in the history of Victoria. Hopefully, that is an exciting, not a dull, prospect.

It is a simple Bill which will ensure that the vote of the gentlest and most self-effacing of Collingwood supporters will carry the same weight as that of the distinguished Chief Justice. That is what democracy means. The Bill bestows no favours on any person, party, or group. All are equal before God and, under this Bill, the ballot-box.

I am aware that the Government will resist this measure tooth and claw, just as its predecessors resisted the popular will for more than a century. The slings and arrows that will be hurled at the Bill are predictable, but not beyond endurance. But may I be permitted to hurl across the Chamber not a sling but a challenge. No one can say that this Bill is unfair. No one can say that it will bring about a gerrymander. No one can say that it contains a solitary principle which is unacceptable to those who are determined to preserve Parliament as I am and, I hope, we all are.

The Bill, properly I believe, for the first time in the history of Australian government, State or Federal, takes out of the hands of any Government the power to interfere or override a redistribution as set out by the judicial commissioners. I remind the House that the commission, which will virtually be a continuing body, will be bound to undertake a redistribution from time to time, at intervals of not more than two years and to allow for a tolerance of up to 10 per cent discrepancy in the number of electors in the electorates.

The Bill takes out of the hands of any Government the power to juggle gerrymander, distort, or monkey with a redistribution. Regrettably, the power is also taken away from Parliament but Australian and Victorian precedents are to be deplored. From time to time, Governments throughout Australia have been corrupted by power. It has been found that they will do anything to perpetuate their own authority. That is true of the Liberal Party Government in Victoria, and there have been notable instances throughout Australia.

The withdrawal of the power of the Parliament to knock back a redistribution—which I suggest should follow because of the conduct of Governments throughout Australia—is brought about by the necessity of taking it away from the Executive. When the commissioners present a report, there is always a tendency to open it up and sneak a look, see how one's own seat fares, and to get busy among one's colleagues saying, "We must protect poor old Joe." Then, for reasons that seem of the noblest, the redistribution is undone and the commissioners are forgotten or have to start all over again.

The principle adopted in the Bill sets a precedent for Australia, but the British Parliament follows it. "Gerrymander" is not a word which can be used about that Parliament and I hope that the word will vanish from this Parliament and every other Parliament in Australia. I believe the passing of this Bill is the only way to accomplish that. I shall not go through the Bill clause by clause. It sets out the duties of the commission. The terms of reference are that what the commission brings back to Parliament goes, like it or not. Is that unfair? Of course it is not!

Anticipating, with some reason, that the opponents of this Bill will urge that country people should have a greater say in the election of a Parliament than those who live in cities, may I ask on what principle this quaint anomaly is based? The main argument is that country members have long distances to travel, but that will always be so. Whether a member lives in Echuca or Wombat Hill, the Bill makes no difference to him. He must still come to Melbourne. Country members must travel long distances, both in their electorates and to and from Parliament. I acknowledge that this imposes a burden that is not cast on

me. I can be at Parliament House in a few minutes. I am conscious of the integrity and workmanlike qualities of country members. I have seen them in this House and despite their privations they appear healthy. They do not seem to be candidates for the grave, invalidism or retirement. The healthy country air is the best thing in the world for members of Parliament. I wish I represented a country electorate.

After that expression of praise and sympathy for members of the Country Party I ask whether these artificial distinctions between town and country have much significance in a pocket-handkerchief State such as Victoria. Where does the country begin and the city end? A fit young man can run out into the country before one has time to go to the Library and find the origin of the dreaded word "gerrymander". It is not only members of the Country Party who have these difficulties. Federal members are required to travel extremely long distances to Canberra from Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne. In most instances they travel greater distances than some of the country members in this House.

The Hon. K. S. GROSS: They travel by air in the same time that we travel by road.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: I understood it took many hours to travel to Western Australia. The problems of large country electorates must be recognized and should be alleviated by ample secretarial and telephone assistance. That is a minimum requirement. I have never enjoyed the help of a secretary, except one provided by myself. Assuming that it is reasonable to adhere to the principle of distorting the weight of the country vote, how does it operate? Does a young lady teacher in Prahran who is transferred to Port Fairy become entitled to four times the vote of a city person? Is the garage keeper in Warracknabeal entitled to four times the vote of the garage keeper in Melbourne? In a matter as important as the franchise these principles should be carefully considered before a blanket proposition is adopted. Because a person, whether he is a Collins Street farmer, an engineer, a school teacher or a doctor, is living in the country should he be given four votes to every one vote in the city?

I am rash enough to say that it is an affront to the nature of democratic government to give one voter more say than another. It is undemocratic. When such a proposition is acknowledged, why should not the principle be extended so that people who are endowed with great intellect should have more say than a person who can scarcely read or write? Should Sir Macfarlane Burnet have more voting power than a hanger-on at the racecourse or even the proprietor of a massage parlour? The answer is simple. Who is to judge whether one man should be entitled to more voting power than another? Whenever one person has more voting say than another, tyranny replaces democracy. That is the answer to the country proposition.

It is to be regretted that in all redistributions there are casualties among members. Not infrequently some outstanding member is left without a seat. But ours is a hazardous occupation and the electorate not the Government must always be given the power to hire and fire. If this independent judicial commission is not adopted the Government may decide it does not like the spectacle of poor old Joe losing his seat and therefore it will not accept the redistribution. Nothing is more sacred than the right of the community to choose its own Government. Nothing is more cynical or destructive of freedom than a Government that sacrifices freedom for the sake of office. In 1965, under the threat of being turned out of office, the Liberal Party agreed to everything that was asked of it. The Government dare not embark upon a fair redistribution. It would like

to do so, but it will not take the risk of offending its Country Party third eleven. The Government is not quite certain that it can go it alone. The Liberal Party would like to do this but the ghost of Hamlet or Hampden affects its resolution and it keeps putting back the clock.

An electoral officer whose work is quick and accurate presented me with enrolment statistics as at 26th July, 1973. I shall not read them but they are available if honorable members wish to see them. For the information of honorable members I will quote some examples of Legislative Council enrolments. The statistics reveal the following enrolments—

Ballaarat Province, 69,000; Boronia Province, 210,000; South-Eastern Province, 205,000; Northern Province, 68,000; and North-Western Province, 51,000.

Can any honorable member justify such distortion and dilution? One vote in North-Western Province equals four in the Boronia Province. Examples of enrolments for Legislative Assembly electorates are as follows—

Broadmeadows, 52,000; Dandenong, 46,000; Frankston, 53,000; Kara Kara, 18,000; Lowan, 19,000; and Scoresby, 67,000.

Kara Kara is held by the Labor Party. I have not mentioned the word "Labor" throughout my speech and I challenge the Government to say that this Bill offends any principle of fairness. No one can justify the figures that I have quoted. They lead to the inevitable conclusion that the Government retains this system because it keeps it in office.

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER: What about the forthcoming redistribution?

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: I have stated the principles; they are so simple that even the newest member of this House can understand them.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: I do not think Mr. Galbally has drawn a fair inference from the figures he has just read out, that the Government keeps itself in office by its redistributions.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: Why does the Government persist with these figures if not to save its own skin? There has not been a redistribution of electoral boundaries since 1965, almost ten years ago.

The Hon. R. J. LONG: Did you know the Government is going to have a redistribution?

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: When I introduced this Bill before the last election I was told that it was too late because the Government was going to introduce its own Bill. Honorable members can say whatever they like about this Bill, but they should not attack its figures, its logic or its unfailing adherence to the democratic principles, which should be respected and even obeyed by all.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE: In the ancient Greek States not everybody had a vote and they did not have a constituency. That was real democracy.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: They did not have the same long distances to travel in those days, nor were there hospitals and schools like those about which honorable members complain. The Victorian Government complains that the Commonwealth Government does not respect the sovereign powers of this State, but is not the Victorian Government unwilling to accept the sovereignty of the people of this State?

The Hon. V. T. HAUSER: Is it not so that in the three largest electorates in the Legislative Council, six Liberal members were returned?

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: I am not arguing about that matter. I am not looking with a curious eye to see how this will affect the Labor Party. This is the argument I used to state that no Parliament and no Government ought to be entrusted with the redistribution scheme. We are not worthy of it and never will be. I do not like surrendering any of our powers, but the history of redistribution in this State is a disgrace.

The Hon. A. K. BRADBURY: I understood that Mr. Galbally believed in the sovereignty of the Parliament.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: I certainly do, but I believe that liberty is the luxury of self-discipline, and it has never been shown in the Parliament.

On the motion of the Hon. H. M. HAMILTON (Higinbotham Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, September 18.

HOUSING (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Government has for a considerable time been interested in the provision of accommodation to permit private landowners to provide housing for their pensioner parents. In this day and age with the advent of advances in medical science people are living longer, and a big problem in the community today is the housing of aged people. The Government considers that many people, rather than see their elderly parents housed in institutions or group housing especially designed for older people, would prefer to house them in individual units under their immediate and direct care. It was with this in mind that the Government has undertaken considerable research in this field and is now submitting a proposal to permit private landowners to erect in their back yards self-contained units for their pensioner parents.

The Housing Commission has already designed typical units, commonly known as "granny units." They meet the requirements of the Uniform Building Regulations, which are being suitably amended concurrently. The units will be constructed and financed from Commonwealth housing funds made available to the Housing Commission and hired to the private landowner during the lifetime of his parents. The units are entirely self-contained and are complete with toilet and cooking facilities.

Persons eligible to occupy these units will be married couples—pensioners—who are the father and mother or father-in-law and mother-in-law of the hirer of the unit. The hirer must be a person who enters into a hiring agreement with the commission for the use of the unit during the lifetime of the eligible persons.

It is proposed that the Housing Commission will enter into an agreement with a person who—

(*a*) is the owner, whether solely or with others, of any land upon which he resides; and

(*b*) requires accommodation on the land for two persons each of whom is a pensioner and who are his father and mother or father-in-law and mother-in-law

for the letting out on hire of a movable unit.

There will of course be a prescribed agreement which shall contain covenants binding the commission to certain conditions. The particular conditions by which the commission is bound are included in proposed Part IIA. section 54B (3) of the Housing Act as set out in the Bill. These include the provision of a suitable unit upon the land of the hirer, the maintenance of the unit in good repair, to permit the unit to remain as long as the hiring agreement remains in force, to remove the unit as soon as the hiring agreement ceases, and an important provision is that the commission will restore the land to a proper condition when the unit is ultimately removed.

The hirer of course also must play a part and he or she is required:—

(*a*) to obtain any permits necessary to allow the unit to be installed, to execute the necessary hiring agreement and to arrange all services necessary to enable the

movable unit to be placed in position and made ready for occupation;

(*b*) to pay to the Housing Commission, Victoria, the weekly hiring charge for the movable unit which will be determined from time to time by the Housing Commission commencing from the time when the unit is first ready for occupancy and ending with the determination of the hiring agreement;

(*c*) to ensure that no person other than an eligible person, as defined in this Bill, is accommodated in the unit;

(*d*) to notify the Housing Commission if at any time no eligible person is accommodated in the unit;

(*e*) to advise the Housing Commission if he ceases to own the land on which a movable unit has been provided;

(*f*) to advise the Housing Commission if he ceases to reside on the land; and

(*g*) to ensure that the unit itself is not moved or damaged and that no alteration to the structure of the unit is made without the consent of the Housing Commission.

The hiring agreement for the movable unit shall be determined only if the hirer dies, ceases to be the owner of the land on which the unit is situated, or if the hirer and his wife and/or husband cease to reside upon the land. Honorable members will realize that the hiring agreement will be terminated and the unit removed from the land when both the eligible persons cease to occupy it.

There is provision in this Bill to ensure that a movable unit shall not, for all statutory purposes, be deemed to constitute a fixture to the relevant land. It is proposed, however, that the hirer, in addition to paying the weekly hiring charge, would pay all charges for water, gas and like services. This would also include any special rating which a municipality might impose.

The rental for the units has not yet been determined but it is proposed that the rental charge will be comparable to that applied to normal elderly persons' Housing Commission accommodation. At the present time a pensioner couple occupying Housing Commission accommodation and qualifying for a rebated rental would be paying of the order of $7.10 a week, and in a similar case of a lone pensioner the rebated rental is of the order of $4.60 a week. Honorable members may be assured that no efforts will be spared to ensure that the provision of this type of accommodation will not present any hardship to elderly people and will provide first-class living in pleasant surroundings with their families.

Although the major part of this Bill makes provision for the establishment of "granny units" on private land, the opportunity has been taken to include in it several minor amendments to the Housing Act. In clauses 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the Bill provision is made to amend sections 46, 47, 48 and 49 of the principal Act. These sections of the Act deal with advances to provide finance for housing purposes. They were inserted into the Act in 1946 but have never been used to any extent, mainly because of the lack of funds available for this type of financial assistance.

However, the amendments proposed to these sections of the principal Act will be utilized in the making of advances to property owners in remaining proclaimed reclamation areas in Carlton, Fitzroy and South Melbourne where the Housing Commission hopes to implement large-scale projects involving extensive renovations to properties.

The amendments as proposed have been designed to streamline the present cumbersome sections of the

Act which deal with the fixing of maximum amounts to be lent and interest rates, and permits a more flexible adaptation of covenants and conditions in mortgages taken out by landowners.

I am sure that all honorable members will support the Government's action in introducing this Bill, which is a major step in making provision for the accommodation of our elderly parents in the twilight of their lives. It is a Bill which has, of necessity, taken some time to evolve in view of the ramifications of providing Government-owned property on private land, but I believe satisfactory solutions have now been obtained to enable this course of action to be adopted.

I commend the Bill to the House.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province) *(By leave)*: I ask the Minister whether it will be possible to obtain illustrations of the design and style of these types of houses, because this will greatly influence my party's discussion on acceptance or non-acceptance of the principles contained in the Bill.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE: I will make that information available.

On the motion of the Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, September 18.

POUNDS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is a simple Bill which contains three principles only — firstly, to limit transport rates to the actual cost of transport; secondly, to abolish the need for advertising the impounding of cattle in the *Government Gazette*; and thirdly, to abolish the provision that a poundkeeper may not impound cattle.

The first of these amendments is contained in clause 2 and concerns transport rates prescribed in the Act for the conveyance of cattle to a pound by motor transport. These rates were inserted in the legislation in 1968, and the advice of the Municipal Association of Victoria was sought on the amounts to be prescribed. The association recommended 50 cents for every sheep; $8 for an entire horse, bull or ram; and $4 for every head of other cattle. These figures were adopted and proved reasonable in normal cases. However, where a large number of cattle is conveyed a small distance to a pound, the charge may be quite unreasonable and may exceed the actual cost of transport.

One instance is known to my department where a landowner had 30 cows and 9 calves impounded for two hours. The resultant transport charge under the Pounds Act was $120. The normal charge for transporting the cattle would have been only $24. Somebody, either the transporter or the impounder, made a large and quite unconscionable profit on that occasion. The amendment now proposed provides that only the actual cost of transport will be charged, subject to the maximum charge calculated on the basis of the rates at present prescribed, to which there will be no change.

Clauses 3, 4, 6 and 7 deal with the abolition of the requirement in the Act for advertisements to be inserted in the *Government Gazette* giving noice of the impounding of cattle and of any sales of impounded cattle. I emphasize that similar notices are already required to be inserted in newspapers published in or circulated in the districts concerned. I do not know of many farmers who read the *Government Gazette* as bedside-like material and the advertisements in the *Government Gazette* serve no useful purpose. That is why these clauses will abolish the requirement, while maintaining the

requirement of advertisements in newspapers circulating in the district.

Clause 5 contains the final amendment. It repeals an existing provision which makes it an offence for a poundkeeper to impound cattle or to assist in impounding them. The provision has an interesting history. It applies only to the pound of which he is the poundkeeper, but it is derived largely from English experience where, in days of yore, a poundkeeper was normally employed on a commission basis with the result that some poundkeepers were known to "find" cattle, one way or another, and impound them. Such a procedure might almost have been known as rustling. Poundkeepers have never been paid on a commission basis in this State under this Act; they receive a salary only.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE: They used to be paid commission in the old days—not under the present Act.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: Mr. Clarke may well be right. That certainly was the English provision, and the original Pounds Act contained nothing about the mode of payment, which meant that some municipalities, even in this State, may have paid poundkeepers on a commission basis. But since quite an early Act the poundkeeper has been required to be paid a salary. The expense of paying his salary and maintaining the pound is a charge against the municipal fund. That being so, the danger of improper action by a poundkeeper is certainly lessened, if not removed entirely. I should think a poundkeeper would hope to get his salary for looking after the minimum number of cattle rather than the greatest possible number.

The existing provision does occasion some difficulties in a small shire which cannot afford a number of officers, and where the ranger, who is presently the person most frequently likely to impound, is precluded from being the poundkeeper as well. That being so, and because the danger to which the provision of the Act was originally directed no longer exists, the Government considers that its repeal is well in order and will not occasion any dangers.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: In most shires a ranger's wife is the poundkeeper.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: That is quite possible. I agree with Mr. Swinburne that the provision in the Act serves little or more probably no useful purpose today. The amendments proposed are minor; they are not of great moment, but they will be of some assistance to municipalities and may well avoid excessive charges to persons whose cattle stray. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of the Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until the next day of meeting.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The debate (adjourned from the previous day) on the motion of the Hon. D. G. Crozier (Western Province) for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech was resumed.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province): I wish the Leader of the House were present because almost the whole of my speech concerns part of his Ministry. "Victoria —All It Needs Is You," by any judgment comes up well as a slogan to sell our State to Victorians, to Australians, and to people from other countries. It is a good slogan. The advertisements on radio, on television and in the press which have sold the various regions of Victoria, particularly the Murray Valley, have been well conceived and executed. I give full marks to the advertising agency, the public relation consultants and the Ministry of Tourism.

I for one also give top marks to the Minister for accepting the suggestion that I made at a meeting at Swan

Hill a few months ago, at which all shires and municipalities in the Murray Valley were represented. The suggestion was that the Murray Valley should be sold as a whole rather than in regions. The Minister saw the wisdom of this suggestion and almost in mid-stream changed the whole of the selling campaign, and I must admit that it was an exceptionally successful one.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: I should like the Minister's photographic account.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: I shall come to that later, but I do not intend to resort, as I sometimes do, to creating unnecessary argument in the Chamber. Tonight I am making a serious contribution, and I expect that honorable members will pay attention to it; if they do, they will learn something.

The Murray Valley television advertisement, which incidentally was made in full colour in anticipation of television going to full colour in March next year, got a great response and has helped to improve business in an area which was severely affected by the encephalitis outbreak. Tens of thousands of regional kits have been sought by potential consumers. Those who have acted on their own initiative, by direct contact with hotels and motels, and visited the places suggested in those kits, have in the main been satisfied; some people have been completely satisfied. They have also been impressed by and gratified at the friendly help that has been given to them in the regional tourist authorities which have been set up to date.

It is obvious that Victoria's biggest potential market is Victoria itself, particularly today when things are a little tough economically and people are looking for bargains within their State to cut down on their holiday expenses. This will be found infinitely more so within the next year, and perhaps for the next two years. There is a market readily available in this city of Melbourne, with a population of about 2·5 million people, and it is here that the whole "Sell Victoria" campaign falls flat on its face. It is really a disgrace. First things first.

I invite honorable members to imagine the Myer Emporium, with eight full pages of advertisements in the *Herald* on a Saturday night, opening its doors on Monday to a dingy Victorian atmosphere, with uncooperative salesmen and saleslades. Eight full pages of advertisements would go to waste because people would walk into the shop and walk out with resentment.

The same thing applies to the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau in Melbourne; it is Edwardian, almost Victorian, if I may use the word in that sense, in its whole set-up. Most honorable members would agree that it is time something was done about Victour not only in Melbourne but also to Victour centres throughout the State. The reluctance—I do not say rudeness—of the representatives at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau has to be seen and experienced to be believed. Sometimes one might fluke good treatment, but generally speaking the wait is long and the service poor—all in an atmosphere of, as I said, almost Victorianism, which no doubt would affect these representatives. If one compares Victour with Qantas, or with tourist bureaux of New Zealand and most other States, and any reputable travel agency, Victour suffers seriously.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: It might be the fault of the potential customer. I have never had any trouble.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: Mr. Swinburne is a member of Parliament and any one at Victour can smell a member of Parliament a block away. I do not know that members of Parliament give off a certain aroma, but the figure of speech is intended to convey the fact that once they know one is a member of Parliament naturally one is given good service. I am not going on my experience alone; I have had dozens of complaints in this direction. I have

sent quite a few people to Victour in an effort to sell my State through Victour and so that it can obtain some income from people travelling overseas, within the State, or interstate. With only a couple of exceptions these people have come back to me with complaints about their treatment.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: That has not been my experience.

The Hon D. G. ELLIOT: That may be so; Mr. Swinburne is entitled to his opinion. It is no good conducting a first-class advertising campaign if at the point of sale one falls down on the job. That is exactly what Victoria is doing. Scores of people, as I have mentioned, have spoken about the unsatisfactory service at Victour. To check on this I have sent in more than a dozen people and, with two exceptions, they came back with the same sorry story.

I ask the Minister, if he has not done so already, to look at Qantas, which is a Government or semi-government institution, the banks, or any of the reputable travel agencies, and he will see something modern, something of a welcoming nature, something that literally induces—or even seduces—the potential customer into an almost immediate decision to buy some sort of travel there and then. As a matter of extreme urgency all Victour offices throughout Victoria should be redesigned. It is no good selling Victoria unless one has a point of sale, or a series of selling outlets, that measure up to the advertising. It is a commonsense view that to lag behind in one's point of sale is to nullify to a great extent all the advertising indulged in over a period. Rather appropriately, Mr. Clarke interjects, "more seduction!" Victoria's tourism slogan—"Victoria—all it needs is you"—should be shown and predominantly displayed at all Victour outlets as a means of identification. As soon as people see a television or a press advertisement they immediately get an imagery perception. Some excellent radio advertisements have been produced by various agencies and if people can see this slogan when they go into a Victour outlet, the whole concept connects and they have the whole story. Within a matter of a few seconds they recall where they had seen the slogan and what it meant and immediately they become alert to what they can discover at the Victour agency.

As I have stated, it is so essential to put first things first. I have always advised the Minister for Tourism to go for the "king-hit" in promoting tourism and that is a phrase I have used throughout the years. One project should be completed at a time instead of trying to tackle many projects at the one time. However, I believe that philosophy seems to be the all-consuming ambition of the Minister for Tourism. The honorable gentleman tries to go too far too fast and there are many country towns or regions wanting folk museums or something of that nature in their areas. I believe Sovereign Hill should be finished and only then should we proceed to a carefully surveyed and researched project for the next area to be developed. It may be that Beechworth, Coal Creek or some other part of Victoria will be developed, but only after research and a complete and absolute survey has been carried out. Incidentally, even before that stage is reached there must be the certainty that adequate accommodation is available in the immediate or near area of the tourist attraction.

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER: What about Flagstaff Hill, Warrnambool?

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: That project could be a worth-while one and already it may have been thoroughly researched. I have seen the plans for the project and after examining them I believe an excellent Naval museum could be established at Flagstaff Hill, Warrnambool. There may be half a dozen projects in the process of completion throughout Victoria but we do not want projects like the quarter-completed project at

Moe, which will take many years to complete. Honorable members will find them in a half-completed condition and they will remain in that condition for the foreseeable future, particularly with the present economic climate.

I have got around the traps and the people who will be one of the key factors to the success or failure of tourism in Victoria are dead scared of the proposed actions of the Minister for Tourism, who did not even consult them prior to writing to them on 23rd July. I am referring to the accommodation industry.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: That is not true as I did discuss it with them.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: I was referring to the period up to 23rd July when the Minister wrote them a letter. If the honorable gentleman believes that is not the position, I shall provide all my facts and he can endeavour to refute them. By the accommodation industry I refer to the Australian Hotels Association, the Motor Inn and Motel Association and the Boarding Houses Association of Victoria. At the moment there seems little doubt that the Minister for Tourism proposes to inflict a 2·5 per cent bed tax on the accommodation industry. The honorable gentleman's silence indicates that that is probably what he proposes to do. The Minister for Tourism would be very vocal if he did not intend to do so because that is his habit and I give him full marks for it. The Minister wants to use this money for tourist purposes throughout Victoria, for advertising tourist attractions and for loans to help some of the folk museums and other tourist attractions. The Minister for Tourism proposes that the bed tax on accommodation should be utilized for general tourist purposes. I ask whether the Minister for Tourism has estimated the revenue to be derived from the proposals. It should be remembered that sometimes the cost of administering a scheme is more than the income derived from it. Has the Minister for Tourism ascertained how much the industry is already paying in liquor licence fees, pay-roll tax, excise duties and other imposts?

The other day the Minister for Tourism returned from Fiji, and of course this meant another photograph of him! The honorable gentleman was loud in his praise of Fijian tourism and he yelled to the high Heavens as he can with diaphragmatic control. The Minister said, "Nobody even feels the nip over there and it is even extended to meals as well as accommodation." I invite honorable members to consider that in Fiji, as a matter of Government policy, all tourist accommodation is eligible for long-term Government loans at reduced rates of interest. It is a separate tourist loan at low rates of interest available for all tourist accommodation. Also, tourist accommodation enjoys fiscal exemptions and relief in the form of company tax, land tax and any tax that in the early stages of operation would inhibit a fair return to the investors. Another concession that applies is that they can procure land on concessional terms. Only two States in Australia have a regularized and consistently available impetus for tourist accommodation, and Victoria is not one of them. The two States are Tasmania and Western Australia. The Minister for Tourism knows what is available in those two States. In Tasmania, as a matter of Government policy, long-term loans at reduced rates of interest are provided. In Western Australia long-term loans at reduced rates of interest and guarantees are given.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: Victoria is doing that.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: Victoria is doing it spasmodically—the least we say about that the better.

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER: Mr. Elliot means selectively.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: I thank Mr. Crozier for his assistance—"selectively" would be a better

word. In Victoria it comes under State development and if I am wrong I can be corrected but there have been a few successful applications.

The accommodation industry, not only in Victoria but also in Australia, rather than being asked to carry a greater tax burden, needs urgent help. Investment is high in this industry. It is considered on the stock exchanges that as a form of investment, the tourist industry is a high risk area. At present the returns are at an all-time low and yet the Minister for Tourism intends to take another 2·5 per cent from gross turnover in the form of an accommodation tax. This is an illogical move.

I refer to the publication, *Travel News*. It was only a few moments ago that I learned that a colleague has asked a question on this publication. I have with me two copies of *Travel News* which were picked at random from my file. They are dated March, 1974, and September, 1974. I like to read the publications to see what information they contain. Only rarely have I found an edition of *Travel News* without a photograph of the Minister for Tourism. I am prepared to concede that this may be good public relations, although I would not indulge in publicity of this type. The Minister for Tourism seems to get his photograph everywhere but I suppose that goes with his portfolio and particularly applies to any publication for which his department is responsible.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: Has Mr. Elliot ever looked at tourist journals published by other organizations?

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: My concern is the Minister, so I invite honorable members to concentrate on that.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE: I may be wrong but I am sure I have seen Mr. Elliot's face somewhere before.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: If the Minister of Housing had not, there would be something wrong with him and he would not be availing himself of an important medium.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): I invite Mr. Elliot to proceed with the Address-in-Reply.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: Certainly, Mr. President. I do not begrudge the Minister for Tourism the publicity he is getting — I even suggest he is the most publicized Minister in the Government. The honorable gentleman even supersedes the Premier, which is pretty good, especially when the Premier has so many good friends in high places. I too, should like to know the cost of publishing and distributing *Travel News*. I should also be pleased if the Minister for Tourism would inform honorable members of the part he feels this publication plays in selling tourism in Victoria, particularly at the moment. The Minister for Tourism may have been out of the Chamber when I mentioned that I consider that in the next year or so, more than ever because of the present economic circumstances, we must turn our attention to selling Victoria to Victorians, rather than going interstate or overseas. We must produce lower cost holidays for Victorians so that they can visit tourist areas in this State instead of having to spend their holiday periods at home because of the economic circumstances facing them. Does the Minister for Tourism want to say something?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: I advise Mr. Elliot, that the tourist industry says that *Travel News* is the best magazine of its type in Australia.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: The Minister for Tourism says that, but I have been led to believe by sections of the tourist industry that this is not a widely-held opinion. The industry is alarmed at what *Travel News* may cost and is afraid that if a 2·5 per cent bed tax is imposed, some funds derived from it might be channelled into helping defray the costs of publishing *Travel News*. I will admit that some of the articles make interesting reading but I do not know that they will activate Victorians into travelling and spending money at the tourist attractions situated in this State.

On a previous occasion I advocated the publication of a Victorian tourist year book instead of having a publication every month. I again proffer the suggestion to the Government, as I believe a Victorian travel year book is urgently needed to promote the tourist industry in this State.

The Hon. G. J. NICOL: Will Mr. Elliot handle the advertising?

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: No, it would be the last thing I would want to do. However, I submit the suggestion to the Minister for Tourism because a travel year book would include all the tourist attractions in Victoria. It would also contain a list of the accommodation available, from the cheapest to the dearest. The book could supply information on the best means of travelling to tourist attractions—by rail, road or air—and advise motorists of the best roads that were available if they preferred to use their own motor vehicle. I suggest that a travel year book of that type would be of great assistance to families when planning their holidays in Victoria.

Only the other day I felt the urge to get away for a couple of days. The Minister for Tourism would know Mr. Peter Steedman, who has written the book *Farm Holidays in Victoria.* It may not be known but during school holidays and over the Christmas period and virtually through to Easter, most of the homes publicized in the book *Farm Holidays in Victoria* are fully occupied and accommodation is limited. The farm holiday homes are located in the Western District and in the north-east areas of the State. I went to Timbarra which is in East Gippsland. Timbarra is 30 miles up in the moutains from a turnoff 3 miles on the Melbourne side of Buchan. The farm home is located on the Timbarra River which runs into the mighty Tambo River. The area has a magnificent valley and the type of accommodation provided is most satisfactory.

I do not know whether honorable members are aware that over the Christmas holiday period and even right up until Easter, the accommodation set-up in Victoria is deplorable. It is almose impossible for a man and his family to find reasonable priced accommodation to get away for a week or two. If they go down to the Mornington Peninsula they are fleeced and have to pay $100 a week for a poor cottage. If the accommodation is any good at all, they have to pay $150 or $160 a week. These costs are beyond the means of the average wage earner and indeed beyond the means of the medium wage earner. Accordingly, people are trying to find alternative ways of going on holidays. Because many people work in industries where employers require them to take their holidays at Christmas time, they are being forced to find alternative reasonably priced accommodation.

Mr. Max Ripper, who, incidentally, is a member of the Country Party and a councillor of the Shire of Tambo, rents his cottage out at $8 a night. It is fully-serviced accommodation and a great proposition. These are the sort of things which the Minister should be checking out through the Ministry instead of indulging in so much theory. These places ought to be advertised and, through a year book, they could be publicized and thus enable families to plan their holidays in their own way and not have to worry about a kit for each particular region. In some instances, a person may get eleven kits for eleven regions and by the time he wants to get away, they have been lost.

The Minister should have consulted the Australian Hotels Association, as well as the organizations covering motels and boarding houses, before the 23rd July last.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: I spoke to the Australian National Travel Association, which body represents the travel industry.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: That association does not speak for the hotel owners and the people who know the business, and who have lost money and made money

through experience, sometimes bitter, sometimes practical and sometimes successful. The Minister should get down to the grass roots and talk to the people who have had practical experience in the business. I can only quote from the Minister's letter to these people which is headed "Office of the Minister for Tourism" and is dated 23rd July, 1974. The Minister states—

No doubt you have seen Press mention of the NSW Government's decision to impose a 2½ per cent "bed tax" on travellers staying in various types of accommodation in that State from January 1 next.

You will also be aware that I have stated in the Press here that we are considering a similar proposition for Victoria.

I am attaching to this letter some notes on what we propose, based on NSW's experience, and on our own needs. I and some of the top people from my Ministry have held talks as late as last week with the NSW Minister, Tom Lewis, and we have become even firmer in our feeling that this scheme is the most sensible way to deal with the pressing problems of tourism in Victoria.

We are by no means yet committed on this question.

I hope that the Minister is never committed on this subject—

I certainly have no intention of imposing any tax on the industry we have worked hard to build up over the past two years, which will cause any harm to that industry. I want to be certain that in the long term, the real result of the tax will be that it will greatly assist the industry. For this reason, I will welcome any suggestion or information you might like to put to me in the next couple of weeks.

There is no way in which the Minister will get me to twist his own letter although the Minister of Housing thought last night that I was twisting something that he had said—the honorable gentleman was very wrong and most unfair. Those in the accommodation industry comprise members of the Australian Hotels Association, the Motor Inn and Motels Association and the Boarding Houses Association and their comment on that part of the Minister's letter is—

The industry to which the Minister refers is the Accommodation Industry. It would be of interest to the members of that industry to obtain a detailed statement from the Minister on how he has worked hard to build it up over the last two years. The industry has no knowledge of any such build up.

The information and suggestions are included progressively in the pages that follow.

The Minister's letter also states—

Initially, however, all our investigations suggest that the tax will have little adverse effect, even momentarily, on the accommodation section of the industry. I may well have a big job convincing all parts of the industry of this, but already many segments of the tourist industry do support the concept.

The comment by the accommodation industry is—

What are "our investigations"? No information has been given on this vital matter to the public or the industry concerned. Above all, no advice has been sought from the industry through its trade organisations i.e. the Australian Hotels Association, the Motor Inn and Motels Association etc.

Enough evidence exists to show that the tax would be detrimental but this will be illustrated more fully later on.

The Minister has an impossible task in trying to convince any part of the accommodation industry. And well he knows it.

The only way will be for the Minister to impose his will or the will of the Government on the industry. The industry's comment continues—

A copy of a letter sent to the Minister by ANTA representing all segments of the industry is attached and this completely refutes the Minister's statement about any support on an industry basis for the concepts.

I know that wherever the Minister travels he has a member of the Australian National Travel Association with him to advise on tourism. The Minister suggests that the last allegation is not correct and that he contacted them long before the 23rd of July.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: Before that I had spoken to the Australian National Travel Association, which represents the Australian Hotels Association and other groups.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: If I had an investment in an organization, I should want to know the feelings of the rank and file members on any matter. If I were the Minister, I would ascertain the views

of the Australian Hotels Association and the motel and boarding house associations, whose members represent hundreds and thousands of employees and millions of dollars worth of investments, as well as consulting with the Australian National Travel Association. I have my contacts within the Australian National Travel Association as well as the Commonwealth tourist commission, and therefore I am reasonably well informed and know that they are alarmed in some respects. They are not all "Yes men" and thank God for that. The Minister's letter continues—

There are two factors that I especially want to mention to you. The first is that the success of our tourism industry is vital to Victoria. It is at present worth $550 million to the State, despite the fact that there is a lot more tourism going out of the State than is coming into it. With vigorous promotion, we can alter this and greatly increase the return to the State from tourism.

The comment on that is—

No one denies this as it is self evident.

The Minister's letter continues—

Despite this, there are enormous pressures on the State to divert all possible funds to such pressing matters as education, health, housing, major works and welfare services. Our Federal friends have made it quite clear they will do little to help our plight.

This was not very much in evidence and I trust that in this respect the Minister will contact the Federal Minister, Mr. Frank Stewart.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: I have.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: I hope that the Minister has done so today following the report in the press this morning or else I will have to castigate the honorable gentleman again. I am sure that Mr. Stewart will be pleased to have a yarn with the Minister who should be castigated for not obtaining a larger share of the money. The letter continues—

Thus, if we are to find some extra funds for tourism, it will have to come from the industry itself in some form. It is a widespread industry, reaching into all facets of commerce, and difficult to tax fairly.

I agree with the Minister's contention—

This proposed scheme is not perfect, I doubt any scheme can be. But after considering all the facts and possibilities, it clearly appears the best.

The comment from the accommodation industry on this is—

The matter becomes one of efficiently managing State finances. Under separate cover are positive suggestions made by the industry on how this might be better achieved without imposing another iniquitous tax on the long suffering public.

I take it that the Minister has received those suggestions and I hope that they have influenced him. The comment continues—

If financial problems preclude development by taxing, then either we don't develop in the ways the Minister suggests or we find better ways. Since the industry (accommodation only note) is being asked to bear the brunt of the effects of this tax it is not unreasonable for it to ask why it is being used to finance something for which the whole community receives benefit.

The Minister's letter also states—

The second point, and a very important one, is that this is an entirely different proposition to that brought forward in this State three years ago. That proposal was for a ten per cent tax, and for the funds to be put into consolidated revenue, and in no way used for tourism. I am certainly advocating nothing of that sort now. I believe in a small tax, to be used entirely to support and build up the industry.

I feel sure you will appreciate this fully when you read the attached notes.

The Minister's notes were excellent. The industry's comment on this is—

In effect this is no different from the original proposal. It amounts to the same thing. Once the tax is imposed, like the petrol tax, it will swell funds for the State and can be used as expediency demands. It would not be long before it was up to 10 per cent. This "back door" approach is not acceptable to the accommodation sector.

The Minister's letter concludes—

I quite frankly hope you will support this proposition. If you feel you cannot, I do hope you will help to provide us with a workable alternative.

The industry's comment is—

It is to be hoped otherwise. The alternatives are listed elsewhere.

Michael Peters in his recent definitive work *International Tourism* sums up the position with respect to taxes

on tourists in the following terms. His first sentence sums the position up quite clearly and is the one which the Minister should forcibly heed.

> All taxes levied on tourists are a burden on them and, therefore, detrimental to the development of tourism. Ideally they should be completely abolished. Unfortunately, this principle cannot always be followed in practice, not the least reason being that some tourism promotion bodies depend on these taxes for their income.

Analysis will prove that in the vast majority of cases where these taxes are imposed, there is a compensatory factor in the benefits which I mentioned at the outset such as long-term loans at low rates of interest, reduced levels of general taxes, guarantees and so on. To this extent the tax is justified as a means of producing some sort of income but not when another tax is being paid. I could not think of a fairer proposition but in this instance it is only an additional tax. There is no basis for it except what the Minister and his public relations experts will devise.

The Minister advocates the placing of a levy on one section of the travel industry to finance all of it. If he wants to do something about tourist accommodation, he should get together with the accommodation industry itself, not the Australian National Travel Association. I assure the honorable gentleman that members of the industry will give him the right type of advice. I give an undertaking that, as soon as the Minister agrees, within a few days, I will have the top accommodation men in this State in his office. They will give him the facts and, given reasonable attitudes on the part of the Minister, will come to the party. It will be a happy party, based not on direction but on co-operation.

On the motion of the Hon. G. J. NICOL (Monash Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until the next day of meeting.

ADJOURNMENT.

FLOODING OF OVENS AND KING RIVERS — PROPOSED DRAINAGE LEGISLATION — HUME HIGHWAY.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): By leave, I move—

> That the Council, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday next.

The motion was agreed to.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): I move—

> That the House do now adjourn.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province): I bring to the attention of the House the serious flooding that occurred during May last. Heavy rainfall took place in the north-east of Victoria during which 10 inches of rain fell over a wide area. The Ovens and King rivers and their tributaries caused the most devastating damage since 1917. Although it is more than three months since the rivers broke their banks and damaged many farm properties, no remedial action has been taken.

When I was overseas my secretary attended to my mail and when I returned I found my letters relating to the flood damage. Letters were also sent to the Premier and the Minister of Water Supply on behalf of the Ovens River and King River improvement trusts and the municipalities concerned asking that something be done to rectify the damage that occurred. This is essential, for two reasons, firstly, to restore the streams to their former condition and, secondly, to assist the persons concerned so that the land can be rehabilitated. Nothing can be done until the river improvement trusts carry out their work on the streams.

On 20th or 23rd July the Premier and the Minister of Water Supply wrote to me and said that they were investigating the matter and that I would be advised at an early date. I have been trying to get assistance through the Treasury for the river

improvement trusts but I have not yet received any information. I give credit to the Premier; only this week he answered my representations, and assistance has been given to the municipality concerned. If something is not done soon by the river improvement trusts many of the summer crops which have to be sown shortly will not be planted. The trusts cannot do anything until they are told by the Treasury what funds will be available.

I ask the Minister of Water Supply to treat the matter as urgent. I telephoned the Treasury last week asking that something be done but I have not yet received a reply. Each week-end all the farmers and interested persons approach me wanting to know what will be done to plug the holes in the river banks. I have been patient but I am starting to lose my patience. I hope something will be done; if not, I will strongly request the Minister to visit the area so that he can press the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission to do something about the problem.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province): I refer to a matter concerning the administration of the Minister of Water Supply. On many occasions previously I have raised in this Chamber the subject of proposed legislation to implement recommendations of the Drainage Committee. Honorable members are conversant with the final reports of that committee made in 1967. On 4th April, 1973, I led a deputation of representatives of northern municipalities to the Premier to put a strong case that the principles involved in the recommendations of the Drainage Committee should be embodied in legislation as soon as possible.

An indication was received from the Premier stating that the matter was in hand and that it was expected that a Bill would be introduced last year. On 24th May of this year the same group of municipalities again met the Premier. During the sessional periods of last year I twice raised the matter on the motion for the adjournment of a sitting, the last occasion being on 10th April, and the Minister of Water Supply indicated that for a variety of reasons it was impossible to introduce the proposed legislation to Parliament at that time. The municipalities involved in this serious problem are, like Mr. Swinburne, beginning to lose patience. They have been waiting for this Bill for some years. In the past three or four months a Supreme Court action took place on the matter of drainage but the question of the control of banking was not resolved satisfactorily.

I again raise this matter with the Minister of Water Supply and the Government in the strongest terms. Many of the individual landowners are directly involved and they are concerned at the long delays. Can the honorable gentleman indicate when the proposed legislation will be introduced and will it be finalized during this sessional period?

The Hon. P. D. BLOCK (Boronia Province): I direct the attention of the Minister for Tourism to a situation which indirectly affects his portfolio. My complaint concerns the condition of a road outside Victoria which directly affects Victoria. Last Saturday I had the misfortune to travel along the Hume Highway. I was forced to do this by the tragic floods in the major river systems in southern New South Wales. I found myself on a road—called a highway—some 10 kilometres north of Gundagai, heading south towards Melbourne. This road could only be described as a second-rate highway in a third-rate banana republic.

What tremendous damage this must have on the tourist industry in Victoria and conversely in New South Wales! The main highway connecting two of the major cities in Australia is in a most disgraceful state. I have every praise for the

Victorian roads; when a motorist reaches Victoria he knows he is on good roads.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): Order! I cannot see how this is a matter of Victorian administration.

The Hon. P. D. BLOCK: I ask the Minister for Tourism, because it damages his portfolio, to take up the matter with his confrére in New South Wales to ascertain whether anything can be done to improve the highway. It concerns Victoria deeply. I have made my point; I realize I was skirting around the edges of Victoria.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for Tourism): Tourism covers a vast area and a multitude of sins, even beyond the areas of this State. Interestingly enough, if honorable members look at the Act, they will see that the department is empowered to promote work outside of the State. I will be happy to oblige Mr. Block in making representations to my colleague in New South Wales, Mr. Lewis. He and his Government have espoused an accommodation levy and I am hopeful that the resources he has can be used for this purpose.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply): Considerable damage was caused by the flooding of the Ovens and King rivers and their tributaries. Probably they caused the greatest damage they have ever caused. Officers of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission visited the area and inspected the damage; unfortunately, I was unable to go. On their return they informed me that the damage was considerable and that the rivers were not in good shape. I made a submission to the Federal Treasury on behalf of a number of municipalities where flooding occurred, and not only in respect of river improvement works. The amount I sought was $2·5 million with an allocation of $700,000 to repair the damage to rivers within Victoria. Although Mr. Swinburne was good enough to inform me that he proposed to raise the matter on the motion for the adjournment of the sitting tonight, I was not able to check on the progress of the submission. I understand that it was forwarded to Canberra but a reply has not yet been received. I will treat this as an urgent matter and endeavour to advise Mr. Swinburne of the results of my representations tomorrow.

Mr. McDonald referred to the proposed drainage legislation. A second draft of this Bill was received by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission today. I hope to present this draft to my Cabinet colleagues on Monday week. The measure contains some serious legal and financial implications which will be considered by the commission. The Bill will be available for consideration by Parliament as soon as possible. I expect that it will follow a course that was set by my colleague, the Minister for Local Government, on a number of occasions; it will be introduced in this House, I will make the second-reading explanatory speech and the debate will be adjourned to obtain the views of municipalities and interested persons on the serious problem of river banking. The problem is not confined to one part of Victoria but concerns all Victoria. The main problem relates to banking.

As I have said before, the Bill is a long one, with many clauses. I am sure that my colleagues on the Drainage Committee will have some comments and criticisms to make that will be taken well by the Water Commission and by myself. I propose to treat this as a non-party Bill and I am sure members of this House will appreciate that, especially the members of the Drainage Committee, who did extremely valuable work and were dedicated to framing drainage legislation for the State.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 6.15 *p.m. until Tuesday, September* 17.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

LAND FOR LOW-COST HOUSING.

(Question No. 15)

The Hon. I. B. TRAYLING (Melbourne Province) asked the Minister of Housing—

(*a*) Has the Housing Commission received a request or requests to examine the possibility of developing low-cost housing in Port Melbourne on land presently owned by the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria; if so, who made the request or requests?

(*b*) Have any discussions or negotiations taken place between the commission and the corporation or any other State or Commonwealth body on the possibility of purchase of the land for the provision of low-cost housing; if so, what is the present position?

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): The answer is—

(*a*) Yes. The Gas and Fuel Corporation and the Port Melbourne council, in conjunction.

(*b*) Yes. Discussions have taken place between the commission, the Port Melbourne City Council and the Gas and Fuel Corporation, but negotiations are not yet finalized.

WATER SUPPLY SCHEME FOR ROCKBANK.

(Question No. 20)

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT (Melbourne West Province) asked the Minister of Water Supply—

Will he lay on the table of the Library the file relating to the proposed water supply scheme for the Rockbank township?

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply): The answer is—

Yes, this will be arranged.

SEA LAKE PRIMARY SCHOOL.

(Question No. 25)

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North-Western Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

In view of the serious health risk from existing toilets at Sea Lake Primary School and that tenders for a new block had been called and received in June, when will this urgent project further proceed?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): The answer supplied by the Minister of Education is—

The work has been deferred due to lack of funds. However, the provision of finance to enable the work to proceed will be further investigated.

WYCHEPROOF HIGH SCHOOL.

(Question No. 34)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

Has the Teacher Housing Authority purchased land at Wycheproof to build two residences, including one for the new principal of Wycheproof High School; if so, when will tenders be called, and when is it expected the houses will be ready for occupation?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): The answer supplied by the Minister of Education is—

Negotiations are in progress to purchase two vacant lots in Jolly Street, Wycheproof. As soon as these negotiations have been successfully concluded, arrangements will be made for the preparation of site plans and the calling of tenders. At this stage, no firm estimate can be given on when the houses will be ready for occupation.

EXTRACTION OF GROUNDWATER.

(Question No. 35)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province) asked the Minister of Water Supply—

In respect of the Groundwater Act 1969—(i) how many construction permits have been issued for the extraction of groundwater; (ii) how many drillers' licences have been issued; and (iii) how many groundwater licences have been issued?

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply): The answer is—

Questions (i) and (ii) are matters for the Minister of Mines. In regard to question (iii) the answer is 2,884.

FOURTH UNIVERSITY.

(Question No. 38)

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

(*a*) When will legislation be introduced to establish an interim council for the fourth university?

(*b*) When is it expected that the university will commence operation?

(*c*) Will the principals of the Geelong Institute of Technology and the Geelong branch of the State College of Victoria be represented on the interim council?

(*d*) Have the over-all aims and objectives of the university been formulated; if so, what are these aims and objectives?

(*e*) How will the facilities for technological education and primary teacher training, currently provided by the Geelong Institute of Technology and the Geelong branch of the State College of Victoria, be incorporated in the fourth university?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): The answer supplied by the Minister of Education is—

(*a*) It is hoped to introduce legislation to-day.

(*b*), (*c*), (*d*) and (*e*) The answer to the honorable member's other questions will be covered in the legislation.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, September 11, 1974.

The SPEAKER **(the Hon. K. H. Wheeler)** took the chair at 4.9 p.m., and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

TELEVISING OF FOOTBALL GRAND FINAL.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Has the Premier taken any action consistent with his promise at this time last year that he would do all in his power to have the grand final of the Victorian Football League televised; if so, what action has he taken to achieve this end?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): At about this time last year, there was a proposal from the Trades Hall Council that the grand final should be televised. A meeting was held between the Victorian Football League and the council, at which I understand it was agreed that if the grand final was sold out the match would be televised.

Mr. SIMMONDS: What does the Government think about this?

Mr. HAMER: I agree that it is eminently sensible. If all the tickets are sold, there seems to be no reason why the match should not be televised. I say that here and now.

As I understand it, the situation this year is that all the tickets for the grand final have not yet been sold and the matter is still under discussion between the Victorian Football League, the Trades Hall Council, and, of course, the television stations which may be interested.

Mr. WILKES: But they have not yet been approached.

Mr. HAMER: The television stations have been kept informed but they still have to line up the necessary sponsors for what is probably an expensive operation. It is in the hands of the people who are really interested. I merely express a view which I think would be the view of this House—that if all grand final tickets are sold, and nobody else can get into the ground, the game should be televised.

PAYMENT TO MRS. T. O'CONNOR.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): Can the Premier advise whether a payment of $40,000 or thereabouts was made to a Mrs. Terry O'Connor by the Government or a Government instrumentality following the death of her husband last year? The late Mr. O'Connor was charged with causing malicious damage following an incident approximately two years ago on

the Port Phillip Bay pipeline at Carrum. If any payment was made to Mrs. O'Connor what was the basis of the payment and, furthermore, to the knowledge of the Premier, was workers compensation paid to her?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I have never heard of Mrs. Terry O'Connor nor have I any knowledge of a payment to her of $40,000 or even $1. I will investigate the matter and find out whether any such payment was made and, if so, on what basis. I would appreciate it if the Leader of the Country Party gave me some details as to who would have made the payment, because at the moment I have no idea.

MICHELTON VINTNERS PTY. LTD.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Can the Treasurer inform the House what sums have been made available either by way of grant or loan to Michelton Vintners Pty. Ltd., and what were the terms and conditions of the loan. Furthermore, will the Treasurer lay on the table of the Library the file dealing with this matter?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I believe $250,000 was advanced by way of secured loan to the proprietors of Michelton by the Victorian Development Corporation.

Mr. HOLDING: No grants?

Mr. HAMER: So far as I am aware, no grants; it was a loan of $250,000 within the charter of the corporation. I will obtain further details and let the Leader of the Opposition have them. I am not aware of the security, the rate of interest or anything of that kind. I know that a body as well endowed and experienced as the Victorian Development Corporation, which is composed of men of great eminence and success in decentralized industry, would have fully examined the whole question and made what seemed to it to be a perfectly sound and justified loan. I will obtain the details and let the Leader of the Opposition have them.

FISH IN GIPPSLAND LAKES.

Mr. McINNES (Gippsland South): Is the Minister for Conservation aware of the death some weeks ago of a substantial number of fish in the Gippsland lakes, particularly in Lake Victoria and Lake Wellington? Has a survey of the causes of the mortality rate been carried out by the Fisheries and Wildlife Division, and, if so, has the Minister received a report, and is he prepared to lay it on the table of the Library?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation): An investigation into the matter has been carried out by the Fisheries and Wildlife Division, but I have not yet received a final report. The fish were being taken from the lakes and scientifically examined to determine the cause of their death.

The situation in the lakes this year has not been unique; initially it was believed that the excessive inflow of fresh water, due to the heavy rains that fell this season, had caused the deaths of species of fish which need a higher saline content.

I shall certainly make available to the honorable member for Gippsland South or any other honorable member any scientific information which I obtain and will lay the report on the table of the Library when I receive it.

MOTOR CYCLE INSURANCE.

Mr. CRELLIN (Sandringham): I ask the Chief Secretary: In view of the concern currently being expressed by many owners of motor cycles, what is the present situation on compulsory third-party insurance on motor cycles?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): I am pleased that at least one member of this House is interested enough in the fate of motor cyclists in Victoria to have the courage to ask such a question. The current spate of rumours throughout the community and in the media concern-

ing increases in motor cycle third-party insurance premiums has been irresponsible.

Mr. CURNOW: You have not denied them.

Mr. ROSSITER: I do not propose to deny them until I am asked a question in this place. The Government is now examining third-party insurance increases and will make an announcement on the subject at the Executive Council meeting next Tuesday.

PARLIAMENTARY SITTINGS.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds): Will the Premier consider the proposals contained in a leading article in tonight's *Herald* headed, "State House Not Seen Enough", and in particular those regarding sittings of Parliament? Will the honorable gentleman examine the suggestion in the article regarding the debating of private members' Bills?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): As I have not yet read the leading article in the *Herald* I am unable to comment on it. I point out two things. Firstly, the hours spent actually sitting in this Parliament are not a true measure of the work or value of a member. The Victorian Parliament uses its committees to a far greater extent than any other Parliament in Australia, and the parties use party committees to a much greater extent than any other Parliament. In addition, honorable members serve their constituents at least several days a week when they are not otherwise engaged in the House.

I reject the notion that the hours actually spent in this House are a true measure of the work of members of Parliament and I hope I would be supported in this by members of the Opposition and the Country Party. If a proper appraisal is made not just of the days on which this House and another place sit, but of the hours over which they sit and the work that they do, measured by the number of Bills that are considered, it will be found that this Parliament is up with the leaders throughout Australia. For 1973, in actual hours of sitting, the Victorian Parliament was next behind the Commonwealth and Western Australia. Victoria was also amongst the leaders in the number of Bills passed. How long it takes a Bill to pass is in part within the province of the Opposition.

Mr. WILKES: And the Government.

Mr. HAMER: That is so.

Mr. WILKES: And the use of the guillotine and the gag.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The honorable member for Moonee Ponds has asked this question. All honorable members in this Chamber, whatever their party affiliations, have to some extent been under criticism by statements in the press. Therefore, I ask honorable members to listen in silence to the answer of the Premier.

Mr. HAMER: Secondly, I believe this Parliament gives a greater opportunity than any other Parliament for debate on private member's Bills.

Mr. EDMUNDS: What about this Chamber?

Mr. HAMER: I am talking about this Parliament. I invite the honorable member for Moonee Ponds to consider how many private members' Bills are debated in the Federal House or in any other State House of Parliament in Australia and compare them with the number of private members' Bills that are debated in the Victorian Legislative Council.

Mr. HOLDING: There is no debate on private members' Bills in this Chamber.

Mr. HAMER: This House has a great deal to do, especially in the spring sessional period, which is the Budget session. I assure honorable members that there will be plenty for them to do in the weeks that lie ahead.

RAIL FREIGHTS.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East): I refer the Premier to his press release dated 28th August, which states, *inter alia*—

> No over-all freight increases will be prescribed but the Railways Board will be given a target in the State Budget for increased receipts to compensate.

Can the Premier indicate whether the recently announced increases in rail freights are in line with his statement and when did Cabinet approve of the increases?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): What has happened is exactly in line with the statement read by the honorable member for Gippsland East. He may remember that the Bland report on land transport in Victoria strongly recommended that instead of Cabinet, the Government and Parliament approving increases in passenger and freight rates, the Victorian Railways should be given a target of freight, goods and passengers to be carried. In accordance with that recommendation, which the Government adopted, the Victorian Railways have been given a target and have drawn up a schedule of tentative and prospective increases to achieve that target.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: It has been announced.

Mr. HAMER: The Victorian Railways have drawn up a list of prospective increased freight rates. The method of achieving the target is within the province and competence of the Railways Board. We expect the railways to make some sort of contribution, although it is only small in proportion to the increased costs. The way in which the contribution to the cost is made is in the hands of the board.

BRUNSWICK GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. REESE (Moorabbin): I wish to ask the Minister of Education whether he could advise the current staffing position at the recently well-publicized Brunswick Girls High School.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): At the Brunswick Girls High School in 1968 there were 28 members of staff. Today official departmental figures show that there are 44 members of staff at the same school, with only an additional 39 pupils. In other words, an extra 16 members of staff have been appointed for an additional 39 pupils. Of the additional staff 10·5 members are engaged in the important fields of migrant English and remedial teaching.

I might add that although the money with which to pay the staff who specialize in migrant teaching comes from the Commonwealth, it was Victoria which first sponsored this scheme. In 1968 I personally took Mr. Lynch, the then Minister for Immigration, around suburban schools in an endeavour to persuade the Commonwealth to provide money for the appointment of special staff of this type. An additional sixteen members of staff sice 1968, for an addition of only 39 pupils, is generous.

BROWN COAL.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): Further to my question yesterday concerning the discussions entered into between the Victorian Government and the East German Government about the exploitation of brown coal resources, two parts of the question I asked the Premier were not answered. The first part of the question I asked the Premier yesterday related to the benefits the East German Government saw coming to it as a result of the exploitation of Victorian brown coal resources. Secondly, I asked whether the Premier would lay on the table of the Library all files, correspondence and memoranda dealing with the two agreements the Premier mentioned yesterday in his reply.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): In my answer to the honorable member for Morwell I gave a summary of what was agreed on with Germany this year. I shall certainly lay on the table of the House, if he wishes to see it, the documents verifying what I said. I believe I

indicated that at the moment the East German Government is not taking part in any agreements, except for the testing of briquettes from Morwell, in their laboratories at Freiburg. If, and only if, a decision is subsequently made to undertake a feasibility study on the design of the plant, then the East German Government is prepared to offer its expertise and experience to the extent of assisting in the feasibility study and in the design of the plant, and in getting the plant operating.

Mr. AMOS: For what reason?

Mr. HAMER: The East German Government is not interested in investment or in putting any money into the operation; it is simply giving its experience and its knowledge—of course, at a fee—to help us with the industry if Victoria wishes to go ahead with it.

TEACHERS FROM OVERSEAS.

Mr. LIND (Dandenong): I ask the Minister of Education: Is it a fact that officers recruiting teachers in the North American continent have told teachers that they will be looked after in the field of health, hospitalization and medical costs, and that if they arrive in Australia with $400 Australian they should have sufficient to tide them over until their first cheque arrives? If this is so, how does the honorable gentleman propose to deal with the problem of a teacher in my area whose wife is seven months pregnant? Will he be compensated through some hospital and medical fund? How does the Minister propose to deal with teachers who are called upon to pay key money, bond money and four weeks' rent in advance out of their $400?

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Is this question directed correctly to the Minister of Education? Would it not be better directed to the Minister of Health?

Mr. LIND: No, Sir. I wish to know about the teacher.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I am not aware of such undertakings being given to teachers who are recruited from the North American continent. It may well be that such a statement was made by people recruiting on behalf of the Victorian Government, and I will make investigations.

Concerning the particular teacher who has been mentioned by the honorable member for Dandenong, I suggest that he should contact Mr. Rex Murfett, who capably looks after personal problems of overseas teachers who are in this country for a limited period. I understand from the Minister of Health that free medical treatment has been provided for people in this category.

REGISTRATION OF TEACHERS.

Mr. SUGGETT (Bentleigh): I address this question to the Minister of Education. In view of the failure of the Teacher Registration Boards to register certain teachers of long standing, experience and proven ability—and I refer to one case, of which the Minister is aware, of a teacher of 27 years' experience—what steps does the Government propose taking to rectify this anomaly?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The Teacher Registration Boards were under the impression that they could not take into consideration previous teaching experience. To clarify this doubt I obtained from the Law Department an opinion which stated that previous teaching experience could be one of the factors considered. It may be necessary to amend the Act to direct the Teacher Registration Boards to take this factor into account.

The teacher mentioned by the honorable member for Bentleigh had 27 years of teaching experience and had previously enrolled at the Associated Teachers Training Institute, having completed a two-year course of training.

BOUNCERS.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North): I address a question to the Minister of Labour and Indusry. In view of the periodic complaints of people being

treated with excessive violence at places of entertainment by employees known as crowd controllers or, to be more specific, "bouncers", who often are little more than punch-drunk thugs who pick fights with people, will the Minister consider the registration of these employees and their places of employment so that it can be ascertained whether they are the right types of individuals to be employed in this classification? Could some code of ethics be set by which these people could conduct their employment in a similar manner to that used by police in controlling crowds?

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): This is the first indication I have had of the problem that concerns the honorable member. If he will provide me with details of the information which he obviously has, I shall have the matter examined.

FARES ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura): I direct a question to the Premier. In the *Age* of 29th August the following article appeared—

> The Premier, Mr. Hamer, announced yesterday that the State budget next month would contain no fare increases for trains, trams and tramway buses. He said the Government would not prescribe any freight increases but he left it open to the Railways Board to impose increases.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): This question is out of order. It is not in order for honorable members to quote from newspapers and speeches at question time.

Mr. WHITING: I ask the Premier: Following the statement published in the *Age* of 29th August, did the honorable gentleman state that there would be no rail fare increase in Victoria in the foreseeable future? If so, what does the honorable gentleman consider to be the "foreseeable future" in view of the fact that he is also quoted as saying that he would not guarantee that there would be no increase within the next financial year?

The SPEAKER: I appreciate what the honorable member for Mildura is trying to put, but it is not permissible to request an opinion to be given on a Minister's views as appearing in a press statement. Perhaps the honorable member could reframe his question.

Mr. WHITING: Has the Premier decided whether there will be any fare increases by the Victorian Railways within the next financial year?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): What I have said is that the Government has decided that there will be no fare increases in this Budget. I defy the honorable member or anyone else to predict what will happen within this financial year. However, so far as we can see ahead, and barring rises in wages and salaries which cannot be predicted at present, the Government intends that there shall be no fare increases for trains, trams or buses.

RELEASE OF BLAND REPORT.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Is it a fact that the Premier has given an undertaking to members of the press that he will make available to them copies of the Bland report and, if so, will the Premier give an undertaking to the House that copies of the Bland report, if they are being issued, will be issued simultaneously to honorable members of the Parliament before they are issued to members of the press?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The answer is, "Yes".

RESIGNATION OF EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OFFICER.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray): Can the Minister of Education advise whether it is true that the Assistant Director-General of Education, Mr. Morton, has resigned from his position with the department? Is it true that this is because of his disenchantment with the Government's school

building programme? If not, can the Minister outline the reason for Mr. Morton's resignation?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): Approximately a year ago Mr. Morton indicated that he was anxious to seek employment elsewhere, in private industry. At that time, because I greatly appreciated his services—I believe he has been an outstanding public servant—I asked him to have a holiday and to reconsider his decision. This he did. Now he has decided for personal reasons to adhere to the original decision. However, because of his outstanding ability, I still hope to persuade him to remain in charge of the building section.

FEDERAL FUNDS FOR EDUCATION.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN (Dundas): Can the Minister of Education advise what funds have been made available for education by the Federal Government in the first six months of this year and what proportion of those funds is being committed to education by his department?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): In the first six months of this year $8 million was made available for building purposes and $18 million was committed to contract.

LETHENAIR DECOMPRESSION CHAMBER.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne): Is the Minister of Health aware of the nature of the Lethenair decompression chamber, and is he further aware that it is used at the Lost Dogs Home, North Melbourne, for the destruction of animals? Is the Minister aware of a body or organization known as Animal Rights which has been formed in Melbourne and which has been investigating the process by which animals are destroyed and has found that the Lethenair process is very protracted and intensely distressing to the animals concerned? Will the honorable gentleman ask officers of his department to investigate the use of the Lethenair decompression chamber and provide a full report to the House?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): Yes, I will be happy to give that undertaking.

LEARNER-DRIVER PERMITS.

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park): Can the Chief Secretary confirm whether the learner-driver permit scheme will come into operation on 20th September and, if so, can the honorable gentleman clarify the position of licence testers, as there is a body of opinion which implies that there will be no persons to be tested in the first three months of the operation of this new scheme?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): Instructions concerning the new procedures have been circulated to all police stations and have appeared in the *Police Gazette*. I ask the honorable member to consult that document.

VICTORIAN INLAND MEAT AUTHORITY.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture) (*By leave*): I wish to announce that for the information of honorable members I have arranged to have laid on the table of the Library for one week the documents containing the terms and conditions of the sale of the properties owned by the Victorian Inland Meat Authority to the Co-operative Farmers and Graziers Direct Meat Supply Ltd.

PETITION.

POLICE STATION FOR SAN REMO.

Mr. MACLELLAN (Gippsland West) presented a petition from certain residents of San Remo, Newhaven and Woolamai Waters and certain citizens of Victoria praying that the House take action to ensure the establishment of a permanent police station at San Remo. He stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 185 signatures.

It was ordered that the petition be laid on the table.

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Mr. REESE (Moorabbin) presented a report from the Committee of Public Accounts upon the State Insurance Offices, together with extracts from the proceedings of the committee and appendices.

It was ordered that the report, extracts from the proceedings of the committee and appendices be laid on the table and be printed.

PAPERS.

The following papers, pursuant to the directions of an Act of Parliament, were laid on the table by the Clerk—

Public Service Act 1958—Public Service (Public Service Board) Regulations—Regulations amended—Nos. 115 to 122 (eight papers).

BRUNSWICK GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East): I wish to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the failure of the Minister of Education to honour a public commitment to provide adequate educational facilities for Brunswick Girls High School.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I appreciate the fact that the honorable member for Brunswick East delivered to me by the required time of one hour before the House met a copy of his proposed motion. I am of the opinion that there will be opportunity for the honorable member to raise this matter on the Address-in-Reply debate which is set down for today. Before giving a ruling, I would welcome an undertaking from the Leader of the House that the Address-in-Reply debate will be called on this day. Can I have that undertaking?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): Yes.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I oppose your ruling——

The SPEAKER: I have not yet ruled.

Mr. HOLDING: In that case what I say might assist you. I ask you to take into account the nature of the adjournment motion. Under the forms of the House an honorable member is entitled to raise a matter of public urgency. The forms require that the motion is to be specific and to be a matter of urgency, and there are already precedents on what that means. A motion such as this requires a specific answer from the Minister or whoever is responsible for the matter. You, Mr. Speaker, should take into account that it is simply not enough for an honorable member to have the opportunity of raising a matter such as this. It is a derogation or limitation of a member's rights if a matter is raised and is not specifically answered.

For the Deputy Premier to give a general undertaking that the Address-in-Reply debate will be brought on today is not sufficient for you to make a decision on the rights of the honorable member for Brunswick East. The Leader of the Country Party has the call in the Address-in-Reply debate and, if proper procedures are followed, the call will then go to the Government side of the House.

Mr. WILCOX: That is not the normal practice.

Mr. HOLDING: It is normal for the Speaker to follow certain rules in giving the call to honorable members; the Attorney-General ought to know that.

The Deputy Premier cannot give an assurance on this matter because of the nature of the Notice Paper. There is a notice of motion standing in the name of the honorable member for Gippsland East and seven Bills are listed for the second reading, quite apart from the other notices of motion. Even if the assurance of the Deputy Premier is accepted, it is highly unlikely that the honorable

member for Brunswick East will have the opportunity of participating in the debate today. Moreover, it is almost certain that any matter which the honorable member wishes to raise would not be subjected to the scope and nature of a debate on an adjournment motion.

To rule simply on the basis of an assurance by the Deputy Premier that the Address-in-Reply debate will be brought on, having regard to the Notice Paper, involves the Chair in a further finding that the honorable member for Brunswick East will get the call. Admittedly, you, Mr. Speaker, might be possessed of some further knowledge of the order of business about which I do not know, and if so the House ought to be informed.

Unless this specific matter can be dealt with in the manner in which it would be on an adjournment motion, for you, Sir, to rule on the basis of the information that has been given by the Deputy Premier would involve a gross diminution of the rights of honorable members.

I ask you to have regard to the rights of members in this place and to the way in which the Government has organized the Address-in-Reply debate because, unless care is exercised, a dangerous precedent will be created. It is common knowledge that, over the years, the Address-in-Reply debate has been used as a filler and kept on the Notice Paper for weeks and even months. If you were to establish a precedent in this way, the rights of all honorable members could be adversely affected.

The importance of debating a matter on a motion for the adjournment of the House is that a member is not merely provided with the opportunity of presenting the facts but, more importantly, an immediate answer is required from the responsible Minister, and the House has to resolve the issue one way or the other.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that, in the light of the state of the Notice Paper, for you simply to say that you are prepared to accept an assurance from the Deputy Premier, and to rule against the honorable member for Brunswick East would create a dangerous precedent and ultimately it could involve a substantial diminution of the rights of honorable members.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): For you merely to inquire of the Leader of the House whether a debate will be brought on this day should not be sufficient, Mr. Speaker, and indeed should not be taken seriously as a basis for ruling in a certain way. It is competent for any honorable member at any time to move that the House adjourn; if the motion were carried, as it well could be—it has happened on other occasions—the House would then adjourn. In those circumstances, the assurance from the Deputy Premier would be of little use in deciding whether this subject ought to be debated under an item on the Notice Paper. Moreover, the Deputy Premier cannot know what the Opposition's attitude will be to the seven Bills that are listed on the Notice Paper. I am prepared to give an assurance to the Secretary of the Cabinet at the appropriate time, but this is not that time. Accordingly, the Deputy Premier would not be aware of the Opposition's attitude on the other items.

In addition, the honorable member for Gippsland East has given notice of a substantive motion which could well be debated at some length and the only weapon which the Government could use would be one that it has used on many occasions—the gag or the guillotine—unless an agreement has been reached on that matter. If this is the case, the House ought to be told about it.

The mere fact that the Deputy Premier has given an assurance that the Address-in-Reply debate will be brought on does not necessarily mean that this will eventuate because in the past the business of

the House has prevented similar assurances from being implemented. A similar situation could occur today.

The Chair ought to pay attention to the position of the Address-in-Reply on the Notice Paper. Obviously, last night it was not intended that the Address-in-Reply debate should come on again today. In those circumstances, irrespective of the assurance from the Deputy Premier, it would be quite competent for you, Sir, to take the view that it is unlikely that the honorable member for Brunswick East will have the opportunity of raising this matter, which he regards as important and urgent, having regard to the position of the Address-in-Reply debate on the Notice Paper and the contingencies that may arise between now and when that item might be reached.

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General): Lest it be assumed that the Government is aquiescing in the arguments advanced by honorable members opposite, I wish to make one or two points. Obviously, you, Mr. Speaker, having received notice of the proposed motion in accordance with the usual practice, have applied your mind to the subject. Good sense has normally prevailed in this Parliament in ordering the business of the House, and if that same good sense is adopted on this occasion, the proceedings of the House will flow smoothly. The Leader of the House has given an undertaking that the Notice Paper will be followed, and the Address-in-Reply is listed as item No. 8 under Orders of the Day. Only seven Bills are listed for the second reading and honorable members know the usual custom with second-reading speeches. When the Address-in-Reply debate is brought on, the call will go to the Government side of the House, then to the Leader of the Country Party and, in accordance with usual custom, back to the Opposition.

Mr. HOLDING: That is not the usual practice.

Mr. WILCOX: That is the usual practice and therefore it is in the hands of honorable members opposite to give the honorable member for Brunswick East his opportunity to speak.

What really matters is that the honorable member should have the opportunity of raising the matter which he considers to be of urgent public importance—I have some doubts about that—and he will have that opportunity today. This is quite clear from the Notice Paper and from what has been said by the Deputy Premier.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): Mr. Speaker, I urge you to allow the adjournment motion to proceed today for quite different reasons from those which have been stated by other honorable members. Certain things happened in Parliament yesterday and this would be the appropriate time, and perhaps the only opportunity, for some honorable members who hold definite views on certain occurrences to express their views. This matter has been one of public interest and has received considerable publicity with most unusual circumstances surrounding it. For those reasons alone, I urge you, sir, to allow the adjournment motion to be debated.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to consider the consequences if the House were to agree to the motion proposed to be moved by the honorable member for Brunswick East. Obviously, the honorable member considers that this matter is of such major importance that the House should resolve it without delay. He is asking the House to adjourn and if the House does so, the Government will be defeated. I should like the Chair to consider this situation.

It is not merely a question of an honorable member's opportunity to speak. The honorable member for Brunswick East has framed his motion in such a way—the Standing Orders provide that any honorable

member can move such a motion—that if the House agrees to it no further business can be dealt with by the House until the electorate resolves who shall govern the State. That is the real situation which you, Mr. Speaker, must consider. The Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have pointed out that the arguments advanced by the Minister and the Government are an exercise in which the Government indulges when it wants to beg the question. The Government gives the Chair an assurance that a particular debate will be brought on to give the honorable member concerned an opportunity of putting his case.

How can the honorable member for Brunswick East achieve his objective by speaking to the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech? He is asking the Parliament to sack the Government and he cannot do so during that debate. That is the reason why Standing Orders provide for the adjournment motion; it is not merely a question of giving an honorable member an opportunity. If Parliament is not permitted to debate the motion of the honorable member for Brunswick East, he will be denied the opportunity of debating what he considers to be an important matter and Parliament will be denied the opportunity of passing judgment on the Government.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): Mr. Speaker, you are about to give a most important ruling which can affect many important debates in the future. There are three cogent reasons why you should allow this debate to proceed. The honorable member for Brunswick East has moved the adjournment of the House to allow debate on a specific subject to take place.

The Standing Orders provide that a debate on a motion for the adjournment of the House shall last for two hours. In your capacity as Speaker, Sir, you would ensure that the subject was debated on the basis of the argument adopted by the honorable member for Brunswick East and you would rule out of order any honorable member whose contribution was not germane to the motion. In other words, members of the Opposition are asking that a debate take place on a specific subject. That situation could not be achieved by allowing a discussion on the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. As you know, Mr. Speaker, in speaking to that motion an honorable member can raise any subject-matter. Members of the Government party could ignore the topic sought to be discussed so that no debate could take place on the subject raised by the honorable member for Brunswick East.

Members of the Opposititon are asking for a debate within the forms of the House when a subject must be discussed specifically and no other subject-matter is introduced. Unless that is done, the rights and wishes of the honorable member for Brunswick East will be frustrated; they cannot be replaced by a discussion within the framework of the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech, which covers every subject under the sun. Mr. Speaker, if you do not accept the views of the Opposition that this matter should be specifically and minutely debated within two hours, you will be limiting the rights of honorable members to debate a specific subject. If the honorable member for Brunswick East is required to raise the matter in the Address-in-Reply debate, no member of the Government party would answer his questions. That has happened time and time again; mostly the Minister concerned is not in the House to answer the questions that are asked, and if he is present, he does not rise to answer them. A motion for the adjournment of the House is the only way in which the honorable member for Brunswick East can expose the shortcomings at

Brunswick Girls High School. My argument adds to the good reasons already advanced.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne): Mr. Speaker, I refer you to the appropriate section of *May* under the heading "General Restriction on Motions for the Adjournment of the House" and also to Standing Order No. 9. I submit that the conditions set down in *May* on a motion for the adjournment of the House have been satisfied. It must be definite and it must be urgent.

A certain number of honorable members believe that it is urgent and it is definite. The normal practice of the House is that if sufficient numbers of members of the House indicate their support, the Chair accepts their contention as being in good faith. The matter must be of public importance; the matter must involve more than the ordinary administration of the law; the matter must conform to the general rules applicable to all motions for the adjournment of the House.

The honorable member for Brunswick East has raised the matter at the first opportunity. Although the Attorney-General has indicated that the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech could be called on, it could be late at night. In this case, the call will go to the Leader of the Country Party. Then an honorable member could again move the adjournment of the debate. Perhaps the honorable member for Brunswick East, through sheer bad luck, might not be in the Chamber to get the call immediately after the Leader of the Country Party had finished. If the matter is to be discussed, if it is a matter of importance as members of the Opposition believe, the appropriate way to deal with it is on a motion for the adjournment of the House. The point of the Leader of the Country Party is well made that there are some general issues that he may wish to canvass but he will not be able to do so if this debate cannot proceed.

Mr. HOLDING: The call goes to the Government side after the Leader of the Country Party has finished.

Mr. JONES: The point of the Leader of the Opposition is well made; the call could be taken by a member of the Government party and the opportunity for the honorable member for Brunswick East to speak on this important matter would be lost. For those reasons and specifically for the reasons advanced on the general restrictions on a motion for the adjournment of the House set out in *May* which are perfectly satisfied by the motion moved by the honorable member for Brunswick East, I urge you, Mr. Speaker to allow the debate to proceed.

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West): Before you give your ruling, Mr. Speaker, I urge you to consider that if the debate does not proceed it would substantially restrict the rights of honorable members in this House. With the assistance of the Clerk I have gone back through the Notice Papers of the spring sessional period of last year. The first time the Address-in-Reply debate appeared on the Notice Paper was Tuesday, 11th September, 1973. It was placed in an extremely low order on the Notice Paper until it was finally discharged on Tuesday, 29th November, 1973. That, apparently, has been the custom in this place for some time.

Your ruling suggests that until an honorable member has spoken to the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech, he is virtually not in a position to move a motion for the adjournment of the House. So far, only three honorable members are in the position of being able to move a motion for the adjournment of the House. No matter what situation arises outside this Chamber your ruling, Mr. Speaker, would suggest that so long as an honorable member has an opportunity of speaking to

the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply, he cannot move a motion for the adjournment of the House. That seems to be a considerable restriction. A number of honorable members may not wish to speak to the Address-in-Reply debate. However, if honorable members wish to move a motion for the adjournment of the House they could turn the Address-in-Reply debate into a farce by speaking for only two minutes.

Mr. HOLDING: I am gagged; I have spoken.

Mr. ROPER: Therefore, the Leader of the Opposition will be unable to speak on the subject of the Brunswick Girls High School. If your ruling, Mr. Speaker, prevents honorable members from moving a motion for the adjournment of the House, they will adopt the practice of getting up for "two-minute quickies" in the Address-in-Reply debate.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): The honorable member for Melbourne mentioned several matters from *May*. I also refer to the appropriate paragraphs of the seventeenth edition of *May*. The matter can be raised by moving a motion. The matter can be raised by moving an amendment to the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply. That is most appropriate. It is not required of me to get an undertaking from the Leader of the House, but I feel that I would do this. If the honorable gentlemen concerned feel they could give me an undertaking, I am prepared to accept it.

The honorable member for Brunswick East has not yet spoken to the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech and an early opportunity can be afforded to him to raise this matter in that debate. It is an appropriate matter for him to raise.

There are precedents relevant to somewhat similar situations. I direct the attention of the House to page 1092 of *Hansard* of 22nd October, 1968, at which a ruling on the matter is given by Mr. Speaker Christie. I also refer to page 1292 of *Hansard* of 22nd October, 1970, at which a further ruling is given by Mr. Speaker Christie. Opportunities will be made available at the appropriate time, almost forthwith, for the honorable member for Brunswick East to raise the matter to which he has referred. For the reasons I have stated, I cannot accept the motion.

RACING (FURTHER AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation): By leave, I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Racing Act 1958 and for other purposes.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Leave is refused.

CHIROPODISTS (ADDITIONAL TRAINING OF APPLICANTS) BILL.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Chiropodists Act 1968.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

DENTAL ALUMNI RESEARCH FOUNDATION BILL.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to vary the trusts upon which certain funds are held by the University of Melbourne and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 76 and section 77 of the Co-operative Housing Societies Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

THE ALFRED NICHOLAS MEMORIAL GARDENS BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make provision with respect to the transfer of certain land in the Shire of Sherbrooke from the president, councillors and ratepayers of the Shire of Sherbrooke to the Forests Commission and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

CARLTON LAND (UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S COLLEGE) BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to revoke the reservation of certain Crown land at Carlton as a site for a residential college for women at the University of Melbourne and to provide for the permanent reservation of the said land as a general residential college at the University of Melbourne.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

VICTORIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCES BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to establish a Victorian Institute of Marine Sciences and for purposes connected therewith.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

FILMS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 15 of the Films Act 1971.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (BENEFITS) BILL.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 26 of the Friendly Societies Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

ROAD SAFETY (EDUCATIONAL) BILL.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to provide for the transfer of two employees of the National Safety Council to the Public Service of Victoria in connection with the transfer of certain responsibilities from the National Safety Council to the Road Safety and Traffic Authority.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

TERANG MECHANICS INSTITUTE AND FREE LIBRARY TRUST BILL.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to enable the surrender to Her Majesty of the property of the Terang Mechanics Institute and Free Library Trust free of the trust and of a certain mortgage, to facilitate the appointment of the Shire of Hampden as a committee of management thereof under the Land Act 1958, and for purposes connected therewith.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

HARBORS AND NAVIGABLE WATERS CONTROL BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Melbourne Harbor Trust Act 1958, the Geelong Harbor Trust Act 1958, the Portland Harbor Trust Act 1958, the Harbor Boards Act 1958 and the Marine Act 1958, and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

MELBOURNE AND METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Act 1958 and the Sewerage Districts Act 1958, and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

BONNIE DOON (PUBLIC HALL) LAND BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to authorize the sale of certain land at Bonnie Doon, to provide for the application of the proceeds of sale and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): Leave is refused.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): In view of the reckless and irresponsible precedent being pursued by the Opposition——

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): Mr. Speaker, I raise a point of order. It is all very well for honorable members on the Government benches to take the view that they do, but all that is happening is that the forms of the House are being observed. To describe our actions as reckless and irresponsible is to make derogatory comments about the forms of the House. The motives of the Opposition are its business. To impute improper motives to any honorable member is a grave breach of the rules of the House. I ask that the Minister who used those words withdraw them.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I can hardly rule that the word "irresponsible" is one which must be rejected by the House. I do not think any inference was cast on members of the Opposition other than by the use of that word, and I cannot uphold the point of order on that ground.

The forms of the House are being used by both the Government and the Opposition. Leave for the second reading to take place today has been refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

WHEAT MARKETING BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Wheat Marketing Act 1969.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

PESTICIDES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Pesticides Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE.

COMPLAINT: PUBLICATION OF REPORT.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with regret, I raise a matter of privilege. I have just been shown a copy of the Bland report which was distributed to members of the press with an embargo on its publication until 11 a.m. tomorrow. Less than an hour ago I asked the Premier for an undertaking, which was freely given, that the report would be distributed and made available to members of this Parliament at the same time as it was given to members of the press.

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I ask honorable members to listen to the Leader of the Opposition in silence. It will be required of me to make a decision and I want an opportunity to deliberate carefully and correctly.

Mr. HOLDING: I immediately made an inquiry in the Papers Room to ascertain whether the report had been placed there so that it could be supplied to honorable members. If that had been the case I should have allowed the matter to rest. But the report has not been supplied to the Papers Room and I was informed by one of the officers that it was not available. I regard this as a serious matter and I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to treat it as such. As I said, this is a matter of regret but the stage seems to have been reached when undertakings given to this House are not honoured. It seems more important to service certain sections of the daily press than members of Parliament.

The SPEAKER: When a matter such as this is raised, it is the practice for the Speaker to take time to consider it deliberately and carefully, and to make a factual and positive statement to the House. I undertake to do that. I shall report to the House on the next day of sitting.

Mr. HOLDING: With respect, Sir, an explanation may be forthcoming and I would not wish to pre-empt it. The Premier was not in the House when I raised this matter and it does involve him. In fairness, perhaps I should repeat what I said so that the honorable gentleman is able to consider his position. I ask leave of the House to make a statement.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): Leave is refused.

The SPEAKER: I do not know whether that refusal of leave was meant to be taken seriously. The Premier was not in the House when the Leader of the Opposition raised a matter of privilege. He has asked leave to repeat the charge. I accept that offer and I sincerely hope that the refusal of leave will be withdrawn.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, when you, Sir, called on me a short time ago the Leader of the Opposition rose to his feet without being called. I sat down expecting that I would be called but that did not happen. I think I could quite rightly feel upset about that. Therefore, my immediate impulse was to

refuse leave to the Leader of the Opposition to make his point. However, I am sure that the Premier would wish to reply to the Leader of the Opposition and I withdraw the refusal of leave.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): By leave and for the benefit of the Premier, I repeat what I said. The honorable gentleman will recall that at question time today I sought an assurance, which he gave clearly and voluntarily, that copies of the Bland report would not be made available to the press until they had been made available to members of this House. When I went to my office I was shown a copy of the report which had on it an embargo on press publication until 11 a.m. tomorrow. Obviously, the report had been distributed to members of the press.

I caused inquiries to be made in the Papers Room presuming that the Premier had given instructions so that the undertaking given to the House would be honoured. However, I was told that there were no copies of the report in the Papers Room and that it had not been issued. Therefore, as I am bound to, I raise this matter at the first opportunity.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I am glad of the opportunity to reply to the Leader of the Opposition. I remind him of what is well known to all honorable members, that in cases where documents are about to be issued and become public it is not only the usual but the sensible practice that members of the press receive copies under an embargo. As I understand the meaning of the word "embargo", members of the press are allowed to examine the document in private without indicating its contents to anybody.

I remind the House that it is well known that copies of Budgets are made available to the press in advance by both Commonwealth and State Treasurers, and also by the Parliament of Westminster, as are reports of Royal Commissions and boards of inquiry. Even copies of the Governor's Speech are made available to members of the press in time for them to examine them. I have never found that the press has disregarded an embargo or not kept the contens of the document private. I do not propose to depart from the practice. The undertaking I gave to the Leader of the Opposition was quite clear, that at the moment it became public he would have a copy.

Mr. DOUBE: "At the same time as the press".

Mr. HAMER: If I misunderstood the question, I shall repeat the position. As far as I am concerned, a document is made public when it is made available either in the House or the Papers Room or otherwise distributed. That has not been done with this report except that it has been given to members of the press under an embargo. No other member of the House has seen it but it will be available to all honorable members when the term of the embargo is completed, that is at 11 a.m. tomorrow. If you, Mr. Speaker, rule that that is a breach of privilege, no more documents will be distributed to the press in similar situations. But I believe it to be a perfectly legitimate thing to do, and it is well known that it is done. There is no reason to depart from the practice. I do not regard it as a breach of any undertaking I gave the Leader of the Opposition and the House. In any case, this is not a House document.

Mr. WILTON: But you gave an undertaking to the House.

Mr. HAMER: I gave an undertaking to the House and I propose to honour it. At the time the embargo is lifted, in other words, when the document becomes public, there will be ample copies available in the Papers Room to any member of Parliament who wants them.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I am surprised at the Premier's explanation. It is a further indication of the complete disregard of the Government for the Parliament. When a

report is to be tabled in Parliament, it is not available to the press until after it is tabled, and this report should not be treated in any other way.

Mr. HAMER: It is not a Parliamentary report.

Mr. WILKES: It is as important as any report tabled in Parliament. Notwithstanding the fact that, half an hour ago, the Premier gave a particular undertaking about the report, it has been made available to the press. *Hansard* will prove exactly what the question was and what the Premier answered.

I am sure that every honorable member in the Chamber believed the Premier would make the report available to members of Parliament when it was made available to the press. But that is not the case. But members of the press have or a member of the press has the report before any member of the Opposition has been able to see it. I regard that as a serious abrogation of the rights of members of this Parliament. I can understand that the Government wants to advise the press.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I have no desire to listen to a full-scale debate at this time, for obvious reasons. There is no question before the Chair. The Leader of the Opposition raised a matter of privilege. He afforded the Premier the opportunity of putting his case. Until I have time to consider the matter there is no question before the Chair.

FERTILIZERS BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the sale of agricultural limes, fertilizers and soil conditioners and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

DRIED FRUITS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Dried Fruits Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

PHARMACISTS BILL.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to re-enact with amendments the law relating to the registration of pharmacists and for purposes connected therewith.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East): In view of strong indications that the Government is yielding to pressure by the Country Party to revise the charges which are the subject of Notice of Motion No. 1, General Business, standing in my name, I desire to indicate that I do not wish to proceed with the motion today but will move it on Tuesday next.

FAMILY COURTS BILL.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make provision for the establishment of certain Magistrates Courts as family courts for the better determination of disputes or matters affecting family life, to vest family courts with certain jurisdiction and powers, and for purposes connected therewith.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to reform the Landlord and Tenant Act 1958 with respect to persons suffering financial hardship upon premises ceasing to be prescribed premises and for regulating and controlling the giving of security deposits.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

AVOIDANCE OF DISCRIMINATION BILL.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make provision against the exercise of certain discriminations on account of sex, marriage, religion, politics, race, colour, or ethnic or social background in relation to the holding of public offices and the exercise of statutory rights and duties and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The debate (adjourned from the previous day) was resumed on the motion of Mr. Chamberlain (Dundas)—

That the following Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor to both Houses of Parliament be agreed to by this House:—

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, the Legislative Assembly of Victoria in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the gracious Speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

and on Mr. Holding's amendment—

That the following words be added to the proposed address—" and respectfully desire to inform Your Excellency that this House rejects the concept of Melbourne's growth being unlimited, and Government departments and statutory authorities acting on a population figure of 5 million by the year 2000, and expresses the view that Melbourne's growth should be limited and that a population for Melbourne in excess of 3·5 million is socially and economically undesirable ".

Mr. McCLURE (Bendigo): The motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech affords honorable members an excellent opportunity of speaking on many of the matters which concern them, particularly in their electorate. I offer no apologies for discussing matters which pertain to my electorate of Bendigo.

Mr. CURNOW: Here comes the parish pump.

Mr. McCLURE: I take the opportunity of reaffirming the loyalty of the constituents of the electorate of Bendigo to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. and also of congratulating and wishing well the new Governor of Victoria, His Excellency Sir Henry Winneke, on his elevation to the position, and of conveying kind regards to the retired Governor of Victoria, Sir Rohan Delacombe.

The honorable member for Kara Kara, by interjection, indicated that this was a good opportunity of working the parish pump, and that is exactly what I intend to do. The last occasion on which I gave the parish pump of Bendigo a decent pull the water that issued forth was by no means clean. This is of considerable concern to the people of Bendigo and the people who are served by the upper Coliban water system operated by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission. On occasions the quality of the water issuing from the mains in Bendigo leaves much to be desired, particularly in summer when a large quantity of water is supplied from the Lake Eppalock system. There is a large amount of suspended material in the water and I believe it is proper to suggest that this time the Government should give earnest consideration to installing a filtration or purification plant for all the urban areas supplied from the Coliban water system. This system was developed in approximately 1872.

In its day the Coliban system was an excellent piece of engineering but the demands on it are now too great. The supply is mainly via an open channel, with the result that a great deal of matter enters the water before it is distributed through the mains. In the early days our forebears had the foresight to install a filtration system and an excellent beds system exists at the Crusoe reservoir. However, these beds have not been used for many years as their capacity is inadequate. It is interesting to note that at the time the Crusoe reservoir was being built the company that had the franchise raised only a small amount of capital because it fondly believed it would pay for the bulk of the work by selling the gold it expected to find when excavating the main embankment, but it was unsuccessful and the company went broke. In digging about Bendigo the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission probably unearths gold. If it could tap that resource no doubt it could pay for the filtration and purification system without any difficulty.

Water has many uses, one of which, and by no means the least important in an urban society, is the putting out of fires. It is of great concern to the people of Bendigo that improvements to the Bendigo fire station which have been proposed for some time by the Country Fire Authority have been completely thwarted by the action of some trade unions and the Bendigo Trades Hall Council which have seen fit to put a black ban on the improvements to the station. Recently the Trades Hall Council has written to municipalities in the Bendigo area complaining that the fire services available to the people of Bendigo are inadequate and that fire appliances are too often delayed in reaching fires. If the Trades Hall Council and the relevant unions are sincere, they will immediately lift their ban on the work proposed at Bendigo fire station and allow one of the most important utilities in the city to be improved.

At present the Bendigo railway station is another area of concern. The station is one of the oldest in the State and unfortunately some of the equipment that is used is also probably the oldest in the State. The equipment available for freight handling at Bendigo railway station is insufficient to cater for modern demands and contributes in no small measure to the difficulties the railways have in conducting business through that terminal. One of the most important pieces of equipment required is an overhead travelling crane to enable a large number of railway trucks to be unloaded simultaneously and those loads to be placed directly on to road vehicles for distribution.

In addition to this, the Railways Board could well rethink its method of parcel handling throughout the State. The current trend in handling parcels almost anywhere is to pack them in small containers for each destination. Instead of the railways

handling a large number of small items, it would be easier to unload quickly from rail wagons containers designated for a specific railway station, and for the staff to unpack the containers and distribute the contents in a more orderly fashion than at present occurs.

As well as freight and parcel handling, there is undoubtedly an opportunity for the railways to increase the amount of passenger traffic that can be carried between country centres and Melbourne. The main object here is to obtain a faster service. This is not always easy to achieve in areas where only a single railway track runs, but where dual tracks exist or conditions are right, the railways could endeavour to provide a service at least as fast as on State roads, and preferably faster. Many people have become aware that although driving has a degree of flexibility, it is by no means as safe, comfortable or convenient as travelling by rail. It should be possible to run a rail service between Bendigo and Melbourne, with a journey time of between an hour and a half and an hour and three quarters. At present the train takes approximately two and a half hours to complete this journey, which is a little too long to attract a large number of daily or weekly commuters.

Recently I travelled by rail motor to Echuca, and although many of my friends thought that was a daring thing to do, the journey proved to be one of the most pleasant I have undertaken in a long while. If the railways sold its services on the basis that there is more to travelling by rail than just getting from point A to point B, and that one may travel to interesting places and see a great deal of countryside that cannot be seen from the roads, more revenue could be gathered.

An example of how a rail service can be made to pay exists in Bendigo, where a tourist tramway service has been introduced and its costs are at least covered, whereas when the State Electricity Commission was running the service it was losing an enormous amount of money. There are some simple arguments against that. However, if the organization that runs the tramway could carry commuter passengers as well as tourists, it would return a handsome profit. At the moment the service could be run daily even without the commuter passengers. If a more novel approach to the railways were taken and rail services were marketed attractively, much more patronage could be attracted.

Another matter causing grave concern to the people of Bendigo and throughout Victoria from Gisborne to Swan Hill is that the Central Victoria District Ambulance Service is being frustrated in its desire to replace its ambulances with others of a type which it regards as most suitable for use in the district. Some time ago the Hospitals and Charities Commission formed a vehicle design committee to design a standard ambulance. In the same way that the Federal Government's standard urban passenger rail car will not be able to cope with all the variations that exist throughout Australia, the standard ambulance designed for the Hospitals and Charities Commission is not able to cope with all the types of work that ambulances are required to do.

I can speak with some knowledge of the types of ambulances available, because my colleague, the honorable member for Midlands, and I recently rode as passengers on stretchers and test-drove the ambulances available for use at present. They fall into three categories—firstly, the ambulance based on the Ford F100; secondly, the one based on the Ford Fairlane chassis; and thirdly, the one based on the Ford Falcon chassis. The differences are that the Ford F100 can carry four patients, two on complete stretchers and two on temporary type stretchers above. The Ford Fairlane type ambulance is also capable of carrying four patients, one on the complete type stretcher, one on a more simple type of stretcher, and two on temporary types of

stretchers carried above. The Ford Falcon type ambulance carries one patient on a conventional stretcher, and one on a simpler version—two at the most.

In the area covered by the Central Victoria District Ambulance Service only 5 per cent of the work involved is accident work, so the possibility exists for multiple loading. However, multiple loading accounts for only a small proportion of that 5 per cent, and when viewed in total, the need for a large capacity ambulance is fairly small. By comparison, a larger amount of running over long distances is done, mainly taking people to and from Melbourne. The service needs an ambulance that has good riding capabilities. The Ford F100 rides like a truck, and indeed, that is the type of chassis it is built on. The Fairlane ambulance is quite comfortable and handles very well, as does the Ford Falcon type. The Central Victoria District Ambulance Service desires to replace its ambulances progressively, mainly with the Ford Fairlane type ambulance. In an emergency this type of vehicle is capable of carrying four patients, for example in crash work, but it is the comfortable ride that is so necessary when carrying patients over long distances. In addition, if a patient can be seated, a special seat in a conventional position is provided.

By comparison, in the Ford F100 ambulance the seated patients are required to sit on the stretcher in the back at right angles to the direction in which the ambulance is travelling. Only a lap safety belt is provided, and if an F100 ambulance had the misfortune to be involved in an accident, a patient seated within the vehicle would run the risk of being injured.

I find it unthinkable that the Hospitals and Charities Commission could adopt a hard line on this matter. The Central Victoria District Ambulance Service has been unable to obtain permission to replace its vehicles with the Ford Fairlane type ambulances which it desires. An additional factor of great concern is that the Fairlane type ambulance costs only about two-thirds the price of the Ford F100 ambulance, and yet the Fairlane has many desirable features. The commission cannot afford to be inflexible in such an important matter when the ambulance service concerned has a great deal of experience in designing ambulances and has had few problems with the Fairlane type version which it pioneered. The Fairlane ambulances have almost completed 200,000 miles' travelling, and the ambulance drivers—quite rightly—have declared that once the vehicles reach 200,000 miles, they will refuse to drive them. I make no apologies for supporting the ambulance drivers in this matter. Ambulances cannot be run for much more than 200,000 miles and still provide a secure service.

It is deplorable that the Hospitals and Charities Commission has failed to see reason on this point. The ambulance service is not refusing to have Ford F100 ambulances—it agrees to have some of them to do special types of work—but it does not want the entire fleet to be comprised of those or the Ford Falcon type ambulances, which have such a limited capacity.

In his Speech the Governor touched on some important issues that affect my electorate, and I intend to cover only a few. The Leader of the Opposition moved an amendment to the motion before the Chair, and I am puzzled because I thought His Excellency's Speech adequately covered the point raised by the Leader of the Opposition. I refer to the initiatives taken by the Government in promoting decentralization. It is a source of annoyance to the Opposition that the Government's decentralization programme is not only succeeding but is progressing better than the schemes of any other Government in Australia. The efforts of the Victorian Government in the area of decentralization leave for dead those of its alleged colleagues who currently comprise the Federal Government of Australia.

It may be of interest to know that the honorable member for Kara Kara, who has interjected, and I both attended the same school. In fact, recently I was told that we were both in the same class, but in those days he was so quiet that I was not even aware of his presence.

In the Bendigo area there has been a pleasing development of new industry, and this is continuing. This is why the Bendigo area is not feeling the same degree of unemployment that is currently rife throughout the rest of the community.

Mr. CURNOW: Did you see yesterday's *Herald*? It stated that Bendigo is in the worst eight.

Mr. McCLURE: My colleague from the Bendigo High School forgets that the figure that is associated with the name " Bendigo ", comprises communities flung far and wide from the city and incorporates a large number of small country areas which, unfortunately, show an immediate response to unemployment. If what the honorable member for Kara Kara says is true, it is significant that persons who are unemployed have not sought assistance from any of the Bendigo members of Parliament, nor have they drawn their unemployment to our attention.

Two industries which are currently establishing in Bendigo will do a great deal to attract not only additional people but also additional industries to the area. I speak of Empire Rubber (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., which has shifted from Footscray to Bendigo—a wise move—and the firm of Sinclair & Duncan Foundries Pty. Ltd. which is shifting from Thomastown. Both of these industries will act as a catalyst and will attract a large number of other industries.

His Excellency the Governor touched on tourism in his Speech and said that it was an important decentralized industry. I fully support his view. In the Bendigo area there is a wealth of interest to tourists, and an organization known as the Bendigo Trust is doing a magnificent job in promoting the district. It is pleasing that His Excellency has kindly consented to become the patron of the Bendigo Trust. This has made the people of my electorate very proud. Recently the trust conducted a fund-raising programme to obtain funds towards the development of a major tourist project called Dai Gum San. Despite the alleged gloom that has been hanging over the economy of the country, the people of Bendigo and district responded magnificently, and the appeal so far has achieved a result of $310,000. This speaks wonders for the way in which tourism is being accepted as an industry. Not only are people pleased to see the development of tourist projects, but they obviously realize the financial advantages that are in it for all concerned.

Mr. EDMUNDS: Do you like photographs of the Minister being plastered over everything? They are frightening little children.

Mr. McCLURE: The Minister is reasonably photogenic. It has been pointed out in this House on previous occasions that the Victorian Government spends less on tourist promotion that does any other State.

With those few remarks I shall conclude. The Government has proposed a fully-rounded programme for this session. I am a relatively new member of this House. I thought all honorable members would have reasonable regard for the forms of Parliament, and for the need of the Government to get its business through. I have been dismayed with what I have seen from members of the Opposition during today's proceedings.

The sitting was suspended at 6.20 *p.m. until* 8.2 *p.m.*

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East): During his Speech the Governor made distinct reference to education. He stated that first priority would continue to be given to education, particularly in the provision of additional teachers and ancillary staff, the improvement of disadvantaged schools, and the provision of libraries, science blocks and art and crafts

rooms. The people of Brunswick East would regard those comments with wry amusement.

I wish to acquaint the Governor with the situation of Brunswick Girls High School and the Government's contemptuous attitude towards the problem of meeting its educational needs. I wonder whether His Excellency would have made the comments that I have quoted if he had possessed that knowledge. I wish to deal specifically with the Government's failure to meet the needs of Brunswick Girls High School, particularly the desperate need for a new school structure and expanded site. The matter is of great urgency, not simply because of the need to provide the new school and expanded site but because of the implications of the Government's failure to carry out those much-needed requirements.

The most serious implication of the Government's failure is the threat to the future existence of this school. In the process of delay and inaction which has characterized the Government's approach to the school, the very future of the school is threatened. Since leading a deputation to the Minister of Education last year and receiving a specific undertaking that the school would be either rebuilt or remodelled, I have heard for the first time that the Government is proposing to swallow up Brunswick Girls High School in a co-educational Brunswick Technical School. That proposal is probably in the embryonic stage; it certainly has not been conveyed in any official manner to anybody associated with Brunswick Girls High School.

The other disturbing aspect that threatens the future existence of the school is the surreptitious change by the Education Department in the school's zone, in a deliberate endeavour to cut down its enrolment for next year, a move which strikes at the future viability of that school. For those reasons alone it is important to raise the question of the Government's failure to meet the school's desperate educational needs.

The Government has shown a scandalous disregard for the welfare of staff and pupils alike. Brunswick Girls High School has been a fire hazard from its inception, and since the construction of the school in 1922 very little action has been taken by the Government to minimize the danger to staff and pupils. The Government's attitude to Brunswick Girls High School has had an effect on two senior figures in the Education Department. It has led directly to the resignation of one of those people and has had an indirect effect on the resignation of the other. I refer in the first instance to the principal of the school, Mrs. June Engish, an extraordinary educationist who has brought about remarkable innovations to the school, unique in this country. She has been virtually driven into the ground by the bureaucratic procedures of the Minister and his department until she can stomach them no more.

I also refer to the resignation of the Assistant Director-General of Education, Mr. Morton, who, as members of the Opposition as well as the Minister have known for more than a year, has been utterly disillusioned with the building programme of the Education Department and the policies of the Government. He was placed under severe pressure during negotiations and demonstrations involving Brunswick Girls High School. Just before his resignation he took the unusual step of rejecting a specific request by the Minister to discuss with the principal of the school, Mrs. Engish, the shambles that the Government had got itself into over its failure to honour an undertaking given by the Minister to rebuild the school on an expanded site. The shambles materially contributed to the resignation of Mr. Morton. Of itself, that is serious enough to justify this question being raised in Parliament.

Brunswick Girls High School is a good school and a bad school. It is a good school in that it has a remarkably talented and dedicated principal

and staff and pupils receptive to the innovative programmes which the principal and staff are trying to implement against the opposition of the department, the Minister and the Government. But it is a bad school—indeed it is appalling—in its physical facilities. I defy the Minister or any Government supporter to provide me or any member of the Oppositon with the name of any other school which is worse off in physical facilities. For the edification of Government supporters, I shall refer to some of the basic facts relating to the school.

In 1970 the school had an enrolment of 401 pupils. In 1971, the number increased to 462. In 1972, the number of pupils dropped slightly to 449, but since then it has continued to rise. In 1973 there were 471 pupils and this year there are 517. Before the belated zoning change the expected enrolment was 558.

The area of the school site has remained the same throughout all that period. Certainly, it is the smallest secondary school site in the State. The site covers approximately 1·25 acres. However, I am intrigued by varying answers given to the honorable member for Brunswick West and myself about the area of the site. In an answer to a question I asked on 29th September, 1970, which appears at page 389 of *Hansard*, the Minister told me that the area of the school site was 1 acre 1 rood 38 perches. On 20th June, 1973, nearly three years later, the honorable member for Brunswick West was told, in answer to a similar question, that the area was 1 acre no roods 33 perches. That question and answer appears at page 136 of *Hansard*. I am not sure which answer is correct. Basically, the site has remained the same—I should be surprised if it had shrunk in the intervening period. It is incredible that although the enrolment at the school has increased by about 25 per cent, that is by 116 pupils, in five years, no real effort has been made to enlarge the site over this paltry 1·25 acres.

Fifteen acres is the standard size specified by the Minister for a high school; that is Government policy. A statement to that effect was made in answer to a question by the honorable member for Footscray on 20th November, 1973, which appears at page 2290 of *Hansard*.

The school has pupils of 30 different nationalities. It is possible that Liberal Party members may find that difficult to comprehend, but 85 per cent of the pupils are classified as migrant pupils. That does not mean that all of them were born overseas. The classification is based on the fact that a language other than English is the main language in use in the home of the pupil. Seventy-five per cent of the pupils are Italian, 8 per cent are Greek; and 2 per cent are of a variety of other nationalities.

There are eight portable class-rooms on this site of 1·25 acres. There is approximately four-tenths of an acre of breathing site for 517 pupils. I defy the Minister to indicate any other secondary school in the State which is choked to the same extent. Even if he could do so I am sure that the Minister would take no pride in naming any other such school.

The school comprises 13 class-rooms, comprising 6 full rooms, 4 half rooms which can be used for art and sewing only, and 3 connected rooms which are termed open space. Because they are constructed in that way they can be used by only one class at a time unless the class happens to be a drama class. The class-rooms provided are nine rooms short of the Education Department's minimum requirement. The school is short of five ordinary class-rooms and four seminar rooms for the teaching of English as a second language. On the small space of the school site, there are 8 portable class-rooms, comprised of 6 ordinary portables, and 1 Bristol containing two rooms.

The library of the Brunswick Girls High School must be unique. At the most it seats 15 of the 517 pupils, and they would need to be small pupils. That number can only be

seated when books are not being catalogued or processed by the librarian. When the librarian is working on these activities, not even fifteen pupils can be seated. That may be one of the reasons why that library is on the list produced by the Library Promotion Council of Victoria for a special tour later this month. I am sure that members of that council are anxious to show as many people as possible the state of this library. It is almost deserving of a National Trust classification.

Science is taught in a laundry between troughs and coppers, but certainly not because the teachers want it that way. They would be happier to teach science in the laundry if the coppers and troughs were removed. But the principal has found it impossible, after five years of trying, to get the Public Works Department or the Education Department to remove the coppers or troughs so that the laundry could be used as a science room.

There is not one store-room in the whole school. I suppose the only room that could have been called a store-room is that which is now the principal's office. It measures 10 feet by 7 feet. Can any honorable member on the Government benches tell me that he would happy to work in an office of that size?

Mr. BILLING: We work in offices like that here.

Mr. BORNSTEIN: I am talking about work, and for the whole year, not flitting in here between other duties at members' law offices and company offices.

Mr. THOMPSON: Now tell the House why the extension plans were knocked back twice.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I do not know whether honorable members are aware that they must advise their guests or constituents that silence must be preserved in the gallery, but that is the situation. If there is anything but absolute silence there, I shall order that the gallery be cleared.

Mr. BORNSTEIN: The school has no gymnasium and when pupils are engaged in physical education activities and it rains, they have the choice of going to the dining room section of the canteen, to the lavatories downstairs in the school building or sheltering under open balconies where the school's lockers, which are rusting and covered in pigeon droppings, are situated. I point out to honorable members that Melbourne averages 144 wet days a year and I suggest that the number may be a little higher this year.

There is no student common room for relaxation or private study. There is no counselling area and there are inadequate facilities for science, art and drama. Drama classes have "shared the stage" with the canteen for several months. There are no showers. The canteen is small and congested and as the roof is unlined this produces condensation. It is a furnace in summer, and in winter the students freeze. That is a brief picture of the physical nature of the school.

The school is a death trap and has been for many years. The Government has callously disregarded the safety of the students by its failure to provide adequate fire safety protection. In 1958-59, the Education Department asked the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board to review all school fire facilities. The board reported back very quickly that the two upstairs wings of the Brunswick Girls High School urgently required alternative means of exit other than internal stairs situated about 40 or 50 yards from the extremity of both wings. An alternative means of escape is urgent.

Those recommendations were reiterated to the Government on numerous occasions, and 1960, 1970 and 1973 were three occasions when the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board pressed home the urgency of these measures. The board also suggested that thermal alarms should be installed and connected to the local fire station so that the local fire station would be quickly notified if a fire

broke out at the school. One would have assumed that the Government may have been interested in that suggestion.

On 3rd May, 1973, the Education Department notified the principal that tenders had been called for the provision of fire escapes. On 5th June, 1973, the Public Works Department accepted tenders for the erection of steel fire escape stairs costing the magnificent sum of $3,068. To date no action has been taken to erect those steel stairs.

Embarrassingly, the Minister of Education went on A.B.C. national television on 22nd July, 1974, the day after a fire had occurred at the Brunswick Technical School, to tell the people of Victoria just what the Education Department and the Government were doing in providing fire-protection measures at schools. The honorable gentleman informed the interviewer that an example of Government activity was the fire escapes installed at the Brunswick Girls High School. Obviously the Minister based that statement on information incorrectly given to him by someone within his department, because, as the Minister of Education well knows, that statement is untrue.

The honorable gentleman was fortunate to bump into me in the precincts of Parliament House on 6th August when I pointed out to him that fire escapes had not yet been installed. My statement shocked him a little. What I did not know was that he was appearing on *This Day Tonight* the same night to discuss the problems confronting the Brunswick Girls High School. Instead of answering "cold" after being asked by the interviewer why he had said that fire escapes had been provided, he was able to point out that he had been misinformed.

Mr. THOMPSON: Tenders were let on 8th August.

Mr. BORNSTEIN: I am very glad to hear that. I am sure that the community of Brunswick, the principal, the staff, the pupils and the parents of pupils would be happier to hear of the imminent destruction of the school so that a new school could arise in its place on an extended site because that is basically what is needed at the Brunswick Girls High School.

There is a very long history of negotiation with the Minister of Education and officers of his department concerning the desperate building requirements of the Brunswick Girls High School. I shall briefly summarize those negotiations so that honorable members can gain some background knowledge of the desperation confronting the community in Brunswick, the principal, staff, pupils, parents of pupils and the advisory council of the school. In recent months the advisory council has taken the unprecedented action of supporting direct action taken by those bodies to bring about the implementation of policies that will meet the education needs of those attending the school.

Shortly after I was elected to this place, on 4th November, 1970, I led a deputation from the advisory council of the Brunswick Girls High School to the Minister of Education seeking the declaration of the school as a co-educational school; a blanket cover on properties bounded by Albert Street, Evans Street, Blair Street, and Ellingsworth Street, which would have increased the future site of the school to 2·25 acres; the construction of an L-shaped, 4-story block on the south-east boundary of the school to accommodate between 600 and 700 pupils; and more senior staff for the school.

On 8th February, 1971, the Education Department notified the principal that the erection of a 3-story block was under consideration. It took a reminder letter from me on 10th May, 1971, to prompt a reply from the Minister of Education ten days later rejecting the four requests made by the deputation. I received a reply from the Minister of Education six months after the deputation had

outlined four requirements and the reply was received only after jogging the memory of the Minister.

On 9th June, 1971, the Education Department notified the acting principal that a standardized block would not meet the needs of the school. Then there was a period of inaction until 9th October, 1972—a period of approximately sixteen months—and then all of a sudden the Education Department gave the principal an assurance that a 3-story block would be constructed if it fitted on the site. I suggest that at that stage one could be excused for thinking the construction of the block was beginning to resemble Alice in Wonderland—commonly known as the old-fashioned " run-around ".

On 24th November, 1972, the Public Works Department was asked to investigate the feasibility of siting a 3-story block on this site. On 9th April, 1973, the principal notified the Education Department that despite the guarantee of an investigation and a feasibility study for a 3-story block given six months previously, no one had yet arrived to take measurements. However, two days later someone from the Public Works Department arrived to assess the possibility of siting a 3-story block and the recommendation, naturally enough, was that the site be extended. On 14th June, 1973, the Education Department informed the principal that Public Works Department officers were working on the feasibility of several alternative projects, and stated that a report was due on 6th July. On 18th July the principal was told that the project architect was on leave. On 9th August someone from the Education Department telephoned the principal and stated that the Public Works Department was not satisfied with the report due on 6th July. Presumably that went into another pigeon-hole.

On 30th August, 1973, I led a deputation from the school's Multi-Cultural Co-ordinating Council to the Minister of Education. For the edification of honorable members, the Multi-Cultural Co-ordinating Council is one of the innovations which have been brought about by the efforts of Mrs. Engish and her staff. It involved the creation of four parent ethnic bodies and represented the parents of Australian-born Italian and Greek students and students whose parents came from Turkey and Middle East countries. Those bodies were created only after intensive visits by members of the staff to 250 homes of families of pupils of the school. They were encouraged to form these councils so that they could develop their own ideas on the future needs of the school and articulate their demands. The Multi-Cultural Co-ordinating Council was an amalgam of all four parent ethnic groups in a co-ordinating action group.

The deputation to the Minister on 30th August represented a breakthrough in the negotiations for a new deal for the Brunswick Girls High School, or so members of the deputation thought, because at the meeting the Minister conceded the desperate physical plight of the school and its lack of basic minimal facilities. He assured the deputation that the school would be rebuilt or remodelled in the near future as a matter of high priority. The Minister did not commit himself to razing the school entirely or renovating or remodelling to a large extent, but he referred to an expenditure of at least $1·5 million. That was a clear assurance given to me and other members of the deputation and was even conveyed publicly by the Minister, although not adequately reported in the media.

In the light of that assurance, I approached the Minister in December, 1973, in the precincts of this House and asked him to approve of a feasibility study to be conducted by a brilliant young architect, Evan Walker, of the firm of Walker and Jackson, which had designed a building at Princes Hill High School. This school is also in my electorate, and the Minister and the Government can

rightly feel proud of it. It is a magnificent structure, and it is obvious why people were anxious to obtain the services of Evan Walker to design a building to meet the special needs of Brunswick Girls High School. The cost of a feasibility study to be conducted by Walker and Jackson would have been approximately $1,000. Some schools might have been able to raise the money but because of the socio-economic status of the parents of students of Brunswick Girls High School that was utterly impossible. It is in the Minister's favour that he agreed in principle that Evan Walker should carry out the feasibility study. The Minister of Education wrote to the Minister of Public Works requesting his formal permission for Evan Walker to do so. The Deputy Premier wrote to a junior Minister and his junior colleague turned him down flat.

Mr. HOLDING: You are joking.

Mr. BORNSTEIN: I am not joking. Apparently the Public Works Department is extremely touchy on the subject of outside architects. It is not concerned with meeting the special educational needs of a school but it is touchy about its prestige and believes it is far more important to save face than to meet the educational needs of a school such as Brunswick Girls High School. In the light of that refusal there was no alternative but to accept a feasibility study conducted by the Public Works Department.

On 14th December, 1973, an architect, who I believe had been employed in the Public Works Department for two days, arrived at the school. He told no one he was there but started wandering around the grounds with a photographer. He asked the gardener of the school whether he considered the school needed to be rebuilt. The gardener, an intelligent man, told Mrs. Engish that a couple of men were wandering around the grounds of the school. That was two days before the end of the term. It was a hot day, and the men should have had the sense to go to the office and get a drink. They finally went to Mrs. Engish's office—it was the old office, not the store room; I doubt whether they would have fitted into the store room. They briefly discussed what the Public Works Department architect was doing.

In January of this year I received a call from Mr. Serpell, the Director-General of Public Works, informing me that the feasibility study had been completed and three alternatives were under consideration. On 13th February I visited Dr. Shears, who was accompanied by Mr. Morton, and I learned in more detail what the three alternatives were. Before I saw Dr. Shears I was made aware of the three alternatives suggested in the feasibility study. I have a copy of it. It is under the nomenclature of one D. C. Bradbury, F.R.A.I.A., Chief Architect. He has taken the credit for the feasibility study conducted by an architect who had been employed by the Public Works Department for two days. That study did not even take one full day to carry out. It is interesting that in the introduction to the feasibility study this sentence appears—

> Because of the school vacation and the limited time allowed for the preparation of this report, it has not been possible to ascertain any likely submissions from the school.

That is how the Public Works Department conducts a feasibility study for a new school!

Mr. HOLDING: Did they mention the gardener?

Mr. BORNSTEIN: The gardener was not even mentioned. I am sure that the department could have obtained some formal submissions from the gardener. I cannot imagine anything more farcical than a feasibility study in which no submission is sought from a school which has shown for four years, through various submissions to the Education Department, how much it wants to express its views and the views of the principal, staff, pupils, parents, the advisory council and the community

generally, on what sort of school should be provided at Brunswick Girls High School. This is how a feasibility study is prepared by the Public Works Department. Is it any wonder that the services of Evan Walker were sought!

Under the heading " Criteria ", appear statements such as—

> A design target of 650 students should be sufficient to meet present needs, and no more than 700 students should be catered for in the future.

I do not know who is determining those sorts of criteria; they are being determined without any consultation with anyone associated with the school. Further, the study states—

> At this stage, it has been indicated from the Education Department that funds will be limited for both the acquisition of land and the construction of new buildings.

Therefore, the whole scheme and the feasibility study were circumscribed from the beginning.

Three separate proposals were suggested as alternative solutions and I shall refer to them from the feasibility study. These were some of the solutions about which the Minister was fairly vocal. In the feasibility study, the first alternative solution provided for expansion of the site to cover the 2·15 acres of land bounded by Blair, Albert, Ellingsworth and Evans streets, demolition of the existing 2-story building and ancillary outbuildings, and replacement by an entirely new school at a cost of $2·2 million.

Alternative solution No. 2 was the extension of the site to the east and construction of a 3-story block, similar to that at Elwood, providing a library, science facilities, additional class-rooms, toilets and staff rooms plus refurbishing and alterations to existing buildings at a cost of $1·2 million.

The third alternative solution was the acquisition of adjoining land to the east and extensions in the form of a 2-story matching building to the south integrating with the existing school and a 3-story block to the east with an enclosed link. A promenade deck was to be incorporated so that there would be little loss in open space. The person who wrote this must be joking. The third solution also stated that the addition of the 2-story extension to the south would provide 11,840 square feet of gross floor area while a new 3-story block to the east would add another 37,800 square feet, excluding the area of the promenade deck. The total area would then be 66,378 square feet. This would cater for a minimum of 660 students at 100 square feet per student, which is the average requirement for a secondary school. This solution would cost $1·65 million.

The attitude of the advisory council, the principal and staff, and other people associated with the school was that they strongly favoured the construction of an entirely new school. They were not too happy about the criteria or the conditions generally under which the feasibility study had been prepared. As a consequence, I visited the Director-General of Education, Dr. Shears, who, as I said earlier, was accompanied by Mr. Morton, the Assistant Director-General of Education who is concerned with buildings. I put to him the case for the construction of an entirely new school. Dr. Shears expressed a preference for the third solution at a cost of $1·65 million. I pointed out that the additional $600,000, which is not a great amount in terms of the total Education Department budget, could well be utilized in the construction of a new school. Dr. Shears did not indicate which of the three solutions would be a definite starter other than that he favoured the third proposal.

The most intriguing feature of my meeting with Dr. Shears and Mr. Morton was the information conveyed to me—this was the first time that I had heard it—that a proposal to merge the Brunswick Girls High School with an expanded Brunswick Technical School, making it a co-educational technical school, was

being mooted either by the Brunswick Technical School or from within the Technical Schools Division of the department.

As yet, the Government has made no public comments about this proposal although obviously it is exercising the minds of persons within the department. Obviously, they feel that this would solve two problems at once in that it is easier to knock off one school, particularly one that is embarrassing the Government, and consolidate it into a large co-educational technical school despite the parents of pupils at the Brunswick Girls High School having stated overwhelmingly that they wish their school to remain a single-sex school and although the Minister, in answer to a question asked by me in this House, has stated categorically that he will make no attempt to change a single-sex school into a co-educational school without the approval of parents of pupils at that school. The Minister is apparently considering a proposal to subvert the wishes of those parents and contrary to his Government's stated policy. One can only wonder what the Minister's motive is.

Similarly the zone from which students are drawn to the school has been altered so that fewer pupils will be enrolled this year—105 instead of 140. This will place the school's viability in jeopardy because the sixth form, which was created for the first time this year, will not be able to continue.

If the enrolments are increasing because the community believes in the type of programme that is being conducted at a school, particularly the bilingual programme which would obviously interest parents of many migrant pupils in areas away from Brunswick, surely the move to restrict the zone and to reduce the options of those people can only affect the future of the school.

One can only suspect that there are persons within the Government, either departmental officers or representatives in the Ministerial ranks or on the Government back benches, who feel strongly that migrants ought to put up and shut up, that migrants ought to be assimilated and allow their cultural diversities to be swallowed up almost in their entirety in the broad social fabric of our society. They do not want migrants to express that cultural diversity by retaining vital aspects of their culture, particularly their language, and to inculcate in their children pride in maintaining that culture. Mrs. Engish and her staff at the Brunswick Girls High School this year introduced a unique scheme at first form level whereby pupils are taught basic subjects in their primary language—in other words, in the language in which they are most competent—and English as a second language in the same way as Australian-born pupils learn French, German, Japanese or any other language. The value of this programme has been recognized as far afield as the Netherlands and Italy, and Mrs. Engish has already received an award from the Italian community for her work in that area. Does anyone believe that that programme can survive against the opposition of the Education Department without support from the community and the Government?

The feeder schools to the Brunswick Girls High School should be encouraged to become part of such a scheme. If the Education Department believed that this was a worthwhile programme designed to overcome the immense educational and social disadvantages suffered by migrants, both adults and children, it should encourage the scheme. The use of interpreters on the staff is beneficial, and we are asking the State Government, with the full assistance of the Australian Government, to encourage feeder schools to Brunswick Girls High School to assist in the maintenance of a programme of that kind. One would hope that, given the inevitable success of that programme if it is allowed to breathe,

it will be extended to other schools with similar problems to those at Brunswick.

The basic needs of the Brunswick Girls High School are clear. A new building on an expanded site is needed. The teachers and students do not want to be "mucked around" any longer. They have gone through the due process in requesting that their minimal needs be met; they have written letters, requested deputations, asked their local members of Parliament to make speeches, and done all the other things that are regarded as a legitimate part of the political process. Only in recent months has it been decided to resort to direct action to obtain the basic requirement for the continued viability of the school.

I assure the Minister and other Government supporters that the principal of the Brunswick Girls High School, the staff, pupils, advisory council and the community of Brunswick are united in their demand for a new school for Brunswick, and will continue to press in any way possible for that school. They will not be satisfied until a start has been made on its construction.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): Honorable members have in recent weeks seen a tremendous amount of publicity about Brunswick Girls High School. The view of senior officers of the Education Department is that as much time has been spent endeavouring to solve the needs of that school as of any other ten schools. It may be that these efforts have not been completely successful.

I invite honorable members to look at the problems of this school. Firstly, it has a large migrant population. For the first 23 years of the large-scale migration scheme no thought was given to providing specialist staff to assist schools such as Brunswick Girls High School. In 1967 a number of experiments were conducted by some of the best teachers in the field—Mr. Treyvaud of Altona High School, and Mr. Manly of Fitzroy High School—in conducting withdrawal classes for the instruction of young migrants in the English language to see whether this would make class-room teaching easier. Obviously it was not easy to teach a class where 75 per cent of the students were born outside Australia or went home to parents who did not speak the English language.

I was extremely impressed with the work done in these withdrawal classes, and believed that a reservoir of teachers was needed for this purpose. Therefore in early 1968 I conducted Mr. Lynch, the then Federal Minister for Immigration, over the Fitzroy High School and the Brunswick Girls High School, Albert Street, to show him at first hand that the type of work being done there was worthy of Commonwealth investment in the payment of teachers' salaries. The Commonwealth is bringing the migrants to Australia and we are stretched to the limit of educational resources. A larger percentage of the Budget is being expended on education in Victoria than in any other State of Australia, and the Victorian Government thought it not unreasonable to ask the Federal Government—whether Labor or Liberal—to pay the salaries of specialist teachers in this category. The Federal Government was asked to arrange for classes to be conducted in the migrant hostels and overseas before people come to Australia.

At present Victoria has 50·04 per cent of the total number of specialist teachers of migrant English in the Commonwealth of Australia. At 1st June, 578 such teachers were operating in Victoria, and that number has now been increased to 630. The Commonwealth pays for this but the State Government is obliged to organize the training of the teachers. It cannot use Commonwealth money to purchase a nearby house in which to conduct the classes but it can use Commonwealth money to place demountable portable classrooms on school sites. A perfect illustration occurred when there was no

room to place a demountable portable class-room at Victoria Park Primary School, so the Victorian Government said that it would spend Commonwealth money on purchasing a nearby house, but it was not permitted to do so. That is one difficulty that has been encountered. In 1968, the Brunswick Girls High School had no specialist teachers of this type. According to departmental figures at that time, it had a total staff of 28 teachers. I am told that today — six years later — the school has 44 staff members. An additional 16 teachers have been appointed to look after 39 additional pupils. Any reasonable, fair-minded person would regard that as real progress.

Mr. DOUBE: In terms of the allegation, that is not progress.

Mr. THOMPSON: The honorable member for Albert Park is labouring under the delusion that the appointment of sixteen additional teachers to cater for 39 extra pupils is not progress. He should return to the Albert Park Primary School.

Mr. HOLDING: Do not generalize; get down to the facts.

Mr. THOMPSON: The Leader of the Opposition does not enjoy listening to the facts. With regard to the specialist course to which the honorable member for Brunswick East referred, I believe there is a lot of merit in this type of experimentation. At the beginning of this year, the department asked the Teachers Tribunal to appoint eighteen special translators to assist in courses of this type at the Collingwood High School in the electorate of the Leader of the Opposition and the Brunswick Girls High School.

Mr. HOLDING: You made a mess of that.

Mr. THOMPSON: A sum of $5 million was spent, and the result is magnificent. The Teachers Tribunal acceded to the request of the department for these eighteen special translators to be hired at the rate of $24 a day to assist those two schools in particular. This illustrates the clear interest in assisting innovative programmes.

In the past twelve months nearly $30,000 has been given to the Brunswick Girls High School from Commonwealth funds and from the Myer trust. No school has received more money from the Myer trust, on the recommendation of the Education Department, than the Brunswick Girls High School. This is in addition to the extra sixteen teachers who have been appointed.

Mr. HOLDING: Do you believe it is enough?

Mr. THOMPSON: I believe it is spectacular progress in that area. I cannot say at this stage that I am satisfied in the building field, but the Education Department should not be accused of not trying or of not being interested.

Mr. BORNSTEIN: Throw it at the Public Works Department!

Mr. THOMPSON: It is not known by the average person in the street, who does not read these reports, that in August last year the Government offered to erect a 3-story block at the Brunswick Girls High School at a cost of $800,000. That proposal was rejected by the principal, Mrs. Engish, and the members of her advisory council. The officer in charge of buildings in the Secondary Schools Division saw some merit in the objections of Mrs. Engish.

Mr. HOLDING: Did you see some merit in them?

Mr. THOMPSON: I did not know of their existence at the time, but I do in retrospect. I do not believe the standard 3-story block was the right answer but nevertheless it was the recommendation of the Public Works Department. Having read and heard of these objections, the Secondary Buildings Director, Mr. Russell, asked the Public Works Department for a feasibility study which was provided. It would be difficult to get everybody associated with education to agree that these were

the right answers; but they were genuine attempts to solve a real problem. Three schemes were suggested. One would have cost $1·2 million; another $1·7 million; and the third $2·2 million. That involved demolition.

Mr. BORNSTEIN: Are you satisfied with the feasibility study?

Mr. THOMPSON: The feasibility study was a constructive attempt to meet the needs of the rebuilding and renovation requirements of this school. At present it is an inadequate building for its purpose. The Public Works Department recommended that scheme two should be adopted at an estimated cost of $1·7 million. It involved the erection of a 3-story building on the eastern side with a 2-story building on the southern side of the existing building. It also involved an expenditure of $200,000 on the existing 2-story building of 167 squares.

On the surface it was a reasonable proposal. I believe it would have been accepted by many schools. However, strong objection was raised by the council and the principal. I do not say that all of the counter proposals were wrong and I informed Mrs. Engish of this over the telephone. Indeed, I said I was prepared to receive a further deputation in the week before the school holidays. I told Mrs. Engish personally that the deputation could comprise the advisory council and interested citizens with the local member of the Parliament to discuss plans for the renovation and rebuilding of the school, in view of the fact that four schemes had already been suggested and, for various reasons, were not acceptable to the principal and members of her advisory council.

Mr. FORDHAM: In retrospect do you agree that they could not be acceptable?

Mr. THOMPSON: For the first time I was informed that there had not been consultation with the principal during he non-school months of December and January. I agree, when the Government is building a new school of this type—and this certainly took place at Collingwood High School—there should be a maximum degree of consultation with local citizens, provided that this does not cause unreasonable delay and the financial outlay is not unreasonable. I extended this invitation in August but it was declined on the basis that I had, first of all, to agree to four demands before the deputation even came in. I was not prepared to say that money would be made available for any sort of school unless I knew all the details.

Mr. BORNSTEIN: Read the four demands.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The honorable member for Brunswick East has been afforded the opportunity of making his contribution. He has made it. I now ask him to listen to the Minister of Education in silence.

Mr. THOMPSON: I thought it was unreasonable, without hearing the deputation, and before I saw it, to agree to the four major demands. I wanted these things to be discussed at the deputation.

Mr. BORNSTEIN: Have the guts to read the demands.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I have already warned the honorable member for Brunswick East and I will not warn him again.

Mr. THOMPSON: The demands, from memory, were that the site should be extended, that a new school be built, and that I should guarantee that money would be available. I thought it unreasonable for them to insist that before I received a deputation on the type of school to be built, there should be a guarantee from me that money would be made available for it. That was not accepted. I tried a further approach and I said I would ask the Assistant Director-General of Education, Mr. Morton, to visit the school. He was not keen to visit the school. Do honorable members blame him?

Following that I then asked the newly-appointed Director of Planning, Dr. Maddocks, to visit the school. I did that, I think on Monday, and he has arranged to meet the principal and to discuss the particular needs of this school in conjunction with the needs of the schools in the surrounding area. The whole Brunswick district really needs a master plan for the rebuilding of its schools. One cannot look at the problem of the Brunswick Girls High School in isolation without looking at Brunswick Technical School and the Fitzroy Girls High School, which is a comparatively small girls' school. Generally speaking the Government does not favor the retention of girls' schools; it would prefer, as a general policy, that these schools should be developed into co-educational schools. The Government must also look at the fact that schools such as Princes Hill High School, Collingwood High School and Fitzroy High School are not filled to capacity at this stage, and there are signs of falling enrolments.

I have asked Dr. Maddocks to conduct an in-depth investigation into the needs of these schools so that a master plan can be produced for the rebuilding of certain of the schools and extending others. The master plan should look 5, 15, or 20 years ahead. Although a lot of work went into the previous plan, I am not going to insist that those plans should be automatically adopted, but I do strongly resent the suggestion that the Education Department and the Minister are not interested in solving these problems. If members of the Opposition ask any officer in the department what has been done to try to meet the needs of the Brunswick Girls High School, they will get a five-minute burst.

Spectacular progress has been made in improving the staffing situation at this school. Great improvement has been made in providing special interpreters for the new type of course. An amount $30,000 has been given to the school from Commonwealth funds and from the Myer Trust. The Government has now reached the stage where it has been knocked back on four different plans for the rebuilding or extension of the school. It is prepared to try again. I cannot think of any other school in Victoria that the department has had more trouble or greater difficulty with in pleasing the interested parties. The department is still prepared to keep on trying.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I again appeal to honorable members to listen in silence, and to refrain from further interjection. I believe my tolerance has been well and truly extended. In this place every member has his just rights, and I also believe that I can only go a certain distance with my own tolerance and perseverance.

Mr. THOMPSON: The department's plan for a 3-story block costing $800,000 was rejected, and the plans emanating from the feasibility study for a school costing $2·2 million, $1·2 million and $1·7 million were not accepted. My department is prepared to look at the problem again to see what changes can be made in addition to those already suggested to meet the special needs of teachers of migrant children. I can see that a different type of programme has been conducted at this school, and there is a case for a special design of building appropriate for the programmes. Dr. Maddocks will be doing this work as a high priority. He will be asked to consult with the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation, so that in evolving a plan for the rebuilding of schools in the Brunswick area the Government will be making the maximum utilization of open space, which I know is in short supply in Brunswick and Fitzroy. My department has succeeded in one area; I believe in spectacular fashion. It has yet to succeed in obtaining agreement on the type of building, but it is not for

the want of trying. It will keep trying to produce appropriate plans within reasonable financial bounds which have the maximum support from the local area.

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara): Honorable members have just heard a most woeful answer from a Minister. The honorable member for Brunswick East fairly described the pitiful and shocking conditions at an inner suburban school, and the Minister's attitude in reply has heightened my belief that he is inept and incompetent in his portfolio. I will give him another serve and tell him about a few country schools that need consideration. The Minister knows of the problems which have existed for the past four years at the Maryborough Technical School. In that time the Minister has promised on every occasion that he has been contacted personally, or written to, that a science and library block would be built at the school. This has gone on for four years, and even as late as this year when the Minister visited the school he promised then and there that the science and library wing would be built at the school forthwith. Whilst at the school he made a telephone call to Melbourne and confirmed that this was so. The Maryborough Technical School still has no science and library wing. No tenders have been called for the new wing, and it is not known when it will be built. This situation cannot be condoned because two years ago this Parliament passed an Act to close an important street in Maryborough, on which site the science and library block was to be situated.

For two years the people of Maryborough considered this closely, wondering at the honesty of the Minister of Education and about the competence of the Victorian Government.

Mr. DIXON (Assistant Minister of Education) : I find the remark of the honorable member for Kara Kara to be offensive as it is directed at the honesty of the Minister of Education. I ask the honorable member to withdraw it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. McLaren): Order! The Minister has taken exception to the remark of the honorable member for Kara Kara and I suggest that the honorable member should consider withdrawing it.

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara): I withdraw the remark. The people wonder whether the Minister is genuine in his attempts when he has made so many promises and whether he will ever provide a science and library wing at Maryborough Technical School.

For three years Maryborough High School has been promised a library but no tender has been called or accepted. This is not good enough. Maryborough High School does not even have a craft room. Boys' craft is carried on at Maryborough Technical School, 1 mile away. Boys in forms I. to IV. who wish to do woodwork or metalwork have to travel a mile in all weathers. This has gone on for probably 50 years and yet the Minister and the Education Department will not recognize the critical needs of Maryborough High School.

I could also mention the Charlton, Boort and St. Arnaud high schools which badly need art wings. Although promises have been made, no genuine attempts have been made by the Education Department and the Minister to provide these facilities. The mismanagement by the Victorian Government of funds provided by the Australian Government cannot be comprehended by the ordinary person. Although funds were committed for many of these projects six months ago, suddenly six weeks ago the funds disappeared. One asks how so many millions of dollars could be drained away overnight? The mismanagement in this instance was absolutely appalling.

People in country areas are tired of the rotten and raw deal they are receiving in the field of education. The department administered by the Minister of Public Works, who is interjecting, has not helped. The Public Works Department's treatment of a serious situation at Wedderburn Primary School was absolutely incompetent. Every time it rained the school was flooded by effluent from the septic tank. Parents had to withdraw every child from the school a month ago to get the Public Works Department to drain the septic tank and remove some of the overflow. The Minister of Public Works ought to be ashamed to be the head of such a department.

Mr. DUNSTAN: There is not one letter from the honorable member in the whole department.

Mr. CURNOW: I sent letters and telegrams and personally rang the Director-General of Public Works.

Mr. DUNSTAN: You are a bludger.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. McLaren): Order! I request the Minister to cease interjecting.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): I raise a point of order. I request the Minister to withdraw his remark which is not only offensive but also unparliamentary.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has taken objection to the Minister's remark and I suggest that the honorable gentleman might withdraw it.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I will withdraw it if the honorable member asks me to do so.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is not a matter of the honorable member asking the Minister to do so; the request has come from the Chair. I request the Minister to withdraw the remark.

Mr. DUNSTAN: If the honorable member for Kara Kara, who has never taken up this matter with me, asks me to withdraw the remark, I shall do so.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have requested the Minister to withdraw the remark. The Leader of the Opposition has taken objection to the statement and I request the Minister to withdraw it without any reference to any other member.

Mr. DUNSTAN: On the reconizable basis that the Leader of the Opposition is objecting, I will withdraw the remark.

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara): As I have clearly demonstrated, there are great problems in the country with regard to education. When the Minister of Education and the Minister of Public Works come to grips with the problems and realize their immensity, we in the country shall be greatly relieved.

This situation exists not only in education but also in the field of housing. In every part of my electorate and most other country electorates there is a shortage of houses for sale and rental. The Housing Commission has failed miserably to provide the required housing in most country towns. For many months the Minister of Housing held up an offer of many millions of dollars from the Australian Government which could have been used adequately to relieve a greatly overtaxed situation. In towns such as Maryborough up to 60 people are now waiting for Housing Commission homes. Four years ago they could have had a choice of twenty empty commission homes. Much of the growth in Maryborough is due not to the decentralization moves of this Government but to initiatives of the people in the town. There exists a desperate need for housing. In the past twelve months only seven houses have been built and a further four are under construction. The provision of eleven houses when there is a waiting list of 60 families can be described only as farcical.

The same situation exists in towns such as Donald and St. Arnaud which have grown rapidly in the past three

to four years, yet this inept Government and the Minister of Housing cannot be convinced of the desperate need for housing there, not for 1 or 2 houses at a time but for 10 and 20 houses. The demand exists and the Housing Commission and the Minister should meet the need as urgently as possible. If they wish to keep people in the country they must show some good faith and help the town immediately, not in a year or two.

In recent months much concern has been felt at the attempts of the Victorian Railways to curtail passenger services on some country lines. Instances that come to mind are the Benalla-Yarrawonga line and the Murtoa-Hopetoun line. The railways have such a poor accounting system and such an unbelievably naive economic advisory system that they cannot produce figures to substantiate their claim that money will be saved if these services are cut. I demonstrate this point by mentioning the Murtoa-Hopetoun service. The railways claim that they would save $80,000 if this service were cut. The railways worked out that they would be able to use fewer staff and take a rail motor off the line, saving the cost of its maintenance, and that they could reduce various other costs. However, they did not say that they would use in other places within the railways employees taken away from the Murtoa–Hopetoun service and that the rail motor would also be used somewhere else.

Nor were we told that on Mondays, when the rail motor leaves Hopetoun in the morning, the driver sleeps at Murtoa that night. When the rail motor goes back from Murtoa to Hopetoun in the evening, it is driven by a driver from Ararat who sleeps at Hopetoun. So, on Mondays, the regular driver sleeps at Murtoa and a driver from Ararat sleeps at Hopetoun, at some enormous cost to the railways. Yet the railways believe that what they have suggested will save them $80,000 a year.

If they changed the roster by one hour, they could save these extra costs by using in a proper way staff they already have. At one stage during the week, a driver drives the Hopetoun-Murtoa rail motor for one hour only although he is paid for eight hours. That is to meet the requirements of a badly drawn up roster. This state of affairs is unbelievable to other sections of the community. No one else would dream of running a rail motor service in such a way. The sooner the railways wake up to the fact that bad situations can be corrected without services being cut out completely, the better off they will be.

The railways have gone so far downhill since the new board came into existence that the amount of money they are losing cannot be comprehended. It is claimed that costs have risen by more than 37 per cent in twelve months. This is because of the inability of the board to correct the situation. Members of Parliament criticized the former commissioners but they did not have costs rising at the rate of 37 per cent per annum.

It is not only on the two lines which I have mentioned that services will be affected. I notice that the Hamilton-Koroit, the Yea-Mansfield, the Healesville and the Daylesford services are all under threat. To lose a rail service in a country area means more than dollars and cents. Surely country people are entitled to at least the equal of what is provided in the city. As the Minister could explain, every person who uses a train in the city costs the railways money. Each person who travels from Melbourne to Ringwood costs the railways perhaps $1. The only reason that the railways are not losing $300 million or $400 million a year is because of their substantial profits from country freights.

It is wrong that railways freights are to be raised by as much as 22·5 per cent. Unfortunately, this rate of

increase will be imposed on the carriage of the railways' greatest revenue earner, grain. The freight on general merchandise will rise by 15 per cent and on wool and stock by 20 per cent. How the railways justify such increases in the light of the statement by the Premier on 29th August is something which has not yet been explained. On that day the Premier said—in complimenting the Government as he always does—that the State Budget to be introduced in the following month would not provide for any fare increases for trains, trams, or tramway buses.

The honorable gentleman stated that the Government would not prescribe any freight increases but that it would be left open to the Railways Board to do so. On the same day the Minister of Transport, when questioned, said that the railways would have to make some adjustments here and there in this financial year. But increases of the order of 22·5 per cent are more than " some adjustments ".

At the same time as the Premier said that there would be no tram or train fare rises, he also said that the railways would be given a target for increased revenue to compensate partly for the enormous increase in expenses. The honorable gentleman stated that it would be the board's management task to conduct its operations accordingly. He said that the Government was trying to avoid any action which would add to living costs at a time of acute inflation. The honorable gentleman also stated that the Government's decision to drop some outer-suburban fares in the past Budget—the first decrease since 1938—had led to a 6 per cent increase in tram patronage and a 2 per cent increase on the trains, and that the extra patronage virtually offset the fall in revenue.

It seems that at the time the Premier was suggesting that the Railways Board might make some major increase in freight. But perhaps a token decrease in the present freight of, say, 1 per cent might result in an increase in the use of the railways to such an extent that the 37 per cent increase in costs would be greatly compensated for. Any genuine attempt by the Railways Board to hold the level of freight rates as they are would be welcomed by all country people. I have worked out that an increase of 22·5 per cent in the freight on grain will mean roughly an extra 3 cents a bushel in costs to the primary producer. By the time the cost is passed on to the person who buys a packet of flour in a shop it will be 10 cents on a kilogram of flour.

When primary producers are not having the best of years because of many circumstances, freight increases are to be deplored. But the actions of the Victorian Government are one of the greatest causes of inflation within the State and throughout Australia. When there should be a genuine attempt to help people in the country to hold prices steady in a way which would be appreciated by consumers, the Government is increasing freights by up to 22·5 per cent.

One wonders how such increases can be justified when figures show that enormous profits are made from freight even on what are termed marginal lines. I direct attention to the revenue derived from a 20-mile section of line from Lubeck to Bolangum. In 1970-71, that line showed an operating profit, mainly from grain, of over $300,000; in 1971-72, the profit had increased to over $400,000; and in 1972-73, it was approximately $400,000. Surely, when profits of that magnitude are made on such small sections of line, to increase freigths by 22·5 per cent and to slug the people who are contributing much to the revenue of the railways is grossly unfair. In 1971-72 the Murtoa-Hopetoun service made an outward freight profit of nearly $2 million. In 1972-73 it was a little more than $1 million. Country lines virtually keep the railways afloat. How can the Railways Board justify an extra charge of 3

cents a bushel for the transport of wheat? That freight rise goes right down the line, and by the time it is reflected in the price of a loaf of bread it probably accounts for an increase of 1 cent a loaf.

On the Gippsland line in 1970-71 inward goods, outward goods and parcels revenue amounted to approximately $10 million. The maintenance cost was estimated at $1·2 million. Operating costs are not available but they are approximately the same for every line. To estimate the operating costs one has only to double the maintenance costs so I suggest that although the maintenance and operating costs totalled $2·4 million the line made a profit of approximately $7·5 million. Now the Railways Board proposes to increase the freight charges.

I suggest that the Liberal Party is looking after its friends in the city. It is asking the country people to subsidize further those who travel on trams and trains in Melbourne. From now until when the Australian Government takes over the Victorian Railways, every country person will contribute probably 50 cents towards the travel costs of every person who uses a train or tram in Melbourne. This is because the Government knows that its support lies in the city.

I assure honorable members that these freight increases will not be taken lightly by the farmers. The Government may believe the farmers at Fiery Creek were upset by the attitude of the Australian Government to primary producers, but the farmers of this State will be more than upset and more vehement in their opposition to these freight increases, which will not only add to the cost of a loaf of bread, but will affect the cost of other products.

In the *Sun News-Pictorial* of 24th August, 1974, the Four Square grocery chain advertised some 25 to 30 "specials". In Melbourne, at a Four Square store, Harpers Dog Chow costs 81 cents but in some country areas its costs 86 cents. The excuse for that price increase is to be found in little print at the top of the advertisement which states—

Higher prices apply in some country areas to cover freight costs.

If it costs 5 cents to send a packet of Harpers Dog Chow to the country now, what will be the result of a 22·5 per cent increase in freight charges? Comparing other prices, I see that a tin of peaches costs 2 cents extra, a bottle of White King 3 cents extra, a bottle of safflower oil or peanut oil 2 cents extra, and a packet of Rinso 3 cents extra. If a 22·5 per cent freight increase is to be added to those items, it can be taken for granted that if the increase works out at 0·75 of a cent, then 1 cent will be added and not half a cent.

I believe the performance of this Government in the past twelve months has been one of the greatest causes of the inflation that is now affecting the country. The Minister of Consumer Affairs was reported in the *Bendigo Advertiser* of 7th September as stating that people did not complain enough. The honorable gentleman was referring to people who did not make complaints to the Consumer Affairs Bureau when exorbitant prices were charged for products such as Harpers Dog Chow and Rinso. I forwarded to the Minister a copy of the advertisement which showed these price increases for country areas. He replied informing me that he had no intention of taking action, yet two weeks later he has stated that people do not complain enough. However, when I did complain he said he would do nothing. The honorable gentleman further said in Bendigo that if prices rose sharply the public should not buy, and that statement provoked an interjection from the audience to the effect that if the public did that it would starve.

I take the opportunity, while the Minister of Lands is at the table, of reminding the honorable gentleman that he is doing very little to promote decentralization in country

areas. The Minister has compelled four employees, who previously worked in Maryborough, to work in Ballarat. He has also transferred one Lands Department employee from St. Arnaud to Melbourne. As the honorable gentleman interjects, I was consulted about that move but I did not agree to it. The Minister for State Development and Decentralization continually claims that the Government is encouraging industry to move from Melbourne to country areas. I suggest that the actions of the Minister of Lands are forcing people to centralize. I believe he should reverse some decisions he has made.

As a further illustration, I point out that before the 1973 State election the Minister of Lands could not write quickly enough to indicate that the Survey Office in Maryborough would not close but now, mid-way between elections, the honorable gentleman has struck again; he has shifted the four employees in that office from Maryborough. In effect, it means shifting fifteen people, including wives and children. The actions of the Minister of Lands will be long remembered by the people of Maryborough. The silence of his colleagues, the Premier and the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, could only be taken as condoning his actions.

This Government is in a state of disarray, decay and shambles. Its actions in mismanaging and delaying the massive spending of Australian Government money and in many instances refusing that money are imposing immense burdens on the citizens of the State. There are offers that could be taken up immediately, such as those of the Australian Government to take over the railways and to meet half the cost of the health services, and the State Government should quickly reach agreement on the ratification of road grants. The Government is deliberately delaying and refusing these offers for some cheap political gain in the hope that its friend Snedden might call another double dissolution. Fortunately, most people in the State have the brains to realize that the record of this Government during the past sixteen months is one of which no one can be proud. The Government will make the situation even worse when it presents its Budget, which will cause it to lose the next election.

Mr. MITCHELL (Benambra): It is a great privilege to participate in the debate on the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. There are a number of points on which one should comment. His Excellency paid a pleasing tribute to the former Governor, Major-General Sir Rohan Delacombe. This tribute was well earned. The Delacombes won all hearts, not by dramatic actions but by good solid personal worth and a natural innate sympathy for their fellow men.

Sir Henry Winneke is the first Australian Governor of Victoria. We pledge our support to him and wish him every success. He is a brilliant man who has a charming wife. At the same time it cannot be denied that there is a tinge of regret that in Victoria the old tradition of appointing a Governor from the Old Country has at last been broken. Many people think the Governor plays a part similar to that in Governor Macquarie's day when he could do what he liked. That is far from the truth. For many years the Governor has provided an effective link with the Old Country. That tradition and sentiment was the progenitor of the true national spirit. There is a practical aspect. We depend on the Old Country in many ways and it is not good tactics to slap in the face someone from whom one wants help. At the same time there is now a sense of responsibility that we are on our own and must hop in and do what we can. When there is constitutional difficulty an impartial mind is needed. In the days of Mr. Lang, when Sir

Philip Game was the Governor of New South Wales, and in 1935 with Sir Albert Dunstan, Mr. Tunnecliffe, and Sir Stanley Argyle, when Lord Huntingfield was Governor of Victoria, an outside view was needed. Many people who want an Australian Governor demand an outside judge of their fat stock at the local show or their plum puddings in the pavilion. With Sir Henry's ability, keen knowledge and interest in people, should such an occasion arise he will deal with it in the masterly way of which he has proved himself capable in other directions.

In his Speech the Governor referred to Sir Gilbert Chandler, the Honorable James Manson and Mr. Russell Stokes. Victoria and the Victorian Parliament owe much to these men.

I am disappointed with the efforts of the honorable member for Brunswick East on behalf of the Brunswick Girls High School. I was impressed with the masterly and gentlemanly reply of the Minister of Education. In Corryong there is a shortage of housing for teachers. Teachers above a certain age are required to obtain their own houses. That may be satisfactory when many houses are available but Corryong is isolated and few houses are available. Unless some action is taken it will be difficult to get teachers to go as far away as Corryong. The Education Department and the Minister have frequently been approached regarding work on the oval at the Corryong consolidated school. Parents and the department did a magnificent job but the oval urgently needs completing. It is on a hillside where there is a great potential for erosion from winter rains, and implementation of the work is urgent. We are bitterly disappointed that the Minister of Education did not take the opportunity of buying the site of the old saleyards which is opposite the consolidated school in Corryong, and a stone's throw from the high school. It would have been a wise choice with a view to future expansion. The Minister of Education has failed Corryong in that direction.

I am glad that libraries were referred to because the Minister of Education has been most unhelpful regarding library and science facilities at the high school. In an isolated place like Corryong one cannot go to the next suburb and borrow a few books. Modern subjects require books. With the modern approach to education children do not have facts hammered into their heads. They are taught to search out the answers and almost to teach themselves. They learn to acquire knowledge through their own efforts rather than have it hammered into their heads in a parrot-like fashion.

In his Speech, the Governor referred to inflation and increasing industrial unrest. He stated—

> **The Government has made several offers to the Commonwealth to take action in concert aimed at halting or slowing down the vicious spiral of wage and price increases now threatening the whole economy of the nation.**

With that famous "Maggie hoo-ha" Government in Canberra it is wishful thinking that this will be achieved. It is absolutely hopeless. What will happen if the industrial unrest continues? There are certain forces which consider that they can take action, not exactly blessed by the law. Mr. Gallagher has said that there will be a general strike next year. Something more is needed than vague statements that the Government stands ready to introduce any necessary complementary legislation this session. In the time of Hollway and Oldham emergency legislation was going to do all sorts of things if there was industrial unrest. The Government drafted a Bill in great secrecy but its contents were known all over the place within two minutes. The legislation was absolutely impotent. I say that with due respect to the legal ability of the late Thomas Hollway and the late Trevor Oldham. It is not possible to cure an industrial crisis with paper, and that is

exactly what the Government is trying to do now. The textile industry has been mentioned. Many textile factories have been closed down and I do not know what the Government intends to do about it.

In his Speech, His Excellency also referred to the Albury-Wodonga growth centre which is perhaps the greatest challenge in Australia's history, first of all because of its vast scope and, more importantly, because it crosses State borders where different sets of State laws operate, different municipal laws apply, different customs exist and different dates apply to the opening of the duck season and other important national events. As the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation reminds me, there are also two racecourses and one wonders in which direction the horses will run. I thank the Minister for his most brilliantly academic and cultured contribution to my address.

For the first time, I heard a person being hooted when the Minister for State Development and Decentralization visited Albury. The honorable gentleman is in an extremely difficult position. The complex can be made to work but it needs deep consideration and level-headed thinking by the Minister who has already side-stepped a letter which I wrote to him on 2nd July asking many pertinent questions, one of which related to why 70 per cent of the area was in Victoria and only 30 per cent in New South Wales. I also wanted to know the arrangements concerning milk distribution across the border.

Another important problem relates to freehold land. I understand that freehold titles will be taken away from the landowners and business people. But what will they get in their place, and what security of land tenure will they have? I also asked a question concerning the different laws and whether or not this was to be a second Australian Capital Territory with the border extending back to Wangaratta or Springhurst and to Holbrook or Wagga in the north. I have asked the Minister a series of questions which had been asked of me by local people, but they have not been adequately answered.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): On a point of order, I should like the honorable member for Benambra to relate the Address-in-Reply to his attack on the Prime Minister of Australia about the Albury-Wodonga complex.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. McLaren): There is no point of order.

Mr. MITCHELL (Benambra): Apparently, the Minister of Public Works is absent-minded tonight because I have not mentioned the Governor-General during my remarks although the Albury-Wodonga growth centre is mentioned at page 4 of His Excellency's Speech.

I also asked another question concerning people in the electorate of the young and able honorable member for Murray Valley, who has done an excellent job in representing the electorate and with whom everyone is delighted. He won the seat in the face of intense Liberal Party preparation and really held back the forces of entrenched privileged Capitalism in the way that they deserved.

Many people object to the area of the complex extending to Yackandandah. The local people are extremely worried about the difficulties that are arising. Mr. John Patterson of Allans Flat has one part of his property in the prescribed area whilst the other is not. How will this person be situated concerning the title to his land in the future? I have examined a map and I cannot understand why the boundary line should not be drawn along an adjacent road instead of through the middle of a person's land. If the Government is sincere in its intention, it will examine the matter. Some of the land along Yackandandah Creek is boggy and damp in winter and therefore definitely unsuitable. I ask the Government to

examine the impact of the Albury-Wodonga complex on the area surrounding Yackandandah.

The local municipalities of the United Shire of Beechworth, the Shire of Towong and so on have not received full information from the Government. I took the President of the United Shire of Beechworth, Councillor McKenzie-McHarg, to see the Minister for State Development and Decentralization in Albury when the honorable gentleman tried to side-track us by telling us what a wonderful job he had done for the Beechworth Museum. We brought the Minister back on the beam and asked for a guarantee that he would give the municipality the fullest information. The Minister said that he would provide information on the full ramifications of the Albury-Wodonga complex.

Tourism is referred to at page 5 of His Excellency's address. The imposition of a bed tax has been mentioned on a previous occasion. Certain shires feel that such a tax will be advantageous to them, but many hotelkeepers and motel proprietors are extremely apprehensive. Holidays are expensive enough for the family man and others without loading an extra bed tax on top of present costs. The local propietors are frightened that trade in places such as Falls Creek will be affected. Some are willing to compromise on the basis that money will be distributed in the area in which it is collected. However, there is the strong fear that the money thus collected will be spent away from the districts where it is collected. This will place a restriction on the movement of tourists in north-eastern Victoria. The Government dropped the scheme on a previous occasion and I suggest that it should take more than a second look at it this time because I have received many protests from hotel and motel proprietors in my district.

One problem that arises concerns the family which sleeps in a caravan in a caravan park. When mum, dad and four or five children use this sort of accommodation, will a bed tax apply? These matters are causing apprehension. When I travel around, I often sleep in the back of my station wagon. I am wondering whether the bed tax will apply to people who sleep in sleeping bags in the back of their station wagons. This could occur if the scheme is pushed ahead as it threatens to be at the moment.

In his Speech the Governor stated—

> Regeneration of native forests is proceeding, with the treatment of over 20,000 acres this year. A further 1,000 acres of fire-damaged forests will be reforested by the hand-planting of eucalypts.

There is a bit of window-dressing in that proposal. The creation of the Ministry for Conservation was then referred to.

I refer to the impact of the Snowy River scheme along the upper reaches of the River Murray. Honorable members will recall that that when Sir John McDonald was Premier of Victoria he would not sign an agreement on the Snowy River scheme, and neither would the members of the Cain Labor Government. However, Sir Henry Bolte and Sir Arthur Rylah rushed in and signed a blank cheque. When Sir Henry Bolte realized with cold horror the mistake he had made, he promised to assist in every way, and a supplemental agreement was drawn up. Landholders outside the Snowy River area obtain benefits over and above those enjoyed by landholders within the Snowy River area. There are many landholders along the upper River Murray, and practically none in the upper Snowy River area, so this aspect is vital.

Sir William Hudson fulfilled one promise, which was that the Snowy River scheme would not operate until a regulating pondage was installed. During the second world war there was an urgent need for electricity. The Kiewa hydro-electricity scheme was operated without any regulating pondage, and because of this farmers lost hunks of their land, areas were inundated with water, and lagoons were scooped out. A man would take his cows to pasture in the

morning, and by afternoon would have to swim them back. Immense damage was caused to the mechanics of the land and to the botanical ecology. Sir William Hudson built the regulating pondage at Khancoban. I asked him how it would cope with the demand for peak load electricity when the river system and the regulating pond were already overtaxed. Sir William would not give me facts and figures to submit to the engineers to find out whether the scheme would be effective.

The very thing I foresaw happened the other night when there was an urgent need for peak load electricity in Sydney. Extra electric jugs, television sets, stoves and other appliances were being used. Ordinary basic load electricity can be provided by a thermal station, but this needs 24 hours to get under way. With peak load electricity, a button is pressed and water rushes in. The Indi River and the regulating pondage at Khancoban were full, and a flood of water was let in, causing damage all along the River Murray. It is not a matter of needing warning or compensation, but of increasing the height of the wall of the regulating pondage at Khancoban to enable it to cope with any foreseeable situation such as the one I have outlined. I appeal to the Government, in the interests of conservation, to join with the Federal Government, if necessary, to carry out this extra work.

The Governor's Speech stated that a completely new wildlife Bill to replace the present Game Act would be introduced. The reference is gloriously vague, but before one can fry a fish one must catch it. Unless every inch of bush is policed, it is impossible to prevent people from setting snares for wallabies.

His Excellency's Speech also stated—

> New legislation will also be proposed to give protection to whole areas of historic or architectural interest.

This has been an interest of the Deputy Speaker and of mine. I do not know whether the phrase "whole areas" means only buildings of historic interest such as the Princess Theatre or the Melbourne Club, or whether it includes all the shops, houses and flats in between. Those few words are extremely dangerous, and I emphasize that this matter should be examined because it was hinted previously that the proposed legislation would take in not merely a few historic buildings, but entire suburbs. That would be most disturbing because people would not know where they could erect buildings. Who wants to build a shop or a building and find that it is under a blanket threat because of the historic and architectural interest of a few of the neighbouring buildings?

The severe flooding suffered in irrigation areas in northern Victoria was also referred to in the Speech. The Minister of Public Works visited Wangaratta, but the situation must be closely examined. As Shakespeare, said, "We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it". This could happen again. We do not want to see the floodwaters going through people's homes. Water to a depth of 3 feet entered the home of the Honorable A. K. Bradbury, warping the wardrobes and doors, and saturating the underfelt, and the house was left a complete mess. In the homes of several other friends of mine water 4 feet high came in, even through the windows. This is a very dangerous position, and we want to ensure that it does not happen again.

The Dartmouth dam project is referred to in the Governor's Speech. For many years I have been hammering the Government to provide a police station in the dam settlement. The Government has compromised by stating that the police station at Mitta Mitta, 12 miles down the road, will serve the purpose. Nothing can take the place of a uniformed policeman in the village itself. It is a deterrent to would-be offenders to know that a policeman is close by, but if he is 12 miles away a dangerous situation would be over by the time he reached the town. Some nasty incidents have occurred in Dartmouth, one involving a threat to a

woman. The Government should consider urgently the siting of a police station in the dam construction settlement. This occurred at Mount Beauty and Corryong during the construction of the Snowy River scheme and the Kiewa scheme. A policeman must be on the spot because strange types of people who are not restrained when it comes to assessing the amount of liquor they can hold can be dangerous to the community. I do not want to see nasty incidents occurring at Dartmouth, and this could happen if something is not done. I ask the Government to invite Mr. Dunstan, the Premier of South Australia, to come to Victoria—he can stay at my house—to look at the Dartmouth dam project and see how it will affect South Australia and also to see the Snowy River scheme.

In his Speech the Governor said—

> The Government is pursuing a firm policy of encouraging the use of public transport and reducing the dominance of the motor car, especially for commuter travel.

This may well apply in the crowded streets of Melbourne, but not in the country where a person is literally dependent on the motor car. Such a scheme could be potentially dangerous. The proposed introduction of priority roads is mentioned sketchily in the Speech, but something along those lines could be achieved. It was also stated that police strength was being steadily increased. I have referred to this in my comments about the Dartmouth dam.

The Governor stated that the Victorian Council of the Arts was considering development programmes for regional centres for drama and music in Victoria. Mr. Eric Godward, of Yackandandah, is planning an arts and craft centre and has applied for a grant to make it a tourist attraction for the area. I ask, irrespective of any representations that may have already been made on his behalf, that the Government provide adequate assistance to help build up Yackandandah. Again, this will fulfil the policy of decentralization.

I do not know what the Government means by the reference in His Excellency's Speech to a simple course of sex instruction for children.

The Government apparently proposes to amend the Ombudsman Act. There was much doubt whether the appointment of an Ombudsman was a good idea.

His Excellency also referred to a proposed new National Parks Bill. The former Premier, Sir Henry Bolte, broke his word, and instead of reforming the National Parks Authority he put the whole work load onto Dr. Smith's shoulders. It is too much for one man. I have changed my mind considerably about Dr. Smith. He has done a good job and he has stuck to his heavy task.

The question of botany, zoology, shelters, roads and barbecues must be considered. All sections of the community must obtain the use of our national parks and they must not be locked up for the bug-hunters to spy on the sex life of the insects. The Country Party has never been against national parks. We will always support more of them provided that we can look after what we have got. For years this could not be done and the national parks were in a terrible state. When I suggested to Dr. Moulds in 1947 that further alpine areas should be opened up and that Mount Buller could possibly be part of a national park he said "No, we cannot look after what we have got".

Members of the Country Party would be intensely worried and would not consider the incorporation of farming areas in national parks. In Japan and in England, the Government has taken over the heads of valleys similar to the Ovens and Mitta valleys. In that country the farmer is allowed to carry on under lease but he loses his freehold. He is not allowed to cut even a twig from a tree without getting ten signatures. The sawmillers are getting worried.

Mr. Swinburne, a member of another place, has done an excellent job

as chairman of the committee of management of the Mount Buffalo National Park. However, there is need to hasten slowly. It is all very well to go around an area with a pencil, but someone must look after the vermin and noxious weeds. Many problems were caused at Kosciusko National Park which is a harbour for vermin such as kangaroos and rabbits, and for noxious weeds such as St. John's wort and blackberries. As the result of the mismanagement of that national park, the shire of Upper Murray would not have Mount Elliot included as a national park.

I have received all sorts of complaints about the filthy condition of the ladies' toilets at Falls Creek. I have complained of this poor management to the Minister of Health and the Minister for Fuel and Power, because Falls Creek is getting a bad reputation. The Minister of Public Works has just informed me that it gives Falls Creek a bad smell. That is a masterpiece of understatement.

I refer to an article in the *Age* newspaper of Friday, 6th September, under the heading "Australia's Blue Streak Rocket". The article states that one of our best-known skiers skied and streaked in a race at Thredbo. We do not want anything like that in Australia. The race was organized by the Ski Club of Australia. Peter Brockhoff was the unfortunate skier. He is not just a mad kid who had a skinful of plonk and who kicked on. It is sad, because he is a mature married man, who was a member of an Olympic team with which the honorable member for Caulfield was concerned. I hope nothing like this occurs again.

I wish to refer to the subject of safety and the need for the provision of more huts in the alpine areas. In some of the larger areas, commerce is creeping in seeking a dollar here and a dollar there. But human life is worth the provision of huts. They are the types of structures that are used by people who cannot afford the time or the money to go to the big resorts. I appeal to the Government to make a more realistic approach to safety in the alps before more lives are lost in the snow.

Mr. RAMSAY (Balwyn): I move

That the debate be now adjourned.

The House divided on the motion for the adjournment of the debate (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler in the chair)—

Ayes	44
Noes	19
Majority for the motion	25

AYES.

Mr. Austin	Mr. McInnes
Mr. Balfour	Mr. McKellar
Mr. Baxter	Mr. McLaren
Mr. Billing	Mr. Meagher
Mr. Birrell	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Borthwick	Mr. Plowman
Mr. Burgin	Mr. Ramsay
Mr. Chamberlain	Mr. Reese
Mr. Crellin	Mr. Scanlan
Mr. Dixon	Mr. Smith (*Bellarine*)
Mr. Dunstan	Mr. Stephen
Mr. Ebery	Mr. Suggett
Mr. Evans (*Ballaarat North*)	Sir Edgar Tanner
Mr. Evans (*Gippsland East*)	Mr. Templeton
Mrs. Goble	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Guy	Mr. Vale
Mr. Hamer	Mr. Whiting
Mr. Hann	Mr. Wilcox
Mr. Hayes	Mr. Williams
Mr. Jona	Mr. Wood
Mr. Loxton	*Tellers:*
Mr. McCabe	Mr. McClure
	Mr. Skeggs

NOES.

Mr. Amos	Mr. Lind
Mr. Bornstein	Mr. Mutton
Mr. Curnow	Mr. Roper
Mr. Doube	Mr. Simmonds
Mr. Edmunds	Mr. Trezise
Mr. Fordham	Mr. Wilkes
Mr. Ginifer	Mr. Wilton
Mr. Holding	*Tellers:*
Mr. Jones	Mr. Fogarty
Mr. Kirkwood	Mr. Stirling

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I move—

That the debate be adjourned until tomorrow.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I intend to try to convince the Government that this debate is of sufficient importance to be allowed to continue. It was indicated quite clearly yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition how members of the Opposition regarded the debate on the Ad-

dress-in-Reply, and how your predecessor, Mr. Speaker, regarded it, and how I am sure you regard it. For the Government to continue persistently to delay this debate—it was No. 8 on the Notice Paper today—and to attempt to adjourn the debate at 10.35 p.m. and place it low on the Notice Paper for tomorrow, is an indication of the Government's disregard for the importance of the debate, and an indication of the Government's sheer disregard for His Excellency who delivered the Speech on its behalf.

Year in and year out the Government has begged His Excellency to open Parliament, and then it treats the Address-in-Reply debate in a cavalier manner. On the second last day of the previous session His Excellency's predecessor had to telephone the Government and ask when the Address-in-Reply would be delivered. Members of the Labor Party do not intend to be humiliated like that again.

Mr. STEPHEN: Members of the Opposition did not attend the presentation of the Address-in-Reply last year.

Mr. WILKES: Of course we did not go. We did not go because we were humiliated by the actions of the Government. Members of the Labor Party have no intention of embarrassing the new Governor in any way, and if he is foolish enough to put up with the treatment that he gets from this Government, then I feel sorry for him. He does not deserve this treatment.

This debate should be continued and completed as soon as possible. This was the policy agreed to by the Premier last year, but honorable members know what happened. We do not want the same thing to happen again. We want the debate to be finished as quickly as possible and delivered to His Excellency in a respectable way so that the House can get on with its business. Proper respect should be paid to the Governor, but the Government does not intend to do that. It intends to allow the debate to be dragged on and the Address-in-Reply delivered to the Governor at a time to suit itself. I am sure you, Mr. Speaker, would be humiliated by that sort of action. I urge the Government on your behalf, as well as on behalf of the Opposition, to allow this debate to continue and not consistently put it at the bottom of the Notice Paper. The Government should give the debate the precedence it deserves and allow it to continue.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I want to know if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will be supported by the honorable member for Melbourne.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): I support the view that has been put by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to reinforce views stated candidly in this Parliament by the honorable gentlemen opposite, particularly by those who could be described as wanting to lecture the community. I am tired of listening to Ministers who are always urging wage earners to increase their level of productivity. If they were paid on the basis of productivity not one of them would be earning the minimum wage.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I remind the Leader of the Opposition that we have dispensed with the question that the debate be adjourned. We are now on the question of time.

Mr. HOLDING: That is so, Mr. Speaker. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, it is 10.40 p.m. and the House commenced sitting only at 4 o'clock. Half an hour was spent on question time. This debate has been going for less than three hours. Not only has this debate not finished; it has not really started. That is what the Opposition is suggesting to the Premier. Let us be perfectly frank. If it had not been for the attitude taken by the Opposition in

refusing leave to the Government, we would not have made the progress that has been made. The Government opens Parliament and laps up the frills—the afternoon tea and the socializing—but it does not wish to treat the Address-in-Reply debate with the importance that it merits.

I support the statements of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition who is responsible for the organization of the business of the House on behalf of the Opposition and who expresses the views of the Opposition on these matters. I commend him and the Opposition Whip for their persistent refusal to grant leave to the Government, in order to try and give this debate some precedence. If the Minister wishes to proceed with this motion I would invite him later this evening to have this Parliament sit tomorrow.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir): On the question of time, I support the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader. The Governor's Speech referred to a number of matters and problems in members' electorates. During the Address-in-Reply debate today the matter of education in one electorate was raised. There are many problems that the Government should debate in the time that is available. The Speech of His Excellency was followed by a ceremony which occupied as much time as this House has sat and the various matters raised in the Speech seem to be of sufficient importance to justify this Chamber continuing the discussion. Because of the urgency of the matters, I express my support of the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader.

If the Government is concerned about inflation in the community and about the matters which have been raised—I heard an honorable member mention industrial problems—it has an opportunity to do something about them while the House is considering the Governor's Speech, which covers the whole ambit of Government activity. It appears that the Government is not prepared to debate those matters at this stage, although the recent recess—it was as lengthy a recess as most of us can remember—has attracted the attention of the Melbourne *Herald* which is not noted for criticizing the Hamer Government. Hamer makes nothing happen in this State. That has been demonstrated in this Chamber. The honorable gentleman also knows how to stop other people seeking to make it happen. I support the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until next day.

ADJOURNMENT.

COBURG POLICE STATION—EDUCATION DEPARTMENT CLEANERS — BRUNSWICK TECHNICAL SCHOOL—HOUSING COMMISSION — LALOR HIGH SCHOOL — FIREWORKS — UNDERPAYMENT OF WAGES.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I move—

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until tomorrow, at five minutes past twelve o'clock in the morning.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. MUTTON (Coburg): I wish to draw to the attention of the House and particularly the Chief Secretary who has not graced this House with his presence this evening, an important and serious problem confronting officers at the Coburg police station. At that station 23 uniformed officers are doing a capable job under strained circumstances.

Until about two months ago the officers at the Coburg police station had at their disposal two motor vehicles with which to carry out their duties in the Coburg district. Unfortunately, one of the vehicles needed mechanical attention. It was sent to a Government garage for repair but after it had been there for two weeks the officer in charge of the Coburg police station was informed that because the vehicle had

exceeded 30,000 miles it would have to be disposed of. The officer was notified that a new car would be provided within a short period of time.

Since then two months have elapsed but no new car has been supplied. There are now 23 men dependent on one motor vehicle. This situation is a standing disgrace, especially when one considers the problems confronting the staff at the Coburg police station in regard to crime in the district. I recommend to members of the Government, and in particular the Chief Secretary, that an urgent investigation be made into the complaint that I have recorded to ensure that the Coburg police station is supplied with a motor vehicle forthwith.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): I desire to bring a matter to the attention of the Minister of Education. I refer to a letter which the Minister has received from the Miscellaneous Workers Union seeking an audience with the Minister for the purpose of discussing with him the considerable problems and the future status of cleaners employed in the Education Department and the State colleges of education. There is a lack of satisfaction among cleaners who have been unable to obtain any definitive answer from the Minister.

An industrial stoppage has been threatened but it could possibly be averted if the Minister met representatives of the union and discussed their problems to see if some assurance can be given to a section of the work force which, throughout Victoria, carries out important and responsible tasks within the framework of the Education Department.

I ask the Minister to meet the union at the earliest possible opportunity for the purpose of attempting to resolve what are real problems for a not inconsiderable section of the work force currently employed by his department.

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West): I again raise a matter which I have previously raised in the House because it now has a new connotation. It relates to the Brunswick Technical School. The Minister will be aware that in this morning's press there was reference to a meeting of the Brunswick City Council concerning the future development of education in the Brunswick area, and that was also mentioned in the debate tonight. I have reason to believe that the site suggested for the extension of the Brunswick Technical School may be sold in the near future, so that unless the department moves at some speed, even if it decides to rebuild in the Brunswick area, it may not have a site available to it.

The history of this problem is interesting but I do not intend to go through all its details now. Currently, the department plans to acquire a site opposite the school. That site will be acquired by the time my great-grandchildren are at school. It is really a matter of immediately acquiring an additional site for the development of education in the Brunswick area. Unless the department moves quickly the GKN (Aust.) Ltd. (Nettlefolds Division) site will be lost. As both the Minister and the Assistant Minister know, that is the site nearest the development of 30 acres of parkland in Brunswick which has a total of only 70 acres of parks. This will be a substantial addition to that area and it provides an opportunity for a small site to be added within the next ten years or so.

Leaving the long-term problem aside for the moment, I ask the Education Department to reserve a site such as the GKN site because areas of more than half an acre are not often available in Brunswick.

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park): I direct a matter to the attention of the Minister representing the Minister of Housing. The husband of a constituent of mine who lives in St. Albans is at present in the remand section at Pentridge because of alleged

cruelty to children. Four young children have been taken from the mother by the State until she can find suitable accommodation. Because of the problems involved, it was necessary for the mother and children to move from the home they had. Applications were made to the Housing Commission for accommodation so that the mother and four children could live together and so that the children would be brought back under her care from the Social Welfare Department.

All these matters were put by me to the Minister of Housing, but a letter I received from him today states that the best that can be done for this unfortunate woman and her children is to provide accommodation in three months' time. This case deserves special consideration. The mother is suffering mental anguish because of the unfortunate train of events with the husband being charged with cruelty to children and the children being taken from her.

I thought that when the case was explained to the Minister something would be done to relieve the plight of the family, but the best I can tell the woman is that she must wait three months for accommodation. I ask the Minister representing the Minister of Housing to be good enough to take this letter to see if something can be done for the woman immediately. I do not wish to mention her name and address at this time.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): I am concerned with the problems of Lalor High School. In June, representations were made to the Minister on behalf of the advisory council and the staff association of that school, asking him to receive a deputation as they wished to discuss with him various matters of grave concern to the school. I was asked to support the representation and I did that by writing to the Minister. I received from the then Acting Minister of Education, the Assistant Minister, an acknowledgement of my letter.

Yesterday, I received another letter dated 27th August, in which the Acting Minister of Education informed me that he visited the school on 17th July and, as he put it, he was well aware of the present situation at the school. He also indicated that he had met representatives of the various groups. When I received this letter I inquired at the school. I was informed that the Minister visited it unofficially inasmuch as he had responded to an invitation extended some time previously to address a social studies class at the school on the operations of Parliament. As all honorable members know, invitations to address students on these matters are frequently received. No one was aware of the Minister's intention to visit the school on that date and he arrived unannounced.

Mr. DIXON: The people who invited me were aware of it.

Mr. WILTON: The principal of the school was not aware of the intended visit and neither was the chairman of the advisory council; nor was I. The purpose of the representations made to the Minister was to have him go to the school so that the advisory council, the staff association and other interested people could present a proper case to him on all of the problems of the school. I understand that the discussions that the honorable gentleman had were of an informal nature.

Mr. DIXON: That is right.

Mr. WILTON: The original request was for an official visit so that a formal presentation could be made to the Minister of all the evidence of problems at the school. I raise this matter now for the purpose of informing the Minister that it is still the desire of the school council and staff association that he should receive a deputation. In doing so I reaffirm the original representations made to the honorable gentleman, that the members of these organizations wish to discuss all the problems of the school with him. If the Minister accedes to that request, it will be very much appreciated.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds): I direct the attention of the Minister of Mines to the problem of fireworks being used by children and to the fact that injuries resulting from their indiscriminate sale will again be with us soon with the advent of Guy Fawkes night on 5th November. Other Governments in Australia have banned the indiscriminate sale and use of fireworks. The Government of South Australia is the latest to attempt to prevent injuries caused by fireworks. Mr. Speaker, you would be aware of a service organization in the City of Essendon called the Quota Club. That organization has written expressing an opinion that the Government should take action over the sale of fireworks. Years ago the sale of fireworks to children by shopkeepers was restricted to the period immediately prior to an event such as Commonwealth Day, Guy Fawkes Day and Queen's Birthday. Now fireworks seem to be on sale all the time.

I am raising the matter in this forum because to my knowledge there is no other way I can ask the Government to consider the matter. I know of children in the immediate vicinity of my home who have been injured by fireworks. There is time for the Government to take action because 5th November is the next date when fireworks will be used by children. No one wishes to disadvantage shop-keepers who may or may not be considering stocking their shops with fireworks for sale to the public.

I request the Minister of Mines to make an early public announcement on whether the Government intends to restrict the sale of fireworks as has occurred in South Australia.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir): I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister of Labour and Industry concerning a situation which has developed over section 76 of the Labour and Industry Act. The Furniture Trades Society has referred to me a case of underpayment of wages for overtime worked in a furniture factory in my electorate. It appears that the society referred the matter to the department and that officers at the Preston branch of the Department of Labour and Industry reported that they were unable to prosecute because section 76 of the Labour and Industry Act—which was originally introduced in 1896 before Federation but had remained unchanged except for the deletion of the word "Chinese" in the definition of a furniture factory—effectively places all work after 5 p.m. on a week day outside the provisions of the Act. The Act declares that no work shall be performed in a furniture factory on a week day after 5 p.m. or after 2 p.m. on a Saturday or at any time on a Sunday. The effect of the Act is to make work performed after those hours illegal. Therefore, the officers of the department are unable to successfully prosecute for the underpayment of wages. Perhaps the question of industrial safety could also arise. I ask the Minister of Labour and Industry to investigate the position and to take suitable corrective action.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I will draw to the attention of the Chief Secretary, who is temporarily absent at a public function, the matter raised by the honorable member for Coburg. I refer to the matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition concerning the new position of cleaners working in State colleges. Prior to the enactment of legislation to establish State colleges, cleaners working in teachers' colleges were employed by the Education Department. The status of cleaners has now changed and the councils of the various State colleges employ cleaners who are therefore working under arrangements different from those operating in the Education Department. I did say that some time this morning I would ensure that the position was clarified by Mr. Scully, the secretary of the department, and I will have further discussions with him in the morning.

Turning to the matter raised by the honorable member for Brunswick West, I personally do not favour the particular proposal and would regard as objectionable the progressive acquisition of quite a large number of houses over a period of time that would still not provide the technical school with a suitable building site and access to open space. I will bear his comments in mind when making a decision on the particular area which he says is available for sale at present. I shall immediately draw it to the attention of Dr. Maddocks, who, as I mentioned earlier, will be carrying out a survey on the development of primary and secondary educational facilities in the Brunswick area in conjunction with the reservation of a suitable area of land for recreational purposes.

The honorable member for Broadmeadows raised a problem at Lalor High School. I shall have discussions with the Assistant Minister of Education to see exactly what the position is and, if necessary, will arrange a deputation before the Assistant Minister of Education or myself.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): If the honorable member for Deer Park will supply me with the name and address of the person to whom he referred, I shall take up the matter with the Minister of Housing.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister of Mines): The honorable member for Moonee Ponds raised a question concerning fireworks. The present period during which fireworks may be sold commenced on 28th May and ceases on 15th November. Over a period the Government has been viewing this question closely to see whether it should do what other States have done, that is to totally ban the sale of fireworks or implement other restrictions. I assure the honorable member that the matter is receiving attention and that at the appropriate stage an announcement will be made.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The honorable member for Reservoir raised the question of the application of section 76 of the Labour and Industry Act. I will refer the matter to the Minister of Labour and Industry for his consideration.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.8 *p.m.*

QUESTION ON NOTICE.

The following answer to a question on notice was circulated—

RIVER IMPROVEMENT TRUSTS.

(Question No. 50)

Mr. BAXTER (Murray Valley) asked the Minister of Public Works, for the Minister of Water Supply—

1. Which river improvement trusts are presently constituted in Victoria and what is the approximate length of stream controlled by each trust?

2. What information is available concerning the profile of the river or stream in each trust area?

3. What Government funds have been made available to river improvement trusts in each of the past ten years?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): The answer supplied by the Minister of Water Supply is—

1. RIVER IMPROVEMENT TRUSTS CONSTITUTED AS AT 11TH SEPTEMBER, 1974.

Trust.	Length of gazetted streams in trust district
Shire of Alexandra	180 km
Avoca..	135 km
Avon	55 km
Bendigo Creek	39 km
Black Dog Creek ..	40 km
Broken	238 km
Bullock Creek	76 km
Cann	40 km
Fifteen Mile Creek ..	43 km
Glenelg	77 km
Kiewa..	135 km
King	95 km
King Parrot Creek ..	47 km
Shire of Korumburra ..	64 km
Latrobe	177 km
Macalister	54 km
Mitchell	64 km
Mitta Mitta	134 km
Ovens..	240 km
Pental Island	63 km
Seymour Shire	56 km
Snowy..	48 km
Tambo	34 km
Tarwin	97 km
Thomson	63 lm
Whorouly Creek ..	24 km
Yarra	114 km
Shire of Yea	108 km

2. Information regarding stream profiles would be available from river improvement trust engineers.

3. RIVER IMPROVEMENT TRUSTS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS.

Year	Government loan including grant	Frontage grant	Interest subsidy	Total
	$	$	$	$
1973–74..	659,999	32,217	1,289	693,505
1972–73..	719,999	59,413	1,291	780,703
1971–72..	812,716	55,860	1,892	870,468
1970–71..	583,521	66,019	1,672	651,212
1969–70..	501,331	38,201	2,434	541,966
1968–69..	500,000	53,806	2,691	556,497
1967–68..	440,000	32,728	3,178	475,906
1966–67..	440,000	39,321	3,339	482,660
1965–66..	440,000	41,540	3,446	484,986
1964–65..	440,000	39,139	3,695	482,834
	..	..	..	6,020,737

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, September 12, 1974.

The SPEAKER **(the Hon. K. H. Wheeler)** took the chair at 12.39 a.m., and read the prayer.

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE.

COMPLAINT: PUBLICATION OF REPORT.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! During the last sitting of the House the Leader of the Opposition made a complaint concerning certain matters relating to the report known as the Bland report. I undertook to consider the matter and to report my opinion at the next sitting of the House. It is customary, both in this House and in the House of Commons, for the Chair to consider such matters for a period of 24 hours. I do not have to advise honorable members that this has been impossible. In view of the lack of time and opportunity available to me to research the matter, I shall defer giving my opinion until the next sitting of the House.

ABSENCE OF MINISTERS.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I have to announce the absence of the Minister of Labour and Industry, who is receiving medical treatment, and also the absence of the Chief Secretary.

Mr. HOLDING: I should like to know where the Chief Secretary is.

The SPEAKER: The advice I have is that the Chief Secretary is unavoidably absent.

Mr. WILKES: Who is handling questions on behalf of the Chief Secretary?

The SPEAKER: I have not been advised, but I should imagine it would be the Attorney-General.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

TOY PISTOLS.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I address a question to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary. Is the Minister aware that facsimiles of pistols that could be mistaken for genuine pistols are on sale in Melbourne at exclusive prices? On two occasions I have examined these pistols. Considering the crime rate in Melbourne today, what action does the Minister propose to take to ensure that these pistols, which could be used in lieu of the real article, are not available to the public?

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General): This is a matter of personal explanation. The only thing I can say is that an honorable member can ask a question only if the relevant Minister is present. It is quite simple, Mr. Speaker. All honorable members understand the practice of Ministers in this House representing a Minister in another place.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): I rise to a point of order. Honorable members are in the strange situation that the Government of its own volition chose to call this meeting of Parliament at this odd hour. In the same way as it is unable to organize its business, the Government is unable to organize the

presence of its Ministers, and an important Minister—the Chief Secretary—is not present. No explanation for the honorable gentleman's absence has been forthcoming to the House, and no arrangement has been made to have that Minister represented in the House so that questions which normally should be put to him in this Parliament when the House is sitting can be asked.

If the Government intends to treat the House with this type of disdain and contempt, nothing can be done about it, but I ask you, Mr. Speaker, as the custodian and guardian of the rights and privileges of members of this House, to press either the Premier or the Deputy Premier to ascertain what satisfactory arrangements have been made to ensure that the House can conduct its business and not be made the laughing stock of the nation.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I have explained that I have been advised that the Chief Secretary is unavoidably absent. Quite clearly a question to which an answer has been refused cannot be insisted upon, and it is futile for a question to be directed to a Minister if he refuses to answer.

DAYS AND HOURS OF MEETING.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): Can the Premier advise the House of the days and hours of meeting next week, particularly in regard to Thursday and Friday?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The days and hours will be as prescribed under the Standing Orders unless the sitting is disturbed or otherwise delayed unnecessarily by some petty and irresponsible action on the part of the Opposition.

COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATION.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds): Can the Attorney-General advise what legislation passed by the joint sitting of the Australian Parliament will be opposed by the Victorian Government in the High Court of Australia? What are the reasons for opposing the measures which have been legally passed under the Commonwealth Constitution? Who is providing the legal opinion upon which the Victorian Government intends to act and from where is the public money coming to brief barristers for the High Court hearing?

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General): I am not sure whether this question is proper, but I am happy to answer it. The State of Victoria has already issued a writ which challenges the validity of the Petroleum and Mineral Authority Act.

Mr. EDMUNDS: On whose legal opinion?

Mr. WILCOX: On very sound legal opinion which I do not intend to canvass in this House. Concerning the other Bills passed by the joint sitting, at least one State has already challenged what are called the electoral Bills. Victoria will be seeking leave to intervene in that matter, and in the other matters which need serious consideration, for the simple reason that Victoria and other States—particularly Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia, where there are Governments in office which appreciate the necessity to foster the Federal system—have the closest liaison to ensure that the Commonwealth Government does not impose on the people of Australia matters which are unconstitutional.

GAS ACCOUNTS.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): I direct a question to the Minister for Fuel and Power. In the metrication of the Gas and Fuel Corporation's gas accounts for domestic and industrial consumers, do consumers now pay more for the same quantity of gas that was available to them under the old system of accounting?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): I confess that I do not know whether what the honorable member says is correct, but I shall certainly find out and advise him.

MATHEMATICS TEACHERS.

Mr. SKEGGS (Ivanhoe): I ask the Minister of Education: In view of what appears to be a general shortage of mathematics teachers, some of whom have been attracted to the private sector, what steps have been taken to step up the recruitment and training of mathematics teachers?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): Firstly, when studentships are awarded priority is given to people who wish to undertake science and mathematics courses. Secondly, in the recruitment of teachers from the United States of America first preference was given to mathematics and science teachers. Nearly 1,800 of them were recruited, and 90 per cent of them came from the United States, but first preference was given to mathematics and science teachers.

PRIMARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray): Can the Minister of Public Works explain the reason for the delay in the letting of contracts for the construction of 60 primary school libraries, bearing in mind that the funds for this project were made available to the Victorian Government six months ago, and notice of the projects was given another six months earlier? In view of the importance of primary school libraries to the needs of Victorian school children, can the Minister overcome these interminable delays in his department?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I ask the honorable member to place the question on the Notice Paper.

GLADSTONE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows): I direct a question to the Minister of Public Works. In a statement issued by the honorable gentleman in the past few days he referred to the substantial amount of work that is to be done on school building programmes. Can the Minister advise whether the Gladstone Park Primary School is to be included in that programme with the view of removing the unsightly, unhygienic and completely unacceptable conglomeration of portable class-rooms which have been dumped in a paddock and which the Government is attempting to establish as a primary school?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I shall be happy to ascertain the information requested and to advise the honorable member.

FARM ALLOCATIONS.

Mr. HANN (Rodney): Can the Minister of Lands advise the House when the first applications will be called for the allocation of new farms at Rochester and Heytesbury, how many farms will be open for allocation in the first applications, and when they are likely to be allocated?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands): I cannot provide the precise date from memory, but I believe there are to be 25 farms at Heytesbury and about six at Rochester. The Government hopes to call applications in the first half of next year, in March or April, but at this stage I cannot be precise.

CONSTRUCTION OF DREDGE.

Mr. STIRLING (Williamstown): I ask the Minister of Public Works whether a firm decision has been reached on the construction of a bucket-and-ladder type dredge for the port of Melbourne?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I understand that the question has been asked and that the answer has been provided to the honorable member by the Melbourne Harbor Trust Commissioners.

ACQUISITION OF LAND AT LAKE VICTORIA.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East): Can the Minister for Fuel and Power inform me whether he will lay on the table of the Library the file

relating to the acquisition by the Gas and Fuel Corporation of 900 acres of land fronting Lake Victoria?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): This is a matter for the Gas and Fuel Corporation rather than for the Minister. The honorable member for Gippsland East would know of the relationship between the Minister and the Gas and Fuel Corporation. However, I should be happy to discuss the matter with the chairman of the corporation and I am sure that he would be prepared to make any information available to the honorable member.

ERROL STREET, NORTH MELBOURNE, PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne): Is the Minister of Education aware that the Errol Street, North Melbourne, Primary School will celebrate its centenary in October? Does the honorable gentleman recall that in June he undertook to provide a supply of linoleum and hardboard to cover the floors of that school in time for the celebration of the centenary? Is he aware that in July the then Acting Minister of Education, the Chief Secretary, wrote stating that the matter was being considered, although it had been pointed out that the Minister of Education had already given an undertaking? Is the honorable gentleman also aware that in September the then Acting Minister of Education, the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation, wrote to me to say that this matter had been referred to the Public Works Department for a report?

In view of all of this, can the Minister of Education give a firm assurance that in order that the Errol Street, North Melbourne, Primary School can celebrate its centenary in all the glory to which it is entitled, this linoleum will be provided before the end of the month?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): If the school committee agrees to obtain quotes from three tenderers, it can cover the floor and the Education Department will pay for it.

METRICATION.

Mr. MUTTON (Coburg): It has been reported that the changeover to the metric system has been a major contribution to inflation. Can the Premier submit to the House a progress report of the agreement that exists between the Federal Government and Victoria in regard to the costs that have already been incurred on metric conversion?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I am not sure whether there is any written agreement on the subject; there may well be. If so, it would go back for many years. The metrication of the various units of measurement throughout Australia was ordained by the Federal Government because it is within that Government's field. The Commonwealth Government has made available sums of money to reimburse some of the costs but I do not know whether there is any written agreement. If there is, I will table it in the Library of the House.

MELBOURNE UNDERGROUND RAIL LOOP.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North): Can the Premier inform me whether any approaches have been made in recent weeks by the Melbourne City Council expressing concern at the proportion of costs to be borne by that council for the Melbourne underground rail loop and, if so, is it not a fact that the Government is now reviewing the financial obligations of the council in relation to the underground rail loop rather than continuing the present allocations?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The newly-elected Lord Mayor mentioned the matter to me in passing in the course of a courtesy visit soon after his election. He said that, in years to come, the burden on the Melbourne City Council would increase considerably because

of the escalating costs of the underground rail loop. He undertook to supply facts and figures and I said that the Government would consider them.

ENCEPHALITIS.

Mr. BAXTER (Murray Valley): Can the Minister of Health indicate to the House the success he has had in his endeavours to discontinue the adjective "Murray Valley" to the noun "encephalitis" and to convince health authorities in this State and other places to adopt a more technical term for this disease?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): There has been general agreement at the National Health and Medical Research Council to describe "Murray Valley encephalitis" as "Australian arbo encephalitis". However, to receive international recognition, its designation will have to be accepted by the World Health Organization. I understand that this matter is currently being considered, and that an application will be made for recognition.

BOARD OF WORKS FINANCES.

Mr. LIND (Dandenong): I direct a question to the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government. In view of the fact that it is planned for much of the work of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works to be taken over by the Country Roads Board, can the Minister indicate the estimated saving to the Board of Works? If there is to be the saving that is expected can the honorable gentleman indicate why the proposed increase in Board of Works rates is necessary?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): That is a difficult question. I will take up the matter with my colleague, the Minister for Local Government, and see that the honorable member for Dandenong—one of the better members of the Opposition—receives a direct reply.

TROTTING AT ROYAL MELBOURNE SHOWGROUNDS.

Mr. GUY (Gisborne): I direct a question to the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation. In view of the recent purchase of land at Keysborough by the Trotting Control Board, and the proposed future use of that land, what will be the position of trotting in the future at the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds?

Mr. DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation): I have been informed by the Chairman of the Trotting Control Board that he wishes trotting to be continued at the showgrounds, which is the No. 1 venue for trotting in Victoria, and that currently a feasibility study is being undertaken by representatives of the Royal Agricultural Society, the Treasury, and the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation, to ascertain whether a world standard 800-metre track can be located satisfactorily, from all points of view, at the showgrounds.

FINANCE FOR MILK REFRIGERATION.

Mr. McINNES (Gippsland South): Can the Minister of Agriculture advise, firstly, when finance will be available to dairy farmers to enable them to change over to refrigerated milk; secondly, who will administer this scheme; thirdly, what is the general definition of a marginal dairy farm; and finally, will finance be available to milk producers currently on water-cooled milk?

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): The honorable member will probably be aware that this scheme, financed by the Commonwealth, will be administered by my colleague, the Minister of Lands. However, together with the honorable gentleman, officers of my department have had negotiations with the Federal Government. These negotiations are not complete. Regrettably, the Marginal Dairy Farms Agreements Bill which passed through the Federal Parliament was not as complete and as broad as we would have

liked, and the processes of consultation were not as extensive as we would have liked.

Since the Act was passed by the Federal Parliament we have been able to achieve a situation whereby administrative decisions can be made which we believe will encompass a wide spectrum of the dairy farm community. Up to about one-third of Victorian dairy farmers will be able to avail themselves of interest-free money to convert their water-cooled milk vats to refrigeration. Further, dairy farmers who have sub-standard dairies and who wish to improve their standard may be able to borrow money for other useful farm improvements which will make their farms more viable units.

The criticism that we had of the previous system was that it was too restrictive. It is not the wish of dairy farmers in Victoria to be reconstructed out of the industry. Negotiations between my colleague and departmental officers and the Federal Government are rapidly leading to a solution. I believe it will not be long before we are in a position to announce the terms and when finance from the Federal Government will be made available under the scheme.

COOL STORES.

Mr. FOGARTY (Sunshine): I address my question to the Minister of Public Works. Is it the intention of the Government to cease operations of the Government Cool Stores in Dudley Street, West Melbourne, on 30th November of this year? If so, is it the intention of the Melbourne Harbor Trust to occupy the area of land now occupied by the Government Cool Stores? Finally, when did the Minister first know of the expiration date of the present lease of the land in question?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I have been asked to answer three questions. My answer to the first question is that it is conditional upon employees in the cool stores being provided with alternative employment. This is the subject of discussion between the Minister of Agriculture and the unions involved. The answer to the second question is contingent on the first. The answer to the third question is contingent on the second.

FLOATING DOCK.

Mr. BIRRELL (Geelong): My question is directed to the Minister of Public Works. What progress has been made by the floating dock in its passage to Melbourne?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): The progress of the floating dock across the Pacific is more successful than that of the *Southern Cross* in its first trial race against the American yacht. The progress of the Australian yacht across the Pacific is very courageous.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I suggest that the honorable member be courageous and answer the question.

Mr. DUNSTAN: I shall try also to be intrepid. The floating dock is in mid-Pacific, about 1,800 nautical miles from Australia. I cannot say exactly where it is. It was travelling at about 130 nautical miles a day. Now, because of westerly winds, it has slowed down to about 35 nautical miles a day. I cannot give a precise answer—I will not bet on it—but if the westerly winds do not delay it, the dock should arrive by 23rd September.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): I desire to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the failure of the Government to provide adequate facilities for the administration of justice.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The motion proposed by the Leader of the Opposition was handed to me at the correct time. I have analysed it and rule that it is in order.

Approval of the proposed discussion was indicated by the required number of members rising in their places, as specified in Standing Order No. 8B.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

I rely strongly on an important document transmitted to this Parliament by the Supreme Court of Victoria and signed by the justices of that court. For the administration of justice in this State we should not only have judges of high calibre and capacity—in that regard Victoria is probably as well served as, if not better served than, most States in the Commonwealth—but also it is important that the courts, in order to carry out their important functions, should not be dependent or seem to be dependent upon the Executive to have the facilities within which justice can be properly administered.

When one looks at the report which has been prepared by Their Honours, having regard to the fact that normally a communication between the judiciary and the Attorney-General or the judiciary and this House is by its nature always couched in appropriate and circumspect language, one must be deeply concerned by the depth of feeling shown in the allegations contained on pages 11, 12 and 13 of the report.

Generally those allegations are largely related to the question of accommodation for the Supreme Court at Melbourne. Many honorable members, particularly country members, are aware of the problems of administration of justice in country areas. I refer to the inadequate and almost primitive facilities which exist in country towns. Those facilities have not been included in the subject-matter of this report but I believe they can properly be considered in the course of the debate.

I draw attention to the views expressed by the judges of the Supreme Court in this report. I believe it is important that the House should not merely acknowledge the importance of this communication but that it should use the forms of the House to ensure that the Attorney-General takes the appropriate action to act upon the report with a real sense of urgency. The first problem to which I refer is the capacity of the courts to deal with problems——

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I do not want to interrupt the Leader of the Opposition but it is unparliamentary for honorable members to read newspapers in this House. I repeat that I will allow a certain amount of discretion but I ask honorable members to help me to afford that discretion because the rustling of newspapers, as honorable members well know, does cause problems.

Mr. HOLDING: I point out that this debate is not just an argument about buildings. If it were, perhaps the Opposition would not need to take up the time of the House. However, the number of judges who have been appointed substantially affects the capacity of the courts to dispose of all litigation. Honorable members will recall the old saying, "Justice delayed is often justice denied". Unfortunately, many cases have occurred in this State where delay in the court process has meant not merely that justice has been delayed but that justice has in fact been denied. It was not so long ago that delay in the processing of a criminal trial meant, at least on one occasion, that a person suffered.

I have previously mentioned a case to the House and to the Attorney-General in an earlier debate but it is worth repeating because it does bring home the problems inherent in these delays. I refer to the case of the citizen who, having been committed for trial, found himself in the remand yard at Pentridge for up to nine months before his case was finally dealt with and he was found not guilty.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: He should have been out on bail.

Mr. HOLDING: That is possible only if one is in the financial situation where one can get bail. If that occurred the person to whom I refer would not have been in that situation. It is a basic maxim of our law that no person is guilty until proven to be so. When, because of economic circumstances, a citizen, who is subsequently adjudged to be not guilty, is in fact incarcerated for nine months, it is a reflection upon the system of justice and upon the administration of that system of justice. Those problems arise when there are insufficient judges to move the number of cases that are before the court. Having looked at this report, it is true to say that the judges of the Supreme Court have worked diligently and hard to reduce the number of cases in the list, but they point out that it does not matter how many judges there are; if they do not have the facilities to enable them to work properly the system starts to fold up and can break down.

The judges say that fifteen court rooms are available in Melbourne for a court consisting of twenty judges. The result is that three judges sit in the Full Court and usually occupy the First Court for the whole of each month. Two or three judges are on circuit; and sometimes one judge is on sabbatical leave. Fourteen judges occupy the courts from the Second Court to Fifteenth Court. Thus the court room accommodation in the Law Courts is always fully occupied.

Mr. WILCOX: But the figures balance out if the honorable member does his arithmetic.

Mr. HOLDING: I shall be happy to hear the arithmetic of the Attorney-General. I hope the Attorney-General will not become involved in a silly question of arithmetic.

Mr. WILCOX: There is nothing silly about it.

Mr. HOLDING: I invite the Attorney-General to examine the gravity of the situation as pointed out by his own judges. The report states—

> Not only is there no room for expansion, but at times a judge is available to sit in Melbourne and is unable to do so for want of an available court room. Three of the court rooms, the Seventh, Fourteenth and Fifteenth, are sub-standard and it is highly regrettable that the court has to use them.

No amount of arithmetic can reduce the pungency of that statement. What exercise in arithmetic provides an answer to the next statement—

> The Seventh is a small converted room with paint peeling off the walls and with entirely inadequate accommodation for counsel, solicitors and litigants. The judge has to take his seat on the Bench by walking down a public corridor. The Fourteenth Court has been converted from two rooms. It has been used for at least 26 years as a Practice Court. More practitioners and litigants attend each day in this court than any other in the building. It is not uncommon to find scores of people packed into this ill-ventilated room.

Honorable members who belong to the legal profession would agree that that is a moderate statement.

The report points out the impossibility of the situation in which members of the legal profession find themselves—

> Many a very important matter is settled outside the Practice Court, but the vestibule is small, awkwardly shaped and badly ventilated, cold in winter and hot in summer. Conditions in this court room and its approaches are, in view of the purpose it serves, a disgrace.

Those are strong terms from gentlemen who are usually constrained to use moderate language in their communications with the Executive. The judges point out that—

> The Fifteenth Court is a curved room at the rear of the Supreme Court Library. It is in a state of dilapidation, with paint peeling off the wall in large sheets. It has been necessary to use this room as a court room since at least the last war.

I will leave it to my colleagues to develop some of the other points contained in the report. On page 13 the report states—

> It is noted that financial authorization of the alterations has not yet been formally communicated to the Law Department. Yet, at the time and as a result of the increase

of the number of judges from seventeen to twenty some eighteen months ago, an assurance was then given that the Crown Law building would be available for occupancy as an extension or annexe of the Supreme Court in 1974.

I ask honorable members to note that statement because it is important—

In the meantime great inconvenience and a grave shortage of court room facilities, with consequent wastage of public moneys, are being suffered by the court. Even if the work commences in August, 1974, the building will not be ready for occupancy until late 1976 at the earliest.

The document points out that the existing facilities are significantly inadequate, that the judges of the court in many instances are unable to adequately fulfil their duties and that both judges and members of the legal profession, and probably more importantly, the average citizen who comes to the court to have his case adjudged, finds himself in what can only be described as slum conditions. That is the proposition which should be of the deepest concern to the Attorney-General.

There are many other matters relating to the administration of justice and the effect of the lack of adequate facilities in that administration. I direct the attention of the Attorney-General to a situation which was brought to my attention this week involving the administration of justice in Pentridge. Members of the legal profession were concerned to be present to represent a prisoner before a visiting magistrate. They had difficulty getting into Pentridge and then were told that the case was adjourned. They went to no small trouble to communicate with both the Law Department and Mr. Booth to inform him of their wish to represent their client adequately and well. The case was proceeded with by a visiting justice. A decision was made without the members of the profession, who were acting for the prisoner, being consulted.

One problem which is continually raised by visiting magistrates is the totally inadequate facilities in Pentridge for dealing with these matters. The honorable member for Melbourne can deal with this. Merely because a man is in Pentridge and is being dealt with for offences which have occurred there, does not mean that he is automatically denied due process of law, that he should be regarded as a second-rate citizen and as someone who is not worthy of legal representation when (*a*) he or she seeks it, and (*b*) members of the legal profession are concerned to discharge their professional obligations in these matters.

I had hoped that the Attorney-General would comment on these matters but all he has done is to interject on some complicated exercise in mathematics. That does not surprise me, because the Attorney-General will agree that his department is considerably understaffed and in some areas it is surprising that the officers of his department get through the amount of work that they do in view of the shortages that exist in the department. For that reason, I am interested to note the recent escapades of the Attorney-General when delays have occurred in the civil list and when he has received a report from the justices of the Supreme Court advising him of the inadequacies of their facilities. This has been at a time when the State has been racked by company scandals and there have been insufficient officers in the company law branch of the department to ensure that the persons responsible for the frauds which have been perpetrated upon the citizens of the State are brought to justice. There have also arisen the matters referred to in the recent report of the committee chaired by Senator Rae.

What is this intrepid Attorney-General doing about these matters? Is he concerned to honour an obligation which was given to the judges of the Supreme Court some eighteen months ago? The honorable gentleman is concerned to pursue this odd James Bond-like quality which he seems to have undertaken and spend his time setting up a specialized subsection of a super State rights movement.

Mr. WILCOX: The Leader of the Opposition is getting on to dangerous ground.

Mr. HOLDING: I am happy to hear the Minister's interjection because I have already raised this matter outside Parliament. It is germane to the issue and therefore I should raise it in the Parliament so that the Attorney-General can deal with it in the House. It is extraordinary that, when confronted with these enormous backlogs, the Attorney-General can take time out to involve his already over-worked officers in what are essentially political exercises which ought to be performed by the research secretariat of the Liberal Party.

In this connection, I refer honorable members to the letters which were recently made public and which the Attorney-General admitted he had written. In a letter addressed to the Premier on 25th July, the Attorney-General referred to a Cabinet decision requiring him to examine Commonwealth legislation and administrative acts which appeared to be of doubtful constitutional validity. There can be no objection to any Attorney-General examining acts which he believes are of doubtful validity.

Mr. WILCOX: He would not be doing his job if he did not do so.

Mr. HOLDING: I agree. What is objectionable in this concept is the ingredient which the Attorney-General has introduced and which I believe destroys the whole basis upon which senior Victorian public servants operate. In the letter, the honorable gentleman specifically refers to the fact that Victorian public servants may well become aware of Commonwealth legislation or administrative proposals before they receive publicity and that such matters should be drawn to the Minister's attention as soon as possible.

There is a wide gap between legislation that the Attorney-General believes is of doubtful constitutional validity and wants to challenge on the advice of his officers — there can be no objection to this—and the Minister's proposal concerning State public servants—particularly senior public servants, whether officers of the Treasury, the Department of Health or the Education Department—who have to be involved continually in discussions with their equal and opposite numbers in other States and in the Commonwealth. I have always been impressed with the frankness and the integrity with which those officers discharge their responsibilities.

The ingredient which the Attorney-General has introduced is that if a Victorian senior officer is having discussions with a Commonwealth senior officer and, as a result of that free and frank discussion which always takes place, some new Commonwealth initiative is brought to his notice, the Victorian public servant is duty bound to report it to this group of super snoopers of the Attorney-General. This will automatically create a barrier to the free and frank discussions that have been possible between public servants of State and Commonwealth departments. Once the Commonwealth Government knows of the existence of this instruction, any Federal Minister will be bound to say that the only communications that may take place between the Commonwealth and Victoria shall be between Ministers.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Can the Leader of the Opposition relate this to the terms of the motion?

Mr. HOLDING: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I make the point that the Attorney-General ought to be concerning himself with the problems of the administration of law in this State when hundreds of citizens are denied full recourse to the due process of law. The fact that the Attorney-General is prepared to use his over-worked officers on these other duties means that they have not the time to devote to their proper duties.

Mr. JONES: Doing the hatchet work of the Liberal Party.

Mr. HOLDING: That is right. I have no objection to the Minister using officers of the Liberal Party on this sort of exercise, but the Law Department does not have the staff necessary to enable the department to discharge its obligations; the Attorney-General will agree with that.

While the Attorney-General is playing out his James Bond fantasies of super spy, the super ego of State rights, the judges of the Supreme Court, in their traditionally moderate language, are pointing out that the Attorney-General, who is responsible for these matters, ought to get on with the task of honouring obligations and undertakings that have been given to the judges concerning the administration of justice. I urge the honorable gentleman to ensure that the matters raised by the judges of the Supreme Court are dealt with expeditiously and with a sense of urgency. Essentially the judges are putting a plea that is deeply related to the need for them to discharge their duties to the citizens of the State.

When we speak about the structures of government, we should remember that the courts are an essential part of the fabric of society. In discharging their functions and preserving the all-important balance which must be maintained between the Executive, the Government, the citizen and the courts—which in the final analysis is often between the citizen of the day and the tyrannical acts of any Government—it is not good enough for judges to be forced to operate in conditions which might have been regarded as appropriate when Victoria was a colony, and probably would not have been considered appropriate even then.

Justice should not be hampered or delayed or administered under the sorts of circumstances described in the report. I commend Their Honours for the way in which they have put their case. If any honorable member chooses to inspect the facilities referred to in the report he cannot but agree with the comments of the judges, and, as I pointed out earlier, that is the problem only at the apex of the legal system. If one looks around the State one will see that these problems are to be found elsewhere, particularly in some country and outer-urban areas.

I commend the motion to the House and hope it will prompt the Attorney-General to honour undertakings given by the Government to take action which will not only provide the facilities that ought to be provided but will enable the judges of Victorian courts to discharge their obligations to the community and to Parliament.

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General): I do not propose to take much of the time of the House in dealing with this motion which has been put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. It is obvious that the Opposition had to search around, in the circumstances of the House meeting today, to find an adjournment motion which would delay the further business of the House.

Mr. HOLDING: Don't you think this is important?

Mr. WILCOX: I think it is quite important, and it is being dealt with. The Opposition is scraping the bottom of the barrel in order to hold up the legitimate business of the House. I do not consider this motion to be legitimate business in the terms of an adjournment motion, but it is before the Chair and I shall deal with it.

The Leader of the Opposition has dealt fully with the annual report of the judges of the Supreme Court. It is interesting to note that the report does not actually have to be presented to the Parliament, but it has been a tradition that it be transmitted to the Parliament by the Attorney-General. I think it is a good thing that that is the tradition, and I am glad the report comes to the Parliament.

The Leader of the Opposition used the report as the basis for his motion. It contains fourteen pages, two or

three of which deal with accommodation in the Supreme Court in Melbourne, so it is a matter of perspective. It is nonsense to say that the facilities at the Supreme Court are inadequate in a total sense.

Mr. WILKES: The judges say that they are.

Mr. WILCOX: The judges do not say that they are inadequate. If honorable members would take the trouble to read the report they would see that that is not so. If I am given the opportunity, I will go into that part of the report in total. It is nonsense to say that the facilities at the Supreme Court are inadequate, and more than nonsense to say by clear inference that the judges are unable to do their job.

Mr. HOLDING: They say that that is so.

Mr. WILCOX: The judges of the Supreme Court do not say in their report that they are unable to carry out their duties. I have great confidence in Their Honours, and I know they would have informed the Attorney-General well before the present time if they found that they were unable to perform their duties. There is no doubt that what the judges have done in their annual report is to point out some of the inadequacies of accommodation, and in so far as they picked out three courts out of fifteen, I agree with them.

There are fifteen court rooms available in Melbourne for twenty judges. The judges' own figures are that three judges sit as the Full Court and usually occupy the First Court for the whole of the month. Two or three judges are on circuit and sometimes one judge is on sabbatical leave. I understand that each year one of the judges is on sabbatical leave for more than half the effective time of the court sitting during the year, so that immediately the figure of twenty is reduced to eighteen. Then one takes the two or three judges who are on circuit, the one on sabbatical leave, and there are fifteen judges occupied and fifteen courts for them to sit in.

The judges go on in their annual report to say that on occasions they are able to make use of four court rooms. They would not use the four rooms at the one time because there is no need for that, but the four courts which can be made available to them are situated in the High Court building and the Industrial Court building, both of which are occupied by the Commonwealth. The judges can on odd occasions—because that is all there is a need for—use one of those courts. The Commonwealth does not like them doing it, and I do not blame it for that, but that can be done. The matter must be seen in perspective.

On the subject of accommodation, it is worth looking at the statistics on the various matters that come before the courts. The great burden derives from divorce, which is Commonwealth jurisdiction, about which something can be said later. Mention could also be made of the situation in the circuit courts. I repeat that it is nonsense to say that the judges are unable to do their job, and it is a reflection on the judges to say so. I know the judges well enough to say that if they could not do their job they would tell me promptly.

To the best of my knowledge, I have not received a letter from the judges during the sixteen months I have been Attorney-General. I do not blame the judges for making something of these three courts in their annual report. I have conceded that the courts need considerable improvement, and I am prepared to agree with the cynic who said that there are no votes in the Law Department. There is a good deal of truth in that statement. I am also prepared to concede that some sections in the Law Department could use more staff.

Most of the other court rooms are in a good state of repair except for the Fourth Court—the criminal court—which is now in the process

of renovation. Only the other day one of the judges asked: "Have you seen the criminal court since it has been restored? It is magnificent." It is all a matter of perspective. The judges went on to say, *inter alia*—

> The position will be alleviated when the proposal to convert the old Crown Law Building for court purposes is implemented.

The judges, being human beings, understandably are looking for additional chamber space for themselves. That is human enough; when the old Crown Law Building in Lonsdale Street is converted, it will include additional office space for the judges. It is a waste of time of the House to debate a motion of this nature, although I am happy to place on record that, so far as I am concerned, the administration of justice is not being delayed; but I concede it could be better performed if three of the fifteen courts were improved.

I should like to refer to the matter that the Leader of the Opposition raised in relation to a letter that I wrote to the Premier. It is correct that he had the letter.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: You wrote to the Premier, and the Leader of the Opposition had a copy of it?

Mr. WILCOX: Yes; it is interesting. Members of the press gallery came to see me to check.

Mr. WILKES: What about the spies?

Mr. WILCOX: It is unfortunate that the honorable member referred to spies, because obviously the honorable member has his own spies in the Premier's Department.

Mr. HOLDING: What about the personal letter that you sent to me and which was addressed to the Chief Secretary? I opened it and forwarded it to the Chief Secretary.

Mr. WILCOX: That was an unfortunate happening.

Mr. HOLDING: Was it a matter of spies?

Mr. WILCOX: It was not a matter of spies. It was a "foul-up" in the Law Department. Because some criticism has been made of the Law Department, I am glad to say that the letter, which was obtained by the Leader of the Opposition from the Government service, came from the Premier's Department.

Mr. HOLDING: You are not entitled to say that; you have no idea from where I got it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. McLaren): Order! The honorable gentleman has one more minute.

On the motion of Mr. WILKES (Northcote), Standing Order No. 8B was suspended to enable the Attorney-General to continue his speech for ten minutes.

Mr. HOLDING: Tell me more about spies.

Mr. WILCOX: It is unfortunate that this matter came up at this time of the morning because it is an important matter of great concern that the Leader of the Opposition should be able to obtain this letter from the Premier's Department. I say that he obtained it from the Premier's Department because he produced it to members of the press who came to see me as they wanted to ensure that it was real and that it was a letter I had signed. Indeed it was a clear photostat; there was no doubt about my signature. There was no doubt that it was a photostat of a letter I had written to the Premier. In addition, it also carried on it the date stamp of the Premier's Department as having been received. This was a relief to me because at least it made it clear that the letter had been released to the honorable gentleman from the Premier's Department and not from the Law Department. This is a very grave matter, and I am glad that I have had the opportunity of putting the full facts before honorable members.

Mr. HOLDING: Actually, it is an attack on the Public Service. Is it the Public Service that you suspect? Tell us about your big inquiry.

Mr. WILCOX: I would attack any public servant who released that letter. It was a dereliction of duty.

Mr. HOLDING: When you released the letter to me was it not a dereliction of duty? If you apply the same standards to yourself you should resign.

Mr. WILCOX: If the Leader of the Opposition would let me mention the subject-matter of the letter the matter would become quite obvious. In relation to the subject-matter of the letter—this again is most important —the Leader of the Opposition has no understanding of the role of the Attorney-General or of any other Minister. The Attorney-General not only has the responsibility of administering his department, but also by long tradition has all sorts of other special duties imposed on him. One duty which is imposed on all Ministers and certainly on the Attorney-General, is to uphold the Constitution. It is interesting that although the Commonwealth Government is daily involving itself in legislation and unconstitutional administrative acts and is seeking in total to destroy the Australian Federal system, members of the Opposition in this House do not raise one voice in objection to that policy and seek to make something out of the situation of the Ministers. As the honorable gentleman disclosed, in the letter he received I was simply implementing a Cabinet decision—there is no doubt about that. The State of Victoria will fight tooth and nail to ensure that the Australian Constitution is upheld.

It is always clear to me that when members of the Opposition in this House begin barking and yapping like dogs one has touched a soft spot and is winning. We shall finally win the battle to preserve the people of Australia through the Constitution.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Honorable members have just heard an amazing explanation of a report which is an indictment of the activities of this Government, of how it treats Supreme Court judges, of the accommodation it provides for them and of how it treats the people who are forced to use the courts in this State. In particular the report adverted to the fact that there are serious backlogs in Victorian courts as well as dilapidated and unhealthy court rooms where justice is administered at a Supreme Court level. The Government's answer to the pleas of the nineteen justices who signed the report is that there is nothing terribly wrong; only perhaps 20 per cent of the court rooms used by the Supreme Court judges need paint here and there or some adjustment and they would be all right. After all, three judges are always on circuit.

The Attorney-General did not say, however, that circuit judges from time to time find themselves in the position where their lists collapse. They then normally come back to Melbourne to administer justice. When they do so, no court rooms are available to them. This situation in the Supreme Court has not just happened. The Minister's predecessor, Sir George Reid, was aware of this situation and his predecessor, Sir Arthur Rylah, was also aware of it. Any improvement that has been made in the Supreme Court over the past twenty years in redecorating or rebuilding has been minor. It must be depressing for the senior judges of this State to have to administer justice under the conditions about which they have complained to the Attorney-General and which the honorable gentleman treated in a cavalier way tonight.

The Attorney-General read only the parts of the report that he regarded as satisfactory from the Government's point of view. The Government has not made any attempt to correct the situation which, according to the report, the judges have been telling the Attorney-General about for some time—26 years in regard to one aspect.

The backlog of court cases is referred to on pages 7 and 8 of the report. On page 8 the judges state that matrimonial causes continue to be difficult matters to dispose of. There are insufficient judges to dispose of these cases as promptly as they should be dealt with. The Attorney-General did not acknowledge that insufficient judges are available. The judges state that undefended petitions in which no children are involved are heard with the least delay. Undefended petitions in which children are involved are subject to the greatest delays and take longer to hear than cases in which there are no children to be considered. Undefended divorces are generally subject to a delay of about twelve months after a date of hearing has been set.

The judges also say that appeals from Magistrates Courts to a single judge of the court by way of orders to review have always been regarded as an important part of the Supreme Court jurisdiction. The appeals are on questions of law, and an order nisi to review a magistrate's decision must be obtained within one month. In 1973 there was a delay of more than six months before an appeal could be heard.

On page 9 of their report the judges state that the number of criminal trials heard in Melbourne in 1973 was eight more than in 1972, but that the volume of criminal work was in fact much larger than this quite small number might suggest. Of the 64 cases heard 32 were murder trials over which the Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction. Thirteen of these trials occupied five or more sitting days. In the case of *The Queen* v. *Lawless*, the trial of the accused proceeded for seven sitting days when a retrial was ordered. The retrial lasted 31 days. A number of non-capital trials were extremely lengthy. The kidnapping case consisted of three trials.

On page 10 in their comments on new business the judges mention the increase in business in certain jurisdictions. On page 11, to which the Attorney-General briefly adverted, the judges said that 15 court rooms are available in Melbourne for a court consisting of 20 judges, the result being that 3 judges sit as the Full Court and generally occupy the First or "Banco" Court for the whole of each month. Two or three judges are on circuit each month. If these judges found that their lists collapsed, all cases being settled, they could return and sit in Melbourne if court rooms were available. This would overcome some of the backlog in the administration of justice.

Fourteen judges occupy the Second Court to the Fifteenth Court. Thus the court room accommodation in the Law Courts is always fully occupied. Not only is there no room for expansion but at times a judge is available to sit in Melbourne but is unable to do so for want of an available court room. The judge therefore has no job to do, although there is a backlog in trials in both civil and criminal jurisdictions.

Three of the court rooms, the Seventh, Fourteenth and Fifteenth, are sub-standard—the Attorney-General said that they are not the best—and it is highly regrettable that the court has to use them. These facts are being advanced not by the Opposition, but by the nineteen Supreme Court judges, including the Chief Justice. The report states that the Seventh Court is a converted room with the paint peeling off the wall and that it is entirely inadequate for counsel, solicitors and litigants. The judge must walk along a public corridor to take his seat on the bench. This must be the only State in Australia where a Supreme Court judge sits in a miserable court which is not fit for habitation and must subject himself to any of the indignities which can occur around courts by having to approach his court along a public corridor. But that is the way in which justice is

dispensed in Victoria under this Government. It shows the importance that the Government attaches to the conditions in which Supreme Court judges operate.

The Fourteenth Court has been converted from two rooms; a hole has been chopped in the wall. This court has been used as a Practice Court for at least 26 years. More practitioners and litigants attend this court than any other and it is not uncommon for scores of people to pack into this ill-ventilated room. Does the Attorney-General regard this as normal habitation in which justice is dispensed? As many actions are heard in that court each day, there ought to be adequate vestibule or foyer accommodation outside the court room where the parties and their legal advisers can confer and negotiate. However, in Melbourne they are expected to do that in the street. The Government will not provide proper accommodation and it is no wonder that the judges have submitted a report of this nature.

The judges also state that many important matters are settled outside the Practice Court—that means in the street. They state that the vestibule is small, awkwardly shaped, badly ventilated, cold in the winter and hot in the summer and that the condition of this court and its approaches are disgraceful. The Attorney-General did not say that and neither did the Opposition; the judges said that. The situation is a disgrace to the Government.

The Fifteenth Court is a curved room at the rear of the Supreme Court Library. It is dilapidated, with paint peeling off the walls in large sheets. It is of an unsuitable design for use as a court room, and is, in any event, a part of the library. Nevertheless, the judges say, it has been necessary to use it as a court room at least since the second world war. This Government has been in office too long and during all that time it has refused to provide a coat of paint for the wall of this court, which is used by the senior judges of this State, and in which advocates and others concerned with cases are compelled to congregate. How must the judges, litigants and defendants feel?

That does not matter so long as the Government can say in this House that it wants to go ahead with its Bills and that the Opposition should not dare to use this report of the judges at this time of the morning, that it is something that the House should not even consider. But this is an important matter. The Leader of the Opposition should be congratulated for raising it. If we waited for the Government to raise this matter no one would ever know what judges put up with in this State.

The judges also say that most of the other court rooms are now in a good state of repair except for the Fourth Court—the Criminal Court—which is now in the process of renovation. They point out that the eight original court rooms and the four main courts added after the second world war are large. Most are acoustically poor, but they are otherwise functional, although the larger rooms at least should be fitted with amplifying devices. The court rooms of the original buildings, according to the judges, are quite magnificent, although the facilities in them could be improved.

Finally, at page 13 of the report, the judges say that there is no scope for providing any further accommodation in the Law Courts for additional judges or their associates. Two judges occupy rooms in the library, although it is pointed out that this does not hamper the use of the library. At least two associates have to share one room. Furthermore, renovation and repair work is required in the corridors and public places.

The whole report is an indictment of the Government's lack of appreciation of the importance of the Law Courts and accommodation for the dispensation of justice. The Attorney-General made an oblique remark to the effect that the report need not

have come to Parliament. If the Opposition had not been prepared to raise this matter, no one would have been prepared to consider the problems of the judges and juries and all the other people concerned with dispensing justice in this State. The Government should take immediate action to correct this dreadful situation which exists in the courts in Melbourne as outlined by the justices in their report.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN (Dundas): I welcome the opportunity which the Opposition has provided for the House to discuss this important issue. It is obvious from a perusal of the report that physical deficiencies exist in the facilities available for the Supreme Court in Melbourne. One has only to walk around the courts to see these deficiencies. The situation has been improved over the years, but work on these buildings, like work on most old buildings, seems to be painfully slow. The main reference in the motion is to the provision of adequate facilities for the administration of justice, and the House is now considering facilities for the Supreme Court.

Mr. HOLDING: You can consider any other facilities.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: So far, the main emphasis has been on the report of the Supreme Court justices, but I want to shift that emphasis. The justices refer to the increased jurisdiction of the County Court and to the fact that this has resulted in a decrease in the number of jury matters dealt with by the Supreme Court. So let us consider the court on the other side of William Street and the facilities available there. A modern and comfortable building has all the features desirable for courts. Ideally, that is what is wanted for the Supreme Court.

The County Court premises contain adequate facilities for waiting jurors, excellent facilities for counsel and solicitors to interview their clients, facilities for interpreters, adoption suites, and all the other basic facilities required for the dispensation of justice. As I have pointed out, there has been a considerable increase in the amount of the work of the County Court.

If honorable members examine page 10 of the report of the Supreme Court judges, they will find that there has been a decrease in judge and jury actions from 1,495 in 1972 to 1,097 in 1973. One of the reasons for the decrease is that claims for personal injuries arising out of motor car accidents or industrial accidents, formerly instituted in the Supreme Court, are now being instituted in the County Court following the increased jurisdiction of that court. The County Court is assuming a more important responsibility in the administration of justice. I believe honorable members should keep the whole question in proper perspective.

Another feature of the administration of justice is to be found on page 6 of the report, which refers to the high percentage of cases that do not come before the court. The report refers to the many cases settled after they have been set down for hearing. The judges state that the percentage is high not only for actions set down for trial before a judge and jury but also for cases before a judge alone. Figures published by the County Court within the past twelve months indicate that of all cases instituted, only 10 per cent are set down for hearing and of that 10 per cent, only 2·5 per cent go to trial. The inference can be drawn that insurance companies do not meaningfully negotiate until the matter is set down for hearing and that is one reason why many cases do not reach the court.

It is also apparent from the report that there has been a large increase in the work of the circuit courts, which sit outside Melbourne. The work of the circuit courts is important as more than 1 million people reside outside the metropolis. Country residents are entitled to the same recourse to justice as people who reside in Melbourne. In fact, they

get a much better service because the waiting lists in the country are smaller.

I refer honorable members to the figures appearing on page 5 of the report. Section B relates to sittings of the court on circuit. The number of cases disposed of by trial by judge and jury increased by 30 per cent. In the case of undefended matrimonial cases, the number of cases disposed of increased by 85 per cent. To me that is not the sign of a system which is in decay but a system which is coping satisfactorily with a growth situation.

On page 5, honorable members will also find statistics relating to new proceedings commenced. In the issue of writs for trial by judge alone there has been a significant decrease. The decrease has occurred because the County Court is taking over more of the functions of the Supreme Court, and again I speak from local experience.

In Hamilton, each year there are two sittings of the Supreme Court and three sittings of the County Court. When a case is set down for hearing at that venue, often it is heard within twelve months. It is sometimes even heard within three months of an accident occurring, which is a remarkable record. It is usually found that quick justice is administered in country areas because usually good facilities are provided for the circuit judges. Also, a much better and more personal relationship exists with the judiciary. This helps in bringing justice to the people. A ceremony is conducted at the opening of the circuit court and all citizens in the community are invited to attend to let them know that they are part of the court process and that the court process is not above the people but for the people.

Honorable members opposite should keep the debate in proper perspective and I summarize it in this way: Honorable members have ignored the improvements that have taken place in the County Court jurisdiction and its facilities, and the subsequent increase in jurisdiction imposed on that court must increase the work load of that court. I admit that there are deficiencies in the physical facilities available to the Supreme Court. I share the view of the Attorney-General, who looks forward to the day when large sums of money are made available for the renovation of the Supreme Court building.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne). Before rising I paused for a moment to see whether a member of the Country Party would rise, but the rigours of the session appear to have exhausted the Country Party—it has not been a good day for them.

Mr. McINNES: The Country Party has a higher percentage of members present than the Labor Party.

Mr. JONES: That is probably true, but we have a higher proportion awake. When the debate for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency was adjourned, the Country Party was not prepared to debate the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition on the question of decentralization, a question with which it should be vitally interested. Honorable members of the Country Party had the opportunity to speak but the opportunity was lost.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: The opportunity has not been lost.

Mr. JONES: The Country Party secured the motion for the adjournment of the debate. The honorable member for Gippsland East had a notice of motion on the Notice Paper but that too has fallen by the wayside. The Country Party would have had an excellent opportunity to speak on this motion about some of the deficiencies in the administration of justice in areas outside the metropolitan area. I shall be talking about the metropolitan area but I thought honorable members would have heard the honorable member for Gippsland South speak about the shocking conditions at Sale.

Everything that the honorable member for Dundas said was perfectly correct. My colleagues, the

Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, quite correctly concentrated their remarks on the facilities in the Supreme Court. That is the apex of the pyramid. From a physical point of view—and this affects the work load and so on—in some ways the judges of the Supreme Court operate under better conditions than judges in some other courts. From a physical point of view the County Court has the best provision of all at the moment. However, the question before the House does not revolve around the provision of physical facilities in courts but seeks the provision of adequate facilities in seeking justice for those who reside in the State of Victoria.

In the case of the County Court, despite the increase in the number of County Court judges to 25, the waiting time for cases to be heard is increasing, and this is particularly so in criminal cases. There has been a tendency in recent years for the Supreme Court to deal with a smaller number of criminal matters and for the County Court to deal with an increasing number. However, the time lag between apprehension and the commencement of the trial is getting longer and longer.

Unfortunately, one is not able to provide up-to-date statistics for the County Court because, unlike the judges of the Supreme Court who furnish to the Governor an annual report, which is passed on to this House, the judges of the County Court are under no obligation to provide an annual statistical report. One would have thought the Attorney-General could find time to devote his considerable energies to this aspect. The Attorney-General could suggest to the judges of the County Court that they provide this House with an annual report so that honorable members could compare the work of the Supreme Court with what the judges of the County Court are doing.

There are also 60 magistrates who operate a total of approximately 200 Magistrates Courts throughout the metropolitan area. The conditions in the City Court are deplorable, as they are in many of the courts located in inner-metropolitan areas. For example, if a crowd is congregated at the City Court on a Monday morning and it starts to rain, the people have to huddle under the verandas of the court. The working conditions are extremely degrading.

If the Attorney-General were to make a visit to the court on any sitting morning he would come away disgusted with the realization that counsel have to consult with their clients under extremely disadvantageous conditions which are not at all conducive to the proper administration of justice. Certainly the physical conditions of many of the courts are very bad. The City Court and a number of inner-metropolitan courts are extremely overcrowded and have poor facilities. As a result, the typical situation is that people are simply hanging around outside and that is where consultations have to take place. Therefore, the administration of justice is not merely a matter of the provision of buildings. It is also entails the provision of facilities of various types.

One of the most deplorable aspects of the administration of justice in this State is the failure of the State Government to make itself responsible for the provision of legal aid in civil cases. I have mentioned this before and no doubt will do so again. It is true that the Public Solicitor will provide assistance in criminal matters where indigent persons are charged with indictable offences. In the case of persons who are liable to be tried summarily, an increasing number go to court and are tried without benefit of counsel.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS : They might do better.

Mr. JONES : That may be right, but if one looks at the statistics compiled in a recent survey carried out in New South Wales and compares the fate of persons who were summarily tried and who appeared with representation as against those

who appeared without representation, one finds that there was a striking divergence in the penalties.

I have always been attracted by the judgment of the United States Supreme Court in the famous case known as "Gideon's Case". The citation is 1963, 372 U.S. 335. In that case the United States Supreme Court made the point in its head note that —

> The right of an indigent defendant in a criminal trial to have the assistance of counsel is a fundamental right essential to a fair trial, and petitioner's trial and conviction without the assistance of counsel violated the Fourteenth Amendment.

We have the continual situation in which prisoners come before the court without legal assistance of any kind or access to legal advice. They have theoretical access but not real access. This is deplorable. It is true that the Attorney-General might well reply that if every person accused before a court actually had the benefit of counsel and counsel argued on his behalf, this would enormously slow up the work of the courts, and make the courts even more crowded. Of course that is so, but how else can a court system be run? Whether it is said that if a person can afford to have counsel or can persuade someone to go along on the basis of deferred payment of the fee, he can appear on that person's behalf, but if a person is poor he just takes his chance and hopes the magistrate will be lenient. There may be factors a person does not understand about his case. There may be factors he can raise in his own defence. I quote briefly from the very moving words of Mr. Justice Sutherland in the United States case of *Powell* v. *Alabama*. He said —

> The right to be heard would be, in many cases, of little avail if it did not comprehend the right to be heard by counsel. Even the intelligent and educated layman has small and sometimes no skill in the science of law. If charged with crime, he is incapable, generally, of determining for himself whether the indictment is good or bad. He is unfamiliar with the rules of evidence. Left without the aid of counsel he may be put on trial without a proper charge, and convicted upon incompetent evidence, or evidence irrelevant to the issue or otherwise inadmissible. He lacks both the skill and knowledge adequately to prepare his defence, even though he have a perfect one. He requires the guiding hand of counsel at every step in the proceedings against him. Without it though he be not guilty, he faces the danger of conviction because he does not know how to establish his innocence.

I make the point that the right of access to counsel is essential to the provision of a system of justice. To speak of justice under the law becomes an absurdity if the defendant has the right to punish. I think it was Anatole France who referred scathingly to the "majestic equality of the law which forbids poor and rich alike to sleep under the bridges of Paris, and beg for bread in the streets". Where the poor are concerned, the motion is a failure if the Government does not provide adequate facilities for the administration of justice. Adequate administration of justice is not achieved when the poor are disadvantaged when they appear in court. This is not simply a motion about physical facilities. It is a motion about the whole spirit and intention of the law. If the law means anything it should mean equal rights for every man.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: The honorable member is not fair dinkum.

Mr. JONES: I leave that to the House to judge. I represent an electorate, a large proportion of which consists of poor people.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: There are no poor people in Melbourne: The Lord Mayor says so.

Mr. JONES: He is not my Lord Mayor.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: The Labor Party put him there.

Mr. JONES: I am depressed that the Attorney-General, whose energies could have made him a great reforming Attorney-General who could have tackled a number of these issues such as the failure of the Government to provide a legal system for the indigent, has instead seen fit to engage in constant tiltings at windmills against the Australian Government. I found his attempt to involve the then Chief Justice and

now the Governor, Sir Henry Winneke, in his campaign against the Commonwealth Human Rights Bill a deplorable exercise. He is quite happy to continue his crusade against the Australian Government but when we asked him to provide the House with a reasoned statement of his case and to table his correspondence with the Chief Justice, he declined to do so. I thought it was a reasonable request.

The list in the Supreme Court judges report of the number of cases waiting to be determined appears to be satisfactory, but I suggest that it is misleading. It is fair to say that because of the long delays in actions, litigants often feel obliged to settle without going to court, because after a period of two years or so precise recollection of the facts in a case becomes blurred. If the matter is settled expeditiously the case may be decided one way, but if the matter is long delayed it may very well be decided differently.

The Attorney-General should give serious consideration to the suggestion of the Australian Government Attorney-General, Senator Lionel Murphy, that courts should be open for longer hours. This is true of the Parliament as well, of course, but certainly the courts should be prepared to sit in shifts as required.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. McLaren): Order! The honorable member's time has expired.

Mr. McINNES (Gippsland South): I take up the challenge issued by the honorable member for Melbourne that members of the Country Party should show some interest in this matter. I had intended to participate in the debate in any case. However, not having the sort of familiarity with courts that my legal friends have, I am probably a little like a lamb being led to the slaughter.

The motion relates to a report which has been presented by the justices of the Supreme Court of Victoria. Sub-paragraph (*ii*) of paragraph 1 of the report refers to the requirement for the judges to report on what amendments or alterations it would be expedient to make for the better administration of justice. Accordingly, the motion is perhaps relevant to this matter. However, the omission in the report is that it deals not with the whole of the Supreme Court but with only that part which is situated in the metropolitan area. I remind honorable members that justice is spread throughout the State and that Sale has the only Supreme Court situated east of Dandenong.

The physical condition of the Supreme Court building at Sale is well known to me and perhaps I am on sounder ground in dealing with that matter because one does not need to be a lawyer to know that a building is falling down or is in an inadequate state of repair. It has been reported to the Attorney-General that the condition of the building warrants attention. On occasions, when rain is leaking through the roof, litigants and barristers in the court have to wear galoshes. The building is inadequate in other respects. For instance, the jury room has only one toilet, and this can cause embarrassment when members of the fairer sex are on the jury. Difficulties are experienced by judges and barristers with the changing rooms and other facilities. Indeed, one magistrate refuses to use portion of the court house because of its inadequacy. I make a plea to the Attorney-General to consider the physical state of the building and the circumstances in which justice is dispensed in country areas as well as in the metropolitan area.

Whilst I would never reflect upon the integrity of justices in this State, undoubtedly people must be affected by their surroundings. I often wonder what effect a dull, listless, grey court room has on those present in the court, particularly the unfortunate litigants who are unfamiliar with court proceedings and are rather apprehensive of them. To the hardened criminal, I do not suppose

the surroundings mean very much, and they may make no difference to the judges. I often wonder whether the surroundings in a court room in Melbourne or anywhere else can result in a person receiving a heavier sentence than he might otherwise receive.

The Opposition has tried to make a case on the failure of the Government to provide adequate facilities for the administration of justice. Undoubtedly, lawyers argue a case around a particular word or phrase and, although I am unfamiliar with the practice, I have to try to do the same thing in assessing whether the motion should be supported. I refer honorable members back to the requirement that the judges have to report on what alterations it would be expedient to make for the better administration of justice, whereas the motion deals only with adequate facilities for the administration of justice. This leads to some doubt whether the Country Party should support the motion.

In this connection, I would have preferred the Attorney-General to exhibit more concern for the comments of the judges of the Supreme Court. They are an honourable body in the community and I doubt whether they would make the sort of comments that one hears from members of the teachers' organizations in Victoria. Undoubtedly, more weight could be placed upon their words on matters concerning not only the physical construction of court houses but also the manner in which justice is dispensed.

In their report the judges recommend the appointment of additional judges.

Mr. WILCOX: They do not say that.

Mr. McINNES: On page 8, the report states—

> Matrimonial clauses continue to be difficult matters to dispose of. There are insufficient judges to dispose of these matters as promptly as they should be.

Surely, the need for the appointment of more judges is implicit in that statement. That is my interpretation but perhaps the Minister, being a lawyer, interprets it differently.

In one area of law—that of divorce—delays are a continual source of complaint by litigants. An honorable member has interjected that people "want to get out of it quickly". I agree that that may be so, but I suppose in divorce proceedings there is some justification for taking things slowly, and I am sure the judges take the delays into consideration.

Reverting to the Supreme Court at Sale, I should like to say that although I do not have the figures with me at the moment, I did provide the Attorney-General with information indicating the amount of business transacted at that court over the past ten or fifteen years. There is no question that the amount of business transacted at Sale and other provincial centres has increased quite dramatically. A comment supporting the statement is contained in this report. Speaking again of the physical condition of the courts, I am reminded of a comment made by a former Chief Justice and Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, Sir Edmund Herring, when he was one of the judges on the panel at the premier town contest held last year. When the name of Sale was mentioned, the learned judge said that the only thing he remembered about Sale was the dreadful state of the court room. I am sure His Honour saw more of Sale than the court rooms. He is a wise and intelligent person. If a Chief Justice is moved to make such a comment, one is bound to take notice.

I have made my comments in answer to the honorable member for Melbourne that we are very concerned in this general matter. Frankly, I do not know that I would be prepared to vote with the Opposition on the motion, because the argument turns around the weighting of a particular word, and whether the

facilities are "sufficient" or "adequate" for the better administration of justice. I would need legal counsel to decide how one should look at that matter in law.

Mr. DOUBE: You only have to decide on the facts.

Mr. McINNES: That is right, and the facts before me certainly place a doubt in my mind. This is the first report I have ever seen from the judges, and the only time scale that is evident in it is the reference to the Law Courts building which should have been completed two years ago. This is also a serious matter, and adverting to a discussion on schools that was held last evening I think we all know that it takes a long time for Government action to be translated into physical repairs to a building. I am not sure, however, whether there are sufficient grounds for supporting the motion on that point either. I should certainly like to see a future report to determine whether the other matters mentioned by the justices in regard to the build-up in the number of cases and the delay in getting them to the courts warrant the Attorney-General's close attention.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds): The honorable member for Gippsland South said that he would require legal assistance to interpret what was meant by the phrase "adequate facilities for the administration of justice in Victoria". One does not need to be a lawyer or have a legal opinion; it is for the House to decide whether the motion stands or fails.

This debate is unique, because judges' reports have never before been debated in Parliament. They have been coming into Parliament since about 1961. The report is presented in accordance with the provisions of section 28 of the Supreme Court Act, which requires the Supreme Court judges to report annually to the Governor, and states that the judges are to report on—

> . . . what other provisions, if any, which cannot be carried into effect without the authority of Parliament it would be expedient to make for the better administration of justice.

The judges say in their report—

> We therefore take this opportunity to comment upon the matters which we consider should be rectified and to present to you information concerning what has transpired during 1973.

Previous speakers have gone into detail about the accommodation at the Supreme Court in Melbourne, and it is important for the House to know precisely what these distinguished jurists consider necessary for the proper administration of the courts of Victoria. The photostated signatures of nineteen judges appear on my copy of the report, including that of the Chief Justice, and those of Sir George Pape, Justices Little, Gillard, Starke and Menhennitt. These men could not be considered to be uninformed about the circumstances of the conditions in which they work. They are distinguished in their field. They said all the things which were stated by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. On page 13 of the report the judges state—

> **In the meantime great inconvenience and a grave shortage of court room facilities, with consequent wastage of public moneys, are being suffered by the court.**

This is the most important and relevant section of the report, that a great deal of wastage of public money is being suffered by the court in the administration of justice. This is not a new thing, because a great deal of information is contained in the 1968 report of the judges, in which Their Honors complained about their accommodation in the courts. They said this—

> In the beginning of 1968 the Building Sub-Committee of Judges, referred to in the last two reports, made an appreciation of the building requirements for the Court to the year 2000 Anno Domino. After investigating the potentiality of the present building, and hereby discovering its deficiencies, the Sub-Committee reported to the Council of Judges that, with the expansion of the

Court, the present building was quite inadequate to meet the demands of Court space, jurors' accommodation, including provision for women jurors, and the accommodation of the judges and administrative staff. Accordingly, it recommended the radical course of demolishing a portion of the east wing and erecting thereon an eight-story building with foundations for the provision for a further two floors in the future to provide eight new courts and appropriate facilities for judges, jurors and staffs.

The Council of Judges consists of men who are doing their jobs like any other members of the community. They are well rewarded for their efforts, but why should they work in conditions in a building which, if City of Melbourne health officers were as observant as the health officer at Essendon, would have been condemned or made subject to a repair order by the Housing Commission? If nothing were done from 1968 to 1974 a demolition order would have been placed on the building and people would not be able to occupy it. These are two sets of rules in the community.

I know the House is very interested in these reports, because the information has never before been given to the House. The 1968 report went on to say—

In the meantime, the sub-committee,—

that is the sub-committee trying to organize better quarters for the judges and the people who go to see whether they can get justice—

with the assistance of Mr. Dunn, an architect from the Public Works Department, has gone ahead to improvise, so that the present accommodation might be made available for use by members of the court, the personnel of which is expected to increase in 1969.

They had to improvise; there was no hope of getting the new building, because there were no votes in the Law Department.

Therefore it was decided to improvise, and the architect from the Public Works Department was brought in to look at the position. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, a hole was knocked in the wall to get into another room which was part of the library. The report then continued—

In such improvization, no accommodation can be made available for new court rooms or other requirements of the court.

The judges were whistling to the wind. The next report relating to the accommodation for the judges was signed by seventeen judges, one of which was the Chief Justice—now the Governor of Victoria—Sir Henry Winneke. Sir Henry Winneke had this to say about the accommodation—

There are at present fifteen rooms which are being put to use as court rooms within the Supreme Court. One of these is makeshift and has been taken from the library to which it will have shortly to be returned and of which it forms an integral part.

An incredible situation is revealed when the facts of this report are aired in Parliament. They went on to report—

Two of the remaining rooms used as courts were not built as such and are quite unsuitable for normal judicial use. If the Full Court is sitting and only one judge is on circuit, the available court rooms will just be sufficient to allow each judge to be employed in court, with the continued adoption of unsatisfactory improvisation with regard to two rooms. Should the Full Court not be sitting and two judges are on circuit there will be, after the library resumes the space now serving as the fifteenth court, insufficient courts in which all the present number of judges can sit.

Time will not allow me to go through the relevant sections of this report because I wish to refer to the report now before the House. It states, *inter alia*—

We feel bound, therefore, again to point out the futility of considering the appointment of additional judges, unless and until substantial building additions are undertaken to provide not only courts, but the necessary concomitant accommodation for judges, associates, tipstaffs, other court officials and the necessary amenities to service any such additional courts.

It is no wonder that Sir Henry Winneke grabbed at the new job! The report continued—

> To this end we refer to and repeat the recommendations contained in paragraph 7 of our report for 1968 for the provision of additional court facilities on the present Supreme Court site.

At page 13 the report stated—

> In the meantime great inconvenience and a grave shortage of court room facilities, with consequent wastage of public moneys, are being suffered by the courts.

If the Government cannot provide accommodation for the adequate administration of justice, how can it claim that it is providing sufficient facilities for people to obtain justice at the Supreme Court level? Honorable members have referred to Magistrates Courts and County Courts. A further aspect in the provision of better facilities for the administration of justice is the provision in the Magistrates Courts of a duty counsel to assist the poor people who are unrepresented at the stage when their cases are being heard. If any good is to come from this debate that aspect ought to be considered.

Honorable members now learn that magistrates do not inform people before the court of bail procedures. Many people are required to obtain this information without assistance, and they are unaware of court procedures. I support the motion before the House; it would be in the best interests of justice if the motion for the adjournment of the House were agreed to.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition for moving this motion, and members of the Opposition who have contributed to the debate. I include also the members for Dundas and Gippsland South because their remarks were well worth listening to. The debate has been refreshing. The Government believes that Parliament is a rubber stamp for Government business, and usually talks about items which have little relevance to the people outside. One of the reasons why Parliament might be drifting away from the people is that honorable members do not talk about the subjects in which people are interested, but deal mainly with "tinpot" amendments to Government legislation. This debate has been most informative.

The Attorney-General said that he thought the debate was hardly worth while and that the matter raised by the Opposition in the early hours of the morning was not a subject about which honorable members should be talking. This is an odd attitude for an honorable member holding the important position of Attorney-General. It must be realized that it is by an Act of Parliament that the judges make their annual report to the Government in the hope that these matters should be rectified. Time and time again in past reports the judges have complained, but the Minister has done nothing. The report which honorable members are considering is couched in careful language, which one would expect, but there is no doubt that it is an indictment of this Government. It states, firstly, that there are insufficient judges. The Government has done nothing about it; it takes no notice of the judges of the Supreme Court.

Secondly, the judges pointed out that they require legislative amendments, but again the Government has done nothing about it. Thirdly, they point out that their accommodation is disgraceful. The Minister said that only three courts are referred to, but that represents 25 per cent of the total accommodation. The situation is serious when Supreme Court judges state that point to the Governor.

Mr. WILCOX: Your arithmetic is not correct.

Mr. DOUBE: The Minister should examine the report. There are fifteen courts; three of them are described as disgraceful, and one is in the process of being renovated.

We are speaking about a substantial percentage of the number of court rooms available and yet the Minister is still adopting the attitude that the figures are wrong. Even 10 per cent would be a disgrace. This Government has become so used to portables and to second-rate accommodation over many years for children in schools, that it cannot lift its collective mind to the proposition of something better than second class.

Mr. WILCOX: Does the honorable member think the Law Department could have some of the education money?

Mr. DOUBE: The Government is receiving more education money from the Federal Government than it has ever had before.

Mr. WILCOX: Does the honorable member think the Law Department could have some of that?

Mr. DOUBE: A remark like that could be expected from a bankrupt Minister. The honorable gentleman cannot see any way out of this problem other than to take money from education. He knows that money could be found for this important work. To have people, whether they are defendants, convicted persons, judges, lawyers, barristers or clerks working in the conditions that apply in those three courts is disgraceful. It is no good the Minister at this point of time saying that the Government stood there like the figure of justice balancing whether it would put money into improving the courts or into building another portable at some school which was bereft of accommodation. The Minister is trying to get off the hook. He has received these reports from year to year and if he had been here when the honorable member for Moonee Ponds made his valuable contribution, he would have heard the 1969 pleas of the Supreme Court judges, the 1970 pleas of those judges and later their request, under section 28 of the Supreme Court Act, that something be done to alleviate their position. As was pointed out, nothing has been done and their wishes have been ignored.

One of the points which has been mentioned previously and which should be mentioned again is the comment that appeals from Magistrates Courts to a single judge of the court by way of orders to review have always been regarded as an important part of the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The appeals are on questions of law and an *order nisi* to review a magistrate's decision must be obtained within one month. In 1973 it took more than six months before the appeal itself could be heard. These cases are put into the miscellaneous court list where they await their turn. What sort of justice is that? Apparently the Minister can see nothing wrong with the peeling paint, the overheated court rooms in summer, the ice-cold court rooms in winter, and the lack of accommodation which prevents courts from operating with dignity. The Opposition believes that is not good enough. I support the Leader of the Opposition, who raised this matter. I commend the justices but I condemn the Minister and his Government for having taken no notice of pleas made over many years.

The House divided on the motion (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler in the chair)—

Ayes	..	19
Noes	..	44
Majority against the motion	..	25

AYES.

Mr. Amos	Mr. Kirkwood
Mr. Bornstein	Mr. Lind
Mr. Curnow	Mr. Mutton
Mr. Doube	Mr. Simmonds
Mr. Edmunds	Mr. Trezise
Mr. Fogarty	Mr. Wilkes
Mr. Fordham	Mr. Wilton
Mr. Ginifer	*Tellers:*
Mr. Jones	Mr. Roper
Mr. Holding	Mr. Stirling

NOES.

Mr. Austin	Mr. McInnes
Mr. Balfour	Mr. McKellar
Mr. Baxter	Mr. McLaren
Mr. Billing	Mr. Meagher
Mr. Birrell	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Borthwick	Mr. Ramsay
Mr. Burgin	Mr. Reese
Mr. Chamberlain	Mr. Ross-Edwards
Mr. Crellin	Mr. Scanlan
Mr. Dixon	Mr. Skeggs
Mr. Ebery	Mr. Smith (*Warrnambool*)
Mr. Evans (*Ballaarat North*)	Mr. Stephen
Mr. Evans (*Gippsland East*)	Mr. Suggett
Mrs. Goble	Sir Edgar Tanner
Mr. Guy	Mr. Templeton
Mr. Hamer	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Hann	Mr. Vale
Mr. Hayes	Mr. Whiting
Mr. Jona	Mr. Wilcox
Mr. Loxton	Mr. Williams
Mr. McCabe	*Tellers:*
Mr. McClure	Mr. Plowman
	Mr. Wood

RACING (FURTHER AMENDMENT) BILL.

For **Mr. DIXON** (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation), Mr. I. W. Smith (Minister of Agriculture) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Racing Act 1958 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriture) : I move—

That the Bill be printed and, by leave, the second reading be made an Order of the Day for later this day.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition) : Leave is refused.

It was ordered that the Bill be printed and the second reading be made an Order of the Day for next day.

CRIMES (INHUMANE PUNISHMENTS ABOLITION) BILL.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to abolish certain inhumane punishments and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

TATTERSALL CONSULTATIONS (SOCCER FOOTBALL POOLS) BILL.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to amend the Tattersall Consultations Act 1958 to enable soccer football pools to be promoted and conducted in Victoria.

Honorable members will recall that in 1972 the Tattersall Consultations Act was amended to authorize Tattersall's by way of licence to conduct football pools based on the results of Australian rules football matches played by the Victorian Football League. The pools did not capture the imagination of the public. They were not supported by the public and from a revenue-raising point of view they were a dismal failure.

The amending Bill will revoke the old licence and enable a new licence to be issued to Tattersall's to promote and conduct pools on soccer football matches played in Australia, the United Kingdom and elsewhere. The new licence will also authorize Tattersall's, as the promoter of the pools, to engage any other person to promote and conduct soccer pools on its behalf.

If the proposed legislation is acceptable to the Parliament, Vernons Pools, a firm with considerable experience in the operation of soccer pools in the United Kingdom, will be engaged by Tattersall's to promote and conduct the pools on behalf of Tattersall's.

The Bill provides for 37 per cent of the total amount subscribed in each pool to be paid by way of prizes and for 30 per cent of the total pool to be paid to the Consolidated Fund. It is intended that one-third of that 30 per cent will be paid to the Mental Hospitals Fund, and the remaining two-thirds will be paid to the Sports and Recreation Fund.

As penalties for offences under the Tattersall Consultations Act have not been varied since the Act

was first enacted in 1954 the opportunity has been taken of having these penalties increased.

The Bill also provides for consequential amendments to be made to sections 14 and 15 of the Youth, Sport and Recreation Act 1972 and section 5 of the Lotteries, Gaming and Betting Act 1966.

The principal Act provides for the making of regulations by the Governor in Council and it will be necessary to prescribe, by regulation, the rules under which the soccer football pools will be conducted. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. WILKES (Northcote), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.

PAY-ROLL TAX (RATE) BILL.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This is a short and simple Bill, which gives effect, in Victoria, to the decision taken by all Premiers at the Premiers Conference on 7th June to increase the rate of pay-roll tax from 4·5 per cent to 5 per cent.

The decision taken at the Premiers Conference followed the refusal of the Federal Government to provide any additional grants to supplement tax reimbursement grants calculated under the formula. All Premiers pointed out that such additional funds would have been consistent with the additional grants which had been paid in previous years. If additional financial assistance was not granted for 1974-75 the States would be forced to raise their own taxes and charges to cover their Budget needs. All Premiers recognized that this increase in pay-roll tax would have an inflationary effect and would increase the cost of goods and services. However, because of the attitude of the Federal Government and because of the limited tax fields available to the States, the Premiers were left with no option but to increase pay-roll tax.

As agreed by all States the new rate of pay-roll tax will apply to wages paid or payable on or after 1st September, 1974. The increase in revenue from this Bill is estimated to be $23 million for 1974-75.

For the information of honorable members, and also the business community generally, I want to say at this stage that the Government intends to introduce shortly another Bill amending the Pay-roll Tax Act to close a loophole, the use of which is becoming widespread and is causing a significant loss of revenue.

The Pay-roll Tax Act contains a general exemption from tax for the first $20,800 of wages paid by an employer in a year. This exemption was designed for the benefit of the small business man, but it is being used by larger organizations to reduce their pay-roll tax liability and, in some cases, to avoid pay-roll tax altogether. This is being done by splitting what is really one business entity into a number of parts to obtain the benefit of multiple exemptions.

The measure to be introduced shortly is designed to close this loophole. It will apply to wages paid or payable on or after 1st October, 1974. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. WILKES (Northcote), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.

FISHERIES BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It amends the Fisheries Act 1968. In December, 1967, a Fisheries Bill was enacted for the purpose of providing a new licensing system and establishing a Fisheries Research Fund into which all moneys raised from

licence fees were to be placed and —excepting a 10 per cent administrative charge—used to provide finance for research into Victorian and adjacent fisheries.

Under the 1967 Act the Minister was obliged when considering applications for additional fishing licences, to have regard not only to the welfare of the fishery concerned but also to the persons engaged in the industry concerned. The Act effectively preserved the right of persons engaged in the different fisheries to be licensed in respect of those fisheries, and empowered the Minister to refuse entry into fisheries which were being heavily exploited or in danger of over-exploitation.

The provisions of the 1967 code, together with modifications and amendments, were re-enacted in the 1968 Act which spelt out new policies for research, conservation and management which have since been pursued in the administration of Victorian fisheries.

The Victorian fishing industry has developed dramatically over the past ten years. Lakes Entrance is now one of the largest fishing ports in Australia. The Victorian abalone catch is the second highest of any State in Australia, and that fishery has been maintained at its optimum only because of good management. Uncontrolled entry into the abalone fishery would have resulted in overfishing of the stocks and detriment to the welfare of all those persons engaged in the several sectors of this industry.

An industry of the size and potential of the Victorian fishing industry needs sensible planning by industry as well as Government to ensure its continued development and viability. I am therefore delighted to see responsible fishermen becoming organized and affiliating with the Victorian Farmers Union as a Commercial Fisheries Section. Fishermen are also represented on the Victorian Branch Committee of the Australian Fishing Industry Council.

Over the past two years some of the moneys accumulated in the Fisheries Research Fund have, together with Commonwealth funds, been used to finance an exploratory fishing programme in Bass Strait by Victorian shark fishermen who were adversely affected by the prohibition of the taking and marketing of large snapper shark. The projects were designed to investigate hitherto unexploited fish species and the introduction of modern fishing techniques as yet not established in Bass Strait waters. Some projects, in particular the otter trawl experiments, have been encouraging while others have proved disappointing. However, the results and knowledge obtained will prove beneficial to fishermen in demonstrating practical ways of improving their efficiency and diversifying into other fisheries.

The Government recognizes that the Victorian fishing industry has "come of age" and desires the continuing involvement of representatives of the industry to assist fisheries resource managers in reaching decisions and making recommendations on the future management of fisheries. In addition, fishermen or persons representing their interests will be given an opportunity of expressing their views when applications for commercial fishing licences are being considered.

Furthermore, it is the wish of the Government that the fishing industry be given special attention so that it may continue to progress and realize its potential.

The Bill introduces amendments which are partly designed to this end, and partly to overcome difficulties which have prevented the proper administration of fisheries and of the existing legislation.

Until now, the Fisheries and Wildlife Division has been unable to give the fishing industry the service and specialized attention that it demands. Clause 2 therefore provides for the establishment of a Commercial Fisheries Section within the division to administer all its activities relating

to the fishing industry. More staff will be needed. Although the new section will be supported by existing staff of the division, additional field people will be required.

I am already considering proposals for the appointment of additional marine and supervising fisheries inspectors. This would ensure that all important fishing ports and areas would have the services of the equivalent of an inspector fully devoted to fisheries work.

The section will be administered by an assistant director, supported by a secretary, whose sole responsibility will be commercial fisheries.

The clause also provides for the constitution of a Fisheries Management Committee, a Commercial Fisheries Licensing Panel and a Licensing Appeals Tribunal.

The Fisheries Management Committee will consist of three divisional officers, including the assistant director, who will be chairman, and three industry representatives. Of the industry representatives—

1. One person shall be selected to represent the interests of commercial fishermen generally and he will be eligible to attend all meetings of the panel whilst he remains in office.

2. One person shall be selected from each of the several kinds of fisheries, such representatives being eligible to attend meetings in accordance with the particular fishery receiving the consideration of the committee. For example, when the lobster fishery is being examined the person selected to represent the interests of lobster fishermen shall participate in the committee's deliberations ; in circumstances where the abalone fishery is receiving attention the person selected to represent the interests of abalone fishermen shall be in attendance and so on.

3. One person shall be selected to represent the marketers of fish; he will be eligible to attend all meetings of the panel whilst he remains in office.

Whenever general matters pertaining to the fisheries industry are being discussed then the several representatives aforementioned shall elect one of their number to represent them and their interests in respect to the matter or matters for consideration.

The functions of the management committee shall be to make recommendations to the Minister concerning the number of persons to be licensed in the different fisheries, and the management of those fisheries. The committee will also recommend the number of licences to be held in reserve to ensure that the desired total number of licensees is not exceeded in the event of the tribunal allowing the appeal of persons who have previously had their applications for fishing licences refused by the director.

The Commercial Fisheries Licensing Panel shall consist of three divisional officers, including the assistant director, who shall be chairman, and two industry representatives as specified in the Bill.

As I have already indicated, the Government is anxious to have industry representatives involved in making recommendations concerning the management of their fisheries and the issue of licences authorizing satisfactory use of those fisheries resources. The establishment of the said committee and panel gives effect to Government policy. I believe it is well known, but it is certainly worth repeating, that some of my more difficult tasks since assuming this office have been in applying my powers to refuse applications for fishing licences under the Fisheries Acts in circumstances where additional entry into the fishery concerned would have proved detrimental to the interests of the persons engaged in it.

As the discretionary power to grant or refuse a licence has many associated problems, I consider it essential for an aggrieved person to

have a right of appeal to an independent body whenever an application for a licence is refused.

The Licensing Appeals Tribunal and its composition, as specified in clause 2, meets a need which is lacking in the existing principal Act. It is important to note that the tribunal will not be bound by legal technicalities and that its decisions will be final and given effect. Clause 3 provides for additional licensing machinery to implement the following—

(i) To allow the holders of fishing bait licences, upon payment of a fee of $5, to employ one assistant in gathering fishing bait for sale by the use of the equipment specified in the licence.

(ii) To provide for the licensing of people engaged in the selling of live aquarium fish upon payment of a fee not exceeding $20.

Control over people selling live fish is necessary in order to prevent the spread of fish diseases and undesirable species into public waters.

Clause 4 repeals the provisions of the principal Act relating to the furnishing of false or misleading information in connection with an application under the Act, together with the consequential cancellation and suspension provision. Those provisions are re-enacted in improved form and a penalty of $1,000 fixed for contravention thereof.

Clause 5 simplifies licence issuance procedures and provides for all licences for each fishery to be issued so as to expire on a common date, as specified in the licence. The existence of such uniform renewal dates will simplify licence issuance procedures, for both the fishermen and the division, particularly where a number of different licences are held by a single person. The clause also provides for several licences to be printed and issued on a single document.

Fishermen have been concerned about the situation where a number of inactive fishermen have continued to invoke the entitlement provisions of the principal Act to have their licences renewed for participation in what may be described as restricted entry fisheries. Such persons prevent others from obtaining the right to participate in a restricted industry.

The clause also empowers the director to require a fisherman to show cause why he is inactive which in effect denies another person the opportunity to participate in that industry. In the circumstances where a fisherman is unable to give an adequate explanation for his inactivity, the director may refuse to renew the licence. An aggrieved applicant would have the right of appeal to the tribunal.

Clause 6 provides for fees obtained from the sale of fish culture permits to be paid into the Fisheries Research Fund established under section 19 of the principal Act and also provides scope for moneys in the fund to be applied towards the establishment of fish hatcheries, the training and equipping of enforcement officers and the decentralization of those officers.

Clause 7 provides for the issue of amateur fishing licences by authorized persons or organizations. This gives effect to Government policy of removing the sale of angling licences from police stations.

Clause 8 makes provision for fees payable for amateur licences to be fixed by regulation. The maximum amount which may be charged for the issue of an amateur fishing (angling) licence is $7, and for amateur hoop or netting licences $20.

Mr. Speaker, although it is not contained in the written notes, when honorable members examine the Bill they will note that the Government has waived the charge to pensioners. In the past a concession rate of 50 cents has applied to angling licences for pensioners, but the charge will be deferred in future.

Mr. WHITING: What about persons under the age of sixteen years?

Mr. BORTHWICK: The existing system will continue. The clause also provides for issue of a 28-day holiday amateur fishing—angling—licence at a reduced fee, and further provides for all moneys obtained from sales of amateur fishing licences to be paid into the Fisheries Research Fund which is established under section 19 of the principal Act.

The current amateur fishing—angling—licence fee of $2 has not been raised since 1966. The existing hoop net and amateur netting licence fees of $4 have not been increased since 1968.

Clause 9 provides for the production of amateur fishing licences through the post. Clause 10 strengthens the fish culture provisions of the principal Act by providing for the issue of permits upon payment of the prescribed fees for growing fish for commercial purposes in any Victorian waters or on Crown lands or private property. The clause authorizes the director, instead of the Minister as was formerly the case, to issue fish culture permits and provides additional grounds on which the director may refuse applications for permits. The clause also provides that any fish culture permit issued in respect of Crown lands has no force or effect unless the Minister of Lands consents in writing to its issue.

Since the provision for fish culture was first incorporated in the 1968 Act advances have been made in culture techniques and the development of intensive methods applicable to such species as eels. Intensive culture may be carried out extensively on private as well as Crown land so that there is a need to adopt a uniform licensing system. At present it is often difficult to distinguish between a fish farm and a fish culture proposal.

Under the existing Act a fish culture permit allows a person to create or improve a habitat on any land in or adjacent to public waters for the purpose of growing certain species of fish, molluscs or crustaceans specified in the Act. A fish farm registration permits the hatching, rearing and raising of fish for human consumption or the provision of an angling amenity for which a charge is made.

An application for fish farm registration for a project on private land not adjacent to public waters but which draws or discharges water into public waters, clearly involves the criteria to be applied to both fish culture and fish farms. By extending the fish culture provisions of the Act to cover all fish rearing activities, controversial proposals will be eliminated.

Further, commercial fish farms on private land which at present pay a fee of only $5 for initial registration will be required to pay an annual fee of $50. This means they will be contributing towards the cost of the advisory service provided by the Fisheries and Wildlife Division.

Rainbow trout can now be grown successfully in the sea in pens and other species could be similarly farmed. Clause 10 provides a more effective control over this activity.

Under section 48 of the principal Act, inspectors are empowered to search boats and vehicles for fish and fishing equipment. Clause 11 enables divisional inspectors and police to call on the operators of such boats and vehicles to stop for the purpose of performing such searches, unless in the circumstances it would be unsafe or unreasonable to do so. The Government considers it reasonable for inspectors to be empowered to stop boats and vehicles for the stated purpose.

Clause 12 amends section 49 of the principal Act to permit the seizure of fish which, contrary to the provisions of the Act or regulations, are in the possession or control of any person.

Clause 14 empowers fisheries inspectors to board fishing boats for the purpose of inspecting the operational condition of scallop dredges

and other equipment, and to ascertain whether poorly maintained scallop dredges or other equipment could break loose and foul fishing grounds. The clause also empowers inspectors to direct in writing the owner or person in charge of any fishing boat to remove or repair any fishing equipment which is deemed to be in danger of breaking loose from the vessel during the course of its fishing operations.

Lakes Entrance fishermen in particular have incurred large financial losses because of fouling of their expensive synthetic trawl and Danish seine nets on scallop dredges, and their wire hauling lines, which have broken loose from scallop boats and been deposited on such fishing grounds.

Some of the once productive trawling grounds off Lakes Entrance are no longer worked because of the hazards associated with the number of scallop dredges deposited thereon. These proposed powers will do much to preserve good order among fishermen exploiting different fisheries in the one area.

Clause 15 strengthens the section of the principal Act relating to the prohibition of fishing in fish hatcheries and research stations, the control of which is vested in or under the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife. The clause also contains provisions to simplify the furnishing of evidence on certain matters in cases of prosecution by empowering the director and officer in charge of a research station or hatchery to issue certificates for the purpose of certifying whether any specified place, building or object is within the boundaries of any research station or hatchery under the management and control of the director.

The clause further requires the statement on oath of an inspector, that any packaging label or slip on the outside or inside of any box, container, or package of fish consigned for or on sale is marked with the name or brand of any person, shall be prima facie evidence that that person consigned those fish for or on sale.

Clause 16 repeals section 57 of the principal Act. The section is reenacted in improved form to prohibit the unauthorized release of any fish or fish eggs into Victorian waters. The clause also requires persons bringing non-indigenous live fish or eggs of fish into Victoria from any place, to forthwith notify the director and furnish particulars of the place and hours during which those fish may be inspected. These provisions are necesesary for preventing the introduction of diseased and undesirable fishes into Victoria.

Clause 18 provides for courts to suspend or cancel the licences of persons who are convicted of taking or possessing scallops or abalone in contravention of the Act or the regulations. Under existing provisions of the Act courts are empowered to cancel or suspend crayfish licences. I am informed that law-abiding scallop and abalone fishermen have requested that this provision be extended to apply to their fisheries.

Clause 19 empowers the director to require persons engaged in the taking and handling of fish to furnish in writing information concerning the time and effort expended in the taking of a catch. This information is required to assist fisheries administrators to make decisions and formulate policies for the good management of fisheries.

Clause 20 enables any area of marine or estuarine waters to be set aside as a marine reserve for conservation, scientific, educational or recreational purposes. I am advised of the existence of unique flora and fishes in several areas of Victorian waters. I am satisfied that there is a need for specific provision in the Act to ensure the preservation, control and protection against exploitation of the fish and flora now existing within those areas.

Clause 21 provides for fees for the inspection of live fish being introduced into Victoria to be prescribed and fixed by the regulations. Clause 23 raises the maximum penalties which may be imposed by courts for contraventions of the Act.

The Government considers that the higher penalties are necessary to serve as a deterrent against persons who deliberately contravene the provisions of the Act. However, the Bill does not increase any licence fees and these are the same as existed in the previous Act. The clauses or parts thereof to which I have not referred are either formal or machinery provisions for the effective administration of Victorian fisheries. I commend the Bill to honorable members.

On the motion of Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds), the debate was adjourned.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation) : I move—

That the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East) : I oppose the adjournment of the debate until Tuesday week. This is an important and far-reaching Bill, and it will be impossible for honorable members to approach people involved in the fishing industry within that time to ascertain their views on the measure. The Bill has considerable merit but I hope the Minister, to prove the sincerity of his expressed desire to include representatives of the fishermen in the administration of the legislation, will at least give them the opportunity of expressing their opinions on the measure. The period suggested by the Minister is completely inappropriate, and, as an amendment, I move—

That the expression " Tuesday, September 24 " be omitted with the view of inserting the words " one month ".

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I expected the Minister to reply to the honorable member for Gippsland East but, in the absence of any comments, I support the views expressed by the honorable member. This is an important Bill and the Government must be mindful of the fact that members of the other parties do not see Bills until they are introduced into the Parliament although other people in the community have the privilege of examining draft Bills. Indeed they are asked to comment on them and are even prepared to write to members requesting them to take certain action on Bills which those members have not seen.

This is one of the failures of the Government and, in the absence of the opportunity for members of the other parties to examine draft Bills before they are introduced, although copies are distributed to other interested people in the community, honorable members are entitled to more consideration, particularly the honorable member for Gippsland East and other members of the Country Party, whose areas will be affected by the legislation.

Mr. McINNES (Gippsland South): I support the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the honorable member for Gippsland East. This Bill is far reaching and is probably the first major legislation relating to the fishing industry. Obviously, it will formalize the licensing of the Victorian fishing industry, which is probably overdue. The week-end is by no means sufficient time for honorable members to circulate copies of the Bill to people who are concerned. I support the view expressed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and, whilst I have no objection to discussions with the people in the industry concerning the general framework of a measure and what provisions might be incorporated in it, the actual Bill should not be circulated until it has been introduced into Parliament.

Another Bill which will be presented shortly has already been sighted by other people and members of my party have received correspondence on the matter.

Mr. BORTHWICK: Is the honorable member suggesting that this Bill has been sighted by the fishing industry?

Mr. McINNES: I do not know whether that is so in this case but I know that this is done in some instances. I contend that this has occurred with another Bill which is lister on the Notice Paper. I shall certainly need at least two or three weks in which to study the measure adequately.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation): I appreciate the significance of the remarks of the honorable member for Gippsland East and other memebers of the Country Party. In this instance, I am prepared to agree to an extension of the period of adjournment for a further week, which will mean that the debate will be adjourned until Tuesday fortnight.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East) (*By leave*): I have moved an amendment, and I wish to persist with it.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) (*By leave*): The suggestion by the Minister is tantamount to what the honorable member for Gippsland East wants because the Government proposes that the House shall not meet during the first week in October.

The House divided on the question that the words proposed by Mr. B. J. Evans to be omitted stand part of the motion (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler in the chair)—

Ayes	.. ..	35
Noes	.. ..	26
Majority against the amendment	..	9

AYES.

Mr. Austin	Mr. McKellar
Mr. Balfour	Mr. McLaren
Mr. Birrell	Mr. Meagher
Mr. Borthwick	Mr. Plowman
Mr. Burgin	Mr. Ramsay
Mr.Mr. Chamberlain	Mr. Scanlan
Mr. Crellin	Mr. Smith (*Warrnambool*)
Mr. Dunstan	Mr. Stephen
Mr. Ebery	Mr. Suggett
Mr. Evans (*Gippsland East*)	Sir Edgar Tanner
Mrs. Goble	Mr. Templeton
Mr. Guy	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Hamer	Mr. Vale
Mr. Hayes	Mr. Williams
Mr. Jona	Mr. Wood
Mr. Loxton	*Tellers*:
Mr. McCabe	Mr. Billing
Mr. McClure	Mr. Skeggs

NOES.

Mr. Amos	Mr. McInnes
Mr. Bornstein	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Curnow	Mr. Mutton
Mr. Doube	Mr. Roper
Mr. Edmunds	Mr. Ross-Edwards
Mr. Evan (*Ballaarat North*)	Mr. Simmonds
Mr. Fogarty	Mr. Stirling
Mr. Fordham	Mr. Trezise
Mr. Ginifer	Mr. Whiting
Mr. Holding	Mr. Wilkes
Mr. Jones	Mr. Wilton
Mr. Kirkwood	*Tellers*:
Mr. Lind	Mr. Baxter
	Mr. Hann

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY BILL.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is rather appropriate that I should be introducing item 4 on the agenda paper at 4 a.m., because it happens to be a Bill to establish Victoria's fourth university, which will be known as the Deakin Universit.y It is interesting to recall that Victoria's first university was established in 1853. One hundred and five years elapsed before a Bill was introduced into Parliament to establish the second university in 1958. In 1964 another Bill was introduced into Parliament to establish the La Trobe University.

As I mentioned, this university will be called the Deakin University. That is a choice which has been recommended by the interim planning committee, and I believe it to be a singularly appropriate choice of name. Honorable members will be familiar with the magnificent profile of Alfred Deakin which is apparent to anybody walking into the Parliamentary Library. Alfred Deakin was amember of the Victorian Parliament from 1878 to 1900. He was Commissioner of Water Supply for a long period and was the pioneer of many of our most important irrigation schemes, mainly those in the area represented by the Deputy Leader of the Country Party.

Mr. Deakin was Solicitor-General for a period, and in 1900, as one of the founders of the Federal system, he was elected to the Federal Parliament. He became Prime Minister in 1903 and was Prime Minister on three different occasions between 1903 and 1910. He laid the foundation stone of the Malvern Town Hall.

Mr. GINIFER: He also introduced legislation setting up wages boards in 1896.

Mr. THOMPSON: I thank the honorable member for Deer Park for that contribution; that is another achievement of Mr. Deakin. He was an outstanding orator, a distinguished writer and a man of exceptional intellect, and it is most fitting that his name should be honored in this way because he was an eminent Victorian and Australian. It is strange that his name has not already been perpetuated in any distinctive form.

In May, 1970, the Government promised to establish a committee to advise it on the location and date of establishment of the fourth university. The committee was finally appointed in November of that year and made its report in January, 1972. The committee consisted of twelve members under the chairmanship of Sir Thomas Ramsay. The committee had a more difficult task than that faced by the committee associated with the establishment of Monash University or La Trobe University. It was faced with three existing universities and a strongly developed advanced college system and teachers' college system.

The committee had difficulty in making clear and definite recommendations, but its final recommendation was that a site should be acquired in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne for the establishment of a fourth university, and that consideration should be given to the acquisition of a site which might serve the western suburbs of Melbourne, and Ballarat and Geelong. The Government carefully considered this report and decided that the time had come for the establishment of a university in rural Victoria. It felt that if the fourth university were established in the metropolitan area of Melbourne, this would postpone indefinitely the establishment of a university in a country area of Victoria. The Government also believed that a university in a country district could fulfil the much-needed charter of a university specializing in external studies.

The fourth university report indicated that, taken on an Australia-wide basis on an average, 0·8 of the age group from seventeen to twenty years would be seeking external study courses in Victoria. The addition of part-time students of orthodox courses would bring the figure to 1·7. Translated into student numbers, this would mean that 3,000 to 6,300 students would be seeking external study courses. In other words, there is immense potential to make use of a university offering correspondence courses.

Speaking in Melbourne this week, Sir Walter Perry, the Vice-Chancellor of the Open University, Great Britain, said that of 52,000 applicants who enrolled, the university was able to take only 13,000 students this year. There is a world-wide trend towards a greater demand for correspondence and external study courses.

The Government decided in July, 1972, that the fourth university should be established in either Ballarat, Bendigo or Geelong. Finally, in February, 1973, the Government decided that it should be a multi-campus university with wings at Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong and that in each of those areas the existing advanced college and State college should be absorbed as part of an institution at tertiary level embracing three wings—the university wing, the advanced college wing and the teachers' college wing.

In December, 1972, the Federal Government set up a special committee consisting of Professor Bull, Vice-Chairman of the Australian Universities Commission, and Mr. Swanson the Chairman of the Australian

Commission of Advanced Education. The charter or terms of reference of this committee were to investigate the desirability of establishing a university in the Albury–Wodonga area, an additional university in the Sydney metropolitan area, and a university in the Melbourne metropolitan area. The committee's report was finally completed in February, 1973, and it recommended that Victoria's fourth university should be at Dandenong. The Government strongly objected to this proposal because Dandenong is only a few miles away from Victoria's second university—Monash University—and, as I indicated before, the establishment of a fourth university in the metropolitan area would postpone indefinitely the establishment of a university in a country area.

It was also noted that in New South Wales there were three universities in country districts—in Wollongong, Armidale and Newcastle. At Townsville in Queensland there is the James Cook University, which is also outside the metropolitan area. The Government made strong and repeated recommendations to the Commonwealth Government and to the Australian Universities Commission, as a result of which the Commonwealth Government asked the Australian Universities Commission to make a further investigation. On this occasion the investigation was extremely thorough, indeed an exhaustive one. Bendigo, Ballarat and Geelong were visited. Teachers' colleges, and advanced colleges in that area were visited and lengthy conferences were held with the Premier and myself. The committee made a final report which was presented in December, 1973. It recommended that the fourth university should be established at Geelong with regional study centres at Ballarat and Bendigo. The Government regards this report as a most worthwhile one and as a vindication of the Government's original programme and policy to establish a multi-campus university.

The report was accepted in full. It included a recommendation that the unversity at Geelong should embrace the Gordon Institute of Technology and the State College of Victoria at Geelong. The Gordon Institute, as honorable members are aware, is a well known and famous institute. It was established in 1877 and was named after Gordon of Khartoum. This institute has made a name for itself, particularly in the field of training people in the chemical-textile area and other allied fields of learning. It has some fourteen diploma courses and four degree courses, with 1,430 students and 240 staff members. The State College is a slightly different body but equally effective. It awards a three-year teaching diploma, and has 70 staff members and 630 students. Both these institutions are of some consequence. However, the Government agrees with the recommendations of the Australian Universities Commission, headed by Professor Karmel, that the university should absorb these two existing institutions.

An interim planning council of twelve people was immediately set up. This has now been extended to sixteen people and is headed by Mr. Peter Thwaites, head of the Geelong College, who has given drive, enterprise and initiative to this committee during the short period that he has occupied the position. A particular problem has to be faced by the planners of this university because it is absorbing two existing institutions. Most of the controversy which has centred around the Gordon Institute and the State College of Victoria will be settled by the interim council of the new university.

I should like to quote from two letters that I received, one from the Chairman of the Australian Universities Commission, and one from the Chairman of the Australian Commission of Advanced Education. These letters indicate that the bodies, of which these people are members, strongly believe that the council of

the university should be free to determine which members of staff of the existing institutions in Geelong should be engaged as members of staff of the new university. There have been requests that everybody should automatically be taken over and guaranteed security. I refer to the letter from Professor Karmel dated 6th June, 1974, which states—

> The Commission's main concern is that the new university should be, and should be seen to be, an institution of university level in the true sense. It firmly believes that the University Council should be in a position to appoint academic staff who are appropriately qualified and capable of university level work. The Commission realises that the requirement that the existing V.I.C. and S.C.V. Colleges be wound up and that the university absorb the appropriate activities of the Colleges presents difficulties relating to academic staffing. However, it believes that these difficulties must be resolved without prejudicing the recognition and acceptance which would be needed for the new university from the community, students and other universities.

The same approach is taken by Mr. Swanson, and he states—

> The Commission supports the policy that the Council of the new institution, for the academic reasons stated, should not be required to absorb all the staff of the existing institutions. The Commission nevertheless hopes that the most favourable consideration will be given to these staff members should they apply for appointments, and believes that opportunities to apply should be available as early as possible.
>
> Assistance in obtaining other employment should be extended to the unsuccessful staff members and this Commission offers its help in making these latter arrangements.

In the proposed legislation provision is made for those who are not successful in obtaining employment at the university or who do not wish to do so, to transfer to the Teaching Service or the Public Service at a level of emolument not less than that which they were receiving before applying for such transfer. This seems to be a most reasonable approach and will protect the interests of the great majority of those who may not be absorbed by the university. It is, however, highly likely that a great proportion of the staff of both institutions will be taken over by the new university.

I refer briefly to the more important aspects of the proposed legislation. Clause 5 (*b*) gives the new university a special charter to cater for external studies. It states—

> to provide tertiary education at university level for students attending the University and to provide the opportunity for tertiary education at university level to all qualified persons whether within or outside Victoria by means of external studies programmes;

This is the first occasion in Victoria that a university has been given a special charter. There is an incidental mention of external studies in the Monash University Act but no mention of the Melbourne and Latrobe universities Acts. That is followed up by the words in paragraph (*c*)—

> "to arrange for the provision of study centres in appropriate places throughout Victoria, including Ballarat and Bendigo, where students taking external studies programmes can have access to library and other study facilties and can be given tutorial and practical assistance".

When the recommendation of the Australian Universities Commission was accepted, the right was reserved to proceed at some stage with the multi-campus university with wings at Ballarat and Bendigo. At present, the Government has accepted the idea that the main university should be at Geelong and that study centres should be set up at Ballarat. I refer honorable members to clause 5 (*f*) which gives the university power to confer degrees and diplomas. I mentioned diplomas particularly because at present the Gordon Institute of Technology runs fourteen diploma courses and it is desired that the new university, for a period, if not indefinitely, should carry on the role of the institute with its high-level diploma courses.

Clause 7 (2) (*a*) makes provision for student representation on the council at the same level as at Monash University—two undergraduate students and one graduate student. In similar vein, in clause 26 (2) (*b*) provision is made for student representation on the

Academic Board. Similar provision was made last year for Monash University.

The next section of particular relevance is Part II., which makes provision for the interim period. Following the passing of this Bill the interim planning council will be replaced by an interim council consisting of fifteen members, whereas the permanent council of the university will have 32 members.

Finally, I direct attention to clause 43 (7), which provides—

> **At any time during the transitional period a person who is employed on the academic staff of the Institute or of the State College—**
>
> **(*a*) if he is or is entitled to be registered as a teacher in Victoria shall be entitled to be appointed to a position in the teaching service of Victoria; and**
>
> **(*b*) in any other case shall be entitled to be appointed to a position in the Public Service of Victoria—**

That is the clause to which I referred a moment ago, and I shall not read it again in detail.

I believe this is an exciting experiment in tertiary education in Victoria. A university is being created which will be different in three respects. The first is that it will be outside the metropolitan area.

Mr. WHITING: Only just.

Mr. THOMPSON: That is true, but there are the regional study centres and it is proposed to extend the university to Ballarat and Bendigo. The Government fought a long battle on this matter and considers that it has won a substantial if not a complete victory.

The second respect in which the university will be different is that it will provide a far greater range of courses than normally would be the case for a new university. The reason is that it will be taking over the Gordon Institute of Technology and its four degree courses and fourteen diploma courses, as well as the State College of Victoria at Geelong.

The third point is that it will be the first university established in Victoria with a special charter for external studies. This will be of tremendous benefit to teachers who are posted to country areas of Victoria and, generally speaking, to those who, because of geographical location or the nature of their employment, are prevented from attending an orthodox university.

If the fourth university of Victoria, the Deakin University, makes as great a contribution towards learning and the development of this country as did the man after whom it has been named, it will be a university of which the State will be proud.

On the motion of Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray), the debate was adjourned.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I move—

> **That the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.**

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray): The House has before it a major piece of proposed legislation introduced by the Government after many years of anguish, report and discussion. The Opposition is told that it has until Tuesday week, a period of nine or ten days, to discuss the Bill. The Opposition needs at least three weeks.

The Minister highlighted how different and unique is this Bill relating to tertiary education. For those reasons alone it is important that the Opposition should have adequate time to consider these matters. I have already been approached by academic and non-academic staff in the Geelong area who are concerned about their future. I wish to ensure that this university will receive the support of the Australian Universities Commission. It is essential that the Opposition should have at least three weeks to consider this matter. The Opposition is quite insistent on that.

Mr. MITCHELL (Benambra): Three weeks is a perfectly reasonable time to ask for. What the Minister said is well cloaked up with a lot of history we all sucked in with our mother's milk. The decision to locate the university at Geelong was a

dirty slap in the face to Albury-Wodonga. However, there is much merit in what the Minister has said. This is a good Bill, worthy of adequate thought. The Country Party demands three weeks in which to consider it.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education) (*By leave*) : I agree to an adjournment of the debate for three weeks.

By leave, the motion was withdrawn.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, October 3.

GEELONG LAND BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its main purpose is to enable additional land to be leased to the Geelong East Community Youth Club. The site presently occupied by that club comprises 4022 square metres, being allotment 3 of section 4C, City of Geelong, and is held under a lease pursuant to section 134 of the Land Act 1958 for a term of 21 years. This site fronts the west side of Wood Street and is already fully utilized. It contains a club-house building and open-air provision for courts for basketball, volley-ball, badminton and net-ball, together with car parking space.

Membership of the club is about 300, comprising members of both sexes between the ages of seven and 26. Numbers are increasing each year, and this growth will be accelerated following the current development by the Housing Commission of accommodation for some 700 persons off Wilsons Road, Whittington.

The land desired for expansion of the club facilities is an area of 1·128 hectares situated directly behind the existing site. The club desires to extend its facilities greatly so as eventually to include another building with provision for gymnasium and other activities as well as tennis courts with lighting for night use, squash courts and a running track. It is intended that many of the facilities will be available not only to club members but also for use by the general public.

The additional area sought by the club is part of the land containing 4·528 hectares which is described in the Second Schedule to the Geelong Lands Exchange Act 1972, No. 8326. Honorable members will recall that the purpose of that Act was to make available for Mental Health Authority purposes certain land at the corner of Leather and Tanners streets, which was at that time vested in the Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners. In exchange for this, an area of 4·528 hectares fronting Wood Street, which had previously been reserved for mental health purposes, was authorized to be granted to the Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners. The actual Crown grant document has, however, not been prepared and issued in view of the youth club's present proposal.

The land immediately south of the land in the Second Schedule to the 1972 enactment is Crown land, and it is therefore possible to exclude the area required for youth club purposes, and to compensate for this by including an equivalent additional area of the available Crown land.

The effect of this Bill is therefore simply that the area to be granted to the Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners will not be as authorized by the 1972 Act, but will be an area of similar extent surveyed so as to exclude the proposed youth club area and to include an equivalent area of Crown land. Both the Geelong City Council and the Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners have agreed to the proposal.

Clause 1 of the Bill cites the short title and provides for the commencement of the legislation. Clause 2 provides that the land delineated in the schedule may be granted to the Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners. Clause 3 repeals the provision in

the 1972 Act for the grant of the original land to the commissioners. Clause 4 makes a consequential amendment to the Geelong Harbor Trust Act 1958.

The schedule contains a plan showing the land to be granted to the commissioners. A plan showing the relative positions of the parcels of land involved has been prepared for the benefit of honorable members.

This measure will allow for a considerable expansion of recreational and sporting facilities available to both the youth and the general public in this part of Geelong, whilst still giving effect to the general intention of the 1972 exchange proposal in relation to the harbor trust commissioners.

In commending the Bill to honorable members, I point out that it was presented to the House during the last session and that it lay on the table for a considerable period. The members representing the area are fully familiar with its contents.

On the motion of Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, September 19.

MELBOURNE (ALEXANDRA GARDENS) LAND BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its principal purpose is to place the occupations by certain rowing clubs of portions of Alexandra Gardens adjacent to the Yarra River, in the City of Melbourne, on a proper footing. At the same time it revokes portion of a permanent reservation which ought to have been revoked prior to the reservation of Alexandra Gardens.

The portion of Alexandra Gardens on which the boat-sheds are erected was temporarily reserved as a site for ornamental plantations in 1907. Previously the land was permanently reserved in 1873 as a site for public park and gardens. The permanent reservation of 1873 was revoked in 1897 so far as the land now comprising Alexandra Gardens was concerned, excepting the sites of the boat-sheds as then existing. Nevertheless the boat-shed sites were included in the temporary reservation for ornamental plantations of 1907.

The sites of the boat-sheds were the subject of licences granted last century by the Lands Department. The occupations were taken over by the Melbourne City Council when that body was appointed the committee of management of Alexandra Gardens reserve in 1923.

The occupiers of the boat-sheds are presently the Richmond Rowing Club, Melbourne Rowing Club, Mercantile Rowing Club, Melbourne Church of England Grammar School Rowing Club, Banks Rowing Club, Yarra Yarra Rowing Club and the Melbourne University Boating Club.

The Melbourne City Council is desirous that the occupations be placed on a firm tenancy basis by empowering the municipality to grant leases to the clubs of their respective sites.

Clause 1 of the Bill cites the short title and provides for the commencement of the legislation. Clause 2 lists certain interpretations for the purpose of the Bill. Clause 3 revokes the permanent reservation made in 1873 in so far as it relates to Alexandra Gardens. Clause 4 confirms the temporary reservation made in 1907. Clause 5 confirms the appointment of the municipality as the committee of management of Alexandra Gardens. Clause 6 empowers the municipality, as the committee of management, to grant leases of the boat-shed sites. It also sets out the conditions of leasing which are standard for Bills of this nature. Clause 7 is the usual provision that no liability shall attach to the Crown.

The schedule contains a plan showing the sites of the boat-sheds which may be leased to the respective clubs. The hatched areas are the

lands actually occupied by the buildings and no land outside these areas will be capable of being leased. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West), the debate was adjourned.

It ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.

WATER RESOURCES BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The main purpose of this Bill is to give effect to the Government's decision to bring both the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works within the one Ministry. Under the proposed legislation the functions of the board in respect to water supply, sewerage and main drainage will be brought under the Minister of Water Supply who will head a Ministry of Water Resources and Water Supply.

Honorable members will recall that during the summer of 1973 the Melbourne metropolitan area was faced with a serious water shortage because of a prolonged dry spell of weather. To advise the Government on steps to overcome the emergency at that time and to plan future water conservation works, the Government appointed a standing committee consisting of representatives of the State's two major water authorities — that is, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works — and a representative of the Treasury.

The work of the committee proved extremely valuable. It also emphasized the desirability of having an over-all co-ordinating body for the State's water resources. The Government has therefore decided to give the standing committee statutory authority within the proposed new Ministry.

As part of the Ministry there will be a Water Resources Council which will include the same representation as the standing committee. There will also be a Director of Water Resources and appropriate staff to enable the Ministry to perform a co-ordinating function in assessing and developing the State's water resources, including the extension and development of sewerage and drainage services. The Director of Water Resources will be the chairman of the Water Resources Council.

It is the Government's view that it is essential that the many competing interests and the increasing pressure for water, sewerage and drainage services should receive the attention of one over-all body. The proposed Ministry will enable the long-range planning of future requirements, especially for additional decentralized urban complexes and will also enable a proper balance to be achieved between rural, urban and industrial development. The Ministry will also be able to advise the Government on priorities for construction.

It is not the intention of the legislation to change in any way the functions of either the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission or the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, but rather to implement the Government's policy of bringing both bodies under a single Ministry with a view to achieving the co-ordination of their activities already referred to, which policy was also strongly supported before the last State election by both the Labor Party and the Country Party.

Clause 3 sets out the constitution of the Ministry, while clauses 4 and 5 concern the functions and duties of the Minister. Clauses 6 and 7 deal with the constitution and functions of the Water Resources Council, and clause 8 refers to the appointment of the Director of Water Resources.

The remaining clauses are machinery clauses. However, I draw the attention of honorable members to

clause 1 of Schedule Two, which has been specifically drafted to ensure that, for the purposes of the Public Service Act, the Chairman of the Water Commission shall be permanent head of the Ministry and will thus continue to handle all dealings affecting commission staff directly with the Public Service Board. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 1.

THE ALFRED NICHOLAS MEMORIAL GARDENS BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Honorable members will recall that a similar Bill was introduced during the last sessional period of Parliament and had reached the second-reading stage but had not been debated when the Parliament was prorogued.

The purpose of the Bill is to transfer the Alfred Nicholas Memorial Gardens from the Nicholas holding company to the Forests Commission for the purpose of establishing a research centre to study animal and plant life in the Dandenong Ranges. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, September 18.

CARLTON LAND (UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S COLLEGE) BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It relates to the Crown land situated at College Crescent, Carlton, which was permanently reserved in 1934 as a site for a residential college for women at the University of Melbourne. The site has been placed under the control of a committee of management, being the nominees of the council of the University Women's College.

The council of the college is now of the opinion that recent trends in education may result in the council having to provide for both men and women as resident students. The college is experiencing difficulty in filling places and interviews with students have indicated that some prefer co-residence. Moreover, the college has always been an innovator in education and has attracted students of high academic ability. The council fears that these standards may not be maintained if the college continues to accept women students only.

If the college does not keep in step with current trends, the council feels it may become the last choice of women instead of enjoying high priority as in the past. The council sees the college as being primarily for women and would continue operating with this purpose in mind.

The purpose of the Bill is to remove the legal impediment, which applies to the college site, to the acceptance of men as resident students.

Clause 1 of the Bill cites the short title and provides for the commencement of the legislation. Clause 2 revokes the permanent reservation of the land as a site for a residential college for women. Clause 3 permanently reserves the land as a site for a general residential college at the University of Melbourne. The schedule includes a plan showing the reserved land. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, September 18.

VICTORIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCES BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation) : I move —

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The southern coast of Australia is one of the most interesting coastlines in the world. Although it is less spectacular than the more famous Barrier Reef, it is in many ways more important, both biologically and for its oil and mineral wealth. Cold and temperate oceans are more fertile than tropical ones ; all the major oceanic fisheries are in cold water.

In the latitude 35° — 40° south, the rich waters of the cold Southern Ocean meet the Australian land mass, giving rise to a unique and valuable, but as yet little studied, community of plants and animals.

The basic exploration of this marine environment has hardly begun, yet already oil and gas reserves have been discovered. The potential for the future is virtually unlimited, but we are already feeling the effects of our lack of knowledge. Coastal developments have caused problems of erosion. Much of the basic knowledge essential to good fisheries management, such as detailed information on seasonal breeding periods and migration, egg and larval development and definition of food webs is lacking for most of Victorian commercial fish, shell fish and crustacea. More recently the problems of heavy metals have been highlighted and a great deal more investigation is required.

In recent years interest in marine science has developed strongly in all advanced nations. Science, industry and Government are realizing the necessity for exploring and utilizing the abundant resources of the oceans.

There is an awakening interest in marine science in Australia, stimulated on the one hand by rich discoveries of off-shore oil and gas and on the other by a growing realization of the need for conservation of natural assets such as the Barrier Reef and for the protection of coastal resources from pollution and despoliation. Not long ago the Commonwealth Government announced plans to establish an Institute of Marine Sciences at Townsville, Queensland. Admirable though such an institute will be, its establishment by no means provides for the total needs of Australia in relation to her vast coastline and the variety of waters that wash her shores. The Townsville institute will, perforce, be directed specially to problems of tropical waters and to investigation of the Great Barrier Reef. There is an equal — perhaps greater — need for an institute that would concern itself with the temperate ocean around Australia.

Because of the importance of marine research generally in the development of this country, the Royal Society of Victoria, which is one of the oldest scientific bodies in Australia, if not the oldest, took the initiative in proposing that an Institute of Marine Sciences be established in Victoria.

Accordingly, the Royal Society set up a committee drawn from its own council, the three Victorian universities, the Victoria Institute of Colleges, the National Museum of Victoria, and what is now the Fisheries and Wildlife Division of the Ministry for Conservation, together with members with legal and business experience, to lay down the purposes and objectives of an institute.

The recommendations of the committee have been accepted by the Government and the purpose of this Bill is to constitute an Institute of Marine Sciences in Victoria.

The Victorian Institute of Marine Sciences will not be a Government department or a Government instrumentality — it will be a private corporation, and comparison might be made with a body such as the Florey Institute at the University of Melbourne.

It will differ from other marine institutes in Australia in its multi-disciplinary approach: It will not be just a biological institute; the physical sciences and marine technologies will be an important part of the exercise. As stated in the Bill, the objects of the institute shall be to provide facilities for and foster, carry on and support scientific research and technological development in all branches of learning concerning or touching upon marine sciences. It will concern itself with the sea, the sea bed, the sea shores and the resources and inhabitants thereof and draw particular attention to mankind's relationship with and use of the sea.

Another unique aspect will be the accent upon education. The institute will assist the universities and colleges to stimulate and train students, thus helping to provide the manpower necessary to staff marine establishments elsewhere in Australia. The institute will provide a stimulating and co-ordinated focus on the schools of marine science which are being developed in Victorian tertiary education institutions.

Victoria has had considerable difficulty in recruiting from within Australia the wide range of marine biologists who were required for the Port Phillip Bay environmental study and the Westernport Bay environmental study. The problem will be further aggravated by staff needs for the proposed environmental study of the Gippsland lakes and their catchment. The institute will play an important role in making Australia less dependent on overseas experts for environmental studies of all kinds. This country will never get the full range of experts it needs in the broad field of marine science until there are a number of well-equipped institutes around our shores.

Australia has no cadre of people expert in the operation of submersibles. No country with Australia's length of coastline and Australia's marine resources, including off-shore oil wells, can afford not to have knowledge and expertise that will enable selected personnel to operate beneath the sea surface, using the latest technical aids.

It is of interest to note that the Commonwealth Government has recently decided that Dr. G. Aitchison, Chief of the Division of Soil Mechanics, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization should take leave of six months from his normal duties, in order to investigate and report on what can and should be done in regard to research on sediment on the Australian continental shelf. This is another indication of the growing awareness in Australia of urgent problems of marine geology and related subjects.

The institute will make important contributions to environmental control, particularly in the marine environment. The universities are being called on more and more to participate in the environmental studies of the estuaries, and as the three universities and the institute of colleges will be associated within the one institute, greater assistance can be anticipated.

I now propose to deal in detail with the provisions of the Bill. Clauses 1 and 2 are the usual citation and definition clauses. Clauses 3, 4 and 5 provide for the incorporation of the institute for legal purposes and set out the objects of the institute.

Generally, clauses 6 to 17 establish the council as the governing body for the institute and include the standard procedural provisions in relation to governing bodies. Provision is made for the appointment of officers and the regulation of council meetings. The council of the institute is to consist of not more than eighteen members appointed by the Governor in Council, of whom three are to be members of Parliament. This is the

desire of the Royal Society of Victoria committee. One member is to be nominated by the society.

Clauses 18, 19 and 20 empower the council to make statutes in respect of the affairs of the institute. These powers are similar to those contained in the Victoria Institute of Colleges Act and the Melbourne University Act.

Clauses 21, 22 and 23 deal, again largely in conformity, with standard financial provisions for bodies of this type. Special provision is made in clause 23 for the investment of common funds for trust moneys. Although this may be regarded as a somewhat novel way of dealing with trust moneys, the Act will override any but a specific direction that the moneys are not to be invested in common funds.

Clause 24 provides for an annual audit of the accounts of the institute by the Auditor-General. Clause 25, which is comparable to similar provisions in the art gallery and museum Acts, deals with the acquisition of property by the institute. Clause 26 requires council to prepare an annual report for presentation to Parliament.

The Institute of Marine Sciences will, I believe, be an important and significant step towards the better understanding of our environment and the prosecution of scientific studies in this part of the continent. It will certainly lead to a greater knowledge of marine life and our off-shore resources. I have much pleasure in commending the Bill to the House.

This Bill was on the Notice Paper in the last session for a considerable time and was not proceeded with.

On the motion of Mr. LIND (Dandenong), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (BENEFITS) BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to increase the maximum amount of weekly payment which a registered friendly society may make to a member in respect of sickness and other benefits.

Section 5 (1) and (4) of the Friendly Societies Act 1958 provide that societies may be registered to provide, by voluntary subscriptions of members, for the relief or maintenance of members and their families in old age, widowhood, sickness or other infirmity, or to members in search of employment or in distressed circumstances.

The proviso to section 5 prohibits the registration of any society which, in respect of the objects of section 5 (1) and (4), contracts with any person for the payment of benefits exceeding $30 a week. Section 11 (11) (*d*) of the Act prohibits any society, whether formed before or after the commencement of the principal Act, from contracting with any person for the payment of a rate exceeding $30 a week in respect of benefits under section 5 (1) and (4) of the Act.

Section 26 of the principal Act restricts the entitlement of any member of a registered friendly society, or any person claiming through a member, to a rate not exceeding $30 a week in respect of benefits. This rate has applied since May, 1966, prior to which the amount was fixed at $20 a week.

Following the receipt of representations from interested bodies seeking an increase, and upon the advice of the Government Statist, the Government proposes to increase the maximum rate of benefit which may be paid to a member by a registered friendly society to $50 a week.

Accordingly, the Bill makes the appropriate amendment to section 26 of the Friendly Societies Act 1958. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. LIND (Dandenong), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, September 18.

ROAD SAFETY (EDUCATIONAL) BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to effect the transfer of Messrs. Francis George Harris and John Michael Evans, at present employees of the National Safety Council, to the Public Service of Victoria and to appoint them to be officers of the Road Safety and Traffic Authority.

The Government has agreed to take over from the National Safety Council the responsibility for conducting a public education programme designed to improve the attitudes of drivers and pedestrians towards the road traffic laws. The responsibility for this task was allotted to the Road Safety and Traffic Authority and, pursuant to an arrangement made with the National Safety Council, the employment of Messrs. Harris and Evans, who were engaged in the administration of the campaign by the council, was to be continued within the Road Safety and Traffic Authority structure. Accordingly, the two gentlemen concerned were seconded to the authority and in fact have taken up duty.

The question of their employment as permanent public servants has presented some difficulty. Although Treasury clearance was obtained for the creation of permanent positions for their employment, the Public Service Board was unable to create the permanent positions for the following reasons—

Firstly, the board was and is circumscribed by the provisions of the Public Service Act 1958 relating to age of entry.

Secondly, the requirements of the Public Service Act 1958 prohibits the board from appointing persons from outside the service to permanent positions unless applications have been invited from persons already in the service and, as a result of such advertisement, the board is satisfied that there are no suitable applicants already in the service.

Thirdly, the board was unable to give a guarantee that if the positions were created and advertised within the Public Service the two persons concerned, if they were eligible to apply, would be successful in their applications.

The only way in which the situation can be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties concerned is by legislation. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. LIND (Dandenong), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, September 18.

TERANG MECHANICS INSTITUTE AND FREE LIBRARY TRUST BILL.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to facilitate the surrender to the Crown of property held by the Terang Mechanics Institute and Free Library Service Trust, and the appointment of the Shire of Hampden as a committee of management over such property.

The trust property, situated in the main street of Terang, comprises a public hall, large reception area, library meeting rooms, kitchen

facilities and shop space. To date, the property has been administered by locally-elected trustees.

In 1959, the trustees obtained a loan of $40,000 from the National Mutual Life Association of Australasia Ltd., to finance extensions and improvements to the building. At that time the trustees were confident that their annual revenue would be more than sufficient to meet the interest and repayment charges on the loan, particularly as income was expected to increase upon the completion of the building extensions. However, by 1962 the picture theatre which operated in the hall began to lose money and by 1965 it was necessary for the institute to negotiate an extended repayment term on the loan. Notwithstanding this relief the financial position of the institute continued to decline.

As the trustees controlled the only large reception area and public hall in the town, the Government, in 1967, decided that it would assist by enabling the trustees to pay off the existing mortgage loan and to replace it with a Government loan on even more favourable interest and repayment terms. The institute, faced with rapidly diminishing theatre audiences and falling revenue from other activities, was not able to meet the level of commitments on the Government loan.

In 1972, the council of the Shire of Hampden indicated that it would be willing to assume responsibility for the property for community purposes. The Government considered the matter and agreed that, provided the buildings were to continue to be available for such purposes, the only viable solution was to transfer the management of the property to the council as a centre for community activities.

The property is subject to a trust registered under the Religious, Successory and Charitable Trusts Act 1958 and the terms of the trust did not permit the trustees to transfer the whole of the trust property to the council. The Crown law authorities have advised the Government that special legislation is required to enable the council to take over responsibility for the property from the trustees on the agreed basis.

The Bill therefore provides that the land will be surrendered to the Crown, free of the trust and all encumbrances and reserved for public purposes. The council of the Shire of Hampden will be appointed as a committee of management under the Land Act to administer the property for the benefit of the local community.

The Bill also provides power for the council, as a committee of management, to lease the whole or any part of the property for business, social or recreational activities on the conditions contained in clause 5(2) of the Bill. Revenue received under any such lease arrangement shall be applied by the shire towards the maintenance and improvement of the property. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. LIND (Dandenong), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.

BONNIE DOON (PUBLIC HALL) LAND BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is identical to one which proceeded to the second-reading stage during the last sessional period. It is designed to effect the removal of a restrictive covenant on the Bonnie Doon hall site to enable the Bonnie Doon Hall Committee to sell the now unwanted land and apply the proceeds of the sale towards the erection of a sports centre, including a public hall, on the Bonnie Doon Recreation Reserve.

On the motion of Mr. LIND (Dandenong), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, September 18.

WHEAT MARKETING BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proceeded to the second-reading stage in the last sessional period. Its purpose is to extend the operation of the Victorian wheat delivery quota scheme to cover the season 1974-75. Under the Wheat Marketing Act 1969 as it now stands, the operation of the scheme will expire on 30th September, 1974.

It is the Government's intention to undertake an early thorough review of the Victorian scheme and with this in mind the Government, after considering the representations of the Grains Division of the Victorian Farmers Union, has decided that the best course to follow at this stage would be to extend the operation of the current legislation for one season only. In order to implement this decision, amendments are required to three sections of the Act containing references to specified seasons.

The first of these amendments, as set out in clause 2(1) of the Bill, is to section 32(3) of the Act which deals with the apportionment of a quota between a landowner and a sharefarmer where the applicant for a quota was a party to a sharefarming agreement in respect of the seasons 1969-1973. This reference is extended to cover the season 1974-75.

The second amendment, contained in clause 3, is to section 38 (2B) which makes provision for over-quota wheat to be treated as quota wheat. This sub-section provides that the Minister, after consultation with the Victorian Farmers Union, may specify that all over-quota wheat delivered by the holder of a quota during the season 1973-74 is to be treated as quota wheat delivered during that season. It is envisaged that a similar arrangement will operate in respect of the season 1974-75, and provision is made accordingly.

The third amendment, shown in clause 4 of the Bill, extends the reference in section 48 to include the season 1974-75 as a season in respect of which the Wheat Marketing Act shall have effect.

The other amendment proposed in the Bill has been included following a specific request from the Grains Division of the Victorian Farmers Union. The union has pointed out that the existing requirement in the Act for the Wheat Quota Committee to issue individual quota notifications to some 17,000 quota holders involves considerable expense. In respect of the season 1974-75 it is envisaged, as I said earlier, that a specification will be made under the Act whereby all wheat delivered by a quota holder during that season will be treated as quota wheat. Therefore there is little point in the committee notifying quota holders of their individual quota allocations, although the committee will, of course, record them for administrative purposes.

In these circumstances the union has requested that, in order to save unnecessary expense, the requirement to issue individual quota notifications be suspended for the season 1974-75. The Government considers that the request is reasonable, and the relevant amendment is included in clause 2(2) of the Bill.

In order that necessary administrative arrangements in relation to the season 1974-75 can be put in train, it is most desirable that the amending legislation be passed during this session. I commend the Bill to honorable members.

On the motion of Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, September 18.

FERTILIZERS BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Department of Agriculture administers a number of Acts governing the sale of products used in agriculture. In many cases, the man in the street will also use these products in his home garden. This legislation, which enables the quality of the products to be controlled by the department and provides some limitation on the sale of products which may be unsatisfactory for use or which may present some hazard to crops, animals or people, has been in force for many years, and the industries involved have accepted the need for it.

Two such Acts are the Fertilizers Act 1958 and the Agricultural Lime Act 1958. The former has its origin in the Artificial Manures Act 1897, which was almost entirely self-help legislation providing that a vendor must disclose the composition of a fertilizer on the invoice upon any sale and giving a purchaser the right to an official analysis. Later, provision was made for an official analyst to inspect and take samples, with publication of a list of the analyses in the *Government Gazette*; and later still in 1910, provision was made to require manufacturers or importers to register brands of all fertilizers sold. The Agricultural Lime Act, first introduced in 1935, includes by reference many of the provisions of the Fertilizers Act.

This Bill proposes to consolidate and reframe the current legislation controlling the sale of fertilizers and agricultural limes, and to introduce some important new provisions in the legislation. Clauses 1 and 2 are introductory clauses and include the usual saving provisions. It is proposed to bring the legislation into force by the begining of October this year which would be the date at which applications would normally be due for the next annual registration period.

The scope of the current legislation will be extended by additional and amended interpretations in clause 3 to cover all materials sold as fertilizers, including manure and trade wastes, and also including packet trade fertilizers. These were previously all exempt. Materials, including gypsum sold as soil conditioners, will also be covered. Provision is made in similar terms to those included in the Pesticides Act for the expansion of interpretations of the various products by means of a proclamation. This provision would enable materials such as bacterial preparations which could have the same effect as agricultural limes, fertilizers or soil conditioners to be proclaimed at some later date.

Unless exempted by the provisions of clause 5, or by proclamation under clause 4, all products must be registered with the Department of Agriculture and, if packed in parcels, must be labelled, or if sold in bulk accompanied by an approved delivery document. Animal manures and gypsum are exempted by clause 5 from the labelling and registration provisions whilst agricultural lime packed in parcels of less than 25 kilograms in weight is exempted from the labelling provisions of the Bill. Products such as trade wastes or fertilizer packed with seeds may be exempted by proclamation. Sales of soil, clay, sand and gravel are completely exempted by clause 5.

The interpretation of sale in clause 3 has been extended to cover contract application, and the supply of a product in consideration for the use of services.

Power will be given by clause 6 of the Bill to prescribe standards for the various products. Currently there is one standard for bone dust in the Fertilizers Act, in respect to fineness. It is proposed that this and other standards will be set by regulation.

Over the past year or so, because of the shortage of blood and bone, various mixtures of organic waste and other materials have been on the market as blood and bone manure. In some cases the substitute product has been unsuitable for the purposes for which blood and bone manure is traditionally used, causing some damage to plants. Most of this product has been sold in small packets, less than 7 kilograms in weight, and as such has not been subject to the Fertilizers Act. As a result, home gardeners and some nurseries have been particularly affected. Products in small packets will be covered by the Bill and it is proposed that power shall be given for standards for products such as blood and bone manure to be prescribed, so that substitutes cannot be described as the genuine article. Power is also provided for the prescribing of standards for gypsum sold for soil application.

Under clause 7 the sale of any agricultural lime, fertilizer or soil conditioner is prohibited unless the product has been registered under the Pesticides Act. Additionally, power is provided to prohibit the use of certain materials to package some products. This provision will enable the prohibition of re-usable jute bags for use with fertilizer containing pesticides, so as to prevent later contents being contaminated with pesticide residues. All labelling provisions of the legislation have been brought together in clause 8 of the Bill.

There is some change of terminology, in conformity with other Acts regulating agricultural materials. The mode of statement of analyses on labels will in future be fixed by regulation, instead of being set out as at present in a schedule to the Act. Difficulties have been experienced in making provision in the schedule for the wide range of constituents and forms of constituents now found in products used for agriculture and for the use of terms uniform with legislation in other States. Provision is made for warning statements on labels to be prescribed.

The registration procedures in clauses 9, 10 and 11 have been redrafted to bring them into line with those currently required by the Pesticides Act, which was revised in this respect in 1972.

Registration will be on a three-year cycle. This is in accordance with a decision by the Australian Agricultural Council to arrange three-year cycles of registrations for pesticides, fertilizers and agricultural limes, and stock foods and stock medicines, on the basis that pesticides would be registered every three years after 1973, fertilizers and agricultural limes every three years after 1974, and stock foods and stock medicines every three years after 1975.

In view of the time of the introduction of this Bill, it is planned that current registrations for the relevant products shall continue until 28th February, 1975, and that the first cycle for agricultural limes, fertilizers and soil conditioners should start on 1st March, 1975 and expire on 30th June, 1977. In succeeding cycles the first day of July will be the commencing date.

Provision is made for copies or specimens of labels to be provided with applications for registrations. Currently the requirement is specified in the regulations. Procedures are provided whereby approval may be given for minor changes in labels and other specified information provided in the application for registration which became necessary in the

course of the three-year registration period. Changes which materially alter the identity of a product would require a fresh application for registration.

Power is given to the Director of Agriculture, where a product could be sold either as a fertilizer or an agricultural lime or soil conditioner, to determine to which category the product belongs, and also for him to require substantiation of any claim made on labels for a product.

A list of registered products will be published in respect of each three-year period in the *Government Gazette*, and where necessary supplementary lists during the period of registration. However, between publication of lists, it will be possible for any person to inspect a record of registered products upon payment of a nominal prescribed fee to cover administration expenses.

The provisions of the legislation regarding special prescriptions have been simplified in clause 12 and the requirements set down in more detail. Matters such as a requirement for retention of orders and prescriptions, and their production to an inspector, delivery of a copy of the special prescription to the director together with the payment of a prescribed fee and labelling or documentation to identify a sale of product with the relevant prescription have been set out in the Bill. The circumstances under which this provision can be used to exempt a product from labelling and registration have been more precisely defined.

The provisions in respect of special imports have been retained with only slight modification, although few persons or organizations have taken advantage of these provisions in recent years.

Clause 13 is similar to a section in the Stock Foods Act and provides a specific warranty to the purchaser for products covered by this Bill. The provisions will apply to all agricultural limes, fertilizers and soil conditioners, including those such as animal manures and gypsum which do not require registration and labelling.

Clause 14 is a new provision designed to prevent deliberate false or misleading advertising with respect to products covered by the Bill. Clauses 15 to 19 relate to the appointment of inspectors and analysts and the powers of inspectors. Inspection procedures are set out in detail and have been up-dated to cover modern practices in industry and to cover the packet trade in fertilizers. The powers of an inspector are restricted to the property of a wholesale dealer or vendor, as defined in the Bill and, with the consent of the purchaser, to his property.

Clause 20 retains the existing right for a purchaser to obtain an analysis of a product he has purchased although detailed procedures will be set out in regulations. The provisions in clauses 21 and 22 for certificates of analysis and the carrying out of reference analyses are substantially those of existing legislation.

Tolerances for analytical figures have been retained in clause 23, in much the same form as previously, with the additional provision that the analysis may be compared with any standard proclaimed, any bona fide prescription, and in some cases, with the analysis specified in an application for registration, to determine if the product is adulterated.

The provisions of current legislation in respect of court proceedings have been incorporated in clauses 24 to 26 of the Bill and in addition two areas are specified where the burden of proof is placed on the defendant. One is the proof of the nature of a substance when the defendant claims that it is not a product subject to the Act. The other is the proof that a product is not for sale where the inspector has discovered it on wholesale or retail premises.

On a number of occasions, problems have occurred in these areas where a statement made by a person at the time of sampling as to the identity of a product or as to its being for sale have conflicted with his evidence in court and prosecutions have been dismissed because of this conflict.

Penalties generally through the Bill have been increased to bring them into line with present-day money values. The powers to make regulations set out in clause 28 are substantially those contained in the existing legislation with additional items to cover the new provisions incorporated in this Bill. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, September 24.

ADJOURNMENT.

DAYS AND HOURS OF MEETING.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): Before moving the motion for the adjournment of the sitting, for the guidance of honorable members I shall give a brief outline of the intention of the Government for the next two weeks. It is intended to concentrate on the Address-in-Reply debate next week, following the completion of the debate on the substantive motion moved by the honorable member for Gippsland East. There is a possibility of the House sitting on Thursday of next week. On Tuesday evening of the following week there is a Government function occasioned by the visit of a distinguished overseas visitor and the Government intends to sit at 2.15 p.m. on Tuesday, to allow members attending the function time to dress. Because Thursday, 26th September is Show Day, it is the Government's intention on the preceding Wednesday to sit at 11 a.m. The earlier sitting will allow Country members to leave sooner on Wednesday evening than would otherwise be possible.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I support the proposition put by the Deputy Premier. It is a reasonable arrangement and as we have met until 5.30 a.m. today, we have at least cleared the air so that we know where the session is heading; it has been put on some sort of a basis. Country Party members particularly must be satisfied to know that the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply will take precedence next week.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): With a great degree of reluctance, I move—

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday next, at half-past three o'clock.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.31 *a.m. until Tuesday, September* 17.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, September 17, 1974.

The PRESIDENT **(Sir Raymond Garrett)** took the chair at 4.52 p.m., and read the prayer.

DOG (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Dog Act 1970.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

COMMAND PAPER.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization) presented, by command of His Excellency the