Legislative Council.

Tuesday, October 22, 1974.

The PRESIDENT **(Sir Raymond Garrett)** took the chair at 4.55 p.m., and read the prayer.

COMMONWEALTH PLACES (ADMINISTRATION OF LAWS) BILL.

This Bill was received from the Assembly and, on the motion of the Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government), was read a first time.

VALUATION OF LAND (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Valuation of Land Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

PAPERS.

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

Dairy Products Board—Report for the six months ended 30th June, 1974.

Melbourne Harbor Trust Commissioners—Balance-sheet and statement of accounts for the year 1973–74.

Public Service Act 1958—Public Service (Public Service Board) Regulations—Regulations amended (Nos. 174 to 182) (nine papers).

Statutory Rules under the following Acts of Parliament—

Explosives Act 1960—No. 453.

Latrobe Valley Act 1958—No. 449.

National Parks Act 1970—No. 452.

Portland Harbor Trust Act 1958—No. 454.

Second-hand Dealers Act 1958—No. 451.

Zoological Gardens Act 1967—No. 450.

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—

City of Moe Planning Scheme 1966—Amendment No. 37, 1973.

Eppalock Planning Scheme—Amendment No. 2 (Shire of McIvor).

Geelong Planning Scheme 1959—Amendments Nos. 10 and 14, 1972 (City of Newtown) (two papers).

Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme—Amendment No. 53, with map (two papers).

Shire of Sherbrooke Planning Scheme 1965—Amendment No. 31, 1970.

Shire of Woorayl Planning Scheme, with maps (two papers).

PAY-ROLL TAX (RATE) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from October 16) on the motion of the Hon. Murray Byrne (Minister for State Development and Decentralization) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province): This measure proposes an increase in pay-roll tax, a tax which will be immediately passed on to the consumer. It is another step along the inflationary highway.

All indirect taxation is a clumsy attempt to conceal from the taxpayer that he will be paying it. The difference between direct and indirect taxation is the same as the difference between a man's wife asking him for money and going through his pockets while he is asleep. If our ancestors thought taxation without representation—*a la* the Boston Tea Party—was bad, they should see it with representation. The art of taxation consists in so plucking the goose as to obtain the largest amount of feathers with the least amount of hissing.

The whole tax system in Australia is ripe for consideration and review. It is out of date, and has been for many years, and nobody is in a position to define its logic or its rationale. No clear philosophy emerges, no principles can be spelt out. The cumbersome system of State, Federal, local government and Board of Works taxation is a haphazard day-to-day witches brew. There is no more urgent task in Australia than the restructuring of the taxation system.

For a century or more one tax has been piled upon another. Unless we realize what we are doing, the time will come when there will be nothing left and the Government will be as ineffective as a pickpocket in a nudist colony.

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON: I thought we had reached that stage.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: I am glad to have some support. Our system of taxation at best is cumbersome, costly and bureaucratic. The combined administrative costs to revenue of some forms of taxation exceed the yield. The turnover tax, —which I believe, although the Government does not, is an excise and therefore illegal—on the Gas and Fuel Corporation and the State Electricity Commission is passed directly on to the consumer. Where else is the money to come from?

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: Only two people can pay the tax, either the producer or the consumer.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: Exactly. The Opposition was at some pains to point that out to Sir Henry Bolte's Government. You, Mr. President, will remember the lively debates that we had on that subject. I feel sure that both instrumentalities would have taken the matter to the courts if it had not been for the immense regard in which they held Sir Henry Bolte and his power to get his own way. Why should the turnover tax which is payable by the two fuel instrumentalities be passed directly on to the consumer and why should the taxpayer have to foot the bureaucratic administrative costs as well?

Stamp duty on vehicle transfers and road tax are irksome and costly. Because of excise the price of beer is an economic atrocity. Stamp and conveyancing duties on land and mortgage transactions are inflationary. They add substantially to the cost of land. It is still our proud boast that the first thing any young couple has to do is to buy a block of land and start getting a home. Today most of them are horrified at the duty involved in land transactions. Duties on land transactions and mortgage transactions for small areas of land designed for home purposes are inflationary measures at the best.

Inflation can never be tackled by indirect tax hikes, and that is what we are doing. The ill-fated, abortive, bed tax is a grim reminder of the window tax of Britain.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: Mr. Galbally should not be too sure that it will not be brought in.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: It may be. Most proposed taxes are hit on the head for a while but revive remarkably well and take their place in the statutes. The window tax in Britain led to a health hazard because of the resultant darkened rooms and lack of air. Indirect taxes on food items are to be deplored. They are in the same class as the window tax.

Mr. President, if the Government showed as much ingenuity in dealing with social problems as it does in devising new forms of tax, overnight we would become a most remarkable community.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province): Some years ago, Australia had a generous Prime Minister who offered to the States what he termed a growth tax. They are the truest words that have ever been spoken because undoubtedly pay-roll tax is growing. It has been an enormous growth tax in this State and will continue into the future. Every year when the Premiers return to their States without obtaining additional moneys from the Commonwealth, the decision is taken to add further to the rate of pay-roll tax. It is increasing year by year.

I do not know how much longer industry can absorb a tax of this nature without making a greater charge on the consumer. As I indicated a few moments ago, only two types of person have to pay the tax, the producer or the consumer. In the main, the consumer pays the tax

because industry in the main is passing it on. Indirectly, some of the tax is taken from the producer, but for most purposes it can be regarded as a consumer tax.

The tax will continue to be increased at its present rate every time the annual pilgrimage to Canberra takes place and the Premiers are told that they had better obtain additional funds by increasing the growth tax. Whoever is in power—and this is not a political argument for one party or another—will increase the pay-roll tax by another 1 per cent, and this will be passed on. Victoria is in a serious plight. When pay-roll tax was handed over to the States, it appeared to be a simple method of obtaining funds. When it was first introduced, the Country Party raised objections to the principle of this tax being applied to certain country industries, and was told that those industries could not be excluded because agreement had been reached between the States. Since then the Government has seen the wisdom of my party's original argument and has now excluded certain decentralized industries from the payment of pay-roll tax.

The measure will apply to a considerable number of people whom it was not intended to include. The tax was to be imposed on industries, but it will drag in small businesses. There need be only four employees receiving the average Australian wage of approximately $127 a week to necessitate the payment of pay-roll tax. I do not think it was ever envisaged that this would happen, but it will occur under this measure. Because of inflation, more and more people will be dragged into the pay-roll tax field. As the average wage of an Australian citizen rises, so will the number of people in this category. If this procedure is to be adopted, we cannot continue to charge the consumer.

The effects of the economic situation which is developing today in Australia may not be felt much in the city, although unemployment figures are rising every day.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: A thousand a day.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: A large number of these people live in the country areas of Victoria. Perhaps the worst tragedy that is occurring in country Victoria today concerns the plight of the primary producer who does not know how many people are going to be in the unemployed group. Wheat growers are still awaiting payment for their 1971 crop; wool growers are being subsidized under a floor price plan and the Australian Wool Corporation is buying about 56 per cent of the clip. Although the Federal Government is advancing the money, this must be underwritten by the grower, and from the beginning he is paying a high rate of interest on the money. A catastrophe has befallen the meat industry in the country. Many people are already going out of business, because their stock has been purchased with loan money advanced by stock and station agents, they have mortgaged their farms beyond their ability to retain them and they must sell their properties. This is happening in the country today and as a result many businesses which are paying wages will also come within this category. Small businesses cannot pass on the tax because they are flat out trying to retain their properties. They will have to close down, as a considerable number have already done.

One has only to drive through any country town to see the number of empty shops, and this situation will be aggravated. When the 5 per cent tax is added to the present salary range which will apply this year—at the moment the figure is $20,800—it will mean that pay-roll tax must be paid even if only four people are employed at the average wage. The financial structure of Victoria cannot afford this.

I am surprised that, when introducing this measure to the House, the Government did not adjust the formula to which the Bill applies. The Government has dealt with the

measure on the present $20,800 basis. People in both the metropolitan and country areas in this category cannot afford to pay pay-roll tax at the rate of 5 per cent. Something should be done about this because if the situation continues small businesses in both the metropolitan and country areas will be hard put to keep their doors open. No doubt the Government will say that an agreement was reached on 7th June at the Premiers Conference to raise the amount of pay-roll tax from 4·5 per cent to 5 per cent.

Therefore, the consequences must be passed on to people who cannot afford to pay the tax. The Government should examine the minimum rate to be charged now that it has entered into an agreement to increase the figure from 4·5 per cent to 5 per cent. However, the Government decided to reap the benefits not only of the 0·5 per cent but also of the increased wages being paid today. It was prepared to take the rake-off caused by inflation as occurs with all taxes that are applied today. My party does not believe the country can stand it. The rate of inflation continues to increase and taxes rise at the same high rate. Accordingly, I move—

That all the words after "That" be omitted with a view of inserting in place thereof the words "this House refuses to read this Bill a second time until such time as the Legislative Assembly is requested by message from this House to make provision for the taxable wages amount prescribed in sub-section (4) (*b*) of section 11 of the Pay-roll Tax Act 1971 to be increased from $20,800 to $50,000."

This provides a reasonable basis for the granting of exemptions, and will enable the Victorian people to return to the tax as originally applied in 1971. The Country Party does not agree that the old measuring stick should be used from year to year. If pay-roll tax is to be applied on the basis laid down in the Bill, it will be burdensome to a section of the community which can least afford it. The Country Party makes its protest in an endeavour to get some sanity back into the procedure and its application to the people who must pay this tax.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): Once again, I congratulate the two senior members of the House on their excellent speeches in opposition to the Bill. Few honorable members would fail to support everything that they said. I shall probably repeat some statements which I made on previous occasions. I do not think anyone in the House can support the principle of indirect taxation, because it is unfair and unjust. As Mr. Galbally and Mr. Swinburne pointed out, the only fair method of taxation is income tax because it is based on the taxpayer's ability to pay. Pay-roll tax has nothing to do with ability to pay, nor does any form of indirect taxation. Whether a business is doing well or not, pay-roll tax must still be paid.

I did not think Mr. Galbally's speech was as good as speeches he has made on other occasions. Mr. Galbally usually makes a colourful speech saying that we are the most heavily taxed people in the world and that even the air we breathe will soon be taxed. Spokesmen for the Labor Opposition in New South Wales and Western Australia have indicated that Victoria is a wonderful State because its taxation does not appear to be as high as taxation in other States. If I had been making a speech on pay-roll tax on behalf of the Opposition—and I could have made a good one—I would have said that in a time of unemployment those who are employing the most people are the most heavily taxed.

Let me make the position quite clear: I do not believe anyone defends indirect taxation, nor do I think any Government supporter defends the present system of taxation because it is an irresponsible form of national taxation, for reasons which have been discussed previously. Mr. Galbally spoke at

length on this matter. If one wants something done at local government level, one must pay local government tax, State tax, Federal tax and some instrumentality taxes, such as those levied by the Board of Works and other organizations. If one asks local government to do something, one will be told that local government has no real powers of taxation. Local government representatives will send one to the State Government, which will say that it has no real powers of taxation other than indirect tax. The Federal Government will say that it is not its responsibility because the Constitution—as honorable members know—vests most Government responsibility in the States. Most bread-and-butter issues come under the direct control of State Governments.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: Except the rate of State tax.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: That is exactly so. For interesting historical and other reasons, of which honorable members are well aware, the power of the purse is vested in the Federal Government, and therefore a completely irresponsible system of taxation exists in Australia.

The Governments of all States—Liberal, Labor and Country Party—together with the Federal Government agreed unanimously that what little tax the States would receive from the indirect system of taxation, namely pay-roll tax, should be passed over. It is the unfortunate task of State Governments to carry out their responsibilities in this regard.

Once again the Victorian Government comes before Parliament with a Bill which proposes to increase the rate of this unfair indirect tax, which is also—as has been indicated—to an extent inflationary. It is proposed to increase the tax by 0·5 per cent. I do not think the Government has to justify its position in this matter. It was a uniform decision by the Federal Government and all State Governments. I do not think anyone in this House can suggest that under all the circumstances, the State Governments, whatever their political beliefs, could have done other than they did, because the facts are known. Mr. Reece and all the other State Premiers say that the States receive back less money now than ever before in the history of the Federation. There is not a State Government in Australia that is not desperate for revenue.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: It was never intended that this tax should be imposed on the small businesses to which it now applies.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: That is a hard point to argue against.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: I know the Minister is in some difficulty.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: I thought I was doing quite well. It is clear that the State Government does not want to impose this form of indirect taxation; it is not a proper form of taxation and members of the Government do not recognize it as a fair and just tax. As were other State Governments, we were forced into accepting this taxation and we do not like it.

Mr. Swinburne suggests that the exemption of $20,800 should be increased to $50,000. There is much logic in what Mr. Swinburne suggests and it can be argued that pay-roll tax is inflationary. Mr. Swinburne nearly provided the answers to his own argument and, although I have not read the *Hansard* report, I know that similar arguments have been put forward in another place. I also know that after the Premiers of the States returned from Canberra it was revealed that an agreement was reached by all the States and the Commonwealth on the imposition of pay-roll tax.

The Treasury has stated that 25,000 people or businesses at present are liable to pay pay-roll tax and if this reasoned amendment suggested by

Mr. Swinburne—I almost said reasonable—is accepted, Victoria will lose immediately in excess of $37·5 million at a time when every cent of revenue is committed. So Victoria is in an impossible position.

The Premier stated that at the next Premiers Conference, which, I understand, will be held soon, he would be prepared to suggest a higher exemption, but whatever is done an additional $37·5 million will have to be obtained. If this sum of money is not found, the salaries of teachers will not be paid and provision will not be made for mental hygiene, housing and other matters which are the responsibility of the State and for which the Government must accept responsibility.

Although other members of the Government and I appreciate all of what Mr. Galbally and Mr. Swinburne have said about the reasoned amendment, for the reasons I have suggested the Government is not able to support it.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province): The Bill has been introduced, as the Minister has stated, to bring into effect the agreement reached by the Premiers and the Prime Minister to increase the rate of pay-roll tax from 4·5 per cent to 5 per cent.

My Leader, Mr. Swinburne, has moved a reasoned amendment to the second-reading motion. The Leader of the Government, Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Galbally have outlined quite clearly the history of pay-roll tax and what it means to Victoria and no benefit would be gained in my covering those same arguments.

Mr. Swinburne pointed out that pay-roll tax was vacated by the Commonwealth and handed over by the States. Certainly it is an important source of revenue for Victoria. The Budget estimates indicate that a total of $320 million will be obtained from the tax during the year.

As I understand the position, the question is not whether or not this indirect tax is an unfair one—all honorable members agree on that—but whether the rate should be increased from 4·5 per cent to 5 per cent. The Country Party has indicated that it is prepared to support that change. Certainly an agreement has been reached and it will provide additional revenue to Victoria.

I refer particularly to the matter raised by Mr. Swinburne in his amendment that the statutory exemption be increased from $20,800 to $50,000. The Minister has conceded that this increase would be of great value to many small businesses in Victoria. The honorable gentleman used the argument in opposing Mr. Swinburne's amendment that because of the agreement that had been reached by the Premiers and the Prime Minister, it was not possible for this State to alter the exemption.

It is interesting to refer to the original agreement of two years ago to ascertain whether the Victorian Government's decision to grant pay-roll tax concessions to decentralized industries was in accordance with that agreement. The Minister has pointed out that the Treasury has estimated that $37·5 million will be lost to Victoria if this amendment is agreed to. At this stage honorable members have not details of this estimate and I should like to put two points to the Minister.

I should like the Government to make details of the estimate available to members on this side of the House because it seems to me, from a quick assessment of the position, that the estimated amount of tax obtained from these 25,000 small industries is high. If that figure is so high that the Government cannot accept the amendment, the Country Party would have no objection if the Minister would agree to increasing the exemption to $35,000 or $40,000. This would surely reduce the loss of revenue of $37·5 million to the State to a more acceptable level.

Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Galbally have stated that the Bill is the result of a long disagreement between the Federal and State Governments. I see daylight in the dispute because two week-ends ago the Liberal Party at a conference in Canberra was rewriting its Federal policy and decided that, if the party were returned to Government in the future—and in my view the quicker the better—its policy would be to return to the States a fixed percentage of taxation revenue. That is the objective we should all aim at.

As Mr. Swinburne has already indicated, members of the Country Party accept that the increase from 4·5 per cent to 5 per cent pay-roll tax has been agreed to. We know that it is an unpleasant decision for the Government to make and realize that this action is necessary for Victoria.

The amendment moved by Mr. Swinburne proposes that the exemption be increased from $20,800 to $50,000 and in my opinion the argument put forward by the Minister that the exemption figure is included in an agreement between the States and the Commonwealth and therefore cannot be altered is a little thin. As I said earlier, the Minister's decision to give pay-roll tax concessions to decentralized industries in Victoria was admirable but it was probably not in the original agreement between the State and Federal Governments. If the suggested increase to $50,000 is too high, the Country Party is prepared to accept a decision by the Minister to increase the exemption rate to $35,000 or $40,000 or some other acceptable level.

The House divided on the question that the words proposed by Mr. Swinburne to be omitted stand part of the motion (Sir Raymond Garrett in the chair)—

Ayes	.. ..	28
Noes	.. ..	6
Majority against the amendment	..	22

AYES.

Mr. Block	Mr. Hunt
Mr. Byrne	Mr. Jenkins
Mr. Eddy	Mr. Knight
Mr. Dickie	Mr. Long
Mr. Elliot	Mr. Nicol
Mr. Fry	Mr. Storey
Mr. Galbally	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Gleeson	Mr. Trayling
Mr. Granter	Mr. Tripovich
Mr. Grimwade	Mr. Walton
Mr. Gross	Mr. Ward
Mr. Hamilton	
Mr. Hauser	*Tellers:*
Mr. Hider	Mr. Campbell
Mr. Houghton	Mr. Kent

NOES.

Mr. Bradbury	
Mr. McDonald	*Tellers:*
Mr. Swinburne	Mr. Clarke
Mr. Wright	Mr. Dunn

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time, and passed through its remaining stages.

CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES BILL.

The debate (adjourned from October 16) on the motion of the Hon. V. O. Dickie (Minister of Housing) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province): This small Bill increases the aggregate liability of the Treasurer under indemnities given to co-operative housing societies through which low-income earners purchase homes. It also increases to $20,000 the maximum amount which may be advanced by a society to a member of a co-operative housing society.

Members of the Opposition do not oppose the Bill, the introduction of which is necessary because of inflation. This is the third Bill of this type which has been introduced in the past eighteen months. In his explanatory speech, the Minister provided some of the early history of the co-operative housing scheme and stated—

> It is quite clear that, with the build-up in the demand for housing which was in short supply following six years of war, co-operative housing was initially intended to assist in overcoming that shortage.

The honorable gentleman then referred to the provisions of the original Act. The original Act is really not the Co-operative Housing Societies Act of 1945.

Co-operative housing has a long history. Reports of debates that took place in another place when Mr. John Holland was the honorable member for Flemington show that he endeavoured to have established the principle of co-operation so that the Government could assist low-income earners to build homes. His proposals were rejected time and again. In the late 1920s and the early 1930s the predecessors of the Government which is now in office would not accept the principles of co-operation.

In 1936 the Housing Investigation and Slum Abolition Board was established. Some honorable members can remember that board. Its purpose was to deal with the redevelopment of slum areas. The late Mr. Oswald Barnett, who was a member of the board, and other members did a tremendous amount of work. Following that, the Housing Commission was established in 1937. In 1938 the Slum Reclamation and Housing Bill was passed. The Government accepted the indemnity on a loan up to 80 per cent of the value of a home and set aside a maximum of $1 million—500,000 pounds in those days—for this purpose. In 1943 the Housing Bill authorized housing societies to lend up to 90 per cent of the value of the security. That increase was to cover the deposit gap

I do not intend to go into the details of co-operative housing, as I have on many occasions in this House, but it was originally a different kettle of fish from what it is today. At present one can purchase a house and land as a job lot, and one method of financing it is through a housing co-operative.

Despite the fact that the 1938 Act made provision for indemnities on advances up to $1 million, no loan was actually made under that Act until 1st May, 1946. It may be said that this is a strange situation. Of course it is, because the Governments of those days adopted a different attitude to co-operation from the Governments of today. The Minister stated with some pride—which all honorable members share—that only $2,130 has been paid from the Consolidated Fund by way of indemnity payments. Incidentally, between 1st May, 1946, when the Labor Government led by the late Honorable John Cain was in office, and 14th November, 1946, an amount of $47,092 was lent to members of co-operative housing societies under the indemnity provisions.

It is proposed to increase from $3 million to $4 million the aggregate liability which the Treasurer may incur under indemnities. The existing liability now stands at $2,969,246. The Government has maintained the principles that were enunciated in earlier years. The present Minister of Education, who was Minister of Housing when he was a member of this Chamber, raised to 95 per cent of the valuation the maximum amount which may be advanced to a member of a co-operative housing society. That sounds good, but very few homes are financed by loans up to 95 per cent of the valuation.

The Hon. A. K. BRADBURY: Would there be any?

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: I do not know. Some time ago I asked questions of the Minister and found that the average number was about five a year. The amount of the advance depends on a person's ability to pay. If he has not the capacity to pay he cannot be financed up to that amount. I should like this provision to appertain—as I know the Minister does—but the system just does not work out that way.

Members of the Labor Party do not oppose the Bill. I do not want to cross swords with the Minister or to become emotional, but I take some umbrage at the Minister's remarks about his clash with the Minister for Housing in the Australian Government over the question of the "means

test". The Australian Minister of Housing has announced that of the finance made available for housing—it has been doubled this year—the sum of $49·8 million will go to the Housing Commission and $31·4 million will be paid to the Home Builders Account. Of the additional $19 million for housing, $12·6 million will be allocated to co-operative housing.

In this State there have been difficulties related to the means test stipulated by the Australian Government. I like the term "Australian Government". It is more descriptive like saying the Victorian State Government, the New South Wales State Government, the Queensland State Government, and the Commonwealth of Australia Government.

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON: What is wrong with the term "Federal Government"?

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: What does "Federal" mean?

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON: It means that it is a federation.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: Canada does not call its Government the Federal Government.

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON: But this is Australia.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: Is Mr. Hamilton afraid of the word "Australian" or ashamed of using it? At least it describes the particular Government more effectively than the word "Federal".

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON: I support the concept of federation.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: You support the narrow Liberal Party view.

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON: I know you are a leading member of a party whose platform is dedicated to the destruction of State Governments.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: I take exception to that. I have spent at least 50 years of my life for the benefit of this country, not its destruction. I ask the honorable member to withdraw that statement.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): I will ask the honorable member to withdraw the remark.

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON (Higinbotham Province): Mr. President, I am sorry if I upset Mr. Tripovich. It is the policy of his party to which he subscribes.

The PRESIDENT: That is not the matter under discussion. I ask the honorable member to withdraw the remark.

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON: I will withdraw it if Mr. Tripovich does not subscribe to it.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: By way of explanation, there is nothing in the policy of the Australian Labor Party—and I subscribe to it—which relates to the destruction of the States.

The PRESIDENT: Order! This is out of order.

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT (Melbourne West Province): On a point of order, Mr. President, I take umbrage at Mr. Hamilton not withdrawing his remark without reservation.

The PRESIDENT: I ask Mr. Hamilton to withdraw unequivocally.

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON (Higinbotham Province): I apologize if I have offended Mr. Tripovich. If he does not accept his party's platform——

The PRESIDENT: Order! I cannot accept that.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): I think there has been a misunderstanding. Apparently Mr. Tripovich thought that Mr. Hamilton said that he subscribed to a platform for the destruction of the Australian Government. What Mr. Hamilton said was that he believed that the Labor Party subscribed to a platform for the destruction of the State Government, not the Australian Government.

The PRESIDENT: I have asked Mr. Hamilton to withdraw the condition he placed on his withdrawal of the remark.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare): On the point of order, Mr. President, I agree with the Minister of Housing that there has been a misunderstanding of what was said. My understanding of what it was—and I think Mr. Tripovich may agree with me—was that Mr. Hamilton said that Mr. Tripovich subscribed to the destruction of the State Government, not the State. If that is so, I see no point of order in the matter.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask Mr. Tripovich to continue his speech.

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT (Melbourne West Province): Mr. President, I must insist that there is an unequivocal withdrawal.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is a difference of opinion on exactly what was said. Unless we have a report or hear the tape, I do not think any honorable member would know the exact words used.

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT: With all due respect, Mr. President, I heard the remark. It is offensive to me as a member of this House. I ask for an unequivocal withdrawal.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask Mr. Hamilton to withdraw the remark without the condition attached to it.

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON (Higinbotham Province): I did withdraw it.

The PRESIDENT: Order! You said that if you had upset Mr. Tripovich you would withdraw the remark under a certain condition.

The Hon. H. M. HAMILTON: I am completely lost. If I have made an unparliamentary statement——

The PRESIDENT: Order! It is not a matter of an unparliamentary statement. Mr. Hamilton made a statement to which Mr. Tripovich took exception. Therefore, I asked him to withdraw it, but he withdrew it on the condition that Mr. Tripovich agreed to something.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province): The Labor Party favours more States—but I am willing to go on with my speech.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I think that is enough on this matter. I think honour would be served if Mr. Tripovich continued with his speech.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: I am certain that Mr. Hamilton does not really know what he means. I was discussing the application of the means test. I do not want to be emotional about this but the facts as they are known today should be studied. Last week we heard what I thought was an emotional statement from the Minister in defence of his actions when the Housing Ministers met at Port Hedland. The matter which the Minister raised concerned the fixing of the means test.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE: What date was that meeting?

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: It was in June. On the matter of the means test I quote from the Federal *Hansard* at page 2277 where Mr. Johnson, the Minister for Housing, in answer to a question said, *inter alia*—

> In fact, at the Port Hedland conference held some little time ago, Mr. Dickie was in isolation so far as his attitude was concerned. Despite that, I acknowledged that he had a problem and was very anxious to do something about it. The conference, acting on my request, agreed that I should talk with the Statistician about introducing a new seasonally adjusted average weekly earnings measuring device. This is now in process.

But the matter had started from May. The other night the Minister of Housing told the House that he could not obtain a seconder for his motion at the Canberra conference and, therefore, the matter lapsed. I know that the Minister did not walk out of that conference. He had another meeting to attend and had to leave immediately after lunch for this purpose. The honorable gentleman had told Mr. Johnson that earlier. There was no misunderstanding about a publicized walk-out because there was no walk-out.

The reason why the other States would not support the request of our Minister of Housing for a discussion was that they considered it extraneous to their negotiations. The matter

was already being considered nationally on the basis of what was agreed to by Mr. Johnson at Port Hedland. The other States were already doing exactly what the Minister of Housing now proposes to do. They were using money other than Commonwealth money to finance housing under their own means tests and using Australian Government money for those who complied with the conditions imposed by that Government.

The Hon. G. J. NICOL: It is the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: It is the Commonwealth of Australia Government. I am not ashamed of the word "Australian". I again quote from Mr. Johnson's answer, in support of what I have just said—

> The third matter is about Mr. Dickie's general contention that he intends to defy the terms of the housing agreement. In fact what he intends to do is to use his own Government's money for Housing Commission purposes outside of the prescribed means test. This innovation in Victoria has been precedented in a number of other States already.

I have discussed this with some of the other States. The conference did not discuss the matter which Mr. Dickie wanted discussed because there was no reason to discuss it there and they were concerned with other matters. The means test was already under consideration and it will be adjusted—the Victorian Minister of Housing will have no trouble at all. I agree with the Minister on the means test, but there should be no emotion about it.

The principles associated with Housing Commission homes and their purchase and rental being subsidized were established in 1946 and they still apply. Mr. Swinburne adjusted them and carried them out when he was Minister of Housing in a Country Party Government.

There is nothing to be emotional about because this matter will be adjusted. There is no reason why the Minister could not have done twelve months ago what he intends to do now.

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE: Yes, there is.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: Mr. Lowe, of Tasmania, told me that there is no reason why the Minister of Housing could not have used his $15 million in this way twelve months ago.

This was originally Labor Party legislation. The principle is good but my party is concerned whether the $20,000 which is to be fixed as a maximum co-operative housing society loan will be sufficient. There have been three rises in the past eighteen months. Initially the amount was 3,750 pounds, or $7,500. But inflation has gone on and on and it is now accelerating on a world-wide basis. I suppose every other honorable member hopes, with me, that it can be brought to an end, and the sooner the better. There is little in the Bill with which one can quarrel and therefore the Labor Party supports it.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province): The Country Party supports the Bill. The procedure is the reverse of that in the measure previously before the House, but it also deals with inflation. Because the sum of $15,000 which was set as the maximum loan is not sufficient to cover the average cost of building a house, there will be a new maximum of $20,000.

Lower income earners should be helped to obtain homes. As a member of a party which has supported the principle of co-operative housing over many years and recognizes this as a step to meet the ever-worsening problem of inflation, I agree that the change is necessary.

The views of the Country Party are consistent. It supported the amendment to the previous measure because it was an attempt to cope with one of the problems of inflation. The principle is the same, although the procedures are different. The previous amendment to the Bill increased

an exemption while this Bill increases the amount of a loan which may be made.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (Increase in amount of maximum advance).

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): Obviously, the terms of the Bill have been accepted by all parties. I do not intend to raise again the issue of the discussion which I had in Canberra last week.

With your concurrence, Mr. Chairman, I should like to take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the former Chairman of the Housing Commission, Mr. Jack Gaskin, who died yesterday and, who, if one were to accord a title, would be called "Mr. Housing". Possibly many honorable members had a longer association with Mr. Gaskin in housing than I did, particularly, Mr. Tripovich, who has been associated with co-operative housing much longer than I. Although co-operative housing was not in the domain of Mr. Gaskin, because it was outside the operations of the Housing Commission, his record in the State is quite remarkable.

From time to time criticisms are made of the Housing Commission; a particular case may be highlighted in the press, but it must be realized—I have said this in this House—that the Housing Commission, through its charter under the Housing Act, must look to the needs of people of limited means, and those who live in substandard houses. However, one in ten people walking the streets of Victoria, which has a population of 3·5 million —that is 350,000—have been given housing by the Housing Commission and in relation to co-operative housing, the figure is increased further to one in six.

For twenty odd years Mr. Gaskin was actively associated with the Housing Commission, both as deputy chairman and later as chairman. This was an area where one could make, not so much enemies, but could fall out with people because of their belief that their problem was not appreciated. Members of Parliament who continually made representations on behalf of constituents requiring Housing Commission homes could not have approached a better front man for the Government than Mr. Jack Gaskin. He looked at and appreciated every problem, and if it was possible to find an answer to the problem of the unfortunate person following representations of an honorable member, he most certainly did. There were few occasions when members of Parliament who took a problem to Mr. Gaskin as chairman of the commission, did not get a satisfactory answer.

I have been Minister of Housing for two years and I have set out to alter policies somewhat but I must say that Mr. Gaskin helped me to the full in the matters I have attempted to achieve. Maybe these matters did not always fit in with old policies generally, but to me he was a Rock of Gibraltar and I am going to miss him very much. To his wife and family, on behalf of the Government I extend our heartfelt sympathy. I can only say that few Jack Gaskins pass this way. He was a magnificent man.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province): I crave a little indulgence to endorse the remarks of the Minister of Housing. I had proposed to do this in my second-reading speech but I thought it would be nice if the Minister had the opportunity of making the tribute.

My first association with Mr. Jack Gaskin was when he was associated with materials procurement during the war years. This was after the Housing Commission was established, and I think when the Dunstan Government was in office. Later, when old staff moved out and it was necessary to appoint new staff, Mr. Gaskin was appointed deputy chairman, and then chairman. He was "Mr. Housing" itself. No public servant was as dedicated as was Mr. Gaskin to the welfare of housing in this State.

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT: He was a former Footscray boy and he went to Williamstown High School.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: That is so. Any honorable member who went to Mr. Gaskin with a problem was always helped by him. His funeral is taking place tomorrow. This State will suffer a great loss in the passing of Mr. John Gaskin.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province): With your indulgence, Mr. Chairman, I should like to join with the Minister and Mr. Tripovich in paying a tribute to the late Mr. Jack Gaskin. I first became associated with the late Mr. Gaskin when he was associated with materials procurement, having come from the Department of Works in the Federal sphere during the war years.

When I became Minister of Housing in 1950, Mr. Gaskin was then the director of building. This was a body set up to control all building which took place in the State. It was within that sphere that I first became associated with the late Mr. Jack Gaskin, and it was then that I realized the value of this man. He was a loyal and courteous officer to all under that directorate. He always endeavoured to help people who were interested in the progress of this State. In that period it was difficult to get material and it was difficult for building to proceed, but he had vision; he pressed on and tried to overcome difficulties. Later, he became an officer of the Treasury and eventually he went on to become the director and chairman of the commission. Members of Parliament found him courteous and of great assistance, as he was to all people. It did not matter whether one agreed with what Jack Gaskin was trying to do; he always displayed the utmost courtesy.

I suppose those of us who represent country areas have from time to time made representations to Jack Gaskin for relief in housing in necessitous cases. He always had a willing ear and extended the utmost co-operation. I join with the Minister of Housing and Mr. Tripovich in expressing sympathy on behalf of the Country Party to Mrs. Gaskin and her sons in the loss that they have suffered. I believe the efforts that he made during the period which he served this State probably contributed to his early passing and to the loss Victoria has now sustained. The members of the Country Party offer our deepest sympathy, and we also say to the Minister that we regret that he has lost an officer who has served this State so well and one, whom I believe, has been loyal to every Minister and to every member of this Parliament irrespective of his political beliefs. He was a co-operative man and did his best in the interests of this State. We regret that the Minister of Housing and Victorian housing has lost a great man who was dedicated to his work.

The Hon. R. J. EDDY (Doutta Galla Province): I should like to associate myself with the remarks of the Minister and the two previous speakers. I had the pleasure and privilege of knowing Mr. Jack Gaskin over many years. Prior to my becoming a member of this House I was, as you are well aware, Mr. Chairman, a municipal councillor for nineteen years, and I was associated with the late Mr. Gaskin in the many problems that existed in my municipality which concerned housing people.

I found Mr. Gaskin to be a man always ready and willing to assist in whatever way he possibly could. He probably helped me more since I became a member of this House. I appreciated this and I also valued the manner in which he did this over the many years I knew him.

I extend to his widow and to his family my deepest sympathy. The commission will find it hard to replace a man of the ability of the late Jack Gaskin.

The clause was agreed to, as was the remaining clause.

The Bill was reported to the House without amendment, and passed through its remaining stages.

The sitting was suspended at 6.28 *p.m. until* 8.4 *p.m.*

COMMONWEALTH PLACES (ADMINISTRATION OF LAWS) BILL.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Honorable members who were members in 1970 will recall that this House passed an Act known as the Commonwealth Places (Administration of Laws) Act. The principal Act was subsequently amended in 1971 to enable it to continue in force until the end of this year.

The Act was necessitated by what seemed, to the layman, a rather strange judgment in a case that was variously known as *The Queen* v. *Worthing* and *Worthing* v. *Rowell and Muston Pty. Ltd. and Ors.* in which it was held that even the common law as incorporated into our Acts did not apply to Commonwealth places, including such places as telephone booths, the Tullamarine airport and a variety of places including those owned by the Commonwealth Government and located in this State.

The Act which provided that State laws should apply in Commonwealth places unless overidden by Commonwealth law, was originally passed as a temporary measure. It was confirmed by Commonwealth legislation because it was the belief of the Victorian Government that the only satisfactory way to fix the matter was by amendment of the Commonwealth Constitution. This has been one of the matters discussed at the Constitutional Convention but the end seems a long way off as yet. The Government decided to introduce this measure to continue the Act and this is being done by co-operation between the State and Commonwealth Governments. Complementary legislation will be presented in the Commonwealth Parliament. I commend the Bill to 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, October 29.

FORESTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from October 8) on the motion of the Hon. F. J. Granter (Minister of Forests) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. R. J. EDDY (Doutta Galla Province): The purpose of the Bill is to amend the Forests Act 1958, as it relates to the Forests Commission's responsibility for fire protection in State forests, particularly within the Mallee country. It will protect public land and will also make protected public lands the responsibility of the commission.

The Bill provides for the appropriate forests officer, with the approval of the commission, to declare certain roads maintained by the commission to be unsafe for vehicular traffic. The roads may be closed by the erection of barriers and action may be taken against persons who ignore the barriers or interfere with them in any way. There are too many persons today who interfere with barriers and obstructions in certain streets and roads throughout the State.

The Bill also deals with the farm forestry schemes and proposes some significant changes in respect to interest to be charged on moneys advanced under farm forestry agreements. The interest rate is to be altered from a set 5 per cent to the long-term bond rate, which can vary from time to time.

The Forests Commission will have the right to lodge a caveat with the Registrar of Titles which will ensure that if at any time a person who is a party to an agreement attempts to deal in the land or to transfer it to another person the Forests Commission will be advised by the Registrar of Titles so that the commission may take action to protect the outstanding loans. The Labor Party does not oppose the Bill.

The Hon. A. K. BRADBURY (North-Eastern Province): Principally, the Bill is divided into three parts. It amends the Forests Act 1958 to make it obvious where the responsibility for fire protection lies, particularly in the area of the Mallee which was previously excluded from the responsibility of the Forests Commission.

As Mr. Eddy has pointed out, in those areas the commission can also declare roads unsafe for traffic. In the past there has been some doubt about the responsibility of commission officers in this regard but it is now being made abundantly clear that they can erect barriers to prevent the public from traversing certain roads, especially if the forestry officers consider that they are unsafe for travel. This is a precautionary measure in the interests of the public. Too frequently we hear of unsafe roads and people taking unnecessary risks in using them. Members of the public usually have tender hearts and feel sorry for people who get into trouble. Under the Bill power will be given to the officers of the Forests Commission to erect barriers and they can take legal action against people who disregard the instructions.

The Bill also relates to farm forestry agreements. Many people in this State have undertaken this avenue of livelihood and established plantations on their own properties. They have been able to obtain loans from the Forests Commission at the nominal rate of 5 per cent. It is now proposed to increase the rate. I do not know whether this will be retrospective and apply to current loans—I accept the assurance from the Minister of Forests that it will not be retrospective.

To save a farmer who has obtained more than one advance from making two repayments of interest throughout the year, it is proposed that he can consolidate the loans and make one payment of interest to cover more than one advance.

The Bill also gives power to the Forests Commission to safeguard its interests, and undoubtedly this will be necessary. Advances have been made to many landholders but because of the way inflation is raging throughout primary industry today, it is obvious that many of them are facing a serious crisis. The Bill provides that the Forests Commission can lodge a caveat against the title of a property owner and thereby safeguard the interests of the commission, which has made loans to make plantations possible. The Country Party supports the Bill.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (Amendment of No. 6254 s. 3).

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Forests): I thank Mr. Eddy and Mr. Bradbury for their comments on the Bill. As they pointed out, the regulations on barriers were cumbersome; they necessitated authority almost having to be given by a divisional forest officer and did not give the district forest officer the right to erect barriers. That has now been amended and I agree with the remarks of both Mr. Eddy and Mr. Bradbury that this protects the public.

The Forests Commission has a good fire-fighting force which is ever ready to assist when fire breaks out. It is also ready to assist when people become lost in forest areas or any part of Victoria. This fact was brought home only last week-end when the officers of the Forests Commission played a big role in locating the children who were lost in the Sale area. Those men used their equipment, radio and so forth, to great advantage.

Mr. Bradbury mentioned farm forestry loans. As honorable members know, the sum of $5,000 is advanced interest free over a period of twelve

years. The proposed interest rate will not be made retrospective; it applies only to new loans.

The clause was agreed to, as were the remaining clauses.

The Bill was reported to the House without amendment, and passed through its remaining stages.

DOG (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from September 18) on the motion of the Hon. A. J. Hunt (Minister for Local Government) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province): I hope that in speaking to this Bill I shall have the opportunity to draw to the attention of the House many inadequacies in the existing Dog Act. To put your mind at rest, Mr. President, all my comments will relate to the contents of the Bill.

No doubt owners of Alsatian dogs, or what are more commonly known as German Shepherd dogs, or dogs that are derivatives of the German Shepherd, will be pleased to know that in future they will not be discriminated against in respect of the large fee that has been demanded of them over the past few years, a fee which I believe was never intended to be charged. It was probably, like other fees, the maximum fee on a sliding scale which the council could charge if it so desired. In addition to the ordinary fee for registration of a dog—a maximum of $3 for a dog or a spayed bitch or $7 for an unspayed bitch—an additional $15 has been charged for an Alsatian dog or its derivative. This has definitely been discrimination against Alsatian dogs. It meant that not many people, except the real enthusiasts, were prepared to own one.

It has never been proved that the Alsatian dog was the type of dog that it has been purported to be, that it was more prone to marauding than other dogs. Recently a German Shepherd dog went to the aid of a child who was being savaged by a Doberman. The removal of this discrimination against German Shepherds is reasonable.

The Hon. H. R. WARD: What is to be done about Dobermans now?

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: Mr. Ward might treat this as a humorous matter; I do not.

In addition to this reduction in fee, the Bill provides that a council may enter into an agreement with any animal welfare organization to restore to the owner any stray dog or to sell or if necessary destroy the animal and that the council may keep the fee paid by the owner or the proceeds from the sale. Alternatively, the council has the right to cancel this arrangement if it is not satisfied. At present 33 councils in the metropolitan area use the Lost Dogs Home in North Melbourne as a means of minding and disposing of their unwanted dogs. It appears, as this provision has now been inserted in the Bill, that in the past the councils may have been acting out of power.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: I agree that they may have been acting out of power.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: In future councils will be permitted to enter into agreements with animal welfare organizations. I query the words "animal welfare organizations" because there are places similar to the North Melbourne home, which those concerned prefer to call the city pound, where dogs are kept but they are not animal welfare organizations; they are just places where dogs are kept until they are returned to their owners, are sold, destroyed or die of some disease.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: I would be happy to accept any amendment which Mr. Walton might propose if it is an improvement to the wording of the Bill.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: I am sure that by the time I have finished speaking this evening, the Minister will agree that the Dog Act does not operate in the interest of dogs; it is

simply an Act that provides some control over dogs. The best thing it does is to stipulate that when dogs are to be disposed of this should be done as painlessly as possible. Instead of a Dog Act there should be a dog welfare Act. Having a pet is a responsibility; it is not just a question of paying a few dollars at the market or a pet shop and taking home something for the amusement of one's grandchild.

A dog has to be looked after in the same manner in which one would look after a child. Unfortunately, not enough people realize this. There should be a Dog Act which provides for this. Later I hope to be able to mention some ideas of my own and of other people regarding the way the Dog Act should be amended or replaced with a new Act to cover animal welfare.

Under the provisions of this Bill councils will also be permitted to set up their own pounds. I am greatly concerned about this, having been to the pound at North Melbourne which is used by 33 municipalities and having regard to the fact that some councils may have been acting illegally in holding dogs, as they have done, in their council depots. They are now to be permitted to set up pounds similar to the North Melbourne dogs' home and even to have powers of disposal. These pounds may develop from places of perhaps complete luxury, as are some animal welfare organizations that provide for pets, to those which would be completely austere without any sympathy, care, love or affection, without food, water or exercise for the dogs during week-ends. Although it may be convenient to give these powers to the councils, it may be detrimental to the life and limb of the dogs.

At present it is difficult to know what to do with stray dogs during a week-end or public holiday or after hours. If the dog is injured it is sometimes possible to get an ambulance from one of the other organizations which will do something for the dog. However, it is impossible to get a stray dog into the North Melbourne dogs' home at week-ends, public holidays or after hours. This will perpetuate itself in municipalities when they have the right to run their own pounds.

I suppose quite a few members of this House are owners of dogs and are dog lovers who treat their dogs as members of the family, and in some cases better. In that respect, without bragging, and perhaps not because of my doing, my own dog is probably better treated in many respects than I am.

Things of which most dog lovers are not aware are taking place in the community. An organization has been set up to try to combine all welfare organizations in an attempt to get together all people who are interested in the welfare of animals to discuss ways in which domestic pets can be better looked after. Australian native fauna are treated well under the Protection of Animals Act. Private zoos, kangaroos, koalas and so forth are treated well but the only reference to dogs is that if they are to be chained, they must be exercised from time to time. No mention is made of how often or for how long the dog should be exercised, under what conditions or for how long it can be left, whether it has to be fed regularly and so forth, except that it must be given food. The aims of this organization are—

> Animal Rights is a campaign movement seeking public support for the aims listed below.
>
> It is considered that facilities at present provided for lost and stray animals are inadequate and archaic, and although regarded by authorities as "normal and inevitable" can no longer be tolerated.

Amongst its aims are—

> The immediate improvement of conditions for lost and stray dogs in Melbourne; and a central animal welfare centre for lost and stray animals which provides adequate shelter, food and veterinary care—seven days a week.
>
> Uniform law throughout the municipalities and all councils to provide animal shelters on a seven-day-a-week basis.

Breeding control—all breeders registered. People to be registered on the immediate possession of a dog.

I agree with that, too. The owners should be licensed, not the dogs, thus ensuring that people who have pets understand their obligations. The article continues—

A ban on the sale of puppies and kittens from pet shops and market places.

Doting grandparents often pick up animals from pet shops. Lovely puppies and kittens can take their hearts for the moment. They buy them over the counter and take them home. Unfortunately, the unspayed bitches are usually the cheapest. The parents may be uninterested in the pets and the children look after them in a sort of way. Children can sometimes be cruel to animals. When a dog has a litter, the problem arises of what to do with the pups. They may be handed around to other people who probably do not deserve or want them. The article concludes—

An education programme to encourage the public, especially children, to a moral responsibility towards animals.

Finally, they believe—this could be a good move—in a Ministry for Animals. There is a Ministry for all sorts of things these days. Recently, the Ministry for Youth, Sport and Recreation was established. Why should there not be a Ministry for Animals? It might be a good idea to have a Minister responsible for ensuring that animals, which cannot speak for themselves, are properly and adequately cared for.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: Would sheep and cattle come under the Ministry for Animals?

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: Yes, if cruelty or ill-treatment of those animals was involved. Animals have sometimes been placed in paddocks by people who do not live in the vicinity. These people buy a block of land and put the animals on it. Recently a gentleman received either a severe fine or a gaol sentence for leaving cattle on a block of land to fend for themselves with nothing to eat or drink. That should not be allowed.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: The Minister would have a busy time.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: He may have a busy time. Eventually, as human beings became educated to their responsibilities, the Minister would not be as busy. I believe there should be higher fees rather than reduced fees for unspayed bitches. The fee for an unspayed bitch should be at least the equivalent of the cost of spaying by a veterinarian. In this way the number of unwanted dogs would be reduced. The proper officer of the municipality should make an inspection, instead of simply collecting the fee. At present, dog registration fees are paid with the rate notices. Premises and living quarters of dogs should be inspected to ensure that dogs are treated correctly. Some dogs live inside a flat. The best exercise they get is a walk in the morning and a walk at night, if they are lucky. They remain indoors all day while their owners are at work, simply so that these people can have the friendship of an animal. The owners may live on their own or use the dog as a guard dog. It is wrong that a dog should be locked inside all day. A publicity book on the care of dogs should be included with the dog tag and licence when they are issued by the council. This book should enumerate the responsibilities of dog owners and advise what should be done for the dogs.

A dog may get away from its owner in many ways. It may stray away, get over a fence, walk through a gate which has been left open, perhaps by visitors. When a dog gets out it is possible that it will be picked up by the dog catcher who is generally from the North Melbourne Lost Dogs Home. If a dog which is impounded has a tag around its neck, it is the council's responsibility to notify the owner within four days that the dog has been impounded. When there is no tag, this is impossible. There should be a system, possibly such as I have seen advertised in trams, under which dogs are tattooed painlessly. I have been told that the tattooing is painless. Under

this system, every dog is issued with a number, and the owner can be identified immediately the dog is picked up. In that way it would be possible to ascertain who is responsible when a dog is taken into the bush and left there to die or to kill the fauna or interfere with sheep. A positive means of identification is necessary. Without any such means of identification, a person who wishes to get rid of a dog can simply take off its collar and let it go. People who do this are heartless.

Most stray dogs will finish up at the North Melbourne Lost Dogs Home, notwithstanding that under the proposed legislation councils will have the right to set up their own pounds or to send the animals to animal welfare organizations. Many years ago I inspected the dogs' home and I inspected it again last week. It is completely inadequate and archaic. The people who are concerned about animal rights are correct when they say that the animals are treated as a garbage problem rather than a welfare one. All the home is, and all it admits to being, is the Melbourne city pound. It does not consider itself to be a welfare organization. The large numbers of dogs which are handled by the home each week make it impossible for it to be anything else. The North Melbourne Lost Dogs Home gets no assistance from the Government. Its only income is from the municipalities which pay for the dog carts and the veterinary fees to put the dogs to death and for the minding of dogs for people who are on holidays.

It is a heartbreaking sight to see the method by which dogs are disposed of. It is the Lethenair system, the Auschwitz of the dog world, the final solution. It is not easy to watch the Lethenair system in operation. I should like to describe this instrument to the House, because if municipal dog pounds intend to employ this system I implore the Minister to prohibit and stop them from doing so. It is inhumane and degrading, particularly for the person who has the task of carrying out the job. So far as I am aware, the operators at the North Melbourne Lost Dogs Home, have no qualifications other than that they know how to throw a lever. This instrument is an iron cylinder with a door that closes. As many dogs as can be put in at one time are placed in a cage which can be wheeled into the iron cylinder. The cage is then wheeled into the chamber and the door is closed. The fear in the hearts of the dogs during the last few minutes can be imagined. They are locked away in darkness, among other dogs with which they may be fighting even though they are facing death. A lever is thrown and the air is withdrawn from the cylinder. Certainly, the air might be withdrawn quickly, but I will read the effect of the withdrawal of the air as contained in a *Report to Humanitarians* from the Humane Information Services.

A time of fifteen minutes is allowed in the cylinder and ultimately the dogs are withdrawn, dead. However, the process is not always lethal with puppies, old dogs and dogs with ear or bronchial infections. These dogs which survive the chamber must be dealt with in another way. It is the responsibility of the person operating this instrument to decide whether a dog is suitable for killing in this way. I use the word "killing", because I am sure that people who leave their dogs there to be put to sleep do not realize that their dogs are in fact being murdered. This is what happens. It is no better and no worse than the cells which were used to dispose of human beings in the German prison camps. It is a similar type of operation. However, we are not dealing with human beings but with dumb animals that cannot speak for themselves. The machine makes a lot of noise. It is certainly noisy until the door is closed. The operator would not be greatly worried by the noise of the machine because he would not know what was happening. I shall lay on the table of the House the report to which I have referred because it contains a photograph of the instrument. I

should like the House to understand that what I have said is true and that this is the main method of disposal of dogs that are picked up in the streets of Melbourne, or of dogs from metropolitan and country areas sent to the North Melbourne Lost Dogs Home. The instrument is used on the grounds of economy. It would cost $1 a head for a veterinarian to put each animal to sleep in a pleasant manner with a needle. I am sure that people who leave their dogs at the home would not mind paying an amount of $1 if they could be certain that their animal would be put to sleep in a humane way. I believe all these animals should be put to sleep by the use of a needle.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: How many are disposed of each week?

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: It can be anything up to 200 a week. The report states—

> The chamber is a convenient and economical device for "putting the animals to sleep". The deaths occur out of sight of shelter personnel, and handling of the animals at time of death, a disagreeable and disheartening task, is avoided. For these reasons the managements and personnel of the larger shelters and public pounds much prefer the decompression chamber to other methods.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Some uneasiness and awareness may be manifested by the animal. In one or two seconds the animal gasps for breath, falls to its side, and goes into opisthotonos resembling the convulsions of strychnine poisoning. No outcry is usually heard above the sounds of the equipment, but foam appears through the open mouth of the animal, and it usually defecates and urinates. The skin rapidly becomes bloated.

That is the manner in which dogs are being disposed of at present. It is no wonder that it is difficult to get information about this method. It is difficult even to get an answer from a veterinarian when one asks what happens to the animals and what happens to the bodies afterwards. Recently one of our members took a dog to be put to death and requested to see it done. The dog was given a needle. When he asked what happened to the carcases, he was told that they were collected and taken to the tip at Sunshine. I stand to be corrected as to the particular tip. He asked whether he could take the carcase himself.

The disposal of the bodies of the dogs is frightening and undoubtedly dog lovers would be horrified to know that their dog may finish up as part of the fertilizer with which they feed their pot plants. It is admitted that after the dogs have been asphyxiated their bodies are taken away in a cart and given to a fertilizer manufacturer.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: Does it matter once the dog is dead? I have often shot a dog, as has every farmer in the House.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: It may not matter to the Minister for Social Welfare. If necessary, I would shoot a dog as a means of relieving its suffering. Where the dog's carcase goes matters to the people who owned and loved the dog. At best, the carcase is being used for blood and bone. The body is collected by a professional animal carcase collection organization and I have no doubt that the bodies of dogs are collected from the veterinary surgeon's rooms and taken to a place in Pipe Road, Derrimut, and delivered to Pridham's.

I have examined the telephone directory for Pridham's and many telephone numbers are listed. The first was listed as sausage casing manufacturers and further down was an entry for boiling down works. I have checked in the fertilizer manufacturers' section of the directory but found no corresponding telephone number or address to suggest that the carcases go to a fertilizer manufacturer. The company has so many telephone numbers and cross references that it would leave Milleradio for dead. It is impossible to work out who ultimately finishes up with the carcases. It may not matter to the Minister for Social Welfare, but, as I understand it, some use is made of the skins and the Minister can use his own imagination there.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: The same thing happens to the carcases of dead horses and any other dead animals.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: I will not be provoked into making a comment on that because we all have to live and not everyone wants to be a vegetarian, which means that some form of animal must be killed for food. However, over the years, the manner of killing animals for human consumption has been strictly supervised. Those animals are not first locked into a chamber with other animals and suffocated. Man's best friend suffers a worse death than cattle and other animals which are killed for food.

The Hon. R. J. LONG: In this process, the air is extracted?

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: Yes, which I understand can cause great pain. In defence of the system, the people involved say that this is what happens to the astronauts if their craft loses compression. That might be so, but that does not mean that it is a good, painless or quick death.

I sympathize with the operators of the Lost Dogs Home because they are working under difficult and archaic conditions with old buildings and inadequate funds. No Government assistance is forthcoming and because of this they do not consider that they have any responsibility for returning the dogs to their original owners. They claim that that is the responsibility of the municipal council from which the dogs are collected. Under the Dog Act, the council is responsible for notifying the owners within a certain time.

The organization which operates the Lost Dogs Home was set up many years ago and is registered as a company under the Companies Act. The memorandum of association lists the objects, one of which is—

> To rescue dogs and cats from the perils of the street, to endeavour to restrict the stealing and improper trafficking in animals, to give temporary shelter and food to lost abandoned wandering and starving animals and return the same to their owners.

As I said, they do not attempt to do that; they say that that is the responsibility of the local municipality. A further object is—

> To endeavour to find good homes for suitable animals and to ensure a merciful and painless death for such animals as it may be deemed necessary or desirable to destroy and to afford owners of animals a means of securing a merciful and painless death for any animal which they may desire to be destroyed.

From what I have described, the Lost Dogs Home is not carrying out its memorandum and articles of association. The home acts under licence from the Attorney-General of the time, Sir George Reid, and is dated 22nd August, 1969. The licence is granted upon the conditions that—

> 1. The terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association submitted to and certified by me are strictly followed;
>
> 2. The company or any member thereof or any person on its behalf shall not make or publish or cause to be made or published any statement asserting or implying that in granting my licence under section 24, I am in sympathy with the aims and objects of the company or that I approve the manner in which it conducts its affairs or that I or the State of Victoria guarantees the performance by the company of its contractual obligations.

Honorable members are used to the Government's contracting out of its obligations in all sorts of matters. Only last week, the House debated the manner in which the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works ignored the Government.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: Mr. Walton must know that they are the normal terms of a licence for a company.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: If it is meaningless, why have a licence? I do not criticize the Minister for Local Government because I know that his heart is in the right place and I take this opportunity to present to the Minister facts which may lead him to correct the situation and introduce another amending Bill which will mean something for the welfare of dogs and which will satisfy dog lovers and everybody else in the community.

I quoted from the memorandum of association and the licence to indicate that in fact the Lost Dogs Home does

have the responsibility for finding the owners of the dogs which, in itself, should give the Government the opportunity to act.

The Chief Secretary has said that, as a result of the meeting held with the Animal Rights Association, an inquiry will be conducted. In the *Herald* of Friday, 4th October, the Chief Secretary is reported as having said that he had asked the police to investigate conditions at the North Melbourne Lost Dogs Home. He said that as the Minister responsible for the Protection of Animals Act, he had received complaints from several people including the Animal Rights Association and that he had asked the Chief Commissioner of Police for a report. The proposed inquiry will be completely inadequate. There is no way in which the police can make a proper evaluation of the place. Only an inquiry in which animal welfare people, veterinary surgeons, animal lovers and all sorts of people can give evidence, will achieve anything.

I expect that the police will say that the Lost Dogs Home is a building with a wire fence, that it has concrete floors which are kept very clean, that the dogs look to be in reasonable order, and that they can see nothing on which the Government can take any action. That is the sort of report that I would expect the police to make because it is like asking a prison warder to make an inspection of the cells of Pentridge and to submit a report. This is what the police would expect to find at the home but it is not what I would expect to find.

I apologize for taking so long to debate a Bill which, at first sight, appears to be simple. However, the measure concerns the welfare of animals in the community and the subject-matters that I have raised. I ask the House and the Minister to ensure that something is done to enable domestic animals, indeed all animals, to have a better life in the future.

The Hon. A. K. BRADBURY (North-Eastern Province): The purpose of the Bill is to remove from the Dog Act the restrictions that have previously applied to the keeping of Alsatian dogs. I am curious that all references to Alsatian dogs are being removed with the exception of the reference in section 3 of the principal Act, which still contains a definition of an Alsatian dog. As it is proposed to have no discrimination in the Dog Act, I ask the Minister to indicate later why section 3 of the principal Act will still contain a reference to this type of dog.

I have always been a lover of Alsatian dogs and have had two of them. They are one of the finest house dogs that I know; even when I lived in the city I had an Alsatian dog. As a pet, watch dog, guide dog and protection for the human, the Alsatian is second to none. It has proved this in many instances. I freely admit that, on my understanding, an Alsatian dog is an individual, personal dog. The unfortunate part is—and I agree with some of what Mr. Walton said, although not all—that many people who own dogs should never be allowed to do so because they have no respect for the animals. The fault lies with parents who buy a dog as a pet for their children and completely neglect to ensure that it is cared for and handled properly. I know of people who have bought dogs for large sums of money and then allowed them to stray and become a nuisance to neighbours and the community. I agree with Mr. Walton that an educational programme should be instituted to ensure that dogs are properly controlled and cared for, because I sincerely believe a dog is one of man's best friends if it is properly looked after. However, many dogs are not properly cared for.

One needs only to attend dog shows —of which there are many at this time of the year and Mr. Swinburne and I will attend a show almost every week from now until Christmas—to see how dog lovers, whom I commend highly for their love of animals, care for their dogs. As Mr. Walton said, in many cases dogs are probably better cared for than are members of their owners' families. I

admire people who really love dogs. However, I have no time for those who buy a dog and let it run wild without caring for it or respecting it.

The Bill abolishes discrimination against Alsatian dogs. In the past the Alsatian has been discriminated against because the registration fee for an unsterilized Alsation bitch was $7 plus $15, making a total fee of $22. Some people will argue that if a person must pay this fee he will take greater care of the dog. I do not subscribe to that view because, as I said earlier, I know of people who have paid $50 to $100 for a puppy as a pet for their children, but in many cases the dog has become a nuisance to the community by roaming around, being disobedient and not responding when it is called home.

As I mentioned earlier, the only question I have about the Bill is why section 3 of the principal Act has been retained when the measure is designed to do away with discrimination against dogs.

The Hon. R. J. LONG (Gippsland Province): I had no intention of entering this debate, but the words of Mr. Walton caused me to change my mind. Mr. Walton referred to the North Melbourne Lost Dogs Home, and without doubt he was suggesting that the way dogs are disposed of there is cruel. The procedure adopted for destroying unwanted animals at the North Melbourne dogs' home is to place them in a decompression chamber and extract the air. Mr. Walton says that that is cruel. I should like to relate an experience that occurred to me during my Air Force days. We, as trainee pilots, were forced to enter a decompression chamber, and the air was extracted. During that process one receives a wonderful feeling of exhilaration. In a way which I do not understand, the height one reaches in the atmosphere can be calculated. There is no pain but only a sensation of being at peace with the world. In the end a person becomes unconscious. Eventually oxygen is applied to bring one back to consciousness, and it is as though somebody snapped his fingers—consciousness returns and a person is aware of what is going on around him. Up until then there is no pain or feeling other than a sensation of exhilaration. There could not possibly be any suggestion of cruelty.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: Did the honorable member froth at the mouth?

The Hon. R. J. LONG: That is a symptom which frequently occurs at the time of death because of the make-up of the body.

I wanted to relate that story to the House because anyone listening to Mr. Walton would have received the impression that this was a cruel act. People who have previously criticized the system might think it was cruel if they did not know what went on. I have described my experience as a human being, not from the point of view of a dog. I clearly remember that I was supposed to be writing down my reactions as I went along. When I was shown afterwards what I had written I would not have believed I wrote the words if there had not been other people present to convince me that I had done so.

I reiterate that in the decompression chamber there is no feeling of pain. I put that to Mr. Walton to illustrate that what may at first sight appear to be an act of cruelty is not one at all.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province): I am prompted to make a few brief comments, not so much in answer to the assertions of Mr. Long, but to support Mr. Walton's remarks, which comprised one of the finest contributions I have heard in this House for a long time. One of the matters Mr. Walton referred to which should be followed up as quickly as possible by the Minister is the suggestion that a booklet or pamphlet should be issued with the licence setting out the basic principles of keeping, nurturing and looking after a dog. This would be a logical move for municipalities to make, and would not be expensive if it were done on a mass basis.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: I will follow it up immediately.

The Hon. A. K. BRADBURY: How many people does Mr. Elliot think would take any notice of such a pamphlet?

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: One would not expect to hear such a cynical remark from a person with the deep convictions of Mr. Bradbury. Even if one is cynical about the basic aspirations of people, one should at least try to convince them that an alternative means of caring for pets is highly desirable. If it cannot be achieved in this way, it must be done in a stricter way. Everybody abhors cruelty to animals, and there is no need to labour that point.

In answer to Mr. Long's comment, I am prompted once again to say that Mr. Walton referred to the observations of organizations which have reached definite conclusions about the agony suffered by dogs when they are being put to death by the Lethenair system, and even if the conclusions are assertions, they should be investigated. I do not wish to engage in histrionics, but Mr. Walton has made some valid points and they must be followed up. If they are not, we are so much less civilized people. So much of this type of thing has been occurring lately in various ways—man's inhumanity to man, child beating and so on—that surely we can make a gesture to animals which have brought us so much happiness through the centuries. We owe that much to every animal, whether it be a dog or a bird. Humane treatment should be ensured for sheep and cattle in transit. Even if the animals are to be eaten, at least they should be despatched by the most humane method possible. That is why I urge the Minister to consider Mr. Walton's suggestions urgently.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (Amendment of No. 8079 s. 4 (2)).

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): I am glad at least to find that everybody is agreed on the question of the removal of the discrimination against Alsatians, so we have one thing in common. Mr. Bradbury asked why the definition of "Alsatian" and a further reference to these days remain in the principal Act. We have retained one provision that relates to greyhounds and Alsatians — or German Shepherds—only, and that is the need to have them kept on a choker chain, or muzzled. That is why a definition remains. It would have been possible, of course, to change the words in the Act from "Alsatian" to "German Shepherd dog", but the definition states that Alsatian includes German Shepherd dog and vice versa, so it would have been a change without a difference if that had been done.

I regret deeply that Mr. Walton has seen fit to denigrate an organization which has provided magnificent service in this community since 1910, on a non-profit basis, and has been the only organization ready and available to assist municipalities throughout that period. The dog community too has been vastly better served by the existence of such an organization and by the officers of that organization than it would have been if no such organization existed. People give their services voluntarily there. I do not doubt the integrity of Mr. Walton's remarks, though I believe he has been misled by well-meaning people who have not taken the trouble to study the facts properly.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: And have never offered to carry out similar services.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: That is so. I have before me the report of the American Humane Association, a report compiled by some of the top animal lovers of that country and veterinary surgeons on euthanasia relating to dogs in particular. It is

dated 1969. It is distributed in this State by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, an organization which I am sure Mr. Walton will agree is no less concerned for the care and welfare of animals than he is and, no less concerned with any allegations of cruelty.

This report examines the various alternative methods of disposal of dogs. The preferred method is that which Mr. Walton attacked with such woefully inadequate knowledge. In view of the attacks made on a magnificent organization by Mr. Walton, in view of the allegations of cruelty——

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: I did not make any attack on the organization. I pointed out its inadequacies.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: I withdraw that remark. I believe the net effect of Mr. Walton's remarks was to denigrate that organization seriously and without justification.

I turn to this report which is available for the information of the Committee, and I must quote from the relevant section, which states—

HIGH ALTITUDE (LOW PRESSURE).

The high altitude (or low pressure) method of euthanasia is a simple procedure. In practice, an animal is placed in a chamber and the air pressure inside is reduced by means of a vacuum pump, resulting very quickly in a simulated altitude of approximately 55,000 feet. Due to the reduced oxygen at this reduced pressure, unconsciousness occurs in less than a minute. Holding the unconscious animal at this simulated altitude for a few minutes results in death without awareness. The effect is similar to "black outs" experienced by pilots at similar altitudes without the use of auxiliary oxygen breathing equipment.

The high altitude chamber for humane destruction of small animals was developed by Dr. Charles F. Lombard following his experience with Air Force altitude chambers during World War II.

Throughout, the report highly recommends this as the best possible method where numbers of dogs are concerned.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals prepared a report recently, following criticisms, and that report is available in the Parliamentary Library. It is the report of Dr. H. Wirth, Bachelor of Veterinary Science, President of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and President-elect of the Australian Veterinary Association. I do not believe I could go higher than that in quoting an authority to answer completely Mr. Walton's remarks. In that opinion Dr. Wirth points to the fact that the decompression system has the full support of the American Veterinary Medical Association and of the American Humane Association. He points out further that the Executive Director of the American Humane Association has inspected, passed and approved the equipment in actual operation at the Lost Dogs Home, North Melbourne. Furthermore, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals inspectors regularly check the functioning of that equipment and find it in order. Dr. Wirth goes on to say, from his own knowledge—

Total decompression occurs as early as 20 seconds and late as 40 seconds (depending on the number of dogs), in the chamber. The average loss of consciousness is 20 seconds.

He points out that if the animal is unconscious after twenty seconds it matters little if it takes longer to die. Dr. Wirth continues—

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals will take steps to investigate objections, but none of them have yet shown the scientific data on the method is false. Should this ever be shown the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals will take steps to investigate the system immediately.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is regularly in touch with sister societies in United States of America and at time of writing the use of decompression system is widespread.

I consider that the evidence in answer to Mr. Walton is overwhelming, that his attack has been based on a complete inadequacy of evidence, and that the result can only mean loss of confidence by the public, unnecessarily and wrongly, in a magnificent organization to which, I believe, Mr. Walton owes an apology. I invite Mr. Walton to tender that apology publicly now in the light of the evidence which I have just submitted.

Mr. Walton also dealt cavalierly with the Protection of Animals Act. He made just a passing mention as if it dealt primarily with wildlife.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: Do you honestly believe Mr. Walton was cavalier in his remarks?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: In his treatment of that Act he certainly was; he dismissed it as if it had no application. Of course, the Protection of Animals Act is the Act that deals with the welfare of animals—not the Dog Act. Mr. Walton was referring to the need for a Welfare of Dogs Act or a Welfare of Animals Act. The Protection of Animals Act is just such an Act. An animal within the meaning of the Act includes every species of quadruped and every species of bird whether in a natural or domestic state. It certainly includes dogs.

All the provisions of that Act relating to animals include dogs. Extensive provisions in that Act deal with acts or omissions which constitute or involve cruelty; failure to provide animals with proper and sufficient food, drink and shelter; keeping dogs chained up unreasonably; abandoning domestic animals; and a great many other things. There are provisions to enable a person to be disqualified from owning dogs or other animals, and there are provisions for extensive and heavy fines.

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. Nicol): Will that Act be amended by this Bill?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Walton attacked the measure before the Committee on the ground that it did not provide for the welfare of animals, and he referred in passing to the Protection of Animals Act. I am pointing out that that is the Act which does in fact provide for the welfare of animals.

As I said, the court has power to disqualify a person, previously convicted, from having custody of any animal, and there are extensive further powers, including some powers by regulation. That is the Act that deals with the welfare of animals, not the Dog Act. The Dog Act is not intended to deal in detail with the welfare of animals; that is a matter for the Protection of Animals Act as such.

I believe the matters raised have been answered. I regret that they were raised in the manner in which they were.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: What about the booklet or pamphlet? Have you anything to say about that? Do you not think that that is a good idea?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: I thank Mr. Elliot for drawing attention again to Mr. Walton's suggestion regarding the more ready use of brochures advising people on the care and welfare of dogs. I will take up that suggestion through the Chief Secretary with a view to investigating the possibility of its implementation, perhaps in co-operation with animal welfare organizations.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province): Try as he may, the Minister has not succeeded in intimidating me in the slightest. I stand behind every word that I have said tonight. My remarks were not made in a cavalier fashion, and I tried at all times to be factual and to back up my remarks with written evidence I made no attack on the Lost Dogs Home as such. I merely said that the conditions under which the dogs have to live in these inadequate surroundings should be changed and that the staff worked in the most difficul conditions, with limited finance and no help from this Government.

That is what I said about the Los Dogs Home. The people who work there are, in the main, sympatheti towards the dogs, but I had a feelin of despair because the staff is com pletely inadequate to deal with s many dogs in one week and to carr out so many tasks for the dogs. T handle the number of dogs that pas through there is only a part-tim veterinary surgeon who, I believ occupies a section of the ground

rent free to carry on a private practice. If I am wrong, I shall apologize. When he is required by the Lost Dogs Home the veterinary surgeon is called upon.

The amount of money spent by the dogs home for that veterinary surgeon in any one year would not satisfy a small provincial dog pound. The sum that the veterinary surgeon receives from the home obviously means that the time he spends with the dogs is limited. I consider that an organization of the size of the Lost Dogs Home should have one full-time veterinary surgeon at least, one who does not have to rely on an outside practice for income and who is prepared to dispose of dogs by the needle method, which is the best method irrespective of the nonsense which Mr. Long spoke about earlier.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: And the nonsense in the reports from which I read?

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: I do not know whether the Minister is aware of the agonies through which divers go when they are brought from the seabed too quickly.

The Hon. R. J. LONG: That is through the escape of nitrogen, which is a completely different thing.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: It may be, but I am saying that different situations affect people and animals in different ways. Because Mr. Long was affected in such a pleasant way it does not follow that an animal will speedily come to a pleasant end. Of course, the honorable member was not subject to the immediate withdrawal of the air. It was done on a gradual basis; is that not so?

The Hon. R. J. LONG: No, it was sucked out as fast as it could go. You could try it out any time.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: How does Mr. Walton know about this?

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: If the Minister had to die tomorrow, would he prefer a pentathol needle, or to be put in an iron lung and have the air withdrawn?

The clause was agreed to.

Clause 3 (Amendment of No. 8079 s. 6).

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province): I find it hard to understand why section 6 of the principal Act is being rephrased. Some time ago an amendment was made to the Act so that notices about registration of dogs could be sent out at the same time as municipal rate notices in order to save costs and, in the main, most municipalities follow this course. The present provision of the Act covers the situation well. With the addition of the words " or renewed " which may be necessary the present provisions of section 6 of the Dog Act would read, *inter alia*—

(1) Registration of a dog—

(*a*) shall be effected or renewed by lodging with a registration officer for the municipal district within which the dog is ordinarily kept—

(i) an application in or to the effect of the form in the Second Schedule; and

(ii) the appropriate registration fee; and

(*b*) shall expire on the 10th April next succeeding the date of the registration.

That would cover all eventualities and ensure that if a dog was registered during the year, say, in January, when it was six months old, the registration would again fall due on 10th April. If that is not so under the present wording, all that needs to be added are the words, " or renewed ". The effect of clause 3 would be to delete the words " shall expire on 10th April ". In the case of the first registration, it would be the 10th April next succeeding that registration, but in the case of a renewed registration it would be twelve months after the expiration of the prior registration. I cannot understand why that is necessary.

Unless it is stated in the first portion of the section that " registration " means the first registration of the dog or the first registration with a municipality, the dog could be registered with a municipality halfway through a year and the registration would have to be renewed twelve

months after that, and so on. I do not know what the section will achieve in its new form. I should have thought that, perhaps with the addition of the words " or renewed ", the old section covered the position.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): This is purely a legal technicality. The existing wording provides that the registration of a dog shall expire on 10th April next succeeding the date of registration. Thus, if a dog had been registered for a full year and its owner paid a new registration with his rates on, say, 7th April, intending the fee to be for registration for the following year, because the strictly limiting words of the principal Act say that the registration expires on the 10th April next, it could be argued that although a new fee had been paid the registration would expire three days later. I do not think any municipality would take advantage of the technicality, but it would be legally possible. An endeavour is being made to remove the possibility that an owner who registers his dog early should do himself a disservice.

The clause was agreed to, as were clauses 4 and 5.

Clause 6 (Amendment of No. 8079).

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province): This clause contains the extraordinary proposition that if a dog is not registered it may be seized and destroyed. I hope we shall never reach the stage in our civilization when a similar principle applies to human beings.

The Hon. P. D. BLOCK: We are not far from it.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: Perhaps, under this wonderful Government, we shall all be expected to wear dog collars and if one of us is found without one he may be put into this gas chamber where, as Mr. Long describes it, he will be in a state of exhilaration.

This is an oppressive provision. The Opposition suggests that there ought to be substituted provision for an Animal Welfare Division of the Victoria Police. Children who saw dogs in distress or wandering at large could go to the local police officer and let him know of the trouble. After all, there are a good many police squads dealing with licensing and so on. In the opinion of some people those matters are not as important as the welfare of animals.

Other police forces in the world have animal welfare divisions. It is most proper that children, unlike some members of this House, are very fond of animals. There is a community of interest and understanding between young children, dogs, cats, and so on. At times, kiddies are naughty, and so are animals. It is healthy for the community to have this prophylactic whereby young children are encouraged to go to local police officers and tell them about stray dogs, animals in distress, and animals knocked down on the road.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: Which members of the House are not fond of animals?

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: I do not know but it was reported in the daily press, for which I have the greatest respect, that when I launched a motion on the subject of animals a few months ago several members of the House treated it as the joke of the year.

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. Nicol): I wonder whether I could prevail upon Mr. Galbally to keep to the Bill.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: I was rash enough, Mr. Chairman, to answer an interjection by the Minister who was embarrassed by a measure that I introduced some time ago. It does not seem to be a proper function of a municipality to take a dog which may be enjoying the rare sunshine in Victoria and hurry him off to the gas chamber.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: It is because he does not have a responsible owner.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: That is not always so. Some of us have had dogs seized in this way because the registration has lapsed. Some of us have been unfortunate enough to forget the registration of a car, or the renewal of a driving licence. In this case, the punishment hardly fits the crime.

I have been anxious to see the functions relating to animal welfare put where they belong, in the hands of the Police Force, which has done wonderful work with horses. Anybody who follows football, cricket, and so on admires the magnificent way these animals hold back crowds without causing injury. An Animal Welfare Division of the Police Force should be established here, as in other parts of the world, where the divisions do magnificent work, not only in dealing with dogs which are hurt, but also in tracking down kidnappers and other wrongdoers and in protecting the police, which is the aim of any enlightened community.

No one wants to see a police officer endangered in the course of his duties. I understand that the best protection he can have is a dog alongside him. The coward will never attack in those circumstances.

There are problems with some dogs wearing collars. This provision is far too wide and dictatorial. What the Government should do, apart from asking all who get up to express a point of view to apologize, is to suggest that progress be reported.

We have been waiting years for the relaxation of the law on the beautiful German Shepherd dog. It was implemented by this Government in some curious way.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: It was in 1936.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: Does that make it any better? This Bill should not be passed tonight. The dog will not have any say one way or the other but what the Government should do is set up an Animal Welfare Division within the Police Force. I know that there are demands in relation to gaming, licensing, and so on, but this is something which touches the heart of every child in the community.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): I will refer to the Chief Secretary Mr. Galbally's suggestion regarding the Police Force, but I cannot agree with his comments upon clause 6, which creates a new section 17A to follow section 17 and will confer upon authorized animal organizations the same powers that a municipality has. When a municipality seizes a dog it must endeavour to return the dog to its owner. That is normally a comparatively easy matter if the dog is registered and the owner's identity and whereabouts can be discovered from the registration disc.

The animal welfare organization which takes the dog must make those same endeavours, and if the ownership of the dog can be ascertained, the organization is obliged to notify the owner in writing. If the owner cannot be contacted or does not come forward to claim the dog, at least eight days must elapse to enable proper opportunity for a claim to be made. The organization's second obligation is to try and find a home for the dog, and to sell the dog for that purpose. If that cannot be done within eight days after the seizure of the dog it may later be destroyed. I think Mr. Galbally has misunderstood the section.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: If it is not the sort of dog that people would desire, then it is not offered for sale.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: In any event, destruction can take place only after a minimum holding period of eight days. There is no power to destroy dogs willy-nilly.

The clause was agreed to, as were the remaining clauses.

The Bill was reported to the House without amendment, and passed through its remaining stages.

DENTAL ALUMNI RESEARCH FOUNDATION BILL.

The debate (adjourned from October 8) on the motion of the Hon. V. O. Dickie (Minister of Housing) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province): The Dental Alumni Research Foundation is a worthy organization. It was formed about ten years ago by graduates of the Melbourne Dental School. A fund was established and regulations made which could be altered only by an Act of Parliament, and that is the reason for this measure tonight.

One of the provisions of the regulations was that an amount of $30,000 for the total of the funds of the foundation should be held in interest-bearing deposits and only the interest from this capital sum should be used for research purposes. Other than this special reserve fund, all money received from the Dental Alumni Research Foundation may be expended by the foundation upon such research projects, either for capital purposes or payments, from time to time as the foundation sees fit.

The Dental Research Centre envisaged then that the Melbourne Dental School would be a great adjunct to the studies, and also to the service, at the Royal Dental Hopsital. At the moment the council is worried that the completion of this centre will not be effected unless some alteration can be made to the set-up in connection with these funds. I understand that the contract included the usual rise and fall clauses. Because of the large increases in building costs in recent months, it has been necessary for additional funds to be found to complete the construction and also for the fitting-out of the building.

The research foundation has made inquiries from all contributors—a great tribute must be paid to them for their generosity and contributions to this fund—and they are willing to provide as much as $30,000 capital reserve, as is necessary, to finish the research centre as soon as possible. Most of the $30,000 will be needed. The advances for the completion of the centre on condition that the foundation will repay the amount as soon as possible, has been assented to by the Treasurer. This Bill is small in nature but is important in its meaning, which is to authorize the foundation to use as much as is necessary of the capital reserve of $30,000 and to repay the Treasurer all the money that has been advanced. My party does not oppose the Bill in any respect.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province): There have been many debates in this House on dentistry in Victoria and on the appalling state of the teeth of both the children and adults of this State. My party has urged the Government to provide more money and more facilities for dental treatment, dental research, and for the training of dentists. This is a comparatively small Bill to enable a fund of $30,000 to be set aside and to be employed in the building of a new research centre.

One item of information that does not appear is the cost of this new research centre. I do not know whether the failure of certain builders has held up the project. I wonder whether the Minister could give some information on how the project is proceeding. Members of the Country Party welcome the Bill. We believe the money is being put to a good purpose, but the House should have been taken into the Minister's confidence in regard to the whole of the dental research project. I feel that this is not the time to go fully into the dental services of Victoria. They have been dealt with on previous occasions. I should appreciate it if the Minister would give some further information, if he has it available. Apart from that, the Country Party has no objection to this money being employed as the Government suggests.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (East Yarra Province): I should disclose my interest in this Bill before saying anything about it. I am a member of

the Dental Hospital Council which is very concerned with the progress of this research project. The project to build this research centre is a worth-while one and the dental profession of this community is to be congratulated upon the excellent way in which it responded to the original call for funds to invest in such a project for the benefit of the community generally. The dental community cannot be blamed because the building was not proceeded with and completed within the original budget.

As with so many other projects within this community, the cost of building has escalated alarmingly, and what was a practical proposition became an impractical one because of the inability to use the funds which have been set aside under the university regulations as a capital fund for a particular purpose. The action of the Government in supporting and introducing this Bill at the request of the university and those concerned with this fund is to be commended, as is the attitude of the Labor Party and the Country Party. I should like to express on my own behalf my appreciation to all parties. It is a sensible step to use this fund to provide permanent facilities for research which must inevitably mean an improvement in the standard of education of dentists, of research that is performed within the community and, ultimately, in the improvement of dental health within the community. I am, therefore, pleased that the Bill is supported by all parties.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (Variation of trusts).

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): A question was asked by Mr. Clarke in reference to the progress of the building programme for the erection of the Dental Research Centre at the dental school. I am just rereading my second-reading explanatory speech. The contracts were let for the work and it is practically completed, but I am wondering, as Mr. Haddon Storey stated his interest on the council, whether he would be prepared to comment in answer to the question asked by Mr. Clarke?

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (East Yarra Province): I am not able to answer Mr. Clarke's question completely. I am not able to say whether the building is now finished, but it is certainly well advanced. I could add, that were it not for the Government agreeing to introduce this Bill and allowing an additional $30,000 to be made available for the completion of the building, it would have proceeded to the completion of the shell without air conditioning and without other services. There would be the magnificent four walls and a ceiling and roof of the new dental research centre which would have been completely useless for the purposes of research, because it is essential that this building should have air conditioning so that fine control can be exercised over the atmosphere and other conditions within it to enable experiments to be carried out.

I can inform the House that the addition of this money will enable the building to be completed and should enable it to be used within the next few months.

The clause was agreed to.

The Bill was reported to the House without amendment, and passed through its remaining stages.

PESTICIDES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from October 15) on the motion of the Hon. W. V. Houghton (Minister for Social Welfare) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province): This is a small Bill to cope with improvements in the standards of hygiene in the dairying industry, and to ensure that the pesticides and cleaners used in that industry are of the highest standard. Everyone appreciates the high standard of quality which the dairying industry has achieved in Victoria. This has been assisted by the Department

of Agriculture with the co-operation of dairying supervisors who assist the farmers. One must congratulate the dairying community for its readiness to adopt the latest methods of hygiene in dairies.

The standards of quality which are required in this age to satisfy a more sophisticated and informed market are becoming higher each year. The Bill makes the necessary amendments to ensure the protection of those engaged in the industry on the production and manufacturing sides and ultimately the consumer. It is in the interests of everyone concerned that the highest possible standards of hygiene should be maintained. It is remarkable that an industry that is currently facing financial difficulties is still aiming at achieving a higher standard for its products. The dairying industry must be congratulated for the tremendously high standard it has already achieved in Victoria.

I commend the Government, the Department of Agriculture and its officers for the work they are doing. The Opposition does not oppose the Bill.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province): Members of the Country Party support the amendment to the Pesticides Act 1958. It is fairly simple although the import and long-term effects on the dairying industry will be great after the Bill has been enacted.

Mr. Kent has correctly outlined the reasons why the measure has been introduced. It has been largely owing to a rapid increase in technology in the dairying industry, and also by a desire in primary industry generally to improve the quality control measures used in each primary industry.

In the dairying industry, in 1973 a new system of testing of milk quality, namely, the thermoduric testing process, was introduced. As the Minister outlined in his second-reading speech, moves were made by the dairying industry to have the Department of Agriculture undertake the control of cleaners used in dairy factories and in farm dairies, in addition to control over the use of sanitizers. To the uninitiated there may not be any difference between cleaners and sanitizers, but I can assure honorable members who are interested that if they study the matter carefully they will find that the control of cleaning equipment and cleaners is presently covered and where this measure is enacted the control of sanitizers will also be undertaken by the Department of Agriculture. The use of cleaners and sanitizers has had some unusual effects in the dairying industry on cheese making. Some of the chemicals have had an adverse effect on cheese starters resulting in the manufacture of poor quality cheese. This measure will introduce the necessary control in that field.

In simple terms, clause 2 will insert in the principal Act an interpretation of "analysis". This will include the use of biological procedures as well as the accepted chemical and physical tests. As the Minister has stated, biological tests are particularly important in determining the efficiency of sanitizers and cleaners. I could say more about the use of biological analysis and testing because at present these matters are becoming increasingly important in the preservation of the environment.

Clause 3 of the Bill proposes amendments to section 4 of the principal Act to provide power to set biological conditions as part of any standard when the Governor in Council is prescribing a standard for a pesticide.

The Country Party supports the amendments to the Pesticides Act. It believes they are necessary and in the best interests of the dairying industry.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (Amendment of No. 6257 s. 3).

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare): I am grateful for the support of the Labor Party and the Country Party. Pesticides are becoming more complicated in their use. They certainly create problems when it comes to the protection of the environment and food products. It is essential that the sophisticated chemicals now being used should be subject to stricter control.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD: Do you think you should use stricter control on their future use in the Yarra Valley, especially to safeguard Melbourne's water supply?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON: Mr. McDonald touches a sensitive point. It is a matter which may well be debated on another issue. I cannot say I disagree that on many of our river systems, particularly in the Yarra Valley, stricter controls will be needed in future. However, that is a matter for another debate and I shall be pleased to engage in it at the appropriate time.

The clause was agreed to, as was the remaining clause.

The Bill was reported to the House without amendment, and passed through its remaining stages.

DRIED FRUITS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from October 15) on the motion of the Hon. W. V. Houghton (Minister for Social Welfare) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province): This Bill has quite a lot to do with current affairs! It is one which the Opposition does not oppose because it simply makes provision for an increased contribution from packing houses to the Australian Dried Fruits Board. This is to ensure that the board continues to function in the efficient way in which I believe it has in the past. The reason for the Bill arises from an assessment of the reality of the present economic situation. The maximum contribution, which was previously $1.20 a ton, is to be raised to $2 a ton. The registration fee of packing houses is to be raised to $10 and the transfer of registration fee increased to $5.

There are approximately 30 packing houses or sheds in Victoria in the industry which, if I am not assuming something, is well publicized by Mr. Wright. I had some experience in this industry many years ago. It was unfortunate that there my employment was terminated for the first and only time in my life. I did not have much goodwill towards some of the blockies, as they are called, in that area but perhaps the first one I met was not an example of the character of most blockies.

The industry has been prosperous generally in spite of what may be said. It has been efficient and the producers have had sufficient experience of operation to organize their marketing on a sound basis. The growers are also not entirely dependent on dried fruits; they have other sources of income. For those reasons the Labor Party has pleasure in doing what it always does—it supports anything which will enable primary producers to continue to produce efficiently and to market their produce effectively.

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province): The purpose of this Dried Fruits (Amendment) Bill is to increase the charges levied on packing houses which, of course, are payable by the growers. The second purpose of the Bill is to increase the registration charges of the packing sheds and these are payable by the sheds. This levy goes back to when the Dried Fruits Act was passed in 1925. At that time it was five shillings and tenpence a ton. Since 1966 it has been $1.20 a ton and it is now proposed that the levy should be $2. This $2 is one of the many deductions the grower pays.

In the early years of the industry, basically Mildura was a fresh fruit area but because of problems with low rivers, the various trees not being what they were purported to be when sold to the growers, and other problems, many landholders switched to dried fruits. Over-production quickly ensued and there was a need for organized marketing. My grandparents went to the Mildura district in 1921; they had been in Hamilton. At that time fruit was 100 pounds a ton and in the next year, owing to over-production and the activities of other exporting countries, the price dropped to 25 pounds a ton. As the value of the crop reduced to one-quarter of what it had been so did the value of my grandparents' property.

The initial increase in the value for each ton of dried fruit was brought about for two reasons. Firstly, after the Great War there was a period of shortages and the wealth was available to buy the dried fruits. With the demand the price rose. Secondly, in the United States of America the population by referendum voted for a prohibition on the sale of alcoholic drinks and dried fruits were used for making what was called bootleg liquor. The demand for dried fruits therefore improved.

Because of the over-production and the need for growers to have their own organization and representation, the Australian Dried Fruits Association was formed. This is an Australia-wide organization representing four dried fruits growing States—New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. It is broken up similarly to our political organizations, into councils and local branches. It is an association of agents, packers and growers and its main object is the preservation of fair conditions for the grower, the wholesaler, the retailer and the consumer. If fair conditions apply to the grower there is usually a fair price for the consumer. The main objects are orderly marketing and the conducting of an equalization scheme.

The second of the main organizations involving dried fruits is the Australian Dried Fruits Control Board. It is a Commonwealth statutory authority which has seven elected grower members and four Government nominees. Its main function is to look after the export sales of dried fruits. The dried fruits industry is much dependent on overseas sales. Seventy-five per cent of the dried fruits are exported, representing an average of about 60,000 tons a year. Home consumption is therefore 25 per cent, or about 20,000 tons. The present price of dried fruits is about $500 a ton. A couple of years ago it was $260 a ton. It is predicted that the price will return to a steady average of about $400 a ton. As honorable members know, dried fruits are a healthy food and I should be delighted some time to see them served in the dining room of this Parliament.

The third organization and the main one of which we are speaking is the Victorian Dried Fruits Board. It also is a statutory board. Two members are appointed by the Governor in Council and five members are elected by the growers. Its main function is the registration of packing houses. In 1972 there were seventeen of these, all except two of which were in the State of Victoria. It covers the registration of dehydrators, the licensing and education of fruit classers, and the allocation of the various grades—a fairly contentious matter for the growers. Admittedly about 75 per cent of growers are tied to the packing sheds. Their grapes are under lien. Therefore, if they are dissatisfied with the grades they are given when they take their fruit to the packing shed, they have no alternative but to leave their fruit there. If they are free growers who are not under lien, they can take their fruit to another shed in the hope that they will be allocated a higher grade.

The Hon. O. G. JENKINS: Do not most growers send fruit to co-operatives?

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT: No; about 46 per cent of the dried fruits are packed by the co-operatives and the rest of the fruit is packed by the private packing houses. There are, of course, deductions for wastage and moisture and this is determined by the inspectors who are remunerated from the money which is deducted under the terms of this Act. Another function of these inspectors is to carry out an annual inspection of the growers' properties and their drying grounds, to make sure they are clean and to ensure that the dried fruits are in a clean, non-gritty condition when taken to the packing sheds. Nothing deters overseas buyers more than to find a small percentage of grit or sand in their dried fruit.

I should like briefly to refer to the balance-sheet of the Victorian Dried Fruits Board for the year ended 31st December, 1972. These reports are fairly slow in coming forward because the figures for the year, by virtue of the nature of the industry, are late in being printed. In that year the income of the Victorian Dried Fruits Board from these contributions was $60,507. There is an amount of $4,007 from interest on investments, making a total of approximately $64,000. The main items of expenditure were as follows—board members' allowance $5,800, and staff salaries $15,428.

This is the main reason for the extensive increase that we have; there have been some fairly large increases in salaries of the people so employed. Graders' salaries amounted to $10,000 and the Department of Primary Industry fixed charges at $8,000. The State board has to pay to the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture this proportion. As at 31st December, 1972, the accumulated general fund totalled $83,443. This ran down to $76,813, and this is another indication why the charges should be increased. It is projected that in 1974 expenditure will be $72,000, income, $57,000 and the estimated deficit $15,000. The increase from $1.20 to $2 a ton and the accumulated fund of $76,813 could appear to explain this, but the main reason is that there is an increase in demand for wine-making grapes. In 1974 the quantity supplied was 17,000 tons. It is projected that in 1975 it will be 25,000 tons and in 1976 30,000 tons.

Dried fruits growing is a chancy occupation—there are many variable factors that induce growers to send their fruit to wineries instead of drying it. Firstly, international sultana agreement has broken down. It never ceases to amaze me that in the dried fruits industry one only has to have the slightest downturn and producers in the Mediterranean countries are prepared to bring their prices down $20, $30 or even $50 a ton, but if one is involved in a transaction here with them, they show far greater perspicacity than on those other occasions.

Secondly, there are high overseas freight rates. Thirdly, preferential treatment is given to Mediterranean countries by the main marketing countries by way of the duty-free allowances. There has been a reduction in preferences in the United Kingdom; Mediterranean countries are prepared to pay subsidies to packers and buyers alike; and interest charges are currently high.

If the grower sends his fruit for wine making, he receives most of his money within 60 days and he has delivery within twelve months. With dried fruits he may have to wait two or three years for payment. With interest rates of 12 per cent or thereabouts he pays a considerably greater amount in interest. It is therefore more desirable for him to send his fruit to the wineries.

There is also unprecedented industrial chaos, and the inability of the industry to give accurate delivery dates to overseas buyers. There is the concern at the current inquiry of the Industries Assistance Commission and, lastly, there is the difficulty that he has in obtaining labour.

One cannot blame the grower for being tempted to send his fruit to be manufactured into wine. However, this means a lower tonnage is going into packing sheds to be dried and therefore a higher packing charge per unit is made. Four of the past six years have been bad seasons and it is probably no coincidence that the Victorian Dried Fruits Board has made a loss in four of the past six years.

A graph of the total tonnage of production of dried fruits is up and down and looks like the peaks of the Himalayan mountains because it varies from 40,000 to 100,000 tons. The grower is a super optimist. He puts up with these conditions because it is his way of life. He enjoys it and is undeterred by the economic factors which mitigate against his obtaining the best return. Incidentally, there are 5,103 dried fruits growers in Australia of whom 1,932 are from Sunraysia, 250 at Robinvale and 236 in the mid-Murray area. The majority of Victoria's dried fruits growers are situated in the North-Western Province, represented by Mr. Dunn and myself. There is no opposition from the industry to the proposed legislation, and, for the reasons that I have mentioned, the Country Party supports the Bill.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time, and passed through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT.

FIBREMAKERS LTD.

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

That the House do now adjourn.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE (Bendigo Province): I raise a matter of great importance to Bendigo and indeed to the whole of Victoria. I refer to the announcement today, as I heard it, that Fibremakers Ltd. is closing its plants at Bendigo and Geelong. This will mean that a number of employees who have been working for the company for some time will be unemployed. I understand that these factories will remain closed for a period of at least nine or ten months, and perhaps longer. The number of employees who are being put off is such that it will be very difficult for them to find alternative employment in the country. I understand that 102 employees are being put off at Bendigo and 39 at Geelong. This is a worrying situation as alternative employment is unlikely to be available in view of the other factories that have been forced to close. The latest closure places a heavy load on the Minister for State Development and Decentralization. I ask him what comments he cares to make on a matter of grave concern to country Victoria and to the Government.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): Regardless of one's politics, one cannot be happy at the position referred to by Mr. Grimwade. It is fair to say that all Governments are concerned at the events of the past six months. Today I received a telegram from Mr. MacKinnon regarding Fibremakers Ltd. I do not know whether the honorable member's figures are 100 per cent correct. I did not catch everything he said. The information conveyed to me by telegram from Mr. MacKinnon indicated that 138 people were retrenched, in addition to earlier retrenchments totalling 200. It indicated that the cause of the closure was the economic and tariff policies adopted at a national level. A more frightening picture of the retrenchments is revealed in the unfortunate unemployment figures in country areas for the period from September, 1973, to September, 1974. In some areas, unemployment increased by more than 100 per cent during that period. The position has since worsened. I had some figures about a week ago which were even worse.

On a number of occasions the States have put a case to the Federal Government. Most honorable members will be aware that twelve months ago we submitted a case when a number of the tariff policies were being implemented. Dr. Cairns and other senior Ministers have given undertakings that they will take certain action. I do not know what immediate action can be taken other than an immediate introduction of an absolute quota; it is too late to raise the tariff by another 25 per cent, as has been suggested. It would take another six months to get rid of the fantastic amount of goods that have been imported into Australia before the industry would feel the effects. The problem is how to reconstitute and resurrect the industries that have closed. I have had experience in this industry. My department was largely responsible for bringing the industry to Bendigo. Once it is closed down, one would have to be Mandrake to induce it to open again and expand the works, even if the situation had improved. I have certainly contacted the Federal Government on the question. In fact, the State is prepared to co-operate 100 per cent with the Federal Government and with any other State Government on these matters.

I have directed one of my senior officers to visit Bendigo and Geelong and we have had immediate contact with the Federal Government. We are prepared to put a case on behalf of these industries. We have had surveys taken with the industry, and supported by the union, on what is happening. The nation finally realizes the effect of these policies. Our task is to unscramble the egg. I would appreciate the advice of anyone as to what can be done at a State level. We are sincerely trying to help the industry because we have been involved in the establishment of a number of these industries. Every one of the industries which has been established in the country is receiving assistance from the Victorian Government. I assure the House that in many instances we are partners with industry itself. I do not know whether I can supply heartening news for Mr. Grimwade other than to indicate that on receipt of the telegram from Mr. MacKinnon I appointed a senior officer to visit the area and offer 100 per cent co-operation.

The Hon. A. K. BRADBURY: What can he do there?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: He can find out how many people have been put off and what possible alternative employment they can obtain. He can also discover whatever projects we can take up in the area to provide alternative employment. A list has been given to the Federal Government in confidence of other industries that could be attracted to provide alternative permanent employment. These are the types of action we have been concerned with over the past six months. If Mr. Bradbury can advise me what else can be done, I shall be grateful.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.43 *p.m.*

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

FREIGHT ON CORPSES.

(Question No. 99)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province) asked the Minister for Social Welfare, for the Minister of Transport—

Is the freight on corpses carried from Mildura to Melbourne as van goods in the guard's van in either a wooden box or carton $129; if so, as no special facilities or extraordinary handling is involved, why are these charges so high as compared to other van goods carried?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare): The answer supplied by the Minister of Transport is—

The freight rate for the carriage of a corpse from Mildura to Melbourne as van goods in the guard's van is $141.50.

This rate is applied because of the specialized nature of the consignment.

As a matter of comparison it is understood that the cost of conveying a corpse from Mildura to Melbourne by road is approximately $192.

CRIME IN BRUNSWICK ELECTORATES.

(Question No. 102)

The Hon. R. J. EDDY (Doutta-Galla Province) asked the Minister for Local Government, for the Chief Secretary—

How many crimes in the electoral districts of Brunswick East and Brunswick West have been reported to the Criminal Investigation Branch and/or police at stations in each electorate since 1st January, 1974, indicating the number and nature of the crime?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): The answer supplied by the Chief Secretary is statistical, and I seek leave of the House for its incorporation in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave was granted, and the answer was as follows—

A total of 2,139 crimes were reported in these two electoral districts during the period from 1st January, 1974, to 14th October, 1974.

Nature of crime	*Number of offences*
Assaults	99
Assault with weapon	21
Assault and robbery	13
Indecent assault	26
Larcenies	661
Car stealing	198
House breaking and stealing	341
Office breaking and stealing	40
Garage breaking and stealing	20
School breaking and stealing	15
Storeroom breaking and stealing	72
Shop breaking and stealing	94
Rape	5
Carnal knowledge	5
False pretences	26
Receiving	47
Unlawfully on premises	25
Unlawful possession	25
Other offences	406

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

(Question No. 128)

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province) asked the Minister of Housing, for the Minister of Health—

(*a*) What are the full details of the "far reaching training programme aimed at reducing the shortage of general medical practitioners throughout the State" which was announced as being "well advanced" in the Minister of Health's news release of 15th October, 1974?

(*b*) What positive measures will this training programme include, in order to ensure that graduate doctors do practise in country towns?

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): The answer supplied by the Minister of Health is—

(*a*) Details of the programme have not yet been finalized but I expect to be in a position to make a public statement on this in a few weeks' time.

(*b*) The programme will include periods of training of young medical practitioners in accredited country practices during which time they will also be given experience of practice in country hospitals. This will increase the understanding of conditions of general practice and will extend the experience of the doctors concerned. Whilst the programme cannot ensure an influx of general practitioners into country towns, it should contribute greatly towards making general practice more attractive to young graduate doctors.

The Chairman of the Hospitals and Charities Commission will shortly visit the United Kingdom on invitation by and at the expense of the British Government and while there will take the opportunity to stimulate the recruitment of medical practitioners, particularly for service in Victorian country towns.

POLICE STATION FOR WYCHEPROOF.

(Question No. 129)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province) asked the Minister for Local Government, for the Chief Secretary—

Were any tenders received for the construction of a new police station and residence at Wycheproof?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): The answer supplied by the Chief Secretary is—

Tenders have been called for this work on three occasions in 1974. One tender was received in response to the most recent advertisement and acceptance has been recommended by the Public Works Department.

MILDURA RAIL SERVICE.

(Question No. 130)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province) asked the Minister for Social Welfare, for the Minister of Transport—

In view of the increased passenger loadings on the Mildura rail service is it the intention of the Railways Board to introduce three modern sleeping cars?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare): The answer supplied by the Minister of Transport is—

The railways at present are investigating ways and means of obtaining another sleeping car for *The Vinelander* service.

CRIME IN FITZROY.

(Question No. 133)

The Hon. R. J. EDDY (Doutta Galla Province) asked the Minister for Local Government, for the Chief Secretary—

How many crimes in the municipality of Fitzroy have been reported to the Criminal Investigation Branch and/or at Fitzroy police station since 1st January, 1974, indicating the number and nature of the crime?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): The answer supplied by the Chief Secretary is—

A total of 1,481 crimes were reported in this municipality during the period from 1st January, 1974, to 28th September, 1974.

Nature of crime	*Number of offences*
Abduction	4
Armed with felonious intent	6
Armed with offensive weapon	15
Arson	2
Assaulting police	34
Assaulting police by kicking	12
Assaulting police with weapon	1
Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	12
Assaulting civilian	62
Assaulting civilian by kicking	13
Assaulting civilian with weapon	20
Assault and robbery	17
Assault with intent to rob	1
Assault with intent to rape	1
Buggery	5
Burglary	4
Carnal knowledge	11
Counting housebreaking and stealing	2
Demanding money with menaces	1
Drug—possession of	12
Drugs—supply of	2
Drugs—use of	6
Embezzlement	54
Escape	1
Factory breaking and stealing	25
False pretences	7
Forgery	4
Garage breaking and stealing	9
Gross indecency	2
House breaking and stealing	229
Imposition	1
Incest	20
Indecent assault—female	30
Indecent assault—male	1
Insufficient means of support	24
Larceny	153
Larcency of a bicycle	36
Larcency in a dwelling	47
Larcency from a motor car	136
Larcency from a person	9
Larcency as a servant	14
Loitering with intent	12
Malicious damage	9
Motor car stealing	154
Murder	3
Murder–attempted	2
Obscene exposure	5
Office breaking and stealing	31
Pistol–felon in possession of	4
Pistol–unregistered	2
Possessing housebreaking implements	2
Protection application	5
Rape	8
Receiving	11
Robbery in company	5
Robbery under arms	7
Robbery with violence	1
School breaking and stealing	3
Shop breaking and stealing	51
Shop stealing	3
Storeroom breaking and stealing	18
Tampering with a motor car	16
Unlawfully on premises	6
Unlawful possession	17
Uttering	3
Warehouse breaking and stealing	1
Wounding—grievous bodily harm	1
Wounding—maliciously	9
Other offences	47

GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

(Question No. 134)

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province) asked the Minister of Housing, for the Minister of Health—

(*a*) In which towns in the Northern Province does the Minister of Health recognize that there is an acute shortage of general medical practitioners?

(*b*) When is it expected that some of the twenty doctors to be recruited in the United Kingdom will be able to take up practice in these towns?

(*c*) What practical steps are being taken to recruit these doctors?

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): The answer supplied by the Minister of Health is—

(*a*) The Hospitals and Charities Commission has advised me that, in recent months, it has been informed that there are vacancies for medical practitioners in single-practice towns in the Northern Province and other areas of Victoria. These towns include Cohuna, Hopetoun, Dunolly, Minyip, Murchison, Murrayville, Quambatook, and Rushworth.

Other towns with more than one practice also have vacancies.

(*b*) Advertisements are being placed in the British and daily press seeking applicants for the vacancies.

(c) Later this month the Chairman of the Hospitals and Charities Commission will visit Britain to make a study of hospital and community health centres. While there he will also supervise the development of a recruiting drive for medical practitioners for serivce in Victoria.

At this stage, it is not practicable to state when the services of medical practitioners will be obtained for practice in these towns. However, if the recruiting drive is successful, some applicants will be on their way to Victoria by early 1975.

TEACHER HOUSING AT RAINBOW.

(Question No. 137)

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North-Western Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

(*a*) When will three prefabricated flats to be provided by the Teacher Housing Authority at Rainbow be so provided?

(*b*) What further action will be taken to improve the teacher accommodation situation at Rainbow?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): The answer supplied by the Minister of Education is—

(*a*) Preliminary site planning has been completed and arrangements will be made by the Teacher Housing Authority for the letting of a contract as soon as funds become available.

(*b*) When an application from the area is received by the welfare officer, the departmental residence selection committee will consider the provision of further housing at Rainbow.

GYMNASIUM PROJECT AT NHILL.

(Question No. 139)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province) asked the Minister of Housing, for the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation—

Have decisions been made in respect of a proposed joint gymnasium project between the high and primary schools at Nhill (proposed to be built at the high school) and will a Government grant be made for the purpose?

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): The answer supplied by the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation is—

No formal application has been received either by the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation or by the Education Department for this project.

In response to an inquiry, the Education Department has advised the Nhill High School that a special grant of up to $40,000 on a $1 for $1 basis may be provided for the construction of a school gymnasium subject to finance being available at the time of application.

CLASSIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS.

(Question No. 140)

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

What action has the Minister of Education taken to secure new classification procedures for teachers?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): The answer supplied by the Minister of Education is—

The classification and promotion procedures for members of the Teaching Service will be discussed with representatives of the teacher organizations in the near future providing strike action ceases. Any change that might be agreed upon, would take effect in 1975 and relate to 1976 appointments.

ELDERLY CITIZENS' UNITS FOR WYCHEPROOF.

(Question No. 141)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province) asked the Minister of Housing—

Is it envisaged that the elderly citizens' units proposed for Wycheproof will be built in 1974–75?

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): The answer is —

Yes.

SCHOOL COUNCILS.

(Question No. 142)

The Hon. A. K. BRADBURY (North-Eastern Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

Will the proposed changes to school councils, as outlined in the *Education Gazette* of 11th September, 1974, apply to technical college councils?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): The answer supplied by the Minister of Education is—

No.

MELBOURNE CITY COUNCIL PUBLICITY OFFICER.

(Question No. 125)

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province) asked the Minister for Local Government—

(*a*) Is he aware that the Melbourne City Council is to appoint a publicity officer?

(*b*) What will be the salary of such officer, will this be a full-time appointment, and what other staff will be provided to assist him in his duties?

(*c*) What financial provision has been made for additional expenses, including printing, secretarial help, travel, etc.?

(*d*) Do councils need to expend ratepayers' moneys to publicize their own activities?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): The answer is—

(*a*) At its meeting on Monday, 14th October, 1974, council decided to create the position of publicity officer.

(*b*) (i) Within the range of $10,000 to $12,500 according to qualifications and experience.

(ii) The appointment is envisaged as a full-time one on terms applying for other officers, with a probationary period of six months.

(iii) No specific staff has been allotted to the officer at this stage. The office will meld with the present administrative arrangements and structure.

(*c*) General appropriations for administrative purposes are expected to cover the costs of the office.

(*d*) I consider that the Melbourne City Council is acting not only properly but in a highly commendable manner. Effective public participation and interest in the decision making process and in the affairs of a municipality generally should be encouraged and engendered. This can only be achieved if ratepayers, and the general public affected, are adequately and accurately informed of the council's activities, services, proposals, and decisions, and of the major issues from time to time facing council. It will be the prime duty of the proposed officer to ensure that this information is made available effectively, and to provide information which will help the public to utilise municipal services, facilities and assistance to their greatest advantage, and generally to report to ratepayers on the manner in which their funds are expended.

FREEWAY RESERVATIONS.

(Question No. 131)

The Hon. W. M. CAMPBELL (East Yarra Province) asked the Minister for Local Government—

(*a*) Have any freeway reservations been deleted from the Metropolitan Planning Scheme since the Government's announcement in March last year of a cut-back in the freeway programme; if so, which reservations?

(*b*) Have any freeway reservations in the metropolitan area been exhibited or adopted since that announcement; if so, which reservations?

(*c*) What is the position with respect to any other freeway reservations, whether adopted or proposed, which were affected by the above announcement?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): The answer is—

(*a*) Yes. On 25th September, 1974, the Governor in Council approved (with modifications) Amendment No. 23 Part I. to the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme, the effect of which was to delete the following freeway reservations previously approved or exhibited—

(i) Freeway reserve on the approved planning scheme between Cheltenham Road, Keysborough, and Wells Road, Chelsea Heights, the land being reverted to rural.

(ii) Freeway reservation in relation to that section of F6 in the Reservoir area affected by the Premier's announcement of 28th March, 1973, which reservation had been placed on public exhibition on 6th October, 1971, for inclusion in the planning scheme.

(iii) Widening proposals to enlarge to freeway requirements the main road reservation forming part of F6 along the former outer circle

railway, Kew, between the Eastern Freeway, Kew, which proposals had also been placed on public exhibition on 6th October, 1971.

(iv) Proposals for the widening of the existing main road reservation between Wellington Road, Mulgrave, and the Dingley Freeway, Springvale, to provide for F7 as included in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and ancillary access proposals, all of which proposals had been placed on public exhibition on 6th October, 1971.

(*b*) The following reservations relating to freeway segments in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan accepted by the above announcement, were placed on public exhibition in detail as portions of Amendment No. 23 on 6th October, 1971, and were approved (with modifications to meet objections where practicable) by the determination of the Governor in Council mentioned above—

(i) Reservation for portion of F14 constituting the proposed Lower Yarra Crossing and the approaches thereto West of Spencer Street, Melbourne, between Johnson Street, South Melbourne, and Footscray Road, West Melbourne.

(ii) Reservation to extend the Scoresby Freeway, F35, from Cheltenham Road, Dandenong, to the Mornington Peninsula Freeway near Armstrongs Road, Seaford.

(iii) Reservation for intersection improvements for the Lower Yarra Freeway at the junction of Haigh and Cecil streets, and Grant and Clarendon streets, South Melbourne.

(c) Following the Premier's freeway policy statement referred to above, I publicly announced that a review of all reservations, whether adopted or exhibited, in respect of freeway segments which would not now proceed would be undertaken in the first instance by the road authorities and thereafter by planning authorities. I indicated at the time the Government's expectation that the review would disclose that some reservations could be abandoned entirely, that some might be retained or modified to provide for arterial road improvements, and that the opportunity might be taken to create additional public open space or land for public purposes in areas where it was needed and substantial purchases had been made within the freeway reservations. The review is proceeding and has so far enabled the determinations referred to earlier. Recommendations as to further determinations and the deletion or modification of further reservations will be made to the Governor in Council progressively as the necessary reports come to hand.

Minor adjustments arising from more detailed and accurate survey information, to the boundaries of existing reservations approved by the above announcement were made by portions of amendment No. 27 and gazetted earlier this year and are proposed to be made by amendment No. 34 exhibited on 22nd August, 1973 and amendment No. 35, exhibited on 10th July, 1974. Planning scheme amendments to provide for freeway reservations acceptable under the Premier's announcement have subsequently been placed on exhibition as follows—

(y) Amendment No. 47, to provide for the Eumemmering Freeway, Hampton Park, and consequential deviation and widening of the South Gippsland Highway, exhibited on 10th April, 1974.

(z) Amendment No. 52, to provide for the Mornington Peninsula Freeway from Springvale Road to Eel Race Road, exhibited on 21st August, 1974.

Since the date of the announcement mentioned above, no planning scheme amendments whatsoever directly or indirectly affecting freeways which could in any way conflict with that announcement have been prepared or placed on public exhibition, adopted by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, recommended by the Town and Country Planning Board or approved by the Governor in Council.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, October 22, 1974.

The SPEAKER **(the Hon. K. H. Wheeler)** took the chair at 4.4 p.m., and read the prayer.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I have to announce that owing to illness the Minister of Agriculture will be absent all this week.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

ADVERTISEMENTS AUTHORIZED BY MINISTERS.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): In view of the Treasurer's statements on the shortage of funds available to Victoria, does he regard it as a proper practice for Ministers—I refer specifically to the Minister of Health—whose press releases they are

unable to get into the press by normal means, to use funds allocated to their departments to buy advertising space to put views which are essentially political and represent the Minister's views on various matters?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I do not know what the Leader of the Opposition is referring to. He is apparently asking me to give an opinion, which I am not prepared to do.

SPECIAL PREMIERS CONFERENCE.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): Will the Premier consider requesting the Prime Minister to hold a special Premiers conference in view of the fact that the inflation rate has now passed 20 per cent, which is a serious state of affairs for this nation, and in particular, to discuss reducing such items as sales tax, excise duties, fares and power bills throughout Australia, because it has been put forward by the Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research that such a move could have the effect of reducing the inflation rate by as much as 50 per cent?

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! Is that statement quoted from the press?

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: No.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The Leader of the Country Party will be aware that the Government has been seeking some type of co-ordinated action against inflation for a long time. So far the result has been two meetings on this specific subject and considerable reference to it at the Premiers conference in June. One has the impression that to the Commonwealth the co-operation of the States is not really welcome. Certainly it has not led to any form of co-ordinated policy so far in which the States could take an intelligent part. I will pursue any means by which we can obtain some type of co-ordinated action against inflation. I merely comment that the claim made by the Federal Government at the May elections that inflation was under control and that everything had been going according to some sort of plan has since proved to be completely false and we now have a rate of inflation that is higher than that in most Western nations.

FIBREMAKERS LTD.

Mr. EBERY (Midlands): Is the Premier aware that three and a half years ago Fibremakers Ltd. in Bendigo had a work force of approximately 350, and that approximately twelve months ago extensions to the company's plant were proposed? Is the Premier also aware that yesterday there was an announcement by the company that it would close its plants at Bendigo and Geelong? If the Premier is aware of these matters, what action does he propose to take?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I became aware by telegram this morning that Fibremakers Ltd. proposes to close both its plants at Geelong and at Bendigo, which will throw out of work a further 138 employees, in addition to the 200 whom the company was forced to put off previously. Those plants had been reduced to 20 per cent capacity. In the company's view this was necessary because of the flood of imported goods which has been permitted by the lowering of the tariff, the abolition of import quotas, and the revaluation of the currency.

The honorable member may be aware that for a long time the Government has been seeking action from the Federal Government on the textile, clothing and footwear industries. These three industries have been badly affected by these measures, which were said to be anti-inflationary but which have turned out to be prounemployment measures in a most important section of industry, especially in Victoria and particularly the country centres of Victoria. Most of the people thrown out of employment are women who do not have the

mobility to go into other jobs or move to other places to find employment. I regard this as the tragic outcome of a very misguided policy.

Mr. EDMUNDS: It is because of the multi-national policy.

Mr. HAMER: The honorable member for Moonee Ponds is merely parroting something he has heard. I invite him to investigate this matter properly. If he does so he will find it has nothing to do with the multi-national corporations. It has everything to do with a flood of imports coming into this country from cheap-labour countries. Australian industries deserve a reasonable measure of protection and we will fight as hard as we can to see that this protection is restored to them.

LAND RESOURCES.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): I direct a question to the Premier. Is the Government considering the establishment of any new land or resources utilization project in the Latrobe Valley, any other part of Gippsland, or anywhere else? Have discussions been held with Japanese or any other interests about the establishment of such an industry? Will the honorable gentleman inform the House of discussions by at least one Minister with representatives of overseas interests on this subject?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I read a newspaper account of discussions it was claimed I had had with Japanese interests about a wood-chip industry which, it was said, would affect 10,000 acres of land near Morwell. My first comment would be that it would be a rather tiny industry which operated within an area of that size.

In fact, I have not seen or spoken to any Japanese interests. I have no knowledge of any wood-chip industry at Morwell or anywhere else in Gippsland. All I can say is that apparently the whole report results from a misunderstanding.

SEX EDUCATION.

Mr. HANN (Rodney): Following the announcement in the Governor's Speech that the Government would set up a course of sex instruction in schools and a further announcement that some schools are advertising in country newspapers that such courses are available, I ask the Minister of Education whether details of the course have been finalized and, if so, when this instruction is likely to begin in schools.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): This is one of the courses produced by the Australian Science Education Project, developed by one of our institutions at Glenbervie Road, Toorak, in co-operation with the other States and the Commonwealth. The first proposals for the course were submitted to schools, church organizations and parent bodies for constructive criticism. A number of worth-while proposals were received from those organizations, and changes were made in the recommended course.

The question of the republication of that course of study was raised at the Ministers' conference a fortnight ago and Victoria has been given the responsibility of printing it and making it available to the other States. On this basis, it appears that the course will begin in our schools next year.

THIRD-PARTY MOTOR CAR INSURANCE.

Mr. CRELLIN (Sandringham): Will the Chief Secretary inform the House why on earth the Government agreed to retain the 20-mile radius from the General Post Office as the area to determine the differential in motor-car third-party premiums when that radius has no relation to present-day motoring conditions?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): This subject was discussed by the premiums committee and myself with the view of changing the area of the differential premiums so that they would be a little more in line with

modern times. If the premiums committee does not agree to a recommendation from the Government or makes a recommendation which the Government does not agree with, it must consider it again. Previously a recommendation was made and the Government is now investigating whether the differential should be entirely abolished.

MELBOURNE FIRE RISKS.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Is the Chief Secretary aware that this week is fire prevention week and is the honorable gentleman also aware that the Chief Fire Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board has stated categorically that some of Melbourne's taller buildings are fire risks because many of them have no sprinkler systems and the brigade's ladders and hoses cannot reach. If the Chief Secretary is aware of these things, what action does he or the Government propose to take immediately to remove the risk?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): "Immediately" is a strong word; I cannot see us climbing any ladders in the near future. I am aware of the matters raised by the Chief Fire Officer and so clearly enunciated by the Deputy of Leader of the Opposition. I propose to call a conference of representatives of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, the insurance companies involved and certain architects who are concerned with the design of these buildings.

TEACHER PROMOTIONS.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura): Following the meeting of the Minister of Education with the executive of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association last Thursday and the subsequent return to work of members of that association, can the Minister inform the House of the conditions of the return to work and when it is expected that discussions will commence on changes in the promotions policy of the Committee of Classifiers and the Teachers Tribunal?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The conditions relating to the return to work were merely that the teachers had to return to work. I understand that they decided to do this and as a result discussions will commence with the Acting Director-General of Education, Mr. Moore, and the Assistant Director-General, Mr. Hird, on Wednesday of next week.

NIGHT SCHOOL FEES.

Mr. SKEGGS (Ivanhoe): Has the Minister of Education considered seeking a Commonwealth subsidy for night classes in high school buildings as applies to night courses at technical schools?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The matter was taken up with the Federal Minister for Education at the conference of Ministers of Education in Hobart in March this year, with the support of Ministers from other States. We pointed out the anomaly of a Commonwealth grant for technical school night classes when, in many areas, high schools were conducting similar classes and fees still had to be paid. The Federal Minister agreed that an anomaly existed and suggested that, in order to qualify for the Commonwealth grant, high school night classes should be placed under technical school administration. I saw no particular objection to doing this because the technical schools were already running classes of this type. Victoria has now carried out its part of the bargain and is waiting on the Commonwealth to carry out its part.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ADVERTISEMENT.

Mr. LIND (Dandenong): Concerning the advertisement that appeared in the *Age* newspaper last Saturday, under the authorization of the Minister of Health, can the Minister inform the House how much the advertisement cost, to whom the account will be rendered or has been rendered, and who has paid or will pay the account?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): At this stage, I cannot give any indication of the cost. The advertisement was authorized and approved by me following discussions with officers of the Department of Health and the Mental Health Authority. It was a clear statement of policy on behalf of the Victorian and other Health Ministers throughout Australia in terms of the benefits for short-term psychiatric patients in health institutions in this nation and State. Further, we believe the subsidies payable to nursing homes should also be expanded into the mental health field.

The *Age* newspaper refused either to interview me or to use any part of my press release, and in the public interest an advertisement was inserted.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The Minister was asked a simple question. Unless he is finished, I ask him to reply to the question without elaboration.

Mr. SCANLAN: The position is that the statement was of such significance——

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): On a point of order. The questions asked by the honorable member for Dandenong were direct and succinct.

Mr. SCANLAN: You do not want to hear the answer.

Mr. HOLDING: We will hear the answer later. The questions related to costs. If the Minister is unable to supply the House with this information, the Opposition will be happy to debate the matter with him if he gives us the opportunity.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I have ruled on this matter and have requested honorable members when asking questions to be brief. I have also asked Ministers when replying to questions to be brief. I think the Minister answered the question in the early stages of his reply. I uphold the point of order.

STATE PLANNING.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds): Is the Premier aware of a report that the Minister for Local Government is urging that a new super State planning department should be formed and that it should be under the administration of the Premier? If the Premier is aware of the Minister's stated interest in the proposed new planning department, could he inform the House what the functions of the department will be?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The Minister for Local Government was referring, I believe, to a part of the inquiry of Sir Henry Bland on the organization and functions of the Public Service. In the course of that investigation Sir Henry Bland is looking at the structure and functions of the State Planning Council which at present operates under the Ministry for Planning and is serviced by the Town and Country Planning Board.

I am not able to anticipate what his recommendations will be. The Minister for Local Government has now gone on record as advocating that as one of the possible outcomes. At the moment I am not advocating it myself. I shall await the report from Sir Henry Bland. The over-all purpose, of course, is to make sure that the planning of projects in this State which will affect the whole structure and fabric of other planning, is done at the highest level, and that there will be proper co-ordination. This is its whole purpose.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT BY TEACHERS.

Mr. McKELLAR (Portland): Can the Minister of Education inform the House whether teachers employed by the Education Department are permitted to engage in other employment while they are on strike?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): There is a provision in the Teaching Service Act which duplicates the provision of the Public Service Act, that public servants and teachers must obtain the approval of

the Governor in Council before engaging in other employment. Many teachers and public servants apply for permission to undertake other employment in such areas as coaching sporting teams and administering youth activities. The department approves — indeed encourages — this type of activity during leisure hours. A particularly dim view is taken of teachers who work in other jobs while they should be teaching in the class-room.

MASSAGE PARLOURS.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North): Is the Chief Secretary aware that there are many unsatisfactory and unlawful elements——

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The honorable gentleman is asking the Chief Secretary's opinion.

Mr. TREZISE: Is the Chief Secretary aware that a leading police spokesman has said that there should be some law to control the mushrooming of massage parlours throughout the State; if so, when will a law to control these massage parlours be brought in?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The organization and operation of massage parlours in this State must surely come within the jurisdiction of the Minister of Health.

EASTERN SUBURBS RAILWAY.

Mr. WILLIAMS (Box Hill): Can the Minister of Transport advise the House whether the Federal Government has made any promises to finance the proposed eastern suburbs railway through East Doncaster?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is a loud and resounding, "No".

INSURANCE COMPANIES.

Mr. MUTTON (Coburg): I direct a question to the Attorney-General. During last week's Grievance Day debate, I made certain statements concerning the improper activities of insurance companies operating in the comprehensive insurance field. If sufficient evidence is presented to him, will the Attorney-General undertake to inquire into the insurance companies concerned?

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General): If I were directly responsible for the operations of insurance companies, I should be only too happy to do what the honorable member asks. I was not able to be in the House last week when the honorable member for Coburg spoke, but the matter was directed to my attention. Insurance matters are dealt with by my honorable and gallant colleague, the Chief Secretary.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! If the honorable gentleman believed the matter did not concern his department, it would have been better for him to refuse to answer the question, and it could have been redirected.

Mr. WILCOX: With respect to the guidance you have given me, Mr. Speaker, the honorable member for Coburg asked whether I had done anything about a matter he raised last week. I am endeavouring to do so. If necessary, I will do it by personal explanation. There are many ways in which one can do things in this House.

The position is that the matter was drawn to my attention, and, as I was explaining to the honorable member and to the House, insurance does not come within my jurisdiction. The responsible Minister—whether he is responsible for this matter I am not sure, but it comes within the ambit of his activity—is the Chief Secretary, and I have today directed his attention to the matter raised by the honorable member.

LAND RESOURCES.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): I direct a question to the Premier and Treasurer. Previously I asked the honorable gentleman whether the Government was considering the establishment of a new land resources policy, not the establishment of a wood-chip

industry in the Latrobe Valley, Gippsland, or any other part of Victoria. I ask the Premier and Treasurer whether any discussions have been held with Japanese interests on such land policies and, if not, whether he would make available to members of the House the exact details of recent discussions held between at least one Minister of this Government and overseas interests.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I find the question incomprehensible. What is the honorable member talking about? Will he please name the Minister to whom he refers and state what he means in this context by a "land resources policy" and with whom the conversations are supposed to have taken place? If he will do that and place the question on notice, I shall supply him with an answer.

INFLATION.

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara): I ask the Premier and Treasurer whether the actions of the State Government in increasing pay-roll tax, State Electricity Commission tariffs, hospital charges, Housing Commission rents, water rates, third-party insurance premiums, rail freights and so on indicate that the Victorian Government is the most significant cause of inflation——

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The question is out of order. It asks for an opinion and that is not permissible at question time.

Mr. CURNOW: I shall rephrase the question. As the Victorian Government is the most significant cause of inflation in Victoria, when will the Government stop increasing all charges?

The SPEAKER: Order! For the same reason, the question is still out of order.

Mr. CURNOW: Surely I can ask: When is the Government going to stop increasing charges?

The SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. CURNOW: In view of your ruling, Mr. Speaker, I now ask: When is the Government going to stop increases which cause inflation?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): Now that the honorable member has rephrased his question, the answer is very simple: It will be possible to stop raising charges when the inflationary pressures induced by Federal Government policies abate.

MASSAGE PARLOURS.

Mr. BILLING (Heatherton): It would seem that information is sought concerning the possible control of massage parlours. Is this in fact a matter over which the Minister of Health has jurisdiction, and, if it is, what action does he propose to take?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The Minister of Health does not have full or effective control over massage parlours. All massage parlours are subject to permits granted by local municipalities under powers conferred upon them by the Local Government Act. Before massage parlours can be opened, a municipal permit must be obtained for the site setting out the objects and purposes of the business. The Department of Health has some control over them in terms of their claims in regard to the activities of masseuses and physiotherapists where this is a claimed item in the permit sought from the municipality. However the illicit activities that have been alleged, and indeed have been carried out from time to time in massage parlours, are a matter for the police.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Has the Premier had his attention drawn to a recent decision by the Town Planning Appeals Tribunal which indicated that it was felt it did not have power to stop the demolition of historic buildings? As that decision can be applied to many historic buildings, and in view of the desire of certain developers

to demolish them, can the Premier indicate what action, if any, the Government proposes to take to preserve some of Melbourne's more historic buildings?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The answer to the first part of the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition is contained in the Historic Buildings Act which was passed in the last session of this Parliament. Under that Act a register has been drawn up comprising 370 historic buildings. The list was drawn up after consultation between the Department of Planning, the National Trust and other interested parties. That register does not include public buildings which are protected by another Act passed by this Parliament, about eighteen months ago.

That is the measure of protection so far available. I understand that the building which the Leader of the Opposition has in mind was not on the register. It was certainly an old building but I believe it was not classified by the National Trust.

Mr. HOLDING: I believe it was classified.

Mr. HAMER: If it was classified it was not of the calibre of the 370 buildings which have been placed on the new register. I am prepared to look at this problem because the Government is anxious to preserve our historic buildings. I believe this case may rest more on the jurisdiction of the Town Planning Appeals Tribunal than on anything else. I will ask the Minister for Planning to look at this to see whether added protection ought to be put into train through the planning process.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ADVERTISEMENT.

Mrs. GOBLE (Mitcham): Can the Minister of Health give the House the reason why an advertisement was inserted in the *Age* newspaper by the Department of Health?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): Yes, I shall. The position is that many claims had been made in a number of articles contained in the *Age* "Insight" series. It was felt by my officials, and my advisers, as well as by myself, that a number of confusing claims had been made in those articles—indeed a number of very pertinent points in regard to mental health had not been made in the articles. I particularly refer to the heavy dependence of those who are involved in the needs of the mentally retarded and the mentally ill on State funds. To date the Commonwealth has, at best, given only minimal support in this area.

It must be clearly understood that this area of responsibility in mental health is not covered by the Commonwealth Government's proposed national health scheme. Once again this is a pertinent observation to make about the needs in Victoria in the mental health field. For these reasons it was felt doubly desirable to issue the statement.

I shall go one step further and indicate that on one other occasion when a policy statement of myself as a Minister concerned was submitted to the *Age* for "Letters to the Editor", it was refused by the Chief of Staff. Senator McClelland wants a press council, but all I suggest is that I should take proper action on behalf of the Mental Health Authority, Department of Health and myself to ensure that the point of view was known. I do not support the establishment of a press council but I believe in the freedom of the press. I believe also in the rights and privileges of Ministers on behalf of their departments and Governments to take action to ensure that the public is adequately informed.

The press statement that became the subject of an advertisement will be issued to every day training centre throughout Victoria and every parent who has a child who is mentally retarded or mentally ill, to ensure that they have a proper and balanced knowledge of what the Government

of Victoria is doing and of the funding of this vital area of health generally.

PAPERS.

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

Dairy Products Act 1958—Report of the Victorian Dairy Products Board for the six months ended 30th June, 1974.

Public Service Act 1958—Public Service (Public Service Board) Regulations—Regulations amended—Nos. 174 to 182 (nine papers).

Statutory Rules under the following Acts—

Explosives Act 1960—No. 453.
Latrobe Valley Act 1958—No. 449.
National Parks Act 1970—No. 452.
Portland Harbor Trust Act 1958—No. 454.
Second-hand Dealers Act 1958—No. 451.
Zoological Gardens Act 1967—No. 450.

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—

City of Moe Planning Scheme 1966, Amendment No. 37, 1973.

Eppalock Planning Scheme (Shire of McIvor), Amendment No. 2, 1972.

Geelong Planning Scheme 1959, Amendment Nos. 10 and 14, 1972 (City of Newtown).

Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 53.

Shire of Sherbrooke Planning Scheme 196,

Shire of Sherbrooke Planning Scheme 1965, Amendment No. 31, 1970.

Shire of Woorayl Planning Scheme.

PAY-ROLL TAX BILL.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer), pursuant to Standing Order No. 273D, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make further provision in respect of deductions from taxable wages and for that and other purposes to amend the Pay-roll Tax Act 1971 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT (CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES) BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of this Bill.

STATE FORESTS WORKS AND SERVICES BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the State Forests Works and Services Bill.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport), pursuant to Standing Order No. 273D, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to authorize expenditure on works and services and for other purposes relating to State forests.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

LAND (AMENDMENT) 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 Land (Amendment) Bill.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands), pursuant to Standing Order No. 273D, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Land Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

WILDLIFE BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation) : I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It re-enacts with amendments the provisions of the Game Act 1958. Victoria's first legislation to preserve wild animals received Royal assent in 1862 and was designed primarily to protect the game which colonists introduced from the northern hemisphere.

For the first 24 years of operation of this statute the only native Victorian species to be given the same kind of protection were those thought to provide food or sport, and then only during the breeding

season. The prevailing belief was that protection from deliberate killing at such time would ensure the survival of any species which might be at risk.

That belief has not been justified by the experience of the past 100 years. Already some nineteen species of native mammals have disappeared from this State and many species of birds, reptiles and amphibians have become seriously reduced in both numbers and distribution. Some reduction is quite inevitable in the face of human development, but this Government believes that it must do all it can to ensure that this impact on the wildlife resources is not aggravated by indifference or inadequate planning.

Increasing demands and pressures continue to affect the wildlife of the State and have to be met. At the same time we are learning more about the needs of wild animals and developing new techniques and concepts of conservation so that in many ways the Game Act 1958, which is little more than an elaboration of the original law, no longer provides an adequate framework within which the Government can effectively exercise its responsibilities in this field.

This Bill has been designed not only to provide for the needs of wildlife conservation as we recognize them now, but also to provide a considerable degree of flexibility at a time when these needs are likely to change rapidly in response to sociological, economic and technological developments.

Among the many reasons which are advanced for conserving wildlife, two main lines of thought may be distinguished. On the one hand wildlife is valuable to man because of the direct uses he can make of it and because of the part it plays in maintaining the Earth's natural systems in which we recognize the basis of our own ultimate survival. On the other hand is an ethical sense of responsibility to forms of life other than our own.

The two lines of thought are interdependent. A sense of respect for wildlife is not likely to flourish if the community is not given opportunities to become involved with wild animals in various ways for recreation, education, sport, study and so on.

Sensible and responsible attitudes to the use of wildlife will develop only in a community which has some sense of ethical respect for animals. The existing legislation is essentially prohibitive in its concepts, seeking to control or prevent specific deliberate acts which were considered detrimental to wildlife.

The Bill retains complete discretion over ways in which wildlife may be used—and extends this to many kinds of animals which were neglected in the past. At the same time it provides more opportunities for people to engage in hobbies or activities calculated to foster an interest and appreciation of wildlife.

Part I. of the Bill cites the short title and contains the machinery and administrative provisions providing for the commencement of the legislation, and the preservation of all persons, things and circumstances appointed or created by or under the Game Act 1958 and by or under sections 9 and 10 of the Protection of Animals Act 1966 which are repealed under this Part.

The interpretation given to wildlife in clause 3 of this Part means that all native animals including frogs, toads, tortoises, lizards, snakes, together with non-indigenous quail, deer, pheasants, partridges and any other species of animals which the Governor in Council by Order declares to be wildlife for the purposes of the Act are brought within the scope of the Act.

It is not the Government's intention to stringently protect all wildlife ; this is made clear by the meaning given to " Protected wildlife " in clause 3, and other provisions of the Bill to which I will later direct the attention of honorable members.

However, I wish to make it clear that it is intended to give some degree of protection and have some control over practically all vertebrate animals which are native to this State. Victoria still has approximately 130 species of amphibians and reptiles existing in the wild. These so-called cold blooded invertebrates are collected from their habitats each year by hobbyists, medical and scientific research teams, and for commerce. Little is known of the abundance of these animals and the effect which human development or deliberate exploitation is having upon them. The Bill will provide scope for an intelligent assessment to be made of these resources.

In a number of localities in the State, shelters have been set up by dedicated people for the care and treatment of sick, injured or abandoned animals.

The people concerned accept orphaned and injured wildlife for care, and although the significance of the numbers which can be rehabilitated in this way is not very important for the conservation of the species it does help to foster an awareness and appreciation of wildlife in the community. Clause 6 provides for this situation by the issue of permits to persons to keep such shelters and for the permit to be extended to take and sell the species of wildlife specified in the permit.

Clause 7 sets out the circumstances in which the Minister may issue an authority to kill or capture destructive wildlife—that is, where it appears to the Minister that wildlife is causing damage to any building, vineyard, orchard, garden or other property or any crop, grass or trees upon land owned or occupied by any person.

Clauses 8 to 10 relate to the appointment of the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife and such other officers as are necessary to carry this Act into effect, the appointment of honorary wildlife officers, and the delegation of the Minister's powers and functions to the director.

Clause 11 provides that the Act shall be administered by the director subject to the direction and control of the Minister.

Part II. relates to State wildlife reserves. There is little merit in protecting wildlife against deliberate destruction unless at the same time provision is made to protect adequate areas of each kind of habitat where populations of the animals can obtain food, shelter and the other necessaries of life.

It is the principal objective of this Part to provide for the expansion and adequate care of land within the State wildlife reserves system. This concept is not provided for in the present legislation. The increasing demands now being made upon land for one purpose or another makes it imperative that extensive areas should be selected and recommended to the Government by the Land Conservation Council for wildlife reserves and that adequate provision be made for the needs of wildlife in those areas to take precedence over any other use.

Wildlife habitat is constantly changing as a result of the natural processes which occur in streams, swamps and bushland. As the wildlife becomes confined to small insular remnants of the original countryside it becomes essential to manipulate such natural features as vegetation, soil and surface water if some reserves are to retain their value for particular kinds of animals for which they were established.

Some people have expressed their concern about the continual destruction of wildlife habitat and the consequential decrease of wildlife and suggested that legislative provision be made for the director to accept gifts, bequests of land, money and properties for the purpose of being applied for or towards restoring or preserving wildlife populations and re-establishing habitat. Clauses 12 and 13 will allow such contributions to be accepted by the director.

The several classifications of wildlife reserves provided for in clause 15 are the only categories of land in Victoria where modern wildlife conservation techniques can be developed and practised without being compromised by other ancillary objectives. State game reserves will be developed as hunting areas in which hunters may take game during the prescribed open seasons. State game refuges are areas in which work will be carried out to preserve, restore or create game habitat. Hunting will be prohibited absolutely in all of these localities and such places will provide sanctuary for game during the hunting seasons.

State faunal reserves are areas which will be reserved for the preservation and propagation of species of wildlife other than game. The taking of wildlife in these localities will be prohibited. Game management stations will be established as regional research centres where intensive management studies, research and pilot schemes for wildlife management will be developed and assessed.

In some reserves it may be reasonable to permit grazing or allow the erection of buildings or other facilities to serve the needs of people visiting the areas. Clause 16 therefore provides power to the director to grant licences and to impose and receive tolls, rents, fees or charges for granting of the various privileges referred to in clause 16 (2) (*b*). In accordance with clause 17 all such moneys are required to be paid into the Wildlife Management Fund and applied for or towards the cost of any matter specified in paragraphs (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) of this clause.

As a general principle I desire management of wildlife reserves to be pursued in accordance with intelligently prepared plans which clearly set out the goals and objectives to be achieved. Clause 18 charges the director with the responsibility of preparing for the Minister's approval plans of management for each wildlife reserve in existence at the commencement of the section.

The remaining clauses of this Part are principally designed to protect reserves from interference by prohibiting unauthorized removal of soil, flora, interference with water flows and damage to structures. Hunting is prohibited in all reserves other than State game reserves.

Part III. deals with licences. The hobby of aviculture poses many difficult problems for wildlife law enforcement since many of the birds are ostensibly cage bred and reared, and there is a great deal of exchange and sale of stock between aviculturists. The Government recognizes the hobby as a serious one and wants to make reasonable provision for it to continue. However, it is commonly acknowledged that some aviary-maintained bird stocks require infusion of new blood from wild stock from time to time and the Government has a responsibility to ensure that the hobby does not impose any serious drain on wild bird populations. Therefore, the taking of protected wildlife from its natural state by hobbyists will be prohibited.

Officers of the division have had meetings with executives of the Australian Avicultural Society, and it has been generally accepted that the proposal contained in section 22 in this Part to license wildlife fanciers by issue of a general or special licence with provision in particular circumstances to extend the special licences to allow endangered species of wildlife to be kept and bred by aviculturists meets the needs of even the most enthusiastic hobbyist.

There is general agreement between officers of the division and the executive of the society on the types of birds to be specified in the regulation for keeping, breeding and selling by holders of the different wildlife fanciers licences.

Regulations will be made pursuant to clause 44 of the Bill to prescribe the number and kinds of wildlife which are suitable for keeping as

pets. This will ensure that the average person who keeps two or three common parrots, cockatoos, budgerigars, finches or other specified protected animal is not required to be licensed under this Part.

The terms under which the several other kinds of licences may be issued and the privileges they confer are set out in clause 22. The licences aim at regulating various activities which make use of the wildlife resource or have implications for the conservation of wildlife or which affect the discharge of laws relating to wildlife. Under this clause the professional dealer will be regarded as a wildlife dealer and is required to be licensed to buy and sell the species of protected wildlife which are prescribed as suitable for such purposes.

Persons engaged in restoring, mounting or preparing for sale or in the business of taxidermy the skins of protected wildlife which have been lawfully obtained are required to be licensed.

Provision is made to license persons to keep deer farms to breed and rear deer for sale. The present drain on wild populations of deer for commercial use will be prohibited under the regulations.

A licence is available to conduct a game bird farm entitling the holder thereof to raise and breed in the locality described in the licence such birds of game as are specified in the licence and to sell or dispose of such birds. The types of game birds which are being considered for farming include pheasants, quail, partridges and species of ducks ordinarily found in the wild.

Persons engaged in the business of buying, selling or processing the skins or flesh of protected wildlife which have been lawfuly obtained either in Victoria or in another State are required to be licensed.

A trapper's licence entitles the holder thereof to take and keep specified wildlife for sale to persons or organizations set out in the licence. Trappers will be licensed to take or trap protected wildlife for sale to scientific institutions, colleges and other institutions and other species of protected wildlife such as water rats and possums during the open seasons therefor.

Businesses already exist in Victoria which supply biological teaching aids and study material to schools, colleges and universities. Their supplies of animals are collected in part from the wild, and although it is not expected that there will be a need to severely curtail the activities of these biological supply houses it is important to have knowledge of the scope of their work and the effect they may be having on native animal populations.

Clause 22 also makes provision for licences to be issued to biological supply houses which use protected wildlife. Clause 23 makes provision under certain circumstances for the director to refuse to grant a licence. Any person who is aggrieved by the refusal of the director to grant a licence is given a right to appeal to the Miinster.

Fees to be paid for the various licences are fixed in clause 24 of the Bill, and pursuant to clause 27 of the Bill such fees are required to be paid into the Wildlife Management Fund. Until now this fund has derived all its revenue from moneys paid for shooters' licences and the sale of game stamps. As the fund is applied entirely to the support of wildlife conservation work by the Fisheries and Wildlife Division, it is appropriate that other users of the State's wildlife resources should make a contribution to this fund.

Research and management are dealt with in Part IV. The Bill, for the first time, clearly defines the obligations of the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife to carry out research and management designed to serve the needs of wildlife conservation. Clause 30 makes provision for the Minister to issue permits to persons to use prohibited equipment and substances to capture wildlife for study

and examination, and for taking wildlife for transfer to other areas or stocking zoos and other establishments.

Part V. covers wildlife management co-operative areas and prohibited areas and sanctuaries. To complement the system of State wildlife reserves on Crown land, provision is made in this Part for declaring by Order of the Governor in Council privately owned land and indeed Crown lands which are vested in or under the control of another authority as "wildlife management co-operative areas". In accordance with clause 32 (2) a private landholder may apply to have his land so designated and if the Minister accepts the offer, and the formal process is completed, the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife may draw up a management plan in consultation with the owner, or other interested bodies to encourage the conservation of wildlife in that area and may have his officers participate with other persons in putting the plan into effect. The real merit of such a scheme lies in the opportunity it provides for landholders to make a practical contribution to the conservation of wildlife for their own enjoyment and the benefit of the State.

Among Victoria's protected wildlife there are a few species which are particularly timid during the breeding season and which frequently desert their young and nests when disturbed. In exceptional circumstances an area of Crown land which has special significance for these kinds of wildlife may, pursuant to clause 33, be declared by Order of the Governor in Council to be a "prohibited area" into which entry would be restricted to minimise disturbance at critical times. Clause 34 makes provision for areas of land or water or both, whether privately owned or not to be declared "wildlife sanctuaries" where hunting or killing of wildlife is prohibited.

Part VI. deals with noxious wildlife. Only three species of wildlife have been defined as noxious wildlife at this time; the cane toad, the Indian crow and the mallard duck and its hybrids. Any one of these, if it became established in the wild, would pose a threat to some species of our native animals. The strong provisions of this Part are necessary to prevent the introduction and spread of noxious wildlife.

Part VII. refers to offences. Clauses 41, 42 and 43 of this Part provide differential penalties for persons convicted of offences relating to the killing, hunting or buying or selling of the different kinds of wildlife. Under the existing legislation all native animals are described as native game and except in the case of koalas, a low and common maximum penalty is fixed for the wilful killing of any of these animals. Magistrates have been critical of this situation. This Bill now provides for the different species of wildlife to be classified into categories each of which has a different degree of protection or control.

Pursuant to clause 41, persons convicted of the unlawful possession or killing of any animal declared to be endangered wildlife is liable to a penalty of not more than $5,000 and to an additional penalty of not more than $500 for every head of such wildlife so possessed or destroyed. Among the great majority of wildlife to be afforded general protection only a very small number which are threatened with extinction will be declared to be an endangered species. I have in mind the plain wanderer; the orange-bellied parrot; the bustard; the helmeted honeyeater; the ground parrot, and the western whipbird. Another group which will be singled out for special consideration and declared to be notable wildlife because of their rarity, special beauty or other significant quality, include the koala; the lyrebird; the leadbeaters possum; the brolga; the platypus; the white-breasted sea eagle; the brush-tailed rock wallaby; the peregrine

falcon ; the Major Mitchell cockatoo ; the Cape Barren goose, and the Mallee fowl.

Penalties prescribed under clause 42 for offences relating to the killing or destruction and so on of notable wildlife are fixed at not more than $1,000 and there is an additional penalty of not more than $100 for every head of such wildlife in respect of which an offence is committed.

Clause 43 will have application to the unlawful taking and possession of all other protected wildlife—not being controlled wildlife. Maximum penalty for offences against this clause is $500 with an additional penalty of not more than $50 for every head of protected wildlife in respect of which the offence is committed.

There are some species of wildlife which need some protection but not to the extent envisaged by clause 43. For example, it is desirable to have some limitation placed on the capture and sale of some species of venomous snakes but still permit a person to kill them in the wild without committing an offence under this Act. This type of wildlife will come within the definition of " controlled wildlife " and the taking, sale and possession thereof can best be controlled under the flexible regulatory powers provided in clause 76 of the Bill.

The saving provisions of clause 44 suspend the operation of Part III. and clause 43 of the Bill so as to allow—

1. The hunting of game during the open seasons.
2. The possession during the close season of game which have been taken during the open season.
3. The taking of protected wildlife under a licence, permit or other authority under the Act and the subsequent possession of such wildlife so taken.
4. The keeping, otherwise than in the course of a business of selling wildlife, of not more than the prescribed number of animals which are protected wildlife of a kind or species prescribed as suitable for so keeping and which have been taken during the open season or lawfully obtained from a protected wildlife dealer.

The best aspects of game hunting as a sport are being actively encouraged by responsible clubs, and open seasons will be proclaimed for appropriate species of ducks, quail, snipe, deer and other game which may be more firmly established in the wild in the future. The Field and Game Association has requested the raising of penalties to restrict out-of-season shooting. I believe the penalties which are set out in clause 47 for this type of offence will be sufficient to deter most poachers.

A constitutional problem is encountered when one contemplates the type of provision necessary to control the import of wildlife into the State. I am advised that any provision which would require the issue of permits to cover the import or export of protected animals in or out of the State would be in conflict with section 92 of the Constitution. The provisions of clauses 49 and 50 are constructed as an alternative and to provide some control over the movement of undesirable or diseased species of wildlife.

Studies of migratory wildlife frequently provide the information necessary for selection of areas as sanctuaries or reserves. These studies are generally carried out by trapping, marking, banding and releasing of numbers of the animals being studied. It is important that unauthorized banding or marking of protected wildlife should be prohibited in order to prevent confusion over bands and overlapping and unnecessary research. Clause 51 is proposed to achieve this end.

The provisions of clause 52 are designed to prevent the unauthorized release into the wild of animals which, if they became established, would pose a threat to indigenous wildlife populations. The increasing use by pest eradicators of bird lime and other non-selective VISCID substances to take birds is causing concern to wildlife authorities, particularly those materials which are impregnated with chemicals which, on contact, are absorbed through the feet and attack the nervous system. The Government believes that the provisions of clause 55 are necessary to control the use of these substances.

The clauses and sub-clauses of this Part to which I have not referred are self-explanatory, being principally re-enactments in improved form of existing provisions, and are designed to protect wildlife in its natural state.

Enforcement and legal proceedings are embodied in Part VIII. Clause 59 re-enacts existing provisions of the Game Act but has been extended to give power to officers to—

(*a*) Destroy any noxious wildlife that cannot be seized and removed pursuant to section 39 of the Act.

(*b*) Search for and seize or dismantle or destroy any duck trap, net or other equipment which is being used or has been used in contravention of the Act.

(*c*) Carry out any scientific study authorized by the director.

Wildlife officers and members of the Police Force are given indemnity in respect of anything done whilst exercising their powers or carrying out any duty under the Act.

The Government believes that the extended powers given to officers pursuant to clause 60 to seize prohibited equipment and guns which are used or likely to be used in contravention of the code are necessary to achieve better enforcement of Part VII. of the Bill. Clause 60 requires the fortfeiture of any equipment, net, trap, gun substance, instrument or device, the use of which is prohibited under the Act and, in the circumstances where such equipment is not so prohibited, the forfeiture is not required unless the person who is using it is convicted by a court

Seized guns which are not prohibited under the Act are only forfeited in the case where a person has previously been convicted of killing wildlife.

Clauses 61, 62, and 63 are re-enactments of existing provisions of the Game Act. Clause 61 has been improved to require any person who is "found offending" to give his name and address upon the demand of an officer, and clause 62 now makes it an offence to use threatening, insulting or abusive words to any officer in the execution of his duty under the Act.

Prosecutors are frequently in an impossible position when attempting to prove to a court the boundaries of a wildlife reserve. The provisions of section 67 will allow the production in evidence of charts and maps which purport to be compiled by a surveyor or any authority of the Commonwealth and which have outlined or described thereon the boundaries of the area in question. These charts or maps shall be accepted as prima facie evidence of such if certified and signed by the director.

Magistrates when hearing cases with respect to contraventions of the Game Act have suggested that "hunting" and "taking" be defined to cover situations where strong circumstantial evidence exists of a person's guilt. The provisions of clause 68 are proposed to simplify proving of offences.

Part IX. deals with wildlife parks, animal exhibitions and zoos. It is proposed that sections 9 and 10 of the Protection of Animals Act, which require the licensing of private zoos and circuses, be repealed and re-enacted in different and improved

form in this Bill. In association with the growing community interest in conservation there has been an upsurge in applications to establish privately owned zoos and fauna parks.

The community needs and can support only a small number of privately owned zoos, and if too many are established it will inevitably lead to a deterioration of the conditions under which animals are kept and consequent adverse reaction by the public. However, if zoos, and more especially the newer concepts are properly planned and developed, they can make a worth-while contribution to education and awareness in the general field of nature conservation. The Government has a responsibility to ensure that not too many licences are issued for this kind of venture and that high standards are achieved and maintained.

The provisions of this Part require any person who keeps a wildlife park, conducts an animal exhibition in connection with a circus or travelling show, or uses or keeps a zoo, to be licensed in respect of these activities. Persons keeping animal exhibitions in connection with a circus or travelling show will not be required to obtain a separate zoo licence when the animal exhibition is contained at any place whilst the circus or show is in recess.

A fee of $30 is payable for a licence to keep either a wildlife park or animal exhibition, and a $200 fee is payable for a zoo licence.

Sub-clauses (2) of clauses 72, 73 and 74 set out the grounds which the director may invoke to refuse applications for the various licences under this part.

Part X. contains the miscellaneous provisions of the Bill. Power is sought under clause 76 of the Bill to make regulations in respect of the usual formal and machinery matters, the management and control of wildlife and habitat generally, the keeping of records by the holders of licences, the issue of licences for taking eggs of wildlife, the licensing of falconers, the control and preservation of sanctuaries and reserves and so on. I believe the wide range of regulatory powers which are sought are necessary to meet changing conditions which affect management of wildlife. I commend the Bill to honorable members.

On the motion of Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park), the debate was adjourned.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation) : I move —

That the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, November 12.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura) : This is a major and specialized Bill in the wildlife field and it is obvious that a lot of research will have to be undertaken by honorable members who wish to speak on it. In addition, it will be necessary for honorable members to circulate copies of the Bill to many field and game associations and wildlife organizations seeking their views on it. In his speech, the Minister mentioned the large number of regulatory powers that are sought under the Bill. I have made a quick count and I note that there are 36 different provisions providing for the making of regulations under the Bill. These provisions will need to be reasonably well researched if honorable members are to make an effective contribution to the debate.

I believe an adjournment period of four weeks would be absolutely necessary and I hope even then the Minister may be prepared to extend the time if honorable members are not ready to debate the Bill at that time.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation) *(By leave)* : I realize the significance of the Bill and I am quite happy to agree to an adjournment of four weeks.

By leave, the motion was withdrawn, and it was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, November 19.

BUSINESS FRANCHISE (TOBACCO) BILL.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

In the Budget I announced that the Government has decided to introduce a system of licensing sellers of tobacco, with licence fees assessed in a manner similar to that for liquor licences, but at a lower rate. This Bill implements that decision. It provides for a system of licensing wholesale and retail tobacco sellers. There will be two types of licences, a wholesale tobacco merchant's licence and a retail tobacconist's licence.

Tobacco wholesalers will require a licence from 1st January, 1975, and retail tobacconists will require a licence from 1st July, 1975. For a wholesaler the licence fee for the year 1975 will be $100 plus an amount equivalent to 2·5 per cent on his sales except sales to other wholesalers, for the six months ended 30th September, 1974. For subsequent years the licence fee will be $100 plus an amount equivalent to 5 per cent on his sales, except sales to other licensed wholesalers, for the twelve months ending on the preceding 30th September.

For a retailer, the licence fee for the six months beginning on 1st July, 1975, will be $5 plus an amount equivalent to 5 per cent on his purchases from other than licensed wholesalers for the three months ending 31st March, 1975. For each year after 1st January, 1976, the fee will be $10 plus an amount equivalent to 5 per cent on his purchases from other than a licensed wholesaler for the twelve months ending on the preceding 30th September.

In practice this will mean that a retail seller of tobacco will pay an annual licence fee of only $10, provided that he makes all his purchases from a licensed wholesaler. In this, the licensing of tobacco sellers differs from the liquor licensing system. Under this Bill the main impact of the licence is directed at the wholesale level of the industry whereas under the Liquor Control Act the licensing fee is directed mainly at the retail level.

The difference is largely a result of the different structure of the two industries. There are some 15,000 retailers of tobacco in Victoria ranging from large supermarkets and department stores to small businesses. The operation of a licensing system directed at retailers would be complicated to administer, and the indications the Government has received from the industry confirm our view that the method of licensing contained in the Bill is probably the most efficient method of imposing a franchise in the tobacco industry.

The introduction of the licences in 1975 are staged so that retailers will know whether they are dealing with a licensed wholesaler for the purposes of assessing the retail tobacconist's licence fee.

The licensing of retailers in addition to wholesalers is an essential element of the Bill because it provides protection for the revenue in the event of retailers dealing with wholesalers from interstate who would, of course, be unlicensed under the Victorian Act.

The Bill makes it abundantly clear that tobacco sold for delivery and consumption outside the State is to be disregarded for the purpose of calculating the licence fees. Provision is also made in the Bill to avoid any possible double counting in assessing licence fees.

As with the liquor licence fees, the tobacco licence fee is payable in advance of the licence being issued. However, provision has been made in two ways to facilitate the introduction of a licensing system of this nature into an industry for the first time.

In the first place, although the Government has decided that the basic licence fee should be at a rate of 5 per cent, it was decided that for the first year of operation the

rate of licence fee should be lower. The annual rate of licence fee in the first year will be 1·25 per cent. The rate of licence fee payable under the Liquor Control Act is of course being increased from 6 per cent to 8 per cent. Secondly, provision is made in the Bill for annual licence fees which are in excess of $100 to be payable in six instalments, the first being payable before the licence is issued and the other instalments at two-monthly intervals thereafter. If an instalment is not paid by the due date the licence will automatically cease to be in force.

The Government proposes to have circulated to the industry at an early date particulars regarding the operation of the legislation, including the steps to be taken in relation to the application for and issue of licences and the form of records which licencees will be required to keep. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, November 5.

APPROPRIATION (1974-75, No. 1) BILL.

(Budget Debate)

The debate (adjourned from October 15) on the motion of Mr. Hamer (Premier and Treasurer) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): I suppose it is fair to say that in bringing down a Budget any Treasurer must take into consideration a large number of matters. Firstly, it would be important to take into consideration the amount of money he has to spend and how he is going to get that money. Secondly, he must consider the climate and the community in which he has to work.

I hope to demonstrate the extreme difficulties under which the Treasurer has had to work. However, in the circumstances, he has been able to bring down a very satisfactory Budget.

At the outset, when I refer to the circumstances, I suppose I can say that sometimes we hear in the Federal sphere that the present Commonwealth Government, which has a tremendous influence on the budgetary provisions of the States, claims to be the leader in its field. Honorable members who study the columns of the press might be inclined to agree with my statement. The Commonwealth Government is certainly the leader in unemployment because Australia now has the highest level of unemployment in its history. An examination of the cost-of-living figures shows that Australia's inflation is amongst the top of the world. We have certainly achieved the best record ever in Australia, for strikes, especially for the first few months of this year. We have had the highest number of wage demands ever made in the history of Australia. I can sum up the current position by saying also that we have the top unrest in the community today. All of the situations to which I have referred have been caused by the policies of the Commonwealth Government upon which we, in this State, are so much reliant when we bring down a Budget.

I therefore claim that in all of the circumstances this is a fine Budget. When we look at it we see that the Treasurer has budgeted for only a nominal deficit; it will be virtually a balanced Budget.

It is certainly non-inflationary and it exercises one of the most important elements which the financial and economic experts throughout the Commonwealth have been claiming in the past weeks should be exercised, namely, restraint in the face of raging inflation. Within the confines of the difficulty experienced by the Treasurer in obtaining funds at this time, the Budget clearly caters for the needs of the community.

By looking quickly through the Budget, honorable members will see that there have been increased allocations in many areas. The increased allocations cover a fairly wide field, including education, health, social welfare, municipal aid, youth, sport and recreation, the arts, police and environment protection. Notwithstanding the difficulty which confronts the Treasurer, he has been able to make adequate and satisfactory provision in all of those areas.

I shall refer to some of the figures which were quoted in the Budget. An amount of $686 million has been provided for education, and this amount represents an increase of $155 million or 29 per cent on the previous year. The funds being made available for social welfare amount to $39·5 million, an increase of $12 million. Funds to be allocated to the Police Department total $79 million which represents an increase of $18 million over last year. The provision for the Environment Protection Authority has been increased by $1 million over last year, making the total allocation for this year, $3·4 million. The provision for the arts has been increased by $3·5 million. For youth, sport and recreation, the increased payments into the Youth Fund are expected to rise from $1 million to $1·5 million and payments into the Sports and Recreation Fund from the totalizator turnover are expected to rise from $1·9 million to $3·5 million.

In the important medical field grants totalling $172 million for the running costs of hospitals and other institutions assisted through the Hospitals and Charities Commission were made, a rise of $39 million or 30 per cent more than those for last year.

The Leader of the Opposition demonstrated that he might be an adequate small-time suburban lawyer but, as I have said on many occasions, he falls far short when dealing with figures and is completely incompetent in meeting the demands on his party to answer the Budget brought down by the Treasurer. The honorable member said that there were no developmental aspects in the Budget and that the Victorian Government had to rely solely on Federal Government platitudes. I wish to deal with that for a moment because the measures which have been approved by the Treasurer and which were necessary to increase revenue for the Government's social programme and to meet increased costs have now distributed the burden fairly throughout the community. A fair balance has been achieved despite inadequate help from the Commonwealth Government, and despite constant interference by that Government and its utter inability to check inflation.

The areas in which the State Government will make increases through this Budget, bearing in mind what I said about a balanced Budget, are important but relatively small. Stamp duty on cheques will rise from 7 cents to 8 cents; drivers' licence fees will rise from $2 to $6; the surcharge on third-party motor vehicle insurance will rise from $2 to $4; the tobacco licence system will be restored with fees charged on a sliding scale; and liquor licensing fees are to rise by 2 per cent. Those increases will produce a total revenue gain of about $10 million.

When a Budget is brought down it is always interesting to note the community's reaction. I wish to make two short references to that subject. In the *Age* of 26th September the Budget was described as follows—

A BUDGET OF NICE BALANCE.

Victoria's Premier and Treasurer (Mr. Hamer) has, for the third time, proved himself a deft and stylish master of the balanced Budget. Balanced, if not in the strict financial sense, in its moderate tone in the face of Federal stringency, its careful choice of inescapable tax increases and its prudent priorities tempered by a concern for the quality of life. In Mr. Hamer's own words, the Budget has involved "balancing of community needs and financial constraints".

Constraint was one of the cardinal features of the Government. Constraint is now the catchcry of all the would-be experts in Canberra. I hope I have an opportunity of saying more

about that later. The *Herald* of 26th September referred to the Budget as follows—

BUDGET STRIKES A BALANCE.

Not painless, but not too painful. That is what Victorians will feel about the 1974 State Budget. It's a could-have-been-worse Budget, like a visit to the dentist that results in a couple of uncomfortable fillings but nothing too serious.

At the same time, we are warned.

It will be recalled that the Treasurer gave a warning of the possibility, because of our almost complete reliance — agreed to by the Leader of the Opposition — on the financial policies of the present Commonwealth Government, that another small Budget might need to be introduced. The two references I have made indicate the general acceptance of the Budget by the community.

The Commonwealth Government has not given adequate assistance to the State to help the Treasurer in his Budget measures. Last year the Commonwealth Government realized the inadequacies of the tax grant formula and made a special supplementary grant of $25 million to the States. Victoria received $6 million. The Commonwealth withdrew that grant this year, at a time when wage rises and inflation in Australia are spiralling out of control.

In his opening remarks the Leader of the Opposition said that that Budget did nothing from the fiscal point of view, that there were no new fiscal approaches in this State and that the Budget relied on a few taxes only. I have indicated the tax measures and the difficulties. Early in his speech the honorable member adverted to a number of matters, with which I shall deal. Later in his speech he listed the things that he would have done if he had been Premier. I hope at some stage to deal with those separately. Early in his speech the Leader of the Opposition said—

No State can deal with the economic situation alone. But Victoria does nothing within its own powers.

When asked what could have been done, he said that there could have been control of escalation of rents. He also said that nothing had been done about meat prices and he asked whether there was any evidence in the State on the cost of meat today compared with its cost when meat prices were high. I shall deal with that separately.

The reliance that the State must place on Commonwealth funds is important. There is no doubt that the quantum of Commonwealth funds which come to the State has increased over the years. The amount of specific purpose funds which are made available to the States with strings attached is the important element which is pervading at present. When I say "specific purpose", I mean tied grants. In 1971-72 33 per cent of all Commonwealth funds that came into Victoria were in the specific purpose area. In 1973-74 the amount had risen to 43 per cent and now it is 49 per cent. Therefore, the difficulty of balancing the Budget was caused by the shortage of funds coming from the Commonwealth, plus the interference by the Commonwealth. Those figures illustrate the area of interference.

When the Leader of the Opposition says that there is nothing constructive in the Budget I ask what he means. Should this Government have budgeted for a surplus to counter inflation? Surely the Leader of the Opposition knows that that sort of fiscal policy is not within the powers of the State unless it can at some future date take up the deficit for which it has budgeted. Overall this Government is able to spend only what it receives. I ask the Leader of the Opposition this question: Should this Government have invented new taxes? The Government tried to introduce income tax but the Commonwealth rejected it. The Government tried to introduce a receipt duty tax, but the High Court disallowed it. Excise duty is outside the powers of the State but the Government has proposed a tobacco licence.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned a wealth tax, but he did not proceed further on that. What

does he mean? Does he comprehend the difficulties of administration that would result from a wealth tax? He then talked about rent control. Why should rents be singled out for control? There is no form of general price control in Victoria, and thank heavens there is not! If one looks at the latest quarterly cost-of-living figures one finds that the increases in Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia were the lowest in the Commonwealth. The figures for South Australia, which has a costly price-control structure, were higher than those for Victoria. Whenever a comparison has been made between this State and South Australia it has been found that in South Australia the increases have always been higher.

The Leader of the Opposition made a quaint remark about meat prices. I took the trouble to inquire yesterday and found that prices paid to the meat producers are too low to allow them to keep going; growers are selling at a loss. The Leader of the Opposition wanted to know why those low prices had not been passed on to the community. I shall quote some figures which illustrate what I said earlier. The honorable member has been too lazy to do any work and has again demonstrated his inability to handle fiscal matters.

In some supermarkets today crumbed cutlets can be purchased at 10 cents each, whereas eight months ago they were 20 cents each; lamb chops cost 35 cents a pound and were 69 cents a pound eight months ago; rump steak costs 59 cents a pound and was previously $1.30 a pound; legs of lamb are priced at 39 cents a pound and were 79 cents a pound. If honorable members take the trouble to contact me afterwards I shall give them more details. Minced steak now sells at 4 pounds for 59 cents, whereas previously 4 pounds cost $1. The Leader of the Opposition was lazy. He read something in the press and relied upon that.

I mentioned earlier the disruption caused to the State by Commonwealth Government interference. Of the funds received by Victoria, those allocated for specific purposes increased from 36 per cent in 1972 to 43 per cent in 1973 and now they have risen to a higher figure. I wish to give two illustrations of interference. The first relates to the Ministry of Transport—doubtless my colleague, the Minister of Transport, will speak much more fully on this subject. The States have been asked by the Commonwealth to contribute $281 million during the next three years for all but national roads, and although the Commonwealth's contribution will be only $232 million it has stipulated that it will have control over exactly how all the money is to be spent. Its contribution is less than that of the State Governments but it wants control over the total amount. That is the first area of interference that I prophesy. It would mean that in the purchase of, say, a grader, where the State must pay the bulk of the money, it would be unable to pay it without the consent of the Commonwealth Government.

In the second area, education, the Commonwealth's policies have been to require large sums of State money to match Commonwealth grants for tertiary education. The States are continually being forced to contribute on this basis, although other areas of education are neglected. Almost daily in the House questions are asked by the honorable member for Reservoir about additional funds for technical education, with which I agree. However, the State is told by the Commonwealth Government, in its plan of interference, how the money is to be spent. There are many other instances of the takeover bid by the Commonwealth Government. The latest attempt, in the area of consumer affairs, is to advertise what is available to people in the community, but the Commonwealth Government wants the State to pick up the tab and answer the inquiries that will be made. The Commonwealth Government will do the advertising with its plentiful funds, but the State has the task of answering the queries that will arise.

One of the most important matters to which the Premier adverted in his Budget speech was the enormous allocation for salaries. It was indicated that the total cost to the Government for awards in 1972-73 was $75 million. In 1973-74 this increased to $150 million, of which amount $148 million had been budgeted for, but the Treasurer indicated the likelihood of another $50 million. In other words, the Treasurer has had to make provision this year in the Budget for approximately $200 million for wage increases alone. This area is one of the most important in the whole structure of the Budget. It is well known that over the past eighteen months or two years wage escalation in Australia has been at an all-time high. It is also well known that all State Governments, particularly Victoria, the Commonwealth Government, employer organizations and some union organizations, have been at pains to ascertain whether the dramatic spiral in wage increases can be controlled. This spiral has a dramatic effect on the State Budget.

Victoria was a party to the discussions which took place at the Moore conference. At that conference it was agreed that two areas were to be explored to ascertain what could be done about the wage spiral. Firstly, it was necessary to discover what could be done throughout the Commonwealth to deal with the processes of wage structure and industrial relations generally in Australia. Secondly, it was necessary to deal with the now well-known subject of indexing. It became clear that the Governments, the employer organizations and the unions were anxious to find out what possibilities might emerge from the Moore conference. What happened was that wage indexation was supported to the point that if iron-clad guarantees could be given by the Australian Council of Trade Unions that wage indexing was to be introduced in Australia, the unions would lessen their demands for wage increases. Last week the Moore conference flopped completely and utterly, because Mr. Hawke, the curly-headed captive of the Communists, was unable to give the assurance that was being sought by the employer organizations and the Governments on wage indexing.

The present view of all sensible Governments and the employer organizations is that there cannot satisfactorily be wage indexing in Australia in a time of rampant inflation. The necessary guarantees have not been forthcoming. Private employers sought guarantees along the lines of stability in wage relatives. They were not forthcoming, although everyone in the community recognizes that wage restraint is absolutely necessary. When the Moore conference failed, Mr. Hawke said that indexation is crucial in the inflation fight. It is crucial from the point of view of the unions, because Mr. Hawke is echoing the pleas made to him by the Communist-controlled union, and the Australian Council for Trade Unions has not only filed a claim in the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission for wage indexation but at the same time has also filed a claim for an additional $16.90 a week pay rise.

MR. SIMMONDS: On what basis?

MR. RAFFERTY: That is what everyone wants to know. The Commonwealth Government will support this claim, but the employer organizations and all other parties to the conference have said that in a time of raging inflation it is impossible to satisfactorily introduce wage indexation, particularly without an iron-clad guarantee from the unions. At present inflation in Australia is higher than almost anywhere in the world. Even Mr. Crean has said that. Application is being made by the Australian Council for Trade Unions for wage indexation, and at the same time for a substantial additional wage increase.

The Leader of the Opposition has asked why the Victorian Treasurer has not done something about the

spiralling wage increases and soaring inflation. The Government has done a number of things. The Budget is a masterpiece of restraint. A few weeks ago the Treasurer announced that there would be a freeze on the salaries of all members of Parliament, judges and senior public servants, whose salaries are fixed by the Government, with the object of curbing inflation. Approximately 20 months ago the Treasurer called on the Commonwealth Government for a meeting of all State Premiers and the Commonwealth Government, with a view to discussing restraints in these inflationary times.

Mr. WILKES: A summit conference.

Mr. RAFFERTY: The honorable member may call it what he likes. This meeting was doomed to failure from the word go because the Commonwealth Government did not want such a conference. On numerous occasions a question has been asked in the House and it was asked again today. Today the Treasurer was asked whether he will again call for a conference. I hope he will, but I am not certain of the result. In reply to pleadings by the Opposition parties in all States that the States should exercise their powers, the States have repeatedly said to the Commonwealth Government that they will co-operate with it in an attempt to curb inflation. It was proposed to curb not only prices, but also wages. On every occasion the Commonwealth Government has rejected this proposal by simply doing nothing. The Commonwealth Government rejected the plea from Victoria's Premier and Treasurer, and by means of a referendum a few months ago, sought to obtain more power. I do not need to inform honorable members opposite of the result of the referendum. Australia is facing raging inflation. Everywhere the country is sinking deeper and deeper into inflation because of the policies of the Commonwealth Government. Nevertheless, I am certain that the Premier will offer again to meet with the State Governments and the Commonwealth Government on the original plan which he proposed twenty months ago.

Recently the Prime Minister belatedly said that as a result of the Premiers Conference the Commonwealth would examine some of the matters which were discussed. Some State departments, one of which happened to be my own department—the Department of Labour and Industry—were asked to supply officers to examine certain matters relating to wage structure. It was discovered that the terms of reference were virtually the same as those dealt with by the Moore conference. The officers dutifully met but they rapidly came to the conclusion that nothing could be decided until the result of the Moore conference was known. The conference was an absolute flop, because Mr. Hawke was unable to give the assurances that he thought he could. The Communist control of the left-wing unions would not allow him to do so. Mr. Halfpenny, whose view is usually not worth a red cent, said, "We will not let Mr. Hawke give those assurances. We are going for the cost-of-living adjustments". So the one meagre attempt by the Commonwealth Government absolutely failed, and the position has remained as it was 20 months ago, except that inflation is more out of hand.

On about 5th July of this year I made some suggestions, which I shall repeat. I suggested what ought to be done to curb inflation. This list is not exhaustive but the suggestions have some merit. The first suggestion, which has already been implemented, was that there should be no increase in the salaries of members of Parliament. It was to be for a specified period, but I do not know what the period will be. It will be short because I confidently expect that next year there will be a change of Government in Canberra. Another suggestion was that there should be no increase in the salaries of judges or

in the salaries of senior public servants. Another suggestion was that there should be no wage claims by unions except those whose applications had been lodged for some time. A further suggestion was more efficient industrial management, which means full co-operation with the States and the Commonwealth, which is what Victoria has been complaining about for the past twenty months—the utter inability of the States to obtain any co-operation whatever from the Commonwealth Government.

A further suggestion was that companies should restrain profits and dividends and that there should be more productivity. Everybody in the community knows that employees cannot continue getting wage increases without additional productivity. Naturally, the Commonwealth Government has a vested interest in wage increases because whenever the pay packet is increased the revenue from income tax increases and many more dollars are available for the Commonwealth Government to hand out with tags attached, in an endeavour to buy the States and subdue them. Accordingly, greater productivity is extremely important.

A further suggestion related to better quality products and service in certain areas and that there should be price restraints on essential foodstuffs and goods. The Victorian Government has frequently said that it is prepared to consider, with the Commonwealth Government, providing restraints on prices and wages as part of a deal, but it cannot get the Commonwealth Government to the barrier.

Another important suggestion related to increased power for the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and closer co-operation between the commission and the Prices Justification Tribunal. All these matters are important.

The next subject with which I wish to deal is unemployment. The Government has been asked time and again by the Opposition what it would do about unemployment, because it has a tremendous effect on the Budget. The honorable member for Ringwood stressed this matter to the Leader of the Opposition, who I notice is absent from the Chamber. Perhaps it is his day off and he is not game to listen to my remarks! Nobody has heard the faintest bleat from the Victorian Labor Opposition about the Federal Government.

The great cry by the present Commonwealth Government when it was in Opposition in 1972, especially by Mr. Cameron, was that it knew how to deal with the unions, there would be no unemployment because it knew what to do and, as experts, the Federal Government would be able to handle the situation. Mr. Cameron also said that there would be no undue wage increases and no unemployment because, as Minister, he would not permit it. One can imagine him sticking his jaw out when he said that!

Now, in 1974, according to the *Australian*, which is not always particularly friendly towards the Liberal Party, there will be 3,000 jobless by March.

Mr. ROPER: 3,000?

Mr. RAFFERTY: I am pleased that at least one member of the Opposition is alert. The figure is 300,000, but of course the honorable member for Brunswick West would like it to be 3,000. I shall not quote the actual news items but only the headlines. Another headline in the *Australian* reads: "1,000 new jobless a day in worst month on record". All this is happening at a time when this magnificent Socialist Government—sometimes called the Australian Government—is in power in Canberra.

All honorable members know that in Victoria, as in every other State, unemployment is running at a higher level than ever before in Australia's history. Despite this, that puppet of the Communist unions, Mr. Hawke,

on the one hand is asking for quarterly adjustments and on the other hand, Mr. Crean, who was once a member of this House, states that an employee's inflated pay packet will mean one less job for somebody else.

I want to read out a telegram which was referred to by the Premier during question time today.

Mr. EDMUNDS: Is that a Federal member's telegram?

Mr. RAFFERTY: No, it is a short telegram to which the Premier adverted this afternoon. It reads—

> I regret that I have to advise you that Fibremakers Ltd. is now faced with such a serious loss of sales and large stock holdings that we have reluctantly taken the decision to close our plants at Bendigo and Geelong. As a result of imports at all levels of the textile industry these plants are now operating at less than 20 per cent capacity. Closures will involve redundancy of 138 people which is additional to earlier retrenchments of 200 at Fibremaker's Manufacturing sites. I have advised Federal Government of the situation and reiterated request for urgent action to control imports of textile products across the industry. Action so far on specific products and money, devaluation are insufficient to correct the position of the industry which needs much more comprehensive action.

Telegrams of this nature are being sent out in hundreds by aggrieved and concerned people in the community to their local members of Parliament and to the Commonwealth Government.

If honorable members want some further information on the unemployment situation, I have already said that the much vaunted policy of the Labor Party has failed to meet the problem—perhaps some members of that party are thinking about leaving it now. The party's policy has a hollow ring about it.

On the one hand, Mr. Cameron stated that unemployment is 129,363 or 2·04 per cent of the work force, that more than 45,000 people lost their jobs in the three months ending August and in Victoria unemployment increased by 5,000 to 33,000 odd. On the other hand, Mr. Egerton, who is a deputy to Mr. Hawke and is not persuaded by the Communist and left-wing unions, has said that the number of unemployed is more like 150,000 to 180,000 and that there will be many more in the months to come. What sort of Christmas will the 55,000 school leavers have this year? About three weeks ago, Mr. Egerton said that the unemployment figure could be 25 per cent more by Christmas, and how right he is. At least Mr. Egerton has his feet on the ground and I will always listen to a member of the Labor Party who has his feet on the ground.

Let me now examine how, belatedly, the Commonwealth Government has decided to relieve unemployment. This vitally affects the States. The Commonwealth Government has said that everything will be all right because it will ensure that those people who are out of work obtain work and that it will make enough money available for them to get work, but this year it is going to do it differently.

When there was a labour downturn last year and funds were made available by the Commonwealth Government to the States for disbursement in areas where there was critical unemployment, Victoria, by using two competent officers, was able satisfactorily to disburse those funds and overcome the problem in areas where need existed. Victoria confidently expected that the same procedure would obtain this year with the exception that, because of the greatly increased number of people out of work, a lot more money would be provided.

Undoubtedly, a lot more cash will be needed on this occasion to solve the problem but the Commonwealth Government has now changed the system because, as it says, it wants speed and activity. A week or so ago, the Premier announced that if Victoria received money from the Commonwealth Government for unemployment it could arrange tomorrow, with the help of two officers, for the employment of 1,000 people in

areas where there was a desperate need to cover pockets of unemployment.

The Commonwealth Government decided that this was not good enough, that it would set up new committees and create jobs for people by this means. The committees would be set up by the Commonwealth in each State so that the States would have a voice. This proposal was first announced by the Federal Minister for Labour five weeks ago at a conference of Ministers of Labour in Brisbane. With great glory, he told us of this new plan. The State Ministers immediately asked whether this meant that the Commonwealth Government was bypassing the States and making money available direct. After the question was asked about four times, at last the Federal Minister admitted that this was so.

I asked why the Commonwealth Government was bypassing the States. The Federal Minister said, "There is a good reason, because last time in some areas the money that was sent by the Commonwealth to the States was not properly deployed". I said, "If that applies to Victoria, I want to know what you mean". It was eventually ascertained that the problem was caused because money had been sent to Queensland, and the Minister's famous friend, Clem Jones, had received a bigger cut than he thought he ought to have got. That is why the system was altered. In future the system will be that the State committees will first obtain information from many sources—goodness knows from where they will obtain it—and the information will be sent to Canberra. Before decisions are made at least five or six Ministers will sit in conclave with Mr. Cameron as chairman, as he ought to be because industrial relations is always an important area. He requires five Ministers because they all want a say.

The sitting was suspended at 6.17 *p.m. until* 8.3 *p.m.*

Mr. Rafferty.

Mr. RAFFERTY: Honorable members will recall that before the suspension of the sitting for dinner, I had reached an interesting stage of the saga and I know that honorable members have hardly been able to wait to hear what I am about to say in continuation.

It will be recalled that I was saying that the Federal Minister for Labour and Immigration, Mr. Cameron, was about to sit down at a table with five other Ministers to sort out the unemployment problems of the States and to make allocations to relieve those problems. Without wearying the House as to how long that will take, I indicate that Mr. Cameron was asked recently when the money would be available. I point out that the Premier has announced that if the money were available from the Commonwealth now, we could start tomorrow with two officers to employ 1,000 people in Victoria. However, Mr. Cameron indicated, after he had gone through the trauma of listening to the pleas of the five Ministers, that money would be made available by the end of next year. Mr. Cameron said that when the money had been allocated to the various projects of the States, one of the delightful things that would happen—taken straight from the Kremlin, I am informed—was that when a job is approved, after being discussed in Canberra for three or four months and the money made available in a particular area—

an appropriate public acknowledgment of the grant by the Australian Government will be displayed on the project site during the progress of the work.

That is what Mr. Cameron said. He wants everybody to see what good fellows the Commonwealth boys are. It shows how desperately scared they are that their policies will not work. They want to put up these signs on every pothole. That will be the system.

The Victorian Government rejects utterly the propositions of the Commonwealth and its attitude

towards producing money to relieve unemployment in the way in which it is going to be done. It makes a further plea, which I am certain will shortly be supported by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, to the Commonwealth Government to make the money available to the States directly to be deployed by the States in the satisfactory way in which it was done last year.

It would be simple in this debate to speak about the strike situation; everybody knows it is the worst situation that has ever occurred, but I shall refer to only one or two other matters, and specifically to those referred to by the Leader of the Opposition, in which he indicated the action he would take. When speaking on the debate on the Appropriation Bill he raised the hoary old matter, which he raises every year, about the State Savings Bank. The Leader of the Opposition said that if the Labor Party were in office—there is always an " if "; it is like the argument for the abolition of the Upper House as it will never happen because they have not the power—it would make the State Savings Bank a trading bank. I want to know why. The Commonwealth Savings Bank is completely separate from the Commonwealth Trading Bank. It is not necessary for me to go through the whole argument against the proposition put by the honorable member, other than to refer to the Appropriation debate on 9th October last year, where I said—

> I have referred to three propositions put forward by the honorable member . . .

That is, the Leader of the Opposition—

> but I am uncertain what he meant on any of them. I have no doubt that one of his myrmidons will try to explain to the House what the honorable member meant.

The ever-ready Deputy Leader of the Opposition promptly hopped in with an unruly interjection and said—

> The honorable gentleman wants the Government to tamper with the people's savings.

I went on to say—

> The only worth-while Leader that the Labor Party has had in Victoria was the late John Cain and he used this expression about the State Savings Bank: " Hands off the people's bank ".
>
> The present Leader of the Opposition was not a member of the House when the late John Cain made that statement.

Neither were the bulk of his myrmidons who are here now.

> But he should know it and heed it.

I shall not refer further to the bank, but shall deal with other matters. One of the propositions of the Labor Party would be to create a State Prices Justification Tribunal or to confer State powers on the Federal Government. When I asked the Leader of the Opposition what he meant by that statement, he scurried around looking for an answer and then said, " What about the textile industry? ". The plight of that industry is a disgrace to the community and was brought about by the policy of the Present Commonwealth Government.

The honorable member said that the Labor Party would set up a Lands Commission and went on to speak about the Prices Justification Tribunal. What does he mean by that? Is it limited by the jurisdiction of other interests because they will escape the net? What does he mean by referring powers? I shall repeat what the Premier said on many occasions, and which I have quoted on many occasions—he is prepared to discuss with the Commonwealth Government the necessary action to be taken by that Government to deal with prices and wages. If the Leader of the Opposition is supporting that view, I should like to hear from him in more precise terms. I have no doubt that his deputy and ever-ready lieutenant will support that proposition.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): The honorable member has one more minute, but with the consent of the House a motion may be moved to extend his time.

On the motion of Mr. WILKES (Northcote), an extension of fifteen minutes was granted.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): Obviously, I cannot finish my speech in fifteen minutes but I will do my best. The Leader of the Opposition spoke about oil revenue and said that the situation in relation to the sale of graticules in Victoria was a sell-out and contrary to the recommendations of the adviser. As a further indication that he did not understand the Budget because he had done no work on it and hoped to gloss it over, the honorable member said that royalty rates in Victoria were too low at 11 per cent. In fact, the royalty rate is 12·5 per cent. The honorable member said that the rate in the United States of America was 12·5 per cent and 20 per cent in the Middle East. He said that the sheiks in the Middle East could teach us a few things about oil and that what was needed was a renegotiation of the agreement. What the honorable member did not say—and this is the position in Victoria—was that it is not appropriate to look at the royalty rate in isolation; one must look at the total Government take—that is to say, the royalties plus income tax. The total arrangements are not simply Victorian but clearly involve both the Commonwealth Government and the State Governments.

The honorable member for Footscray laughs in ignorance. This proposition was examined by the Senate Select Committee on Off-shore Petroleum Resources, which concluded that a precise comparison of the Government take in various countries could not be made. It also concluded that the Government take varied between 50 per cent and 80 per cent and that a country wishing to encourage development of its petroleum industry would fix its take near the lower end of this range in order to encourage exploration.

Most of the attempts at calculating the take in Australia put the figure at between 50 per cent and 60 per cent. That is a further indication that the Leader of the Opposition did not know what he was talking about, had not the faintest idea and was too lazy to find out.

There are various other matters that could be dealt with in reply to the Leader of the Opposition, but I shall now deal with State development. Despite the great difficulties with which the Treasurer has had to contend in framing this Budget, he refused to reduce funds for country development. In fact, the over-all allocation of funds available to country areas and not to city areas totals $114,469,496, an increase of $21 million. That is a remarkable achievement in a Budget made in such severe and difficult circumstances.

I have here a table showing where this money has been made available in each of the country areas. It has been my practice over the past three years to provide such a table. I shall not have time to read it, but copies are available to honorable members. I seek the indulgence of the House for this table to be incorporated in *Hansard*.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! Is permission granted?

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): I take a point of order. The practice of making a speech and asking for lengthy documents to be incorporated in *Hansard* is to be deplored. A former Minister did this, and it has been a joke ever since. It is an interesting document and the Minister may wish to distribute copies to members, but it is quite wrong for the honorable gentleman to make a speech and to bolster it with a series of figures which honorable members have not had the opportunity of studying.

The SPEAKER: Order! I am satisfied that the document is relevant and I can appreciate the Minister's intention not to weary the House by quoting a lot of statistics.

Mr. RAFFERTY: They are taken from the Budget Papers.

The SPEAKER: Whether that is so or not, the question is whether the figures are relevant to the debate, and I believe they are. However, it should be the will of the House whether or not they are incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave was granted, and the table was as follows—

FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR EXPENDITURE IN COUNTRY AREAS WHICH ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO CITY AREAS.

—	1973–74 Expenditure	1974–75 Allocation
	$	$
Rural Finance and Settlement Commission—		
Interest subsidy in respect of liability for interim leases, purchase leases, etc.	507,331	470,000
Land settlement, loans to country industry, settler, etc.	1,726,000	2,310,000
	2,233,331	2,780,000
Arts—		
Country art galleries	343,287	301,000
Chief Secretary—		
Fire access roads—Dandenongs and other areas	72,000	200,000
Fire fighting units in rural areas	166,000	250,000
Goulburn Valley driver teaching complex	97,000	30,000
	335,000	480,000
Labour and Industry—		
Subsidies to apprentices attending continuous courses of instruction remote from place of residence or work	139,179	188,000
Treasurer—		
Shepparton Shire—Abattoir loan charges	317,000	62,000
Alexander Miller Memorial Homes	5,000	5,000
Flood restoration and prevention	601,000	3,735,000
	923,000	3,802,000
Conservation—		
Soil Conservation Authority	1,728,192	2,110,700
Lands—		
Vermin and noxious weeds	4,495,876	5,615,000
Turnbull Research Station	31,000	38,000
	4,526,876	5,653,000
Public Works—		
Murray levees—Repairs and other expenses	12,933	9,000
Portland Harbor Trust—Annual loss	1,314,000	746,000
	1,326,933	755,000
Mines—		
Boring works—Underground water	431,920	452,500
Geological surveys	17,660	27,250
Advances for gold mining	2,000	10,000
Surveys for mineral deposits	1,655	30,000
	453,235	519,750
Agriculture—		
Total Budget provision	17,183,325	20,482,546
Total works and services allocation	1,802,000	1,882,000
	18,985,325	22,364,546

	1973–74 Expenditure	1974–75 Allocation
	$	$
State Development—		
Historical Projects Fund	500,000	500,000
Albury–Wodonga Development Corporation	25,000	130,000
Industrial Development Fund—Contribution	390,000	920,000
Maintenance of ex-Gun Cotton Factory area—Ballarat	6,000	6,500
Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement	100,000	..
Incentive payments to approved decentralized secondary industries	4,019,906	5,500,000
	5,040,906	7,056,500
Forests Commission—		
Capital programme	4,665,000	5,310,000
Annual loss	4,813,000	5,659,000
	9,478,000	10,969,000
Water Supply—		
Capital programme	19,691,000	24,130,000
Annual loss	27,700,000	32,936,000
	47,391,000	57,066,000
Housing—		
Decentralized Industry Housing Authority	25,000	60,000
Local Government—		
Special contribution—Non-rateable areas	30,000	30,000
Municipalities Forests Roads Improvement Fund	50,000	50,000
Unemployment in rural areas	61,000	160,000
Bendigo airfield	..	30,000
Shire of Benalla—Lake scheme	24,000	16,000
Camperdown sale-yards	50,000	..
River-front development—Mildura	20,000	20,000
Wimmera River beautification	..	20,000
City of Moe—Narracan Creek	..	38,000
	235,000	364,000
Total	93,164,264	114,469,496

(1) The above allocation for 1974–75 represents 5·7 per cent of the total estimated expenditure of $2,006 million from the Consolidated Fund in 1974–75.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I shall now have time to compliment the Leader of the Country Party.

I wish to thank the Treasurer particularly for the direct contributions he has made to municipalities to reduce the rates of eligible pensioners by 25 per cent. The previous scheme depended on financial assistance from councils, but it was not forthcoming except in 41 instances. The Treasurer has overcome that difficulty by making money available.

I consider that the Leader of the Country Party made a most constructive speech to the House. He dealt with education particularly and deplored the teachers' strike, as I think all honorable members do. He complimented the Government on a number of occasions, and I thank him for his comments. He referred to the State Savings Bank, to which I have adverted previously. The other matters with which the honorable member dealt will be covered more fully by my colleagues because I have not sufficient time to do so. I should have liked to develop some of the points made by the honorable member because his speech was constructive.

I shall refer to two final matters. The first is a news flash which came over television tonight. Mr. Dunstan, the Premier of South Australia, said that he regretted greatly that he had to put a 5 cent impost on cigarettes. He said that he had to do this because the present Commonwealth Government refused to accept a co-ordinated plan to contain inflation. I entirely agree with Mr. Dunstan.

The second point is that a panic-stricken Mr. Hawke, on radio tonight, pleaded with the Commonwealth Government—which has got itself into a most ungodly mess—to bring down a new Budget. He has said this only one day or so after he pleaded with the court to increase wages by $16.90 and to grant cost-of-living adjustments.

The Budget brought down by the Premier and Treasurer has been introduced at a time of rampant inflation, with the highest number of strikes ever in our history, the highest degree of unemployment ever, the highest wage demands ever in the history of the country—at a time of utter and complete chaos and conflict in Canberra. It is essentially a balanced and restrained Budget which deserves the full support of every member of the House.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I have listened with great interest to the speech of the Minister of Labour and Industry. If I did not know him better I should have thought that, before dinner, he was gloating over the unemployment figures that he quoted. Perhaps that is not the case and he is concerned about the rate of unemployment. That is a matter over which this Government has little control because it does not attempt to do anything about the shortages that exist from time to time in Victoria.

Mr. SCANLAN: Bunkum!

Mr. WILKES: The Minister should examine some of the shortages that exist in the public sector—of men in the railways and the tramways. The Minister should inform the House how that difficulty will be overcome. The Budget debate is probably one of the most important debates, if not the most important, in this House. Listening to the Minister of Labour and Industry, one would not have thought that was the position. It is strange that few members of the Government party over the years have bothered to take part in the Budget debate; they have never bothered to examine the Government's performance over the past twelve months and what it plans to do, if one could call it planning, in the ensuing twelve months. Apparently Government supporters must be satisfied with the manner in which the State is being run. They must regard it as being a smooth performance by the Government.

I consider that one would be within bounds to say that this is a 1964 model Budget with a battered, rusty old States-rights body, fitted with a high-performance Commonwealth cash injection engine. Without it the Treasurer and his Liberal Party fanatics would not get to the pits of the Victorian no-progress grand prix. Even so, to get to the track, it has to drive along kilometres of unmade roads, for which the Government has no answer; it must pass rows of unsewered houses, acres of portable class-rooms, dilapidated State schools in local government areas which are starved of State funds; it must also pass through areas where the crime rate is increasing to an alarming extent and where the sight of a policeman is rare, and even then he would be on a push bike rather than in a patrol car. How much worse would the position be without that high-performance Commonwealth cash injection engine in this old model body? The State machine would be completely bogged down.

When examining the Budget one must pay particular attention to how the Government's economic policies affect Victoria or have affected it over the past twelve months. One must examine the proposals, supported by the Estimates, for the ensuing twelve months. The Budget

provides for an expenditure of $1,673 million, an increase of about $36 million compared with last year. The Treasurer's objective is a balanced Budget. I query the Treasurer's philosophy in this direction, particularly when one considers the depressed economy, which is particularly reflected in the private sector and is due to a variety of causes, probably aggravated by high interest rates and unemployment. That can be conceded. But given that situation, one would have expected a more enterprising approach by the Treasurer in an attempt to revitalize the lagging public sector of the economy; one would have expected an injection of proposals that would take up some of the shortcomings and shortfalls in the public sector. But that is not the case.

When one examines the Treasurer's speech one could believe that the small increase, particularly for allocating education, health, social welfare, law and order and local government, were designed specifically to overcome some of the problems in those areas. But not even with the widest stretch of imagination could any backward back-bench members of the Liberal Party believe that concept. As the Minister of Transport realizes, this is essentially a States'-rights Budget. It is conspicuous not for what it proposes to do but for what it will fail to do. Despite the Treasurer's States'-rights philosophy, new initiatives which have a profound effect on the State Budget have been taken by the Commonwealth. On 5th March, 1974, I directed the following question to the Premier and Treasurer—

> What amount has been made available by the Commonwealth to the State of Victoria in addition to tax reimbursements and amounts agreed to by the Loan Council since January, 1973, indicating the individual amounts and the purposes for which they were made available?

That was question No. 420, and the answer to it appears at page 3675 of *Hansard* of 5th March, 1974. The total sum was $291,199,952.

I asked a similiar question today and the answer showed that from 1st January, 1974, the total amount has been even more; it is $293,442,600. Why was the Budget not responsive to the injection of cash from the Commonwealth?

Mr. MEAGHER: It was only partial restoration.

Mr. WILKES: I should like the Minister to allow his mind to drift back to 1969-70 and think of what partial restoration was then. Perhaps I should not remind him of that because the thought will be painful to him.

Direct Commonwealth assistance for education purposes over the past three years has escalated from $71·1 million in 1972-73 to $332·3 million in 1974–75. However, evidence of the initiative of the Commonwealth can be seen in its generous assistance in many areas, not only in education but also, for instance, in its attempts to clean up the back-lag in sewerage in this State by 1980. Part of the money will be supplied at the current bond rate, but if the Minister thinks that is not better than nothing, I ask him to say so. In spite of those Commonwealth initiatives, the Victorian Government is incapable of making any progress in this direction. Evidence of that appeared in the Bill relating to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Bill which was passed by this House recently.

The spending by the Commonwealth of $29·4 million on local government in Victoria is another example of its assistance. This compared with $24 million spent by the miserable Victorian Government on local government. The Victorian Government received more from the Commonwealth than it is spending itself.

Will the Minister say that this is a States'-rights Government and that the State is not dependent on the initiative of the Commonwealth? The Commonwealth has not received value for what it has paid

Victoria. It has had to put up with the Victorian Government's attempts to take all the credit.

The substantial losses in public transport which are hampering further initiatives in this area will continue to grow because of the failure of the Minister and the Government to accept the proposals of the Commonwealth with respect to the railways of this State. The Minister of Transport might like to comment on that. His Government could rid itself of the debt around the neck of the railways if he accepted the initiative of the Commonwealth.

For the benefit of the Minister of Health, I point out that public hospitals in Victoria charge more than those in any other State. Yet, despite the assistance of the Commonwealth, the contributions to health benefits schemes are higher here than in any other State. Unfortunately, 400 mentally retarded children are on the waiting list for entry into institutions, despite what the Minister said today.

Finally, the target set by Colonel Sir Eric St. Johnston three and a half years ago has still to be met by the Government. Yet it speaks of initiative.

As everyone knows, the decentralization programme is a fraud. The State Government intends to spend $15·3 million while the Australian Government is prepared to spend $41·5 million in that direction. Any Liberal Party member who disputes this can tell the House where the figures are wrong, if he can. The cheap loans to industry made by the Government under this programme would be well worth examining in detail. The Ministry of State Development and Decentralization is using the Victorian Development Corporation to disburse funds to its supporters. We have seen plenty of evidence of that. If I had time, I should like to go through the latest figures published.

The cost of the Melbourne underground rail loop has escalated from $80 million to $250 million but there are no details given about how the share of the costs of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, the Melbourne City Council, and the State Government will be met. One could hardly expect the States'-rights Minister of Transport to ask the Commonwealth to contribute. The previous Minister of Transport was anxious to obtain Commonwealth assistance. However, I do not blame the Commonwealth for walking away from the States'-rights attitude of the present Minister.

The real achievements of education in Victoria are a direct result of the assistance of the Australian Government. State Government expenditure on education, less direct Commonwealth assistance, was $611 million for 1974-75. The total of Australian Government expenditure for that period, including expenditure on universities, colleges of advanced education, technical, Government and non-Government schools, migrant education and research was $332·2 million. So where were the policy initiatives in this Budget other than those coming from the Australian Government?

To emphasize the point further I shall quote a table relating to education. I shall not ask for its incorporation in *Hansard* because it should be read to the House. The Australian Government's contribution to education in Victoria is made up of two components. The first is direct grants under section 96 of the Constitution, which have increased spectacularly over the past two years, and are as follows—

1972–73	1973–74	1974–75 (estimated)
$ million	$ million	$ million
77	184	332

Mr. BILLING: Yet to come!

Mr. WILKES: The interjection must be answered. Today I asked the Treasurer what amount had

been offered by the Commonwealth to Victoria since January, 1973, which was yet to be accepted and what were the individual amounts and their purposes. There were no offers by the Commonwealth to Victoria which have not been accepted, so that is the end of that.

The second component in the Australian Government's contribution to education in Victoria is tax reimbursement grants to Victoria for general purposes. Part of the tax reimbursement grant is spent on education, as follows—

1972–73	1973–74	1974–75
$ million	$ million	$ million
175	190	237

The total contribution by the Australian Government to education is the total of the two components that I have quoted, and is as follows—

1972–73	1973–74	1974–75
$ million	$ million	$ million
252	374	569

The contribution of the Victorian Government to education raised exclusively from State sources is as follows—

1972–73	1973–74	1974–75
$ million	$ million	$ million
332	355	374

The total expenditure on education in Victoria is as follows—

1972–73	1973–74	1974–75
$ million	$ million	$ million
584	729	943

The matter of educational equality will be dealt with by the Labor Party's spokesman on education, the honorable member for Footscray, but the table from which I have quoted indicates the extent to which the Commonwealth Government is prepared to subsidize Victoria for the purposes of education.

A similar situation exists in relation to health. Hospital charges in Victoria are the highest in the Commonwealth in spite of the fact that there are fewer beds for each 1,000 of the population than in any other State. Yet the current weekly hospital benefits contribution by a family is higher than that in any other State. Not only does it cost more a day to be in a hospital in Victoria, but it costs more to insure against that cost. Why did the Government not make some mention of that in relation to the situation of hospitals and health? The amount spent in Victoria is only one-third of that spent in New South Wales.

A current inquiry into health services and hospitals in Victoria is being carried out by Sir Colin Syme and Professor Sir Lance Townsend. This is necessary because the structure of the Victorian Department of Health is more unwieldly than that of any other State. Victoria has the ludicrous and inefficient situation of 23 sections of the Department of Health and the Hospitals and Charities Commission being responsible to one Minister. It is obviously beyond the capacity of the Minister and the permanent head to rationalize a department of that type. Certainly it is beyond them to rationalize it in the way the departments have been rationalized in New South Wales and South Australia. Those States have completed their investigations and the departments are better organized there.

The Government was warned of the situation, and it was forced to introduce the Syme and Townsend investigation to cover its own inefficiency. I await the report of the investigation with interest. I am certain that it will confirm the belief of the Opposition that the department is not only inefficient but has had a succession of Ministers promoted who have been beyond their capacities.

Why has it taken so long for an investigation to be made of a run-down department? Strangely enough, a survey of hospital facilities and services was conducted in 1972-73 by

Sidney Sax in all States with the exception of Victoria. The Minister says that that is correct. Permission was not granted by the Victorian Hospitals and Charities Commission for the survey to be undertaken here. The reason was obvious to anyone who had anything to do with the department. In the interests of the State, it would have been prudent for the investigations to include Victoria.

At present hospital maintenance has been under-provided for by $35 million. Even when the increased sums are taken into account all hospitals will still experience extreme difficulties in meeting their commitments to their creditors. Their overdrafts are rising alarmingly and the consequent higher interest is affecting them. In addition, there is no hope of hospitals engaging additional staff which, as the Minister knows, are desperately needed in many areas.

In addition to that the amount of money provided for hospital capital requirements is dutifully inadequate. Despite the fact that Victoria has the smallest number of hospital beds per 1,000 population of any State in Australia, the amount provided for capital works takes absolutely no account of the recognized increases in building costs. I understand that the Housing Industry Association has stated that building costs have increased by 50 per cent since January. This means Victoria will get even further behind the other States, in spite of the Budget predictions.

Finally, the department has in the past no idea of what its building priorities are, and there is no suggestion in this Budget that the situation is any different.

It could not give any indication where hospitals stand as regards building priorities. During the last financial year, the executive of the Metropolitan Hospitals Association endeavoured to ascertain what were the hospital building priorities, but again the Minister declined to give any information. He said the executive could get it from the hospitals, knowing full well that neither he nor the Hospitals and Charities Commission were prepared to give this information to the hospitals. Had it not been for the Australian Government, hospitals in this State would be bankrupt now.

The other area where this Budget has depended solidly on Australian Government initiatives and cash is in the field of local government where now the most important steps are being taken by the Australian Government. In his policy speech delivered on 1st May, 1973, the Premier and Treasurer stated—

> We will reimburse local councils, as recommended by the Voumard Report, the amount of rate rebates allowed to Social Service pensioners up to one-half of the municipal rates.

However, in the 1973 Budget speech he stated—

> We will provide that where a pensioner is granted a deferment of rates on his home by a council, the Government will pay to the council one-half of the amount of rates deferred, or $40, whichever is the less.

Not surprisingly the scheme did not work. Only 41 councils took advantage of the scheme and an amount of only $140,000 was claimed from the Local Government Department. The principal reason was that the scheme required councils to contribute equally, and many were unwilling to do so.

The Government has now decided partly to rectify the problem by making a direct grant of 25 per cent. We believe that the Government has not gone far enough, even with the assistance from the Commonwealth. It could at least have provided assistance equivalent to 50 per cent, as we have advocated since the last election. It is important to take this opportunity, for the benefit of the Government, to substantiate a claim that the real initiatives in local government

are now being taken by the Australian Government. I refer to the table of State Government expenditure on local government which the Minister of Labour and Industry used. It is as follows—

	1972–73 $ Million	1973–74 $ Million	1974–75 (Estimate) $ Million
Local Government	2·1	3·7	6·6
Municipal Rate Concessions for Pensioners	..	0·1	3·0
Subsidies to Municipalities Elderly Citizens' Clubs ..	..	0·3	0·4
Subsidies to Municipalities for Home Help	..	1·2	2·2
Subsidies to Municipalities towards Infant Welfare Centres	0·8	1·2	1·6
Subsidies towards the Cost of Maintaining Kindergartens ..	4·9	6·9	10·5
Total	7·8	13·4	24·3

The second table shows the Australian Government's expenditure on local government in Victoria. The honorable gentleman does not want me to say it, but Sandringham and Moorabbin councils, for obvious reasons, thought the Commonwealth Government would not give them the money.

Mr. CRELLIN: Do not say that in Moorabbin and Sandringham.

Mr. WILKES: The motivation was political bias against the Australian Government in its attempt to uplift local government in Victoria. The second table shows the Australian Government's expenditure on local government in Victoria, as follows—

	1972–73 $ Million	1973–74 $ Million	1974–75 (Estimate) $ Million
Grants for Home Care Services	0·4	0·4	0·5
Grants for Senior Citizens' Centres	0·2	0·2	0·3
Assistance for Area Improvement	..	2·0	3·8
Grants to States for Local Government .. .. (amounts already granted for recurrent expenditure)	..	..	14·6
Grants for Aged Persons' Homes	0·4	0·1	0·3
Grants for Delivered Meals	0·1	0·3	0·4
Grants for Child Care	..	0·1	..
Grants for Aboriginal Advancement	..	0·2	0·3
Grants for Aerodromes	0·1	0·1	0·1
Grants to States for Regional Development	..	..	0·1
Grants for Services to Children	..	1·5	9·0 (approx.)
Total	1·2	4·9	29·4

The above table does not include funds provided by the Australian Government for sewerage which amounted to $9·3 million for Victoria in 1972–73 and $34 million in 1974–75.

Where are the Liberal Government's initiatives in this Budget? Where would Victoria be if it were not for the Australian Government? These tables clearly show that the Australian Government is spending more on local government than this miserable Government is prepared to spend. Nobody, even the backbench members of the Government party, could suggest that the *Australian Municipal Journal* had any relevance to the Australian Labor Party. It is a most conservative organization and is well known for its conservatism. I do not know what

the Government thinks, but the September issue of 1974 of this journal, at page 70, carries the heading "Unconditional Grants to Local Government from the Commonwealth Places an Onus on Councils to Spend Them Wisely" I have not time to read the article in full, but I want to make the point that because of its political bias against the Federal Government this Government does not like it. The *Australian Municipal Journal* stated, *inter alia*—

> The real significance lies in the action rather than the amount of money.
>
> The Commonwealth Government has done more than recognize the financial difficulties of local government, it has acted toward alleviating those difficulties.
>
> No less important than the action itself is the fact that the grants have been made without conditions attached.

This Government does not even accept the word of the Municipal Association of Victoria. The article continues—

> The Grants Commission made a very strong recommendation for unconditional grants. The Government accepted this recommendation.

That is the Australian Government—

> Local government has been given an exceptional position in this case.
>
> In effect this means that the Grants Commission has placed its confidence in local Government to spend these grants wisely. The Government has endorsed this confidence.

That is an indictment on this Government and praiseworthy of the Australian Government's initiative. I talk to local governing bodies; perhaps Government supporters do not. But there is one thing certain—local government does not care from where it gets money so long as it gets it without strings, and that is what is happening.

Why does the Treasurer continue to refuse to acknowledge positive ways and means of supplementing Victoria's Budget? Why has he rejected the proposals that the State Savings Bank enter into normal banking business? Why does he reject the concept of the State Savings Bank trading as do other trading banks? Further, why does he not insist on his Government banking with its own bank? Would that be too much to ask? This Government banks with every trading bank around the town as well as with the State bank. The proportion of business the State Savings Bank gets from the State Government is a disgrace.

The State Savings Bank supported this Government in its housing problems. It has loaned more money for housing than any other bank, except the Commonwealth Bank, yet it is restricted and tied down in the same way as is the State Insurance Office. The Government regards its own supporters as more important than this State. Why does it not accept the proposals of its own Committee of Public Accounts and extend the franchise of the State Insurance Office? Look at the difference that would make. I do not want to bore the House with what the committee said, but I am bound to say that the most cogent reason for any such extension at present lies in the accumulated deficiencies in the motor car insurance fund which is automatically appropriated. The Minister knows that. The deficiencies are guaranteed by the Consolidated Fund which is automatically appropriated.

In the present climate of a suggested implementation by the Commonwealth Government of a national rehabilitation scheme, there is likely to be a substantial fall-off in the premium income. Such a cut-back in premiums will force the offices to draw on their limited assets. The inflow of interest will be reduced and in three years, in current estimates, they will be required to pay $68 million against which they hold only $47 million in assets. At the same time there would in the current climate be a substantial loss in realization of Government and semi-Government securities. As well as this economic reason, I give other aspects that are of importance.

There should be a Government office to provide cover for all Government liabilities which are at present the subject of policies with private insurers. I do not know the extent of premiums involved in this payout.

Mr. MACLELLAN.—Stop reading.

Mr. WILKES: I have made more speeches in this Chamber than the honorable member has had breakfasts. It is very infrequent that I refer to copious notes. Because of that stupid interjection by the stupid member for Sandringham, in a debate of this nature it is important to be precise, and I propose to be so.

I do not know the extent of the premiums involved in this payout, but I have no hesitation in saying that it would run into some millions of dollars. In many cases the money passes out of the State and sometimes out of the country, and the Government loses that facility.

A full Government insurance facility should be available to instrumentalities and local government bodies. A Government insurance facility would have a restraining effect on the insurance market generally against the setting of unduly high premiums in any classes of insurance. Already, there are areas of compulsory insurance in which cover is not readily available. I refer to operations involving strata titles, private agents' bonds, sharebrokers' liabilities and life insurance for borrowers from the State Superannuation Fund. Within Government departments and instrumentalities, such as the State Savings Bank and the Rural Finance and Settlement Commission, there has been a proliferation of insurance facilities.

Finally, the Consolidated Fund would be substantially augmented once a balance was held against the motor car deficit but to 30th June, 1972, an amount of $9·37 million had been contributed by the State Accident Insurance Office to this fund.

At page 30 of its report on the State Insurance Offices, the Committee of Public Accounts stated—

> 101. Greater efforts must be made to achieve higher returns of investments. Although the investment position has improved during the past year there remains scope for further improvement. The State Insurance Offices would certainly benefit if allowed greater freedom in investment policies, as is the case in New South Wales and Queensland.

The Queensland investments provide a classic example of the advantage to the State from a more liberal policy for the State Insurance Offices. They return to that State millions of dollars from investments. However, Victoria is restricted in this regard and this fact was pointed out to the Committee of Public Accounts. At page 32 of its report, the committee stated—

> 110. Together with amalgamation of the present State Insurance Offices the franchise of the new office should be extended to cover all fields of insurance considered appropriate for it to offer a complete general insurance service to the public. Any extension will assist the cash flow to the office greatly, therefore enabling it to cushion the effect of any entry by the Commonwealth Government into the compensation fields. Separate accounts must be kept in relation to each class of business and profits made on one class of business should not be used to offset losses incurred on another unless this is clearly shown in the accounts.

Until now the Government has failed to accept advice from Parliamentary committees, but that is not unusual.

In last year's Budget debate I devoted the whole of my remarks to trying to convince the Government of the need to update police services in this State.

Mr. MCCLURE: That was a better speech than this one.

Mr. WILKES: I am grateful for the interjection. In modesty, I commend my remarks of last year to members of the Government so that they might understand the problems associated with the Victoria Police Force. This year the police will receive $79 million, of which $3·2 million is for works and services. However, according to page 34 of the Budget Papers, $75·5 million will be

eaten up by salaries, allowances and general expenses, leaving only $3·5 million to cope with an inflation rate which is running to the order of about 20 per cent, plus a 50 per cent increase in building costs. It does not matter who is responsible for the increases; I am looking at the reality of the present position. The Government is saying that it is concerned about it but does not want to do anything about the problem. It does not want to relieve the problem because at present it has somebody else to blame.

Last year the police had an amount of $8·5 million for hardware and other matters, but this year it will have only $3·5 million, or approximately $4·5 million less than last year, notwithstanding inflation and building costs. I do not know whether the Government expects a reduction in crime because, if it does, it has said nothing about it. Although the Premier made some oblique remark that crime was falling off, to date statistics reveal an increase in the incidence of crime. If this unjustifiable and indefensible situation affecting the Police Force is not corrected, Victoria will become the mecca for the worst criminal elements not only in Australia but also in the world. Especially will that be so if the criminals read what senior members of the drug squad have been saying about the increase in drug offences. That ought to be enough to rock the Government out of its complacency.

On 10th August last year, Commissioner R. M. Braybrook, Acting Deputy Commissioner, forwarded to the Acting Chief Commissioner a memorandum containing comments from the services department of the force for consideration in the police annual report of 1972. In his memorandum the Acting Deputy Commissioner stated—

However, until such time as additional residential, class-room and office accommodation, together with ancillary facilities such as gymnasiums, parade grounds, drill halls and a swimming pool are provided at Waverley, we will be unable to provide the required high standard of training for probationary constables, to cope with the anticipated increased requirements in years to come, or to remove the cadets from their present unsatisfactory accommodation at the St. Kilda Road Cadet Academy.

The requirement in the near future for an alternative police hospital and subsequently for a new mounted branch headquarters and stables to fit in with the planning of the Victorian College of the Arts which has been promised the St. Kilda Road site, is a cause for considerable concern. The immediate requirement for provision of class-room, residential and physical training facilities for increased numbers of police cadets is an extremely pressing problem without any immediate prospects of a reasonable solution, particularly in view of the requirement to fully vacate the St. Kilda Road Cadet Academy administrative building by approximately August, 1974, as requested by the Victorian College of the Arts.

Since its inception, the Services Department has faced immense problems in endeavouring to provide adequate equipment, transport, communications, buildings and maintenance, always with totally inadequate finance.

Over recent years the needs of the Police Department have increased greatly due to—

(*a*) Inability to obtain sufficient finance to keep up with a developing situation and provide adequate maintenance of existing buildings and equipment.

(*b*) The tremendous growth in population since 1950.

(*c*) The rapid expansion of the greater metropolitan area.

(*d*) The growing crime rate.

(*e*) The greater mobility of the population.

(*f*) The enormous rise in the cost of land, buildings and equipment.

(*g*) The increasing demands for more police service during times when it is difficult to secure sufficient applicants of the required high standard.

(*h*) The deterioration of older buildings due to age and insufficient maintenance.

All these factors have been reflected in greater and more complex requirements than ever previously, for equipment, transport, communications and buildings, and have greatly aggravated an already difficult situation.

The stage has now been reached when only a totally new approach to the provision of finance for the police Services Department activities and a major injection of funds can remedy a situation which is deteriorating rapidly as present requirements become more pressing and new needs arise.

Failure to effectively cope with the problem can lead only to a chaotic situation with a further lowering of morale, growing discontent, less efficient service and increased complaints from members of Parliament, councillors, members of the public and police personnel.

The strength of the Police Force at present is about 5,800. In his report of 2nd February, 1971, Colonel Sir Eric St. Johnston recommended a force of 6,700 as soon as possible. Although it is almost four years since his report was presented and eight years since he started his investigation, the Police Force is still 900 personnel short. Although the Treasurer has increased the permissible strength, it has not made a scrap of difference to the actual strength of the force.

Mr. MACLELLAN: Unemployment will sort that out.

Mr. WILKES: Usually in times of unemployment, police recruiting runs higher than in times of full employment. But the Police Department is currently finding it difficult to recruit cadets. Many police buildings are below standard. Institutions such as the City Watchhouse and the Bourke Street West police station are a disgrace and a public joke. Twelve months ago, during a visit to the Bourke Street West police station, the Chief Secretary said, "It is not fit for rats". The station is still there and the police are using it; nothing has been done to improve or replace it. Because the police will receive less this year for works and services, no action will be taken. There has been some talk about the Government purchasing the Commercial Travellers Association building and converting it into a police station, but on many occasions honorable members have heard extravagant predictions of this type from the Government, even from the Chief Secretary. It is no wonder that the honorable gentleman is fed up to the back teeth.

Probably, no other British community would tolerate prisoners—they are mostly unconvicted people who have not been brought to trial—being locked up and housed in such circumstances. It is fourteen years since the late Selwyn Porter, then Chief Commissioner of Police, condemned Bourke Street West police station, thirteen years since the *Herald* carried an announcement that it was to be rebuilt, and twelve months since the Chief Secretary said that it was not fit for rats.

The Government bought the seminary at Waverley—I was out there with the Chief Secretary last Sunday—and it immediately evicted police recruits and cadets from the police depot to make way for cultural and musical trainees. Not one training building or class-room has yet been erected at Waverley. When will those facilities be provided? Members of the Opposition are entitled to ask that question because Waverley is the only training centre for police cadets. Waverley can handle only 500 recruits, but that is not nearly enough. It should handle 1,000 recruits a year to keep pace with staffing requirements but the Government has provided a facility which can barely handle 500. The actual increase in the strength of the Police Force is nothing like 500; it is only about one half that number.

The actual increase in the strength of the force over twelve months has been about 250 but the Government has not yet paid for the Waverley property. It was bought on time payment, and the purchase price was $2 million. A down payment of $150,000 was made. The Government cannot afford to put up one shed there in which to train police. Is it any wonder that there is not sufficient law and order in Victoria! At present 80 police cadets are housed at the Young Men's Christian Association in what can only be described as sub-standard accommodation. If honorable members would like to discuss this matter with the police, I am sure

they would receive the same information. Recruitment cannot be encouraged when such unattractive accommodation is provided.

The top wing of the police headquarters at the corner of Russell and McKenzie streets is 120 years old. I advise honorable members—the Country Party gave similar advice recently—to look at the building. It was to be pulled down 34 years ago but it is still fully occupied and used for the same purposes. The Chief Commissioner Mr. Reg. Jackson points out in *Police Life* that 1,000 trained recruits a year are needed, but the training facilities are not sufficient to train half the number. In the September issue of *Police Life* at page 5 the following appeared—

> The Glen Waverley Police Training Academy includes 10 class-rooms, large dining area and modern kitchen. The theatre is capable of seating 300 people. Two hundred and fifty pupils can be trained at the one time, with male accommodation for 200, and 20 females.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> With the proper facilities, our present cadet training programme could handle 500 members each year. There is accommodation for 100 provided at the Y.M.C.A. with private Board where possible.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Approximately 200 members pass through our Motor Driving School each year.

Mr. Jackson stated—

> The constant need to update our buildings and to maintain the premises that we do have constitutes one of my most constant areas of concern as Chief Commissioner of Police.

The article continued—

> He wrote: Our major single building requirement is clearly that of the Police Training Academy at Glen Waverley; for the force, if it is to satisfactorily discharge its community responsibilities, must grow at a pace very much greater than it has achieved in the past.
>
> '. . . the Police Training Academy needs to achieve an annual output of trained personnel of the order of 1,000 members.
>
> Mr. Jackson also quoted Sir Eric St. Johnston when he wrote: "Well designed and well constructed (buildings) present to the public a very good image of the police and this helps not only to promote good relations between the police and the public but also to recruit more men and women to join the Force".

Not only the present Chief Commissioner but his predecessors also have continually warned the Government of the need to update the Police Force and the recruitment system. Each week the *Police Gazette* lists a half dozen or more resignations, plus boarding-out on ill-health grounds, simply because police are fed up with being understaffed. On 17th September of this year I asked the Chief Secretary—

> 1. How many—(*a*) male; and (*b*) female, persons have been recruited into the Police Force since 1st January, 1974?
>
> 2. How many persons have left the Police Force since 1st January, 1974, specifying the number of males and females respectively?

I received the following answer—

> 1. (*a*) 380 males.
> (*b*) 31 females.
> Total 411
>
> 2. (*a*) 224 males.
> (*b*) 12 females.
> Total 236

That was a total gain of 175. At that rate there is no way in which this State can maintain a properly manned Police Force. The Government ought to be concerned about the position.

Sir Eric St. Johnston recommended as urgent the provision of a new communications system and the scrapping of the present D24 set-up. I refer to recommendation No. 88. I have not time to read that.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): The honorable member's time will expire in one minute.

On the motion of Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds), an extension of fifteen minutes was granted.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I thank the Government for its indulgence and the honorable member for Moonee Ponds for his motion.

An expert, Mr. Nicol, was brought out from England. I met him, as did other members of the Government and of the Opposition. He was appalled at the condition of the communications system of the Victoria Police Force. He estimated that $1 million would put the communications system of the Victoria

Police Force in a position second to none and recommended accordingly. However, not $1 has been spent other than on the purchase of a few personal radios. At present the Victoria Police have no more and certainly no fewer than 30 personal radios. One thousand police cars are on the road at present and although the vehicles are equipped with radios, unless at least one personal radio is provided the efficiency of those vehicles is reduced by 100 per cent because somebody has to stay and listen to the radio in the vehicle when the other policeman is on patrol. For years I have advocated that the Government and the police should initiate a patrolling system under which a man with a personal radio patrols an area and is picked up by a car, and another man patrols another area. It is a practice that takes place in Great Britain and other countries, but it cannot be done here because the Police Force does not have the manpower or the additional radios. If it were adopted the number of assault crimes would be reduced.

Despite promises, police still perform extraneous duties such as the service and the execution of civil processes, particularly warrants of distress for debts and hire-purchase agreements. Sir Eric St. Johnston recommended that this practice be abolished, and I understand that the Government intends to do something about civil processes in the New Year. Police are still registering motor vehicles and testing drivers for licences. The introduction of learner permits has increased this work load. Civilian licence testers have been employed in the metropolitan area, but they must be super vised by police and the accounting and banking of fees are police responsibilities. At Oakleigh and Springvale stations more than $1 million a year is collected from these fees. This work ought to be done by private persons rather than by the police. It is not a political matter; it is straight-out common sense. Apart from the time involved, it is an extremely bad public relations exercise for a policeman to have to execute civil warrants—to have to knock on doors and collect debts. If the man or woman concerned does not have the money, the police officer has to look around to see what goods or chattels he can take in lieu thereof. That ought not to be the responsibility of police in Victoria.

Sir Eric St. Johnston, in recommendation No. 179, stated that police should be legally represented, but despite this police who arrest thugs and louts are regularly countersummonsed and the Government flatly refuses to supply legal aid for them. The Federal Government provides legal aid for anybody. In Victoria, the police legal assistant, a member of the Crown Solicitor's staff, will not appear for policemen and is supported in this stand by the Government. Even after the counter summonses are dismissed, as they have been in 99.9 per cent of cases, averaging about 40 a year, the Government will still not meet or contribute to the cost of legal fees. Despite Sir Eric St. Johnston's recommendation, these fees have to be borne by the policeman himself or be paid by the Police Association. This poverty-stricken policy is a great incentive to the Police Force!

From October, 1973, to October, 1974, the Police Association paid out $12,399 in legal fees to defend police against counter summonses.

All over the metropolitan area there is an almost complete absence of foot patrols. Sir Eric St. Johnston recommended that foot patrols be increased, if nothing else, in the Victoria Police Force. He recommended that at a time when robbery with violence was a real problem; it still is a real problem. The latest crime statistics must awaken the Government to the need for more foot patrols. I shall not go right through the figures but I wish to quote the following—ordinary common assaults from January 1st 1974, 2,632; house-breakings, 10,244;

factory breakings, 1,007 ; armed robberies with weapons, 468 ; armed holdups, 140; assaults with a weapon, 807 ; and so it goes on.

The only way to combat crime is to increase the manpower of the Victoria Police Force and to provide more money for the force. The Commonwealth Government has provided millions of dollars for every other field of endeavour in Victoria but not $1 for law and order. It is high time that the State Government made some proposition to the Federal Attorney-General. One training academy in each State of the Commonwealth is not necessary. Surely one training academy for all the police forces, with one wage-fixing authority, would be preferable. The subject of duplication should be considered. It might be centralism, but in this case centralism would be better than the increasing crime rate. The speeches of the Treasurer about the police read like the saga of *Blue Hills* ; every year they are the same. A few dollars more or a few dollars less are provided for the Victoria Police Force. The police are crying out for support but are not receiving it from the Government, and they never get it from a Budget. Robbery with violence is up by 9·8 per cent with 714 offences to 12th October, 1974, compared with 649 to 12th October, 1973.

Police recruitment of males has dropped off, but no real effort has been made to bring the number of females up to the level recommended by Sir Eric St. Johnston, even though there is an unlimited supply of females wanting to enter the Police Force. At present more females than males are desiring to join the Police Force. Sir Eric St. Johnston, in recommendation No. 103, suggested a proportion of 5 per cent; 5 per cent of 5,800 would be approximately 290. Currently there are fewer than 200 female police.

As I pointed out, there are nine police forces in Australia, each with its own training establishment and wage-fixing tribunal. The forces of the States, the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory perform identical duties. Surely one establishment would be sufficient. Numerous recommendations contained in the expensive St. Johnston investigation have not been tackled by the Government. The closing of 33 superfluous metropolitan police stations was recommended so that a broader 24-hour service could be given from major central stations. However, the Government's policy in this direction was opposed by the municipalities, because police stations were closed and no 24-hour service was substituted. That is a serious indictment. One could elaborate on the many deficiencies in the Victoria Police Force. During the 1973 Budget debate, I made several recommendations to the Government.

At the time the Government considered that those recommendations were reasonable, but not one has been implemented. Therefore, it does not matter whether Nicol, St. Johnston, the Chief Commissioner, myself or back-bench members of the Liberal Party make recommendations, the Government refuses to take any action. This is reflected in the present state of the Police Force.

This disappointing Budget lacks all the policy initiatives which would take up the short-fall in the areas to which I have referred today. Despite the remarks of the Minister of Labour and Industry, nothing in the Budget offers encouragement to anyone who is affected by State Government initiative in those areas. Certainly without the huge injection of funds from the Commonwealth Government, the Budget would have to be reframed to the extent that the State would be bankrupt. More than $500 million has been injected into the State from the Australian Government, Some of this money has been absorbed and spent. The amounts most wisely used have been spent by local government, and not been channelled through this incompetent Government. Irrespective of the Government's hatred for

centralism and financial assistance from the Commonwealth Government, members of the Opposition hope the Commonwealth Government will continue to inject funds, even to this Government, because we realize that without those funds hospitals, housing, local government and police, if not already bankrupt, would be bankrupt. The Government is aware that the Budget does nothing to correct the situation. The Budget should be condemned and members of the Opposition propose to vote against it.

Mr. BAXTER (Murray Valley): I am not sure what the document incorporated in *Hansard* by the Minister of Consumer Affairs is designed to achieve. It appears to be a most deceptive document, and coming from the Minister of Consumer Affairs, who spends most of his time chasing up advertisers who engage in deception, it is an extraordinary document. Apparently the Minister is attempting to convince people that the Government is spending a lot of money in the country which it does not spend in Melbourne. He mentions the Rural Finance and Settlement Commission, whose charter is to spend money in rural areas. Is he suggesting that the commission should spend money in Melbourne?

The next item is grants to country art galleries. What is to prevent city people from visiting country art galleries? The Minister then refers to public works and the levee banks of the River Murray. The River Murray happens to be in rural Victoria and not in Melbourne. The Minister might consider the amount that the Public Works Department spends on the Sandringham beach on sand protection barriers. He might mention how much money the Government spends on the Housing Commission in the city as compared with the country. This document was incorporated in *Hansard* against a point of order taken by the Leader of the Country Party, and is an exercise in sheer deception. In his remarks on the Budget the Leader of the Country Party indicated that although the Country Party supported the Budget in principle it was critical of many aspects of it. I propose to comment on a number of aspects which were not covered by my Leader. Everywhere I go throughout Victoria, and particularly in my own electorate, I sense a tremendous tension building up amongst the population, largely caused by the uncontrolled inflation which the country is experiencing at present. From the comments in today's press, it would appear that inflation is increasing rapidly. People are most concerned. No leadership is coming from Canberra. The Prime Minister and his deputy go cavorting overseas while the nation faces a financial crisis.

Mr. HOLDING: Does the honorable member believe the Prime Minister cannot be contacted by telephone?

Mr. BAXTER: It would involve running the country by telephone calls from America. I suggest that Dr. Cairns was probably running the country from Peking more than Mr. Whitlam was running it from Washington. The people of this nation are deeply concerned and want strong leadership and some controls on inflation. In his Budget speech the Treasurer commented at length on the actions of the Commonwealth Government, and I support his remarks regarding the activities in Canberra.

Mr. HOLDING: What did he say?

Mr. BAXTER: The Treasurer referred to the strings, and so on, attached to these funds allocated by Canberra. He said—

> These events underline yet once again the extent to which the present imbalance of fiscal powers has placed all State Governments at the whim of the central Government. Financial domination, and the use of section 96 of the Commonwealth Constitution to make tied grants to the States, is tending to reduce the States to mere administrative agencies of the Commonwealth.

I suggest that the Commonwealth is going further than making the States its administrative agencies. It is now by-passing the States completely.

Mr. HOLDING: Why not? This Government bypasses the Commonwealth.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. McLaren): Order! The honorable member for Murray Valley has the right to speak without interjections. Interjections are disorderly, particularly from the Leader of the Opposition. I ask honorable members to cease interjecting and allow the honorable member for Murray Valley to speak without interruption.

Mr. BAXTER: Thank you for your protection, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was saying that I considered the Commonwealth was now going further than making the States its administrative agencies, and that it was attempting to bypass the State Governments completely. Yesterday I attended a meeting to discuss the Australian assistance plan and how it would be implemented. It seems that this is a sheer duplication of a number of functions that are already competently carried out by the present and previous State Governments. I refer to the functions of the Social Welfare Department and local municipalities. This can be nothing but a wasteful use of funds. In the region in which I live an amount of $2 a head is being made available, which adds up to $230,000, and a further amount of $88,000 of the taxpayers' funds is being made available for administration. An amount of $88,000 is involved in spending the relatively insignificant sum of $230,000. That seems an extraordinarily inefficient way of spending money, particularly in view of the fact that the Social Welfare Department, the Department of Health and local municipalities are doing nearly everything that the Australian assistance plan proposes to do.

When introducing the Budget the Treasurer made some comments on library services. In his opening remarks he said that he proposed greatly increased support for library services. When discussing the allocation for the Ministry for the Arts, he said that the Government had given special consideration to the needs of library services and had extended the basic subsidy for municipal libraries from $1 to $1.50 a head. On the surface, that appears to be an admirable increase. In actual fact it will not assist country libraries because no municipalities outside Melbourne are at present contributing more than $1 a head. It will help some of the metropolitan municipalities.

The City of Malvern is contributing about $2 a head of population. This increase in subsidy will be a great boon to that city which is in a position to contribute that amount *per capita* in comparison with rural municipalities. Malvern is a totally built-up area. The roads are all sealed. There is a large population and the rate revenue is high. That does not apply in rural municipalities. The Shire of Nathalia has a population of a little more than 3,000 with a rate revenue of $184,000, and contributes $2,240 to the Goulburn Valley Regional Library. That is a significant proportion of the shire's rate revenue, and naturally that shire is indisposed to increase its contribution above 70 cents a head.

I have made representation to the Treasurer that it would have been better if the subsidy was increased to a two-for-one basis rather than from $1 a head to $1.50 a head on a matching grant basis. I know it is all very well for honorable members to say that the Government should spend money on something else and to provide no solution. I suggest what I believe is a feasible solution. It is not particularly popular, in that it involves a charge on the people who use libraries.

Regional libraries throughout Victoria have been set up under the Library Council of Victoria Act 1965 or under section 799 of the Local Government Act. Section 3 (1) of the Library Council of Victoria Act states—

> "Free library" means a library which provides a free library service on its premises notwithstanding that a charge may be made for the loan of books to be read off the premises.

Quite clearly, there is a statutory right for any library to charge persons who read books off the premises.

Mr. CURNOW: Why not start charging at Nathalia first?

Mr. BAXTER: I will explain to the honorable member for Kara Kara why it is not possible, despite numerous representations by the shire. Regional library services are controlled by the Library Council of Victoria, which recommends to the Government that the subsidy payable to any library, if the library makes a charge for book loans, be reduced by an amount corresponding to the funds generated by the charge. While that policy applies, there is no point in any library making a charge because it will end up with no additional funds. It will only incur the wrath of its borrowers and obtain less money from the Government. Naturally, no library is prepared to institute a charge until the Library Council of Victoria changes its policy.

On 12th September, I wrote to the Executive Officer of the Library Council of Victoria and to the Premier suggesting that the policy might be reviewed, but I have received no reply as yet. I have received representations from many shires, including Yarrawonga and Chiltern, supporting a reassessment of the policy.

I would suggest a charge of 10 cents a book to adult borrowers and no charge for children, because it is important that children should be encouraged to read as much as possible. For the Goulburn Valley Regional Library during April, May and June of this year, the number of adult borrowings totalled 66,478 which, at 10 cents a book, if the figures remained constant throughout the year, would result in $25,000 additional annual revenue to the library. Last year, the library's total income was $125,000 and an additional $25,000 would be significant.

Mr. FORDHAM: The number of borrowings would decrease by half.

Mr. BAXTER: The honorable member for Footscray apparently is unfamiliar with conditions in country areas. It has been suggested that a charge might be unfair but I remind opponents of the scheme that ratepayers and taxpayers finance the construction of many community activities for which a charge is made. Swimming pools are a prime example where admission is charged. Roads are constructed by the ratepayers and taxpayers and the users meet the cost through petrol tax, motor registration fees, road taxes and so on. The construction of public halls is financed by ratepayers and taxpayers and a hiring fee is charged.

Mr. ROPER: Not always.

Mr. BAXTER: I have yet to hear of one that does not charge a hiring fee. It can be said that education is an amenity provided by the Education Department and a charge is made. In the examples that I quoted, I mentioned only those which are financed by ratepayers and taxpayers because if the taxpayer is prepared to finance libraries fully, well and good. Ratepayers are being asked to make a significant contribution. In my area some live on unmade roads 25 miles from the library and it is patently unfair that they should be asked to finance a service that is entirely free and used by so few.

I hope the policy is investigated and some means introduced whereby a small charge can be made for books borrowed. I am told that the average cost of purchasing a book today is $5, and 10 cents seems to be a small charge for the use of such a costly item.

Victoria has experienced two record wet years and drainage problems are acute. Indeed, some honorable members have suggested that this is a normal pattern and that the problems will disappear during a normal season. However, such is not the case. The problem has been coming for a number of years and the present wet years have aggravated it. Unless action is taken to provide for suface drainage and groundwater pumping, many areas of the State which produce most of the food at a reasonable price will be laid to waste. Unfortunately, when the irrigation systems were first installed following the second world war, provision was not made for surface drainage. Experience has taught us that with future irrigation schemes, if any are installed, it will be essential that drainage is provided from the outset.

The Murray Valley irrigation district is that part of the Goulburn–Murray Irrigation District which is situated within the shires of Yarrawonga, Cobram, Numurkah and Nathalia. The estimated capital commitment in the district is $321·5 million, made up of Government commitments of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, the Postmaster-General's Department, the State Electricity Commission and the Railways Board in the vicinity of $68 million; shire councils, Country Roads Board, Education Department, hospitals and other Government services commitments of $48 million; and the private commitment is $58 million, the industry commitment $9·5 million and rural holdings $137 million.

On 5th September last, I led a deputation to the Premier from the Murray Valley Irrigation and Drainage League, which requested about $5 million to be spent in the area on surface drainage and groundwater pumping. I commend the Premier for his quick action in making available to the Rural Finance and Settlement Commission and the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission $780,000 on 16th September for urgent drainage and groundwater control works in the Murray Valley. A number of the groundwater pumps which are already operating at Invergordon, Waaia, Shepparton East and Ardmona are having a significant effect in lowering the water table.

The district is one of the largest peach-growing areas in Australia and last year many growers lost 50 per cent of their trees from high watertables. This year similar losses occurred. During the winter months, it was difficult to tell how many trees were dead but as soon as the trees started to blossom in spring it was tragic to see the extent of the desolation caused by the high groundwater tables. I am pleased that the Premier has recognized the problem and has made a start in providing the necessary funds. I should like to give every encouragement to the Government to ensure that adequate funds are made available for surface drainage.

I advise those honorable members who tend to think that country people are always asking for money that once the drains are installed their maintenance is financed from rates levied on landowners whose properties are served by the drains. There is no further call on the Government or the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission.

Mr. GINIFER: Is that the long-term answer?

Mr. BAXTER: Yes. There is already an extensive network of drains in the Murray Valley district but drainage still needs urgent attention.

In the Budget speech, the Treasurer referred to a definite provision for the Ministry for Planning and it has since been intimated that a new planning department is to be set up. The honorable gentleman also referred to regional planning authorities, although I am not sure what he means by that. However, I am becoming increasingly concerned by the number of authorities that have

some influence on what the average man can do with his land, what sort of house he builds, where he builds it and how. When the Ministry for Planning becomes fully operative, I trust that it will draw all these bodies together and dispense with those that are no longer necessary and make quite clear the rights of the individual.

Currently, the Uniform Building Regulations extend all over Victoria and I do not argue about that. A number of shires have interim development orders and others have prepared planning schemes. In the Albury-Wodonga area, with which I am closely associated, there is a multitude of responsible authorities which result in people being held up for months while the authorities argue between themselves.

I was contacted today by Mr. Maurice House, who wants to build a caravan park in Wodonga. The delays caused by the various planning authorities discussing the proposal have resulted in the doubling of establishment costs due to inflation. If Mr. House had received approval, as he now has, within a month or so of making his application, the caravan park would be operating as an efficient business enterprise. Now he has to build it at double the cost and naturally his charges will be higher to make it viable.

In the area, there is also the Ovens–Upper Murray planning scheme, which is administered by the Town and Country Planning Board and also the rural City of Wodonga planning scheme. Moreover, the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation is about to introduce a blanket planning scheme, whatever that may mean, over the designated area. Unless the Ministry for Planning can draw all these bodies together and come up with clear and concise guidelines, development will grind to a halt. Commercial businesses, private individuals and farmers cannot obtain permits to do anything because the decisions are too much in the hands of public servants who sit in an office in Melbourne and do not know conditions in the area. I implore the Minister to straighten out this mess.

I turn now to education. One of my most frustrating tasks is the amount of time spent chasing files between the Education Department and the Public Works Department. The sooner the Education Department has its own construction branch the better it will be. The Public Works Department has plenty of work to do building police stations and looking after Port Melbourne and so on. The Education Department is the biggest client department of the Public Works Department, yet the system still falls down. I have numerous instances to illustrate this point. The construction of new toilets for the Waaia Primary School is an example. In April this year the Education Department advised me that tenders had been called and let to Mr. Pryde of Shepparton. Naturally, I expected the toilets to be built by the summer of this year. I have now ascertained that the Public Works Department has just started calling tenders. These are the sorts of things that sap the confidence of the average person in the Government.

Mr. ROPER: Had they called tenders?

Mr. BAXTER: Not yet. Another example of the lack of liaison between the Public Works Department and the Education Department concern the Cobram High School. There are six high schools in my electoral district, and I can safely say that in the past ten years the Cobram High School has received the roughest deal in relation to new buildings of any of the six. Yarrawonga has received a new library; Wodonga High School received assistance; Numurkah High School received a $500,000 Commonwealth science block, and Nathalia High School has been promised some new buildings, but Cobram High School has not had one square foot of new buildings in eight years,

although the enrolment has increased from 400 to 700, an increase of 75 per cent. It is a former primary school and did not start with new buildings in any case.

Mr. THOMPSON: They will get a guernsey this year.

Mr. BAXTER: I hope the Minister is correct in saying that because I have yet to see action taken to provide new buildings at the school. Today I received a letter from Mr. M. L. Denson, the chairman of the advisory council of Cobram High School, with whom the Minister has had negotiations on numerous occasions. The letter said, *inter alia*—

In 1967, the advisory council made an application for a grant to build an assembly hall. At that time they were given the impression that there was a five years wait. In March, 1971, the Buildings Branch advised that the grant was likely to be allocated in the 1972-73 financial year. In March, 1972, the advisory council advised that they were ready to meet their share of the grant when it was available.

In other words, in 1972 the high school had its share of the cost.

In August, 1972, they were told that the grant could be expected in 1973; in April, 1973, the Minister informed the council that the Buildings Branch had stated that tenders would be called before the end of 1973; in May, 1973, the Minister had stated that estimates would be prepared immediately and tenders called before the end of 1973.

And so it goes on.

Mr. THOMPSON: It had probably doubled in cost in 15 months.

Mr. BAXTER: Exactly; I was about to make the point made by the Minister that because of the delay the school now finds that the estimate for building the assembly hall has increased to more than $190,000. The subsidy available is $126,000, and naturally the difference is too big for the local community to make up, although in 1972 they had what was then the difference and if the building had proceeded at that time the assembly hall could have been built and paid for. Mr. Denson made this comment about recent events, and I agree with him entirely—

The community had responded well to fund raising but recently there has been a noticeable slackening due, we believe, to despair in getting results.

Naturally, any school that has waited so long and encountered so many problems will experience despair. I am pleased to hear the Minister say, by way of interjection, that the school will get a guernsey this year. I take it from the Minister's interjection that he may be able to make an announcement that he will assist, and I certainly hope this will occur.

I refer to striking school teachers and endorse the remarks made by the Leader of the Country Party when he said that because an irresponsible minority of teachers refuse to do their duty, particularly at this late stage of the year, when many students are facing the most important examinations of their school careers, the Government ought to take steps to move in and show the teachers who is boss. Teachers are rapidly losing the support of the public. Ten or twenty years ago teachers were held in the highest regard by almost everyone. Sadly, that is no longer true. Unless teachers adopt a more responsible attitude, their support will wane even further. I hope most teachers will stand up and be counted more than they are doing at the moment, instead of allowing a small minority of teachers within the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association to run the whole show. There is dissension even within the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association on the tactics to be adopted.

I met with members of the Cobram branch of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association and also with members of other branches in my electorate. School teachers who work in the country as a whole are more responsible than some of their city colleagues. I have a letter dated 1st October, 1974, from the Cobram High School branch of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association addressed to the secretary of that organization, which reads—

The following members of the Cobram High School branch of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association wish to outline our concerns and the elements of our dissatisfaction.

(i) We register our strong and active support for the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association policy *re* the abolition of inspection.

So they are going along with their colleagues to that extent.

(ii) However, we regret the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association actions in providing the department with a "smokescreen" by introducing an alternative reference form before the achievement of the primary objective—the abolition of inspection.

This, in my view, is the significant one—

(iii) We regret the lateness of moves in attempting to have appointments remade when the issue is unwinnable.

The Minister has said that often enough in the House, and here is evidence that one branch of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association agrees that the issue is unwinnable. I am pleased to see that at least some teachers recognize that fact. I wish those who were on the front steps of Parliament House last week could see that point.

Mr. MACLELLAN: Were they teachers?

Mr. BAXTER: I am not sure. They were masquerading as teachers. The letter continues—

(iv) We regret the intimidatory remarks used in letters to appointees.

It is a sad state of affairs when a professional organization writes to other people in the same profession using blackmailing terms.

Mr. MACLELLAN: That is real painters' and dockers' stuff.

Mr. BAXTER: Exactly; I hope we have seen the last of strikes for this year. The issue is not black and white; the teachers may have a point to be negotiated, but I have gained the distinct impression that their idea of negotiation applies only if they receive the right answer, and they are never prepared to take "No" for an answer. Negotiation ought to be a two-way matter. If the matter is discussed and the answer is still "No", they should be satisfied with that and go on to the next matter, instead of continually objecting to the one issue when it is obviously unwinnable.

Finally, I should like to refer to housing, which is a perennial issue, particularly in my electorate, and I refer to the situation in Wodonga. I have an office in Wodonga, and half the people who come to see me there wish to discuss housing problems. Many people have read in the newspapers about the proposed Albury-Wodonga growth centre, which offers employment opportunities, and have come to Wodonga, but at the moment one cannot rent even a barn for love or money there. I speak not only of those who have just arrived; some people have been in Wodonga for years and are still waiting for a home.

Recently, I asked the Minister of Transport a question on behalf of the Minister of Housing, and the answer which was supplied was—

There are 169 applications on the waiting list for houses in Wodonga. Twenty-two have been there for over eighteen months. Eleven are of over two years' standing.

However, the Liberal Party candidate who opposed me at the last election said that the Government would build so many homes that people would not have to wait more than six months for accommodation. I suggest that at the next election people take no notice of any Liberal candidate who goes around making statements like that, because the situation is going from bad to worse. It is exceedingly disappointing that the Housing Commission, in my opinion through mismanagement, failed to purchase sufficient land in Wodonga early enough. Even before the announcement that accelerated growth would take place in the complex, it was obvious that Wodonga would grow at a fairly fast rate. It has been on the Government's list of five localities for accelerated development since 1970. However, because the Housing Commission delayed for so long, it has been forced to buy land in Wodonga at high prices. For example, 146 acres were purchased by Lameroo Pty. Ltd. on 31st January, 1974, for $110,000. A month or

two ago the Housing Commission bought that land from Lameroo Pty. Ltd. for $606,000. It is extraordinary that the Housing Commission could have bought those 146 acres last year for less than Lameroo Pty. Ltd. paid for them. Unless the commission takes immediate steps to increase the rate of building activity in Wodonga the situation will deteriorate rapidly.

I have heard all sorts of excuses this year from the Housing Commission about why home building has been so slow. It has been said that there has been wet weather, a shortage of materials, it cannot get bricklayers and so on. Perhaps those reasons were valid six months ago, but they are no longer valid. The summer months are approaching and the weather is likely to be better. There is no shortage of bricklayers now with 1,000 additional people a day out of work, because of the policies of the Federal Government. There is very little shortage of materials. A brick-making firm in my electorate four months ago was working two shifts a day and could not keep up with its orders. Now one could not put another brick in the yard because it is already full of bricks. The firm is working only one shift a day; 25 per cent of the staff have left and have not been replaced, and in the past eight weeks staff members have been required to take their three weeks' annual leave in order to cut down on production. So the shortages of materials cannot be used as an excuse now.

I impress on the Government that if Albury-Wodonga is to be a going concern, houses must be available. That is a basic necessity for any centre wishing to attract population. It is of no use waiting for the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation to build the houses because it will be years before the corporation can do this work. Some members of the Liberal Party do not want the corporation to do this type of work. They say it ought to be the responsibility of the State and that being so then the State ought to get on with the job.

I conclude with those remarks. I appreciate the difficulties faced by the Treasurer in drawing up the Budget because of inflation and because of the attitude of the Commonwealth Government. On the whole, the Treasurer has probably done a fair enough job, but I suggest that the points which I have raised tonight merit some attention.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir): It is important that this debate should deal with the State Budget in terms of State administration. Throughout his speech the Treasurer indicated his great concern that the source of most of Victoria's revenue is the Australian Government. If the State was administered in a manner which eliminated some of the unnecessary expenditures—the honorable member for Murray Valley just referred to an amount of $600,000 paid for land which was available a few months earlier at $100,000—some of the bricks which are now in brickyards could have been used to build houses.

I wish to discuss some of the points made by the Minister of Labour and Industry, which should be debated to establish, firstly, that price increases and inflation did not commence with the election of the Australian Labor Party Government in Canberra. Honorable members should recall the inflation that was created by the predecessors of the present national Government and the misery that resulted from unemployment in that period. We did not experience the joy which the Minister of Labour and Industry displayed tonight when with glee he announced that, according to his figures, 130,000 people are unemployed. It was difficult to get the Minister to talk about this subject previously, and it is equally difficult to get him to talk about prices now.

Throughout his contribution the Minister concentrated on the question of wages and stated that wage increases were the cause of inflation.

He blames the trade union movement and the working class of Victoria for the inflationary situation and pays no heed to the inflation rates of countries such as Spain and Portugal which are 30 per cent and 26 per cent a year respectively. As the Leader of the Opposition points out, those countries have strong Fascist Governments; the trade union movement is suppressed and outlawed in those countries. It is typical of the nature of right-wing Administration that wages are kept down to the lowest possible level. The Minister of Labour and Industry is of the same opinion as his political ilk which form the Governments of Spain and Portugal.

I turn now to the question of oil because the Government sold out Victoria's oil resources to the international company which forms the basis for Esso-B.H.P. As an indication of what is happening to oil, an article on page 6 of the *Australian* of 12th September this year deals with the question of the large producers and how they are set to raise their prices. It states that the world-wide profits of 30 of the biggest international oil companies increased by 93 per cent in the first six months of this year. The Minister of Labour and Industry does not say that that state of affairs is a cause of inflation, because oil flows throughout the manufacturing processes of Western industrialized countries. The Chase Manhattan Bank of New York announced a 93 per cent increase in profits in the first six months of the year, which indicated the contribution being made by the oil companies to inflation.

On the local scene, one can read the publication *Australia Newsletter*, which has a photograph of Sir Maurice Nathan on the front page. I refer to the issue of September, 1974, volume 17, No. 8. It states that the Esso-B.H.P. group made approximately $60 million from its share of Bass Strait oil in 1973 and that this profit was sent home to its United States parent company. This is $60 million taken from Victoria's resources by a multi-national company. This must have some effect on the living standards of the people of Victoria. I understand that this company is now shipping natural gas to Japan at $116 a ton. This means that the agreement which was negotiated by the predecessors of this Government sold out and will continue to sell out Victoria's natural resources and diminish the Government's capacity to administer the State.

The Treasurer seems to crave independence, but there is no independence of action by this Government in the spheres where it has the capacity to act in the interests of the people of Victoria. In the fields of housing, education, apprenticeship training and the provision of sewerage, the cry is that the problem lies with the Government in Canberra because it does not provide Victoria with the wherewithal to do the job. If one were sitting in Canberra listening to this sort of story for long enough, one would begin to believe it. However, when one examines the national Budget one sees that in a number of areas the Victorian Government was not able to spend money that was allocated to it. The sum of $54·5 million was provided by the Federal Government for the land acquisition programme which would enable Victoria to purchase land at a price sufficiently low to enable home owners to combat some of the rising prices which are part of the inflationary spiral. Only $3·5 million was taken up by the Government, for the South Melbourne proposal, and it has not proceeded with the development of the land commission.

The *Australian* of 22nd January, 1972, stated that a survey showed that an increase of 14·1 per cent in prices had occurred between June, 1971, and 22nd January, 1972. For example, the cost of funerals had increased by 36·4 per cent, men's shoes by 22·5 per cent and a business shirt by 66·8 per cent.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: The shoe manufacturers are still going broke

Mr. SIMMONDS: There may be reasons for that other than prices and the inflationary spiral. The point is that prices have been increasing over a number of years and this Government has done nothing to combat those increases; although it has had the power of price control the Government has refused to use it.

The Minister of Labour and Industry visits supermarkets and compares prices of articles on the shelves; he then says a few words, and the racket goes on. The honorable gentleman informed the House that 128 allegations have been made to the Consumer Protection Bureau about Milleradio, but he cannot say what is being done to remedy the situation; he cannot say that he has briefed counsel to take action. Last year he informed the House that he had the answer to pyramid selling. However, in the one case that went to court, he lost the case because the legislation would not stand up, although he assured the House that it would. The honorable gentleman has an obligation to remedy the situation.

The Minister also informed the House that he could buy rump steak at 59 cents a pound. Every housewife in Victoria would like to be led by the Minister to that establishment. In yesterday's *Sun News-Pictorial* Food-Master, advertising the second week of a great sale, offered rump steak at 99 cents a pound. That firm seems to think it is offering meat at a reasonable price and is sufficiently confident of that price to take a full page advertisement in the newspaper. The Minister should inform the House where this product can be bought at that price. I shall be happy to provide that establishment with customers from my electorate on any day which the Minister is prepared to nominate.

On the subject of sewerage, despite the Government's concern for new initiatives and its concept of independence, in the electorate of Reservoir, not 10 miles from the General Post Office, there are without sewerage 784 houses, 1 church, 1 school, 92 factories and 1,597 vacant lots. In this day and age there are 92 factories working without sewerage within 10 miles of Melbourne! This is an indication of the capacity of the Government to bring down a Budget to meet the needs of the people. None of the programme is being dealt with this year, except projects collectively for next year will provide sewerage facilities for 120 houses and 130 vacant lots. At that rate it will be from ten to fifteen years before the existing houses in the electorate of Reservoir can expect sewerage.

In regard to the Government's record of training apprentices, I raised the question some time ago about the number of apprentices unable to get into trade training to combat the shortage of tradesmen. Unless there are skilled tradesmen to operate in industry the auxiliary work force finds difficulty in obtaining employment. At that time 600 apprentices were unable to undertake trade training in Victoria. On 25th September, 1974, I was advised that a total of 1,708 apprentices are unable to be accommodated in technical trade schools in Victoria. In addition, there are 433 apprentices from country areas who are unable to obtain technical training at local schools.

The Leader of the Country Party states that the position will be worse next year. About 8,000 apprentices will complete their apprenticeships next year but because there was such a small intake in 1971-72 only 6,000-odd will be leaving the school system. Therefore, an additional 1,500 places will have to be found, that is, if there is not one additional apprentice put on other than to replace existing apprentices. That figure, added to the 1,700 who are not in schools at present, makes a number in excess of 3,000 apprentices who should be getting trade training but who will not get it in February next year.

It is an indictment of the Government that the situation has continued for so long. I should like to show the Minister of Labour and Industry the equipment at the Bendigo School of Mines. I am pleased to note that the honorable member for Bendigo would be happy to join me. It has a slotting machine installed in 1910; that is the only machine of its type in the school. Most of the machines in the fitting shop are 25, 30, or 40 years old.

That is not an exception. Requests for equipment were made by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in 1950 but no significant improvement has taken place since then—that is over a period of 24 years. Since a comprehensive review of equipment at that school resulted in new machines being installed then, nothing has been done.

Mr. McCLURE: How can young people be induced to take up apprenticeships when they get more for being unemployed?

Mr. SIMMONDS: That is typical of the misunderstanding of the position by the honorable member for Bendigo. Not only are apprentices in industry unable to obtain proper trade training, but literally thousands of other young people are applicants for apprenticeships. There is no shortage of applicants—just a shortage of training.

The Minister of Labour and Industry, not unusually, agreed with employers in their assessment of the inflation situation and threw the blame for inflation on the working people who are faced with the problem of continually increasing their wages in an attempt to keep up with rising prices. It has been put to the Moore commission on indexation that that portion of wages which is adjusted in conformity with prices would be increased. The concept is not new. It existed in Victoria for many years until the coming of a Liberal Party Government. The Harvester award standard was used for wage fixation until 1913, when the Arbitration Court began to use the "A" series of retail price index numbers to vary wage rates in proportion.

In 1921 automatic quarterly adjustment of wages in proportion to variation of retail prices indices was introduced. In 1922 a general loading of 30 cents a week was introduced; at the time, it was known as the "Powers 3 shillings". Between 1931 and 1934, the basic wage was reduced by 10 per cent because of the economic depression. That is what our political opponents seek now. They seek an effective reduction in wage rates so that the workers will carry the burden of inflation.

In 1933 the court adopted the "D" series of retail price indices. In 1937 the court introduced a fixed, non-adjustable loading referred to as a prosperity loading. It ranged from 30 cents to 60 cents a week. In addition a "Court" series of retail price indices based on the "C" series was adopted. That basis of indexation was used until 1953. In 1966, the employers' application for the adoption of a concept of a total wage was finally approved. Since then there has been no wage indexation. Instead of a basic wage plus a margin for skill, there has been a total wage.

What is being sought is a basis for a wage factor to take the shift in price factor out of wage claims, but that does not mean that there will not be wage claims. If changes take place in a particular industry, a work-value wage assessment or an assessment based on production could be made. Increased productivity generally would also be a basis for increases in wages.

Whenever a claim is lodged by a union, the members of the union must first be persuaded of the justice of the claim, which is then submitted to the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

The Minister upheld the idea that before there would be any agreement on wage indexation certain conditions must be accepted, and he

should not have been surprised when the trades union representative walked away from a conference at that stage. No conference completely settles an industrial dispute in one day, and none ever will. Industrial relations are a continuing process and they are not helped by the sort of comment made by the Minister tonight.

Perhaps the Minister of Labour and Industry can resolve a conundrum which follows an answer I received from the Premier and Treasurer today to a question on notice. I asked the honorable gentleman—

1. Whether he authorized an appeal against the order of Commissioner Vosti concerning wages for the employees of the State Electricity Commission; if so—(*a*) whether this appeal was authorized on 3rd September, 1974; and (*b*) why he indicated to a number of trade union officers at the deputation on 11th September, 1974, that he had no knowledge of the appeal?

2. If he did not personally authorize the appeal, when he became aware of such decision?

The answer was—

1. After consultation with the Ministers concerned, I approved of an appeal being lodged against the Vosti State Electricity Commission wages decision by Her Majesty The Queen in Right of the State of Victoria.

(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) I gave no such indication.

2. The reply to part 1 answers this.

I accept the Premier's answer, but I cannot accept it completely. A different position was put to me by the Minister for Fuel and Power and I cannot see how the two positions coincide. During the Grievance Day debate last Thursday, I referred to appeals by Government instrumentalities against decisions by wage tribunals. I said—

On 11th September, 1974, an appeal was lodged on the authorization dated 3rd September, 1974, of the Minister for Fuel and Power, the Minister of Labour and Industry and the Premier.

The Minister for Fuel and Power interjected—

That is not right.

I am pleased to hear the Minister of Labour and Industry endorse that remark. He is saying that that authorization was not given on 3rd September. I then said—

The appeal was authorized on that basis. If I am wrong I should like to be corrected.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The honorable member should state what he is quoting from.

MR. SIMMONDS: I am quoting from the report of the Grievance Day debate last Thursday, at page 1246 of *Hansard*.

Mr. McCLURE (Bendigo): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I understand that it is not in order to quote from *Hansard* reports of debates in the current session.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir): I understand the concern of the honorable member for Bendigo, but the point is important. I said—

It has been put to me that on 11th September at a meeting of unionists with the Minister for Fuel and Power and the Premier, a question was asked of the Premier at the conclusion of the discussion whether there had been an authorization of the appeal. The reply was, "No". But on that afternoon an appeal was lodged against the Arbitration Commission decision. I am advised that on the following day the Minister for Fuel and Power contacted the State Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union to explain the situation and said that the Premier was not aware of the authorization of the appeal. That is my understanding of the position.

The Minister for Fuel and Power interjected—

That is right.

The Minister was saying that on 11th September the Premier did not know of the appeal. But the Minister of Labour and Industry indicated tonight that the Premier and he authorized the appeal on 3rd September. Unions negotiating with the Government on appeals against wage determinations for employees of State instrumentalities find great difficulty in dealing with this sort of thing. In future, when information

of this nature is given, some regard should be paid to the accuracy of statements made.

Some of the friends of the Liberal Party in this State, the private enterprise entrepreneurs, are seriously concerned for the party at election time but they have an extreme lack of concern for their employees when making decisions to benefit their companies. A food company, Brooke Bond Monbulk Ltd., which is 53 per cent English owned, took a decision at 11 a.m. on Thursday of last week that it was necessary to close its plant. I understand that the decision affected the permanent employment of 100 people and the seasonal employment of 300. The management decided to cease the production of jam at the plant. If there was any concern in the minds of the Government about unemployment and the effect of closures of this nature, I should have thought that the Minister of Labour and Industry or the Minister for State Development and Decentralization would visit the plant and found out the situation. The Minister might have found that the company was utilizing the present economic climate to bring about a closure and cease production, thus putting the workers out on the street on a couple of hours' notice. The employees were not given the customary week's notice but were paid a week's wages in lieu.

I am wondering how many multinational companies have been prepared to carry on production in dilapidated and run-down plants and are now utilizing the present circumstances to unload the work force, close the premises and realize the real estate value of the land. The company involved has paid out 105 per cent of its profits in dividends in the past five years. There seems to have been a considerable amount of premeditation in what it has done, and I question the legitimacy of such action. Instead of concerning himself with the affairs of other people, the Minister of Labour and Industry should examine matters within his own jurisdiction and see whether he can do something for the benefit of the community.

During the Minister's one-and-one-quarter hour's address, honorable members did not hear mention of apprenticeship or consumer affairs other than the price of steak, which seems to have increased by about 100 per cent. The Minister did not complain about the inadequacy of the resources of his own department and therefore honorable members cannot look with confidence to the Budget or the future in the administration of the Ministry. The only thing that came from the honorable gentleman's contribution to the debate was that nothing was going to happen under the philosophy of this Government. The Government does nothing about new initiatives; it is simply prepared to laze along and not utilize the resources which are made available to it.

Undoubtedly, the shadow Minister of Education will refer to the lack of expenditure in the education field where, out of $580,000 which was made available for school libraries only $127,000 was spent. The Government's administration of education is a shambles and funds available are not being spent because of lack of planning and administrative ability to deliver the goods.

The honorable member for Murray Valley referred to grants to local Government from the Australian Government. In the 1974 report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission at page 60 it is stated that the commission agrees that there shall be no conditions attached to expenditure grants made to local government bodies. This is the first occasion on which honorable members have seen a national Government being prepared financially to assist local government. For the first time honorable members can read documents which list almost every municipality in Victoria. Municipalities adjoining my electorate have re-

ceived grants from the Federal Government. Diamond Valley received $240,000, Northcote $225,000, Broadmeadows $590,000, Coburg $225,000, Brunswick $105,000 and Heidelberg $230,000. Also listed in the report are the five municipalities in Victoria which did not see fit to apply for the grants.

Mr. MCCLURE: How much did electorates represented by members of the Liberal Party receive?

Mr. SIMMONDS: My electorate received nothing but that was not the fault of the Australian Government but of representatives in the municipal councils who did not know enough about the new initiatives to appreciate what was involved. I am quite confident that next year they will be among the first to apply.

I commend the contribution to the debate by the Leader of the Opposition. The Budget does nothing for Victoria or in the host of areas to which I have referred, such as housing, health, education, sewerage and other services. In another twelve months honorable members will see that the Government has failed to attack the problems besetting the State.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I think I should make one matter clear. During the remarks of the honorable member for Reservoir, the honorable member for Bendigo raised a point of order. If my memory serves me correctly, the honorable member for Reservoir was quoting from the Grievances debate of 17th October, 1974. Standing Order No. 87 states—

> No member shall allude to any debate of the same Session upon a question or Bill not being then under discussion except, by the indulgence of the House, for personal explanations.

For that reason, I should have upheld the point of order raised by the honorable member for Bendigo. It would not have made any difference to the debate because the honorable member for Reservoir had finished his quotation at that point.

Mr. MACLELLAN (Gippsland West): In considering this Budget, honorable members have to consider some of the essential issues, two of which are inflation and unemployment. Although unemployment is distasteful to the Opposition in these circumstances where the Commonwealth Government has to bear so much of the responsibility, the matter should not be avoided. It is interesting that in his contribution tonight, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition indicated that building costs are increasing by 50 per cent and that inflation, as it affects the Police Force, has been running at 20 per cent. According to the newspapers, the Leader of the Opposition has called the Budget an undertaker Budget.

Mr. FOGARTY: That is correct.

Mr. MACLELLAN: I am not querying whether the newspaper report is correct; I am assuming it was correct. One assumption is that if one is to behave like an Arab oil sheik from the Persian Gulf and confiscate Broken Hill Proprietary's interests in the Bass Strait oil fields, the State would be richer, more prosperous and better able to solve its problems. The Leader of the Opposition made an extraordinary contribution.

The honorable gentleman was prepared to sell the oil and gas reserves of this State to the highest bidder and he assumed or agreed that the highest bidder would probably be a foreigner. He contended that it would be better for Broken Hill Proprietary to be sold out and to leave the resources entirely to Esso or some other foreign company.

I should think that that was the very antithesis of everything that the Federal Government stood for when it said multi-national companies must not be allowed to increase their hold on Australia. I am sure that the honorable member for Reservoir would be the first to disagree with his Leader, that we should sell oil and gas to foreign-owned companies.

The Leader of the Opposition used the colourful phrase "rip-off" and suggested there was a rip-off to people who processed the meat between the farmers selling in the saleyards and the sale to the consumer in the butcher shop. He suggested that they are the people who are making a rip-off. Perhaps Myers or even Bourkes-ACTU store, when they mark up the cheap Taiwan shoes, if we still have cheap Taiwan shoes, although they are now perhaps cheap Peking shoes, or whatever shoes that are coming into this country, which should be sold at a cheaper price, get a rip-off. If we get shoes in from some Asian country at a low price, we might as well sell them at bargain basement prices in our shoe shops. One assumes the answer is that we can get Australians unemployed quicker and people in the shoe manufacturing industry broke quicker because the Opposition will not face the essential matter that there is unemployment, that unemployment is increasing, and that it is their responsibility. It is their responsibility, and it is increasing at an estimated 1,000 a week.

Mr. RAFFERTY: There are peals of silence!

Mr. MACLELLAN: Loud peals of silence. They busy themselves with other things. However, I should like to make one quotation. It is ageing, but like all good quotations from the Leader of the Opposition it improves with age. One has no idea of the subjects he mentioned about matters not being debated in the House. He was talking about unemployment under the Liberal Government, but it is nevertheless very apt because he says at page 4162 of volume 306 of *Hansard* of 14th March, 1972, in the same kind of debate as tonight—

> It is a fact that the only group in the community whose income and wages are fixed are members of the trade union movement.

That is one enormous assumption, probably not correct, but one that he is prepared to make. On the next page, on a disorderly interjection from me, the Leader of the Opposition said—

> When honorable members make judgments, it is grossly unfair and even politically immoral to blame, for the inflationary pressures in the Australian economy generally and the Victorian economy particularly, the one group in the community whose purchasing power is constantly limited and fixed by an independent tribunal—the one group which must prove its case before its members are entitled to increased remuneration.

He is talking about the trade union movement. These trade unionists are the one group whose wages are fixed; they are the one group who have to define increases. That was said in March, 1972. On 15th October, if I may quote from this Budget debate, under Standing Order 88 the Leader of the Opposition described what he thought was a favourite Government occupation activity, "Union bashing" which is a most colourful phrase. He said that Liberals are preoccupied with the role of wages in creating inflation. I quote this comment from page 1053 of *Hansard* on 15th October of this year—

> The first view that runs through the Liberal Party, as a national party, is that the biggest single contribution towards inflation is union-inspired wage increases.

There is always a worry that there might be a breakdown in communications presumably by the Leader of the Opposition between 15th October and 22nd October. There must have been a breakdown in communications because today on the front page of the national paper, the *Australian*, there is the heading, "Prime Minister blames pay claims for jump in inflation". We have a new champion Liberal union basher, presumably, on this discussion. It is an interesting front page because it also states, "Government helpless as its policies fail". Again it states, "Threat to Firms Which Grant Big Rises". The honorable member for Reservoir would be delighted by this new attitude of the Government; if a company agrees to pay its exploited workers, using his terms, a higher salary, the Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, proposes to put a special tax on the company to stop it.

This is a special rate of tax for non-conforming capitalists. If one exploits one's workers and pays only minimum wages, and makes the employees work day in and day out in drudgery conditions for the mere pittance industrial courts allow, there will be no special taxation. If a company gives the workers a bonus, pays them over-award wages and treats them like human beings, the Federal Labor Government has announced that it will then impose a non-conforming capitalist super tax for treating the workers well.

If the honorable member for Reservoir still, strictly speaking, calls himself a member of the Labor Party, could he ever describe Mr. Cameron, Mr. Crean or Mr. Whitlam as conforming members of the Labor Party? That will be left to history. What has happened is that somewhere along the line the Federal Labor Government has begun to accept financial responsibility as important and has given up some of its more tainted Socialist views. I can say only that it is trying, despite the fact it is not successful. It will not succeed because there is another heading on the front page of the *Australian* which states, " Indexation Vital : Hawke ". That is the chapter still to come which will keep us on the edges of our seats for the next few months while inflation mounts. We can fiddle while Rome burns.

The real question that has to be answered by a Government which increases its expenditure on education and then leaves people without jobs is : Is it better to have well-educated unemployed people, or is it better to have people in jobs? My worry is not only for the people who do not have jobs today; it is for the children who will not be returning to school in February of next year. We talk in terms of 130,000 or 160,000 unemployed, but Mr. Cameron anticipates that when the sixth-formers of this State try to get a job at the end of this year or at the beginning of next year, that unemployment is going to be around 200,000. I suppose we can confidently guess if it keeps going the way it is, that in the middle of next year there will be 300,000 to 400,000 persons unemployed.

What does the unemployment figure have to be before Mr. Hawke carries out his threat to withdraw his support from the Federal Labor Government? He quoted a figure of 150,000. Fortunately, he never said whether it was seasonally adjustable. I always feel sorry for people who are unemployed on a seasonally adjusted basis. It must leave one with a funny feeling if one is not really unemployed but seasonally adjusted! One is not really out of a job, just between jobs! It is a long time between jobs, but that is where one is.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who has fled from this Chamber along with the Leader of the Opposition, once enlightened this House with a charming comment in 1972 about " the stomach contracts ". This was when the Leader of the Opposition was in full flight about unemployment under a Liberal Government and the fact that workers had to wait for the first unemployment payment. They still had to wait just as long. This was when the disorderly honorable member for Gippsland West dared to interject and said that on the first application payment was slow because a file had to be created. I was explaining, by way of interjection, disorderly again, that this happens on the first occasion but that when a person is regularly unemployed payments do improve, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made the comment about " the stomach contracts ".

The Opposition is not concerned about stomachs any more. The Leader of the Opposition made not one reference to unemployment. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition spent the whole time skirting around it and trying to avoid it, and for all that it is interesting to have police protection, and it is essential, too. It may be that the needs of the Police Force will be vastly extended because if unemployed and hungry people under the Federal Govern-

ment's welfare programme are left to wander around the city more police will be needed to keep them under control. If I were unemployed, seasonally adjusted or not, and hungry, I do not suppose I would stay hungry and law-abiding for very long. I do not imagine these people would either. Then the honorable member for Reservoir, the plaintive humourless voice of the north, made his contribution of Socialist claptrap, if Socialist is the right word—it is probably worse than that.

For all his dour forebodings on the Capitalist system, at least the honorable member is honest. He has told us what he intends to do on the day of revolution and that is a welcome release. I want to know whether it is more important to end unemployment or to continue with the marvellous programmes with which the Opposition has entertained us. Reference has been made to the money that is paid to local councils with no strings attached; in my area the amounts councils have received would not have even made up for the inflation at 20 per cent which they faced during the year. The honorable member for Coburg, the nineteenth man, says that this would have been better than nothing. That is like saying it is nice when somebody stops kicking you. That remark illustrates the mentality of the councillor from Coburg. He said that councillors should be delighted because although inflation has risen to 20 per cent and everything they have tried to do is costing thousands of dollars more, they have been given something towards it from the benign, stringless Federal Government. That is ridiculous and he knows it. But as a good Labor man—independent Labor; one must make this subtle distinction—from the north he has to maintain the party line. In the case of the honorable member for Coburg, it is back in the 1930s.

I do not wish to refer now to other debates, but recently a delightful contribution to the debate was made by the honorable member for Melbourne who referred to Disneyland. The segment of Disneyland to which the honorable member belongs is Fantasyland. If a realistic level is to be reached, as the honorable member for Melbourne envisages, then surely the whole Budget debate cannot be allowed to pass without mentioning that 130,000 people in Australia are unemployed. Something must be done about that. The Leader of the Opposition, his deputy and his helpers—Santa Claus's friends—might have to come up with a wealth tax. That is the sort of thing one would have expected in East Germany when they were having a crisis and could not get the wheat off the farms. A wealth tax means that collectors knock on the door of every citizen and say, "We will have 10 per cent of whatever you have". We should then be grateful to social services for preventing us from starving at the moment.

In the last session there was price control. There has been price control for a considerable time on a few items in this State. If goods and jobs become fewer and unemployment increases, price control does not assist.

The Opposition proposed the establishment of a land commission so that poor people who cannot afford to buy blocks of land will be able to look at them more cheaply. Does that help? Would not the money be better spent on creating jobs for people?

Mr. EDMUNDS: No.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The honorable member for Moonee Ponds will cease interjecting.

Mr. MACLELLAN: It would be unfair to allow the interjection to go unrecorded. After all, the honorable member did say he did not want any funds to create jobs and relieve unemployment. He can sort himself out.

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER: Order! Honorable members will cease interjecting. The honorable member for Gippsland West will cease provoking interjections.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds): On a point of order, the honorable member for Gippsland West raised a point regarding a land commission. He told an untruth in regard to a land commission and the proposition that has been put forward to provide land for people on low incomes. The honorable member got away with it and it is one of the reasons why he provoked interjections from the Opposition. The point of order is that the honorable member for Gippsland West told an untruth. I want to know whether he can get away with it.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honorable member for Gippsland West stated a point of view. He did not accuse the honorable member for Moonee Ponds of stating an untruth.

Mr. MACLELLAN (Gippsland West): I imagine that you, Mr. Speaker, as an attentive listener, would have noticed that the honorable member for Reservoir made a point of the fact that Victoria does not have a land commission. I do not know why such a fuss should be made about something that does not exist. The honorable member must solve his own problems.

According to the Opposition's proposals, the State Savings Bank is to enter the field of consumer credit. This means that those who are unemployed and need jobs will be able to buy goods on credit. The next proposition is that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wants the State Insurance Offices to burst out into a wider field—I presume so that they can subsidize the losses on their motor vehicle business with the profits from their fire business.

Honorable members interjecting.

Mr. MACLELLAN: I said that I presumed that was so. Members of the Opposition are so sensitive about those matters that it is almost as though their programme were to be undermined by the Federal Government. They want to hand over the reins because that will relieve them of the burden. The last thing we handed over—if that is the word to describe it—was the universities. That saved the Government from having to provide money for universities.

Mr. DIXON: They took our money away to do it.

Mr. MACLELLAN: The Assistant Minister of Education is correct. The Socialist way of saving people from having to contribute to something is to take their money away so that they cannot contribute, and when they have nothing to contribute, the Socialists say, "We are saving you from having to contribute to it". The next step will be for the Socialists to say, "You do not have to pay for the railways; you do not have the railways and you do not have the money you used to spend on the railways". I belong to a minority group which wants to keep the railways. I want to keep State responsibilities, not State rights. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made a speech about State rights. I could not care less about State rights, but I do care about State responsibilities. I care about the responsibilities to people in the community who do not have jobs, and that is my party's first priority. It was the party's first priority in 1972 when the Federal Liberal Government inflicted similar types of difficulties and problems on the community.

The Assistant Minister of Education says by way of interjection that it has been the responsibility since 1949, and, with a minor problem in 1961 and a more serious problem in 1972, I think the Liberal-Country Party coalition Government in the Federal sphere did a very good job by international standards. It was so much better than the job that the present Federal Government, with vastly greater resources, is doing, when it leaves the Prime Minister

spluttering to the unions and saying, "Please modify your wage demands because if you do not I might tax the employer who gives you the extra money".

How he is going to tax the Federal Government I do not know, but he will probably work that out. The increase in the consumer price index is the worst for twenty years. It seems to take us back to the Korean war and the days of the wool boom. Honorable members only have to move out of Melbourne and they will realize that there is no big money in rural Victoria.

It has been said that this is a miserable Budget, and although there may be miserable portions in it, it has not proposed increased expenditure which means that it has not required wholesale increases in collections, either. That is what the Treasurer had to face and then make a responsible decision.

The Opposition cannot have it both ways. What Opposition members want is an exciting and dynamic Budget, so they say, but when it came to providing the money for it, they would be missing—they would not share the responsibility. The honorable member for Kara Kara, who is interjecting, knows, as the last remaining rural member of the Labor Party in this State—the last apple to fall from the tree—that rural Victoria is in dire straits. For example, in the beef industry a farmer who bought cattle for $300 a head is now faced with the prospect of selling the same cattle for $100 a head. I inform those honorable members who are interjecting that nobody has made a profit but everyone is concerned about costs and the honorable member for Footscray should know all about it as he has killing works in his electorate.

Mr. WILKES: Is that not a world-wide problem with beef?

Mr. MACLELLAN: The Opposition is now trying to say that it is the multi-nationals again. If only it did not look for somebody to blame but looked at the problem and tried to find a solution. That is what is wrong with the approach of members of the Opposition in this Parliament. They are so anxious to blame somebody that they try to blame the Arabs or the multi-nationals or others, but they do not look at the problem itself.

I am not so much concerned whether it is a world-wide problem; I am concerned with the social aspects in my electorate. I know people who have invested heavily in purchasing cattle and then worked hard to improve the cattle. Whereas previously they were able to sell with confidence in the market, now they cannot recover the cost of the original purchase or the amount of work and capital resources they have used in producing the beast.

This is one of the tragedies we face in rural Victoria. If these people go to the bank for finance to carry on, they get nothing because of the credit squeeze. The honorable member for Preston who is interjecting, would not have a clue because he assumes everybody outside the metropolitan area is on clover and driving a Mercedes Benz. He believes because the Prime Minister is riding around in a Mercedes Benz so are all the farmers. That is not true and I suggest that he catch a tram to the terminus, walk a little way, then hitch-hike a ride and ask the people he meets. He will find that rural Victoria is in the grip of a depression. It is just a matter of time before the impact of that depression hits the suburbs.

When that occurs honorable members opposite will have people knocking on their doors asking for jobs. I wonder whether they will deign to explain that the Leader of the Oposition did not think it was important enough to speak about; that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition avoided it; that the honorable member for Reservoir could not see it as part of the *Das Kapital* approach, and that the other members of the Opposition are all keyed up to skirt around and avoid it. The honorable

member for Moonee Ponds looks forward to the halcyon days when the land commission will make cheap land available to people who cannot afford to buy it.

On the motion of Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray), the debate was adjourned.

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

DOG (AMENDMENT) BILL.

This Bill was received from the Council and, on the motion of Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works), was read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

DISCREPANCIES IN PRICES OF GOODS—PUBLIC STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF HEALTH—PICOLA RAILWAY STATION—INDUSTRIAL EAR DISABILITIES—CLEANER AT WEST FOOTSCRAY PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I raise a matter with the Minister of Consumer Affairs. From time to time in this House the honorable gentleman has expressed concern at the discrepancy in the prices of identical products. I draw his attention to a small item known as a sink-bath plug which is procurable in Melbourne. There is a discrepancy in the price of this plug. One plug I have purchased at the Myer Emporium for 48 cents. An identical plug was purchased at Coles for 30 cents. The Consumer Protection Bureau should be concerned about how it is possible to have an 18 cents difference in the price of an identical plug. No explanation has been given. I point out to the Minister of Consumer Affairs that the Coles store from which the identical plug was purchased is just across the road from the Myer Emporium. If the Government is serious about reducing the effects of inflation and protecting consumers, this is one area in which the Government can act.

The Minister of Consumer Affairs invited honorable members to go into supermarkets and compare prices. He issued that challenge tonight and I accept it. I fail to see how an 18 cents differential between the retail price of identical articles can be justified.

The other day one of his Federal Parliamentary colleagues raised a similar matter in connection with the Myer Emporium. He was concerned about it and challenged the validity of the prices. Here is a small example of what can occur and is occurring. The matter raised by the member of the Opposition in the Federal Parliament occurred some time ago but my example is current. I believe it is worthy of investigation by the Consumer Protection Bureau.

As well as a note of my complaint being taken by the Consumer Protection Bureau, perhaps an explanation can be provided by the Myer Emporium as to why it charges eighteen cents more than Coles stores for a sink or bath plug. If this occurs with a small article, what is the price differential on larger articles? This is where the Consumer Protection Bureau should be concerned.

I refer to articles which are circulating in these stores in Melbourne. How does the public know that it can be protected against this and that the price it is paying for an article is not a false value by comparison with what is paid elsewhere? I know it is in their interests to shop around, but when they can see identical small articles, one would not think that a differential could occur. I ask the Minister to be good enough to raise the matter with the Consumer Affairs Council.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): At question time today I asked the Premier had he seen an advertisement placed in the daily Melbourne newspaper, the *Age*, by the Minister of Health and the Premier answered on the basis that he had not seen the advertisement and was unable to make any comment at that stage. Subsequently in a further

answer the Minister gave some explanation from his point of view as to how this set of events took place. I raise the matter on the adjournment for the attention of the Premier because there are deep and important principles involved. The main principle is the right of a Minister of the Crown to use funds, which are allocated to him for the purposes of carrying out matters of Government administration, to insert in daily newspapers what are essentially political statements which could in the normal course of events be covered by a press release, or if the honorable gentleman considers that he is being ignored by the press, by a letter to a newspaper.

It is a matter of grave concern that this Minister, who is certainly one of the most irresponsible in Victoria when it comes to his mindless confrontation almost on a daily or continuing basis with the Federal Minister for Health—that is a joke in this community—wants honorable members to believe that after a series of articles in the *Age* which pointed out the failure of the State Government to do anything essential about the plight of retarded children, he felt concerned to issue a public statement. That is his right and no one argues about his need to explain both his philosophy and his attitude towards this. He said that to his concern this daily newspaper chose not to publish his statement. There would be no Minister in the Government or indeed no member of the Opposition who has not had the experience of putting forward what he regarded as a press statement of considerable public importance and a matter of great moment, only for it not to appear in the daily newspapers.

If a precedent is set whereby that occurs and a Minister simply buys himself some space and uses it in that way, I should be interested to know the allocation that the Treasurer intends to make to the office of the Leader of the Opposition so that members of the Opposition can engage in the same luxury. It is not good enough that public funds, which could have been used by this Minister for other purposes—perhaps to make life a little better or fulfilling for one or two families who have retarded children—have been used in this manner. The Minister did not say how much was involved. He was not interested in that. The honorable gentleman has a press relations officer, as do all Ministers. He has the resources provided to handle the press in the normal manner.

I wish to know whether the Premier and Treasurer is prepared to endorse the principle of departmental funds being used for what are essentially political advertisements, by Ministers who find to their unhappiness that their press releases are not used by the daily press.

Mr. WILCOX: The Commonwealth does it every day.

Mr. HOLDING: I am concerned and responsible to this House for the wastage of public money by the Government of Victoria. A former Minister of Education in this House issued a White Paper on education and did not receive one line in a daily newspaper. If the principle adopted by the Minister of Health is to be endorsed and a Minister in his situation is permitted to buy himself a couple of pages in the press for an advertisement, the Treasurer ought to tell the House so that the Leader of the Country Party can obtain his share and the Opposition can obtain its share when their press releases are not published. It is a bad principle and the funds would be much better used by this slapdash Minister in relieving the plight of the families with retarded children rather than cavorting around in his politically irresponsible way.

Mr. BAXTER (Murray Valley): I refer to the Minister of Transport a problem concerning the railway goods shed at Picola railway station. Over the past six to seven years local residents at this small township

have seen the station residence removed, the station building removed, and the sheep and cattle yards demolished. Two or three years ago it was intimated by the Victorian Railways that the goods shed would also be demolished. At that time a local resident and businessman, Mr. D. K. Murray, entered into an arrangement with the railways to lease the shed to save it from demolition. He was good enough to make the shed available to all other railway users in the town and it has been used for the storage of superphosphate, which has been unloaded from railway trucks, and from time to time bales of wool have been put in this shed prior to being placed in trucks. A month or so ago, 400 bags of cement for the tennis courts were loaded into the shed. I helped to load them and it was hard work. About eighteen months ago a new galvanized iron 1,000-gallon water tank on a concrete stand was erected at the end of the shed by the railways.

Mr. Murray has now received notice from the railways to the effect that they intend to proceed with the demolition of the shed. From time to time honorable members hear about the loss of business by the railways and the large deficit involved. Yet, here is another clear example of failure to compete with road transport. Once the goods shed goes, a good deal of traffic in superphosphate and wool will go to road transport.

I am not asking the railways to maintain the shed in excellent repair; it does not warrant that. However, a local citizen is prepared to lease the shed from the railways to save the railways responsibility for it and yet the railways are not prepared to go on with the arrangement and propose to demolish the building. I ask the Minister to make investigations with a view to retaining the shed for the use of railway patrons in this small town.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne): I refer a matter to the Minister of Consumer Affairs along the same lines as the matter raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I purchased an item known as a "Planet" lamp, with which honorable members may not be familiar. It is a simple upright fixed to a heavy base with an adjustable lamp fixed with a spring. At McEwan's the lamp sold for $27 but at Myer's the same lamp was selling for $38. Unfortunately I went to Myer's first. As it is the biggest store, I presumed it would have the largest range for customers and that it was reasonable to expect that the prices there would be the keenest. I neglected to follow the Latin maxim *caveat emptor.* Nevertheless, it should be possible for the Ministry of Consumer Affairs to scrutinize the discrepancies between prices which are obviously non-competitive.

Mr. WILCOX: When the great day comes it will be only one store and no lamp.

Mr. JONES: The Attorney-General has stumbled on our secret. In these inflationary times the office of the Minister of Consumer Affairs has a valuable function to perform, to inform the public. Inexperienced and gullible members of the public are buying consumer goods and the department should be policing, warning and advising stores to note discrepancies.

Mr. RAFFERTY: There is no price control.

Mr. JONES: I know that there is no price control, but it is not unreasonable to point out to the firm or to the public that there are great discrepancies. Many people, particularly elderly people, cannot be expected to do a lot of comparison shopping, as I would be expected to do. People often buy the first goods they see in the mistaken belief that those goods are likely to be at the keenest economic prices. I put it to the Minister that his department has an obligation to inform the public and discuss the matter seriously with the firms concerned.

Mr. FOGARTY (Sunshine): I direct a question to the Minister of Labour and Industry. Recently the Minister addressed a conference of the National Association of Testing Authorities at the Exhibition Buildings, Melbourne. He referred to the fact that each year 6,000 employees or workers suffer some ear disability. Many are totally deaf. He also mentioned that many industrial injuries and diseases are attributed to factory noise, and he referred to compensation claims. I believe prevention is better than cure. In the light of the Minister's statement to the conference, he is obviously aware of these matters. Therefore, I ask what action he has taken through his departmental inspectors to overcome the situation.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray): I direct a question to the Minister of Education. I have been contacted by one of my constituents, Mr. Oatway, who has been the cleaner at the West Footscray Primary School since 1955. During that time he has had a first-class record. There is no indication of any difficulty with the school administration or the Education Department. Mr. Oatway is due to retire next year, and in anticipation of that he built a home for himself and his wife at Melton; it was completed recently. Mr. Oatway indicated to the principal at the school that his house is now ready for occupation and that he would prefer not to leave it unoccupied; that he would like to move to Melton immediately and drive to the school each day to undertake his duties.

The principal contacted the Education Department and was advised that if Mr. Oatway did that he would be sacked immediately, and that a condition of his employment was that he remain in the departmental house adjacent to the school. Mr. Oatway cannot recall signing any such agreement, but as it was almost twenty years ago that could be the case. I hope the Minister will examine the matter because the undertaking between these cleaners and the department is for certain duties to be carried out during school hours and not for a general caretaking function, which comes under a different award and involves a different approach. I hope the Minister will review the decision and look with compassion at the family circumstances and the record of this man at the West Footscray Primary School. I hope the honorable gentleman will advise me of his decision.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Consumer Affairs): In Russia one would get no soap or bathplugs. Anyone who has been there would know that. To that extent the honorable member for Northcote has done better than he would in Russia.

Mr. HOLDING: That is not an answer to the question.

Mr. RAFFERTY: The Leader of the Opposition should keep quiet. He has been out most of the day.

Mr. HOLDING: The Minister is thoroughly irresponsible. You are a cheap little lair.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I think I heard the Leader of the Opposition refer to the Minister as a cheap little lair. If I heard correctly, I ask the Leader of the Opposition to retract the statement.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): I withdraw the statement.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Consumer Affairs): The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has done the right thing in raising the matter. He is hoping, as I am, that some publicity will be given to it. I remind the honorable member that the abolition of price agreements was initially promoted by Bourkes-ACTU store. There is no price control in Victoria. It is permissible for a store to offer an article at whatever price it wishes. I do not believe the Ministry of Consumer Affairs can take any action. It is a matter for

the honorable member. He has made two purchases and has found a discrepancy. He hopes there will be publicity about it, and I do, too. However, no team of inspectors is available to carry out this work, and it is not the intention of the department that there shall be.

My remarks apply similarly to the matter raised by the honorable member for Melbourne. It is unfortunate that the honorable member did not see the light earlier when be bought his lamp. He went to the wrong shop first, but at least as a prudent purchaser he ought to have made comparisons. May I suggest that next time he sends his wife; I am sure she will do a better job. The honorable member referred to the Department of Labour and Industry. This would be the responsibility of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs. An enormous team of inspectors would be needed to make these observations and do the job which the honorable member is not capable of doing himself.

The honorable member for Sunshine asked a question which related to the noise factor. At the meeting to which he referred, I told the people present that I considered it was a matter for their own organizations. Most of the people attending the meeting were fairly senior in their organizations and had a say in the general preventive measures of the organization. I asked them to take back the fruits of the meeting to their organizations to ascertain whether they could assist in their home bases in overcoming the problem. I also indicated that the noise factor would not be handled by the Department of Labour and Industry, but perhaps by the Environment Protection Authority, and that I understood legislation along these lines was already being contemplated.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The Leader of the Opposition referred to an advertisement which was inserted in a newspaper by the Minister of Health. He mentioned this matter at question time today, and he invited me to comment on it. As I told him, I have not seen the advertisement. However, I certainly uphold the right of the Minister to publish to the public by means of an advertisement any factual statement. For what it is worth such advertisements emanate almost daily in the newspapers emerging from Canberra, sometimes decorated with a charming picture of the Minister concerned. This right must be used with discretion, but it is certainly within the province of a Minister to keep the public informed in this way.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): I will take up the matter referred to by the honorable member for Murray Valley with the railways and advise him as soon as possible.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The honorable member for Footscray raised the question of a caretaker in the Footscray electorate who, it was alleged, would be sacked by the Education Department if he moved to live at Melton away from the school where he has been caretaker for some years. The department expects caretakers to live on the job and keep an eye on school grounds. However, if the school principal and committee are happy with the situation, I think an exception could be made in this case.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.45 *p.m.*

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

The following answers to questions on notice were circulated—

COMMONWEALTH FUNDS FOR VICTORIA.

(Question No. 95)

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) asked the Premier—

1. What amount has been made available by the Commonwealth Government to the State of Victoria, in addition to tax reimbursements and amounts agreed to by the Loan

Council, since January 1974, indicating the individual amounts and the purposes for which they were made available?

2. What amount has been offered by the Commonwealth to Victoria since January, 1973, which has yet to be accepted, indicating the individual amounts and for what purpose they were offered?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The answer is—

1. An amount of $293,442,600 has been made available by the Commonwealth to the State of Victoria in addition to tax reimbursements and amounts agreed to by the Loan Council over the period from 1st January, 1974, to 30th September, 1974.

The individual amounts and the purposes for which they were made available are as follows—

COMMONWEALTH PAYMENTS FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES.
1st January to 30th September, 1974.

	$
Chief Secretary—	
Road safety practices—grants to assist in financing public education programmes and to assist a programme of management and improvements at locations with poor accident records	862,500
Social Welfare—	
Assistance for deserted wives—half share of payments made by State Government to deserted wives, including deserted *de facto* wives and wives of prisoners and unmarried mothers	1,065,736
Social planning units—contribution to establishment and operation of social planning units	20,000
Youth, Sport and Recreation—	
Grants for survey of recreational needs and assistance for general recreational purposes	467,500
Education—	
Universities—contribution towards capital and recurrent expenditure	63,160,377
Colleges of advanced education—contribution towards capital and recurrent expenditure	41,861,727
Teachers' colleges and pre-school teachers' colleges—contribution towards construction and equipping of teacher training colleges	25,017,410
Technical training—	
Grants for building and equipping technical schools and colleges	5,600,000
Reimbursement of fee revenue lost to State as a result of abolishing tuition fees at technical schools as from 1st January, 1974	1,772,000
Schools—grants in connection with Government schools expenditure, including special projects (innovations) under—	
States Grants (Schools) Act 1972, Capital	6,307,000
States Grants (Schools) Act 1973, Capital	4,990,000
States Grants (Schools) Act 1973, Recurrent	11,734,540
Secondary schools science laboratories—grants for science laboratories and equipment in secondary schools	2,850,000
Secondary school libraries—grants for libraries in secondary schools	3,550,000
Research grants—contribution in support of research projects in the academic field in universities and colleges of advanced education	763,762
Apprenticeship training—contribution to scheme to improve supervision and provide advisory services in connection with the training of apprentices	77,290
Child migrant education—contribution to provision of special instruction to migrant children with English language difficulties	2,482,730
Conservation—	
Conservation extension services—grants to provide soil conservation extension services	45,000
Fisheries development—matching grants towards a programme of exploratory fishing to develop new fisheries	88,000
National estate—grants for a programme of acquisition of land and buildings and the restoration, preservation and enhancement of properties having historical or other interest	150,000
Lands—	
Rural reconstruction—assistance partly as grants and partly as loans for debt reconstruction, farm build up and rehabilitation of farmers in necessitous circumstances	5,000,000
Marginal dairy farms reconstruction—assistance partly as loans and partly as grants for reconstruction of dairy farms	187,800
Fruit growing industry reconstruction—assistance towards a scheme for the removal of trees deemed to be surplus to long-term market requirements	230,000

COMMONWEALTH PAYMENTS FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES—*continued.*

	$
Public Works—	
Disposal of ships' garbage—unmatched grants towards capital cost of incinerators and half cost of access road construction at selected ports	5,892
Local Government—	
Assistance for surveys and investigations, administrative and planning assistance, and area improvement programmes for the alleviation of urban problems in the western sector of Melbourne	2,400,000
Sewerage works—contribution towards specified projects to eliminate a backlog of unsewered premises in principal urban areas	9,300,000
Growth centres—assistance, chiefly by way of loans, to initiate development of new metropolitan and regional growth centres—	
1974 receipts—Albury-Wodonga	4,900,000
Land acquisition and development—assistance by way of loans for programmes of land acquisition and development—	
1974 receipts—Emerald Hill	3,500,000
Agriculture—	
Agricultural extension services—grants to provide for expansion of agricultural advisory services and to promote improved farm practices in the dairy industry	1,179,641
Bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis campaign—Commonwealth-State programme for the eradication of bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis	1,245,000
Health—	
Tuberculosis arrangement—reimbursement of capital and recurrent expenditure on diagnosis, treatment and control of tuberculosis	2,665,786
Home care services—to provide domestic assistance for aged persons in their homes and to provide a contribution towards salary of welfare officers employed at senior citizens' centres and a contribution towards capital cost of senior citizens' centres	317,707
Paramedial services—contribution towards paramedical services provided for aged persons in their homes	174,800
Nursing homes—contribution towards cost of providing nursing homes for aged persons of limited means	366,792
Mental health services—contribution towards capital expenditure on mental institutions	2,971
Community health services, including mental health services—grant towards development and maintenance of community health and mental health centres and therapeutic day services	4,409,967
Drug education—grant for campaign on the dangers of drug abuse	69,393
Blood tranfusion services—reimbursement of one-third of contribution by State towards Australian Red Cross Society's blood tranfusion services	388,294
Pre-schools—grants for the establishment and operation of pre-schools and child care centres	1,513,000
School dental scheme—contribution towards capital and recurrent expenditure on programme to provide a school dental service and train dental therapists	1,343,797
Capital city hospital development programme—grant towards site acquisition and planning of a hospital in Melbourne	150,000
Housing—	
Dwellings for aged pensioners—grants to provide self-contained dwelling units at reasonable rentals for single needy aged pensioners	192,829
Housing—repayable advances for housing purposes—	
Housing Commission — $29,529,000	
Co-operative Housing Societies — 12,300,000	
	41,829,000
Grant to reduce rents charged on the payments, including interest, on the sale of dwellings by the Housing Commission to needy persons	1,347,500
Grant to assist the Housing Commission to reduce below the economic rents payable by needy persons	331,250
Housing for servicemen—repayable advances to enable the Housing Commission to provide housing for servicemen	1,796,893
Aboriginal Affairs—	
Aboriginal advancement—unmatched grants for aboriginal welfare in the areas of education, health, social welfare and housing and community amenities	327,000
Transport—	
Commonwealth aid roads arrangements—payments for road construction and maintenance including road planning and research	32,859,998

COMMONWEALTH PAYMENTS FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES—*continued.*

	$
Water Supply—	
Surface water measurement and underground water resources—contribution to a programme of surface water measurement and investigation into underground water resources	762,500
Dartmouth Dam—Commonwealth special loan towards cost of construction of Dartmouth Dam	950,000
King River Dam—grant for construction of dam on the King River, South of Cheshunt	15,000
Salinity reduction—grant for salinity reduction project on the River Murray at Kerang and Redcliffs	7,000
Millewa pipeline—grant towards construction of pipeline and associated works to carry water from the River Murray to rural holdings in the Millewa district	800,000
Various Departments—	
Natural disasters—grants for flood relief	7,218
	293,442,600

2. There have been no offers of money by the Commonwealth to Victoria which have not been accepted. There are however some financial propositions arising from the Commonwealth Budget which are presently under departmental consideration.

FLOODS.

(Question No. 191)

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds) asked the Premier—

1. What total amount of money was provided to all flood victims affected by recent floods in the metropolitan area this year?

2. How much money was provided to householders in each of the municipalities of Sunshine, Footscray, Essendon, Northcote and any other suburbs affected by floods?

3. What factories and other businesses were affected by these recent floods, how much money was provided, to these factories and businesses and from what sources this assistance was provided?

4. What action is contemplated by the Government to prevent further flooding in municipalites affected by recent floods?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The answer is—

1. $354,041 has been provided for the relief of personal hardship of metropolitan victims of the May, 1974, floods.

2. Payments have been made to householders in the following suburbs and municipalities—

	$
Brunswick	12,885
Coburg	400
Eltham/Diamond Creek	17,210
Essendon	11,840
Fitzroy	1,700
Maribyrnong/Sunshine	196,821
Northcote	108,585
Thornbury	4,600

3. Small businesses in necessitous circumstances as a result of the floods may apply to the Rural Finance and Settlement Commission for a low interest loan.

Eighteen applications have been received by the commission, from which three loan assessments have been approved, eight are under consideration, and seven have been declined.

Loans totalling $15,000 have now been approved. However, the names of individual applicants and details of assessments are confidential.

4. The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works is at present conducting an investigation into possible means of alleviating the extent of flooding in the lower reaches of the Maribyrnong River.

A report is also being finalized on the extensive flooding of parts of Northcote, Brunswick, Coburg and Preston from the Merri Creek.

In the meantime, the board is removing trees which adversely affected the flow of water in the Merri Creek and has approved immediate action to straighten two sharp bends near Merri Park, Northcote, and for the construction of a levee bank to protect houses at Allister Street and Willowbank Road in East Brunswick.

The board has also approved the expenditure of $79,000 for the supply and installation of rainfall and river height recording gauges on the Maribyrnong, Yarra and Plenty rivers for use in predicting possible flood situations in the lower reaches of the rivers.

Negotiations are also taking place with the Postmaster-General's Department for a licence to enable the board to operate several data transmitting stations in strategic

areas for the rapid conveyance of meteorological and hydrological information to head office. This will enable early warning of serious floods.

SCHOOL FACILITIES.

(Question No. 237)

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Minister of Education—

Which schools it is expected will receive—

(*a*) secondary libraries;

(*b*) primary libraries;

(*c*) secondary science centres;

(*d*) art and crafts centres; and

(*e*) multi-purpose halls, in 1974-75 and 1975-76, respectively?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

The department has a building programme of projects that it would anticipate undertaking in the years 1975 and 1976. However it does not make a practice of publishing its building programmes in advance because of the many factors that have an influence upon the programme and could result in the programme not being fully met. For instance, the programme is based on present day costs and conditions and it is inevitable, in the present climate, that costs will rise and also, from time to time, there are policy changes in the sort of facilities that are to be provided. For these reasons the department believes it would be ill advised to announce a programme which it could not guarantee it could perform.

If the honorable member wishes information concerning any particular schools, the department would be able to state what present expectations are, but without any firm commitment.

FURNITURE TRADES APPRENTICES.

(Question No. 270)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Education—

In view of the Apprenticeship Commission's survey which shows that facilities for teaching furniture trades apprentices are too limited for effective working of a full class and that too few machines are available for use by apprentices—

1. What measures he has taken to deal with this situation?

2. Whether additional trade training facilities will be provided to meet the needs of Box Hill, Clayton, and the northern suburbs, respectively; if so when?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. The Technical Schools Division has replanned the specialist building complex at Prahran Technical College for cabinet making apprentice training to provide the additional space required, and has provided the improved equipment necessary to mount the revised training courses.

2. Additional trade training facilities are being provided to cover the needs of the furniture industry. Jordanville Technical School covering the Box Hill and Clayton areas started as a cabinet making school this year, and Broadmeadows West Technical School will provide facilities for the northern suburbs.

METAL TRADES APPRENTICES.

(Question No. 271)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Education—

1. When engineering trade workshops teaching metal trades apprentices at Keon Park, Aspendale, Brighton, Sandringham, Oakleigh, Preston Blackburn, Ferntree Gully, Jordanville, Mooroolbark, Brunswick, Essendon and Tottenham technical schools, respectively, will be brought up to a standard in respect of equipment and space acceptable to the Apprenticeship Commission?

2. How many apprentices are attending each of these schools, indicating in what trade they are receiving instruction?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. In general, the listed schools will be brought to the standard required for fitting and machining apprentices as soon as sufficient money is allocated for this purpose from Federal and State funds.

In particular the Ferntree Gully Technical School has been completely updated and re-equipped to third-year level (final year), and some new machine tools have been supplied to Brighton, Oakleigh, Essendon and Tottenham technical schools.

2. Brunswick Technical School's senior machine shop has also had an extensive updating which included many new machine tools and a completely new floor.

Name of school	Engineering	Building	Cookery	Gardening	Total
Aspendale Technical School	13	27	..	..	40
Blackburn Technical School	9	..	..	..	9
Brighton Technical School	34	246	44	..	324
Brunswick Technical School	54	132	..	..	186
Essendon Technical School	110	126	..	..	236
Ferntree Gully Technical School ..	185	173	..	..	358
Jordanville Technical School	48	66	..	..	114
Keon Park Technical School	35	..	..	..	35
Mooroolbark Technical School ..	11	93	..	..	104
Oakleigh Technical School	104	165	..	208	477
Preston Technical School	314	307	..	..	621
Sandringham Technical School	16	42	..	..	58
Tottenham Technical School	97	..	..	..	97

APPRENTICESHIPS.

(Question No. 274)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Education—

In respect of the training of apprentices in the trades of dental mechanic, dry cleaning, electro-plating, flat glass making and tile laying, what action has been taken to provide additional equipment requested by the Apprenticeship Commission?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

The equipment that flat glass and tile laying trade training requires has been investigated and the purchase of specific items has started. More equipment will be obtained as funds come to hand.

Dry cleaning—Several items of equipment have been purchased and are awaiting installation by the Public Works Department.

Dental mechanics—Equipment to the value of $10,738 has been, or is being ordered, and equipment to the value of $8,820 is included in TAFE estimates.

Electro-plating—An amount of $35,275 has been included in the TAFE submission to permit of replacement and additional equipment.

Flat glass making and tile laying—The purchase of specific items has begun and more equipment will be obtained as funds permit.

WOOD-MACHINING APPRENTICES.

(Question No. 275)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What is the present loading in weeks per year in respect of apprenticeship training in the trade of wood-machining?

2. What is the estimated loading for each of the years 1975 to 1978, inclusive?

3. What action has been taken to provide urgently needed additional facilities in this trade?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. Apprentices do 36 weeks of training including examinations out of the 40 weeks available.

2. The estimated loading for 1975 is 193 students and 9 teachers. The estimated loading for the years 1976-1978 depends on the response to our advertisements for additional instructors.

3. Attempts are being made to introduce classes for wood-machining apprentices at Preston Technical College (Albert Street Annexe) and Royal Melbourne technical college, and to extend the facilities at Prahran Technical College by moving out to another college one of the trades at present housed there.

GREENWOOD HIGH SCHOOL.

(Question No. 289)

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What is the current enrolment at Greenwood High School?

2. What are the expected enrolments in 1975 and 1976?

3. When it is expected that tenders will be called for the construction of stage three of the school?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. 629 at August, 1974.

2. 750 and 850.

3. It is hoped that tenders for blocks A and B at Greenwood High School will be invited towards the end of this month or early in November.

OVERSEAS TEACHER SELECTION PROGRAMME.

(Question No. 302)

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Minister of Education—

Further to the answer to question No. 37 asked on 17th September, 1974, in respect of the Victorian overseas teacher selection programme—

1. What other expenditure the Government has incurred and paid to American personnel or organizations each financial year in respect of—(*a*) administrative expenses; and (*b*) other expenses?

2. Whether there is a fixed per capita charge for administrative expenses; if so, what is the rate of the charge; if not, what is the basis of such payments?

3. From what Education Department accounts funds have been used for salaries, air ticket costs, administrative expenses and other expenses, respectively?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. The administrative expenses in respect of each of the financial years are as follows—

1971–72, $8,652.20; 1972–73, $3,049.73; 1973–74, $21,068.29; and 1974–75, $42,000.

There were no other expenses.

2. From the inception of the programme until January, 1974 administrative expenditure incurred in interviewing and selecting applicants was reimbursed on the production of vouchers.

In January, 1974 the basis for payment was crarged to a per capita one for each recruited teacher. The per capita payments in respect of the February and May airlifts were $30 and $35 respectively. Since 6th July, 1974 the only payment made towards recruitment costs is $120 for each teacher recruited.

3. Expenditure incurred has been charged as follows—

Salaries—Salaries and allowances votes.

Air ticket costs } Not applicable, no costs

Charter flight costs } Travelling and subsistence votes

Administrative expenses } Books and publications; Other incidental expenses votes; Travelling and subsistence votes

Other expenses—Not applicable.

NOTE.—Expenses in respect of the financial year 1974–75 will be charged to a new item—Division 301 Education Administration 3 Other Services, Item 30 Overseas Teacher's Selection Programme Expenses.

AIR POLLUTION.

(Question No. 346)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister for Conservation—

In respect of air pollution levels taken by the Environment Protection Authority up to the end of September, 1974—

1. How many days were classified as—(*a*) clean air; (*b*) light pollution; (*c*) significant pollution; and (*d*) heavy pollution, specifying the dates of significant and heavy pollution, respectively?

2. On how many days the ozone level exceeded the World Health Organization level?

3. On how many days the carbon-monoxide level exceeded the World Health Organization level?

4. Whether pollution readings are taken in the suburbs of Brunswick and Coburg; if so, how often?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation): The answer is—

1. The distribution of the classifications of air pollution levels taken by the Environment Protection Authority up to 30th September, 1974, was as follows—

(*a*)	Clean air	291 days
(*b*)	Light pollution	91 days
(*c*)	Significant pollution	11 days
(*d*)	Heavy pollution	3 days

Significant pollution was reported on the following days—

23rd October, 1973
11th December, 1973
13th December, 1973
8th March, 1974
19th March, 1974
25th March, 1974
27th March, 1974
6th June, 1974
13th June, 1974
3rd July, 1974
30th August, 1974

Heavy pollution was reported on the following days—

29th May, 1974
4th June, 1974
14th June, 1974

2. The World Health Organization in its Technical Report (No. 506) "Air Quality Criteria and Guides for Urban Air Pollutants", made recommendations as to short-term guides and long-term goals for photochemical oxidants expressed as ozone.

Measured as ozone, the World Health Organization short-term guide (maximum one hour average concentration of 200 microgram/cubic metre (or 10·2 pphm)) was observed to have been exceeded on eleven days since 19th July, 1973.

Measured as ozone, the World Health Organization long-term (maximum one hour concentration of 120 microgram/cubic metre (or 6·1 pphm)) was observed to have been exceeded on 29 days during the same period. This figure of 29 days included the eleven days referred to above.

3. In the same Technical Report (No. 506) the World Health Organization made similar recommendations as to short-term guides and long-term goals for carbon monoxide.

There has been no occasion since monitoring for carbon monoxide commenced on a routine basis in September, 1973 when the concentration of carbon monoxide was observed to exceed either the World Health Organization short-term guide (maximum one hour average concentration of 117 milligram/cubic metre (100 ppm)) or the World Health Organization long-term goal (maximum one hour average concentration of 40 milligram/cubic metre (35 ppm)).

4. Monitoring for sulphur dioxide and suspended smoke is carried out on a continuous basis using equipment placed at the Brunswick council depot, Albert Street, West Brunswick. This equipment gives 24-hour average values.

In addition, the following fallout deposit gauges are situated within the suburbs of Brunswick and Coburg—

Gauge 141 situated at the Brunswick Croquet Club, Victoria Street, Brunswick.

Gauge 142 situated at the council nursery, Corner Victoria Street and Cross Street, East Brunswick.

Gauge 251 situated at 173 Elizabeth Street, North Coburg.

Gauge 252 situated at the Sacred Heart Hospital, Moreland Road, Coburg.

Fallout deposit gauges are maintained at each of these sites on a continuous basis. These gauges are exchanged every two months.

ALLAMBIE RECEPTION CENTRE.

(Question No. 349)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Agriculture, for the Minister for Social Welfare—

In respect of Allambie Reception Centre—

1. How many children the Social Welfare Department recommends as—(*a*) the maximum; and (*b*) the desirable number of occupants?

2. What was the number of—(*a*) children in residence; and (*b*) children sleeping on mattresses on the floor on the first day of each of the past twelve months?

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture): The answer supplied by the Minister for Social Welfare is—

1. (*a*) The maximum number of children who can be housed under tolerable conditions at Allambie Reception Centre is 289, 265 in beds and 24 on mattresses on the floor. In emergencies during the main school holiday period the Allambie school building can be used to accommodate an additional 42 children in beds. The maximum capacity is thus 331 children.

(*b*) The desirable maximum number of children, making allowances for the provision of a bed, bedside locker and a reasonable amount of floor area for each child, is 200 children.

2. (*a*) To obviate any confusion between the number of children in residence, which is the way the question is phrased, and the number of children under care at Allambie, this latter figure including children who might be hospitalized, on extended leave, absconded or otherwise not actually accommodated at Allambie, the following table has been prepared—

Date	Number of children under Allambie care	Number of children resident Allambie	Number of floor beds
1st October, 1973..	249	228	2
1st November, 1973	262	232	17
1st December, 1973	264	229	14
1st January, 1974..	288	195	5
1st February, 1974	301	233	25
1st March, 1974	245	221	2
1st April, 1974	291	264	17
1st May, 1974	268	248	10
1st June, 1974	265	237	21
1st July, 1974	239	227	5
1st August, 1974	257	246	11
1st September, 1974	277	214	0
1st October, 1974..	262	244	24

MIGRANT ASSISTANCE BUREAU.

(Question No. 354)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Health, for the Minister of Immigration—

In respect of the proposal to establish a special bureau to help migrants—

1. In which department the bureau will be located?

2. When the bureau will be established?

3. What personnel and financial resources will be provided for the bureau?

4. In what general areas of welfare the bureau will assist migrants?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The answer supplied by the Minister of Immigration is—

1. Premier's Department.

2 and 3. The bureau will be established as soon as possible and adequate resources will be provided.

4. The assistance needed to be given will entirely depend on the nature of the inquiries received.

MIGRANT ADVISORY COUNCIL.

(Question No. 355)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Health, for the Minister of Immigration—

In respect of the proposal to establish a migrant advisory council—

1. To which Minister the council will report?

2. Whether such reports will be presented to the Parliament?

3. When the council will be established?

4. What personnel and financial resources will be provided for the council?

5. What will be the membership of the council?

6. What relationship the council will have with—(*a*) the proposed migrant welfare bureau; and (*b*) the Commonwealth Department of Labour and Immigration?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The answer supplied by the Minister of Immigration is—

1. The Premier.

2. Yes

3 and 4. The council will be established as soon as possible after the bureau referred to in question No. 354 has been set up. Adequate personnel and financial resources will be provided.

5. This has not yet been decided.

6. The council will advise the Migrant Welfare Bureau in its work and will liaise closely with the Commonwealth Department of Labour and Immigration as well as the State Division of Immigration.

REGISTRATION OF CHIROPODISTS.

(Question No. 368)

Mr. LIND (Dandenong) asked the Minister of Health—

How many persons who were or had been practising chiropody on or before 10th February, 1970, applied to the Chiropodists Registration Board for registration between—(*a*) 10th February, 1970, and 10th February, 1972, indicating how many were registered and rejected, respectively; (*b*) 11th February, 1972, and 30th June, 1973, indicating the name of each applicant and the number registered; (*c*) 1st July, 1973, and 20th March, 1974, indicating the name of each applicant and the number registered?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The answer is—

During the first two-year period after the commencement of the Chiropodists Act 1968 on the 2nd February, 1970—

775 chiropodists were registered;
24 applications were rejected; and
15 were deferred for further consideration.

During the period 2nd February, 1972, to the 30th June, 1973—

220 applications were considered by the Chiropodists Registration Board (including the 15 deferred during the previous period).

Of that number—

91 persons were registered;
54 applications were rejected; and
75 persons were required to submit for examination.

Of that number only 25 actually undertook the examination. Six passed and were registered while a further person with only a borderline pass mark was subsequently registered.

Between the 1st July, 1973, and the 20th March, 1974—

9 additional persons applied for registration;
2 were registered on account of overseas qualifications;
1 application was withdrawn;
1 application was rejected;
5 applications are still being considered.

Under the provisions of the proposed legislation 148 persons would be entitled to apply to the Chiropodists Registration Board to seek re-training. A list of surnames and initials of these persons has been laid on the table of the library.

Of these 148—

80 are of persons whose applications were refused by the board; and

50 are of persons who were offered examination but did not accept that offer;

18 are of persons who were examined and failed that examination.

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION EMPLOYEES.

(Question No. 373)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Premier—

1. Whether he authorized an appeal against the order of Commissioner Vosti concerning wages for the employees of the State Electricity Commission; if so—(*a*) whether this appeal was authorized on 3rd September, 1974; (*b*) why he indicated to a number of trade union officers at the deputation on 11th September, 1974, that he had no knowledge of the appeal?

2. If he did not personally authorize the appeal, when he became aware of such decision?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The answer is—

1. After consultation with the Ministers concerned, I approved of an appeal being lodged against the Vosti S.E.C. wages decision by Her Majesty The Queen in Right of the State of Victoria.

(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) I gave no such indication.

2. The reply to part 1 answers this.

BURBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL.

(Question No. 384)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Education—

Further to the answers to question No. 91 asked on 17th September, 1974, and question No. 273 asked on 25th September, 1974, relating to additional buildings and site works at Burbank Primary School No. 4917—

1. What changes in site works are to be made around the library having regard to the construction of the multi-purpose room?

2. Whether the school was notified that work would shortly commence on the five new class-rooms, conversion of the art/craft accommodation, and standard conversion of staff accommodation, as part of the 1974 programme mentioned in letters from the Education Department dated 22nd February, 1974, and 1st April, 1974?

3. Whether the letter of 22nd February, 1974, notified the school that work would shortly commence and asked for the department to be notified as soon as occupied?

4. Whether the letter of 1st March, 1974, requested information as to the grades to utilize the available furniture and details of the furniture needed within six weeks of completion?

5. Whether both letters stated that approval had been given?

6. Whether he will lay on the table of the library the correspondence data and memoranda in respect to buildings and site works at the school?

7. With respect to question No. 273, whether the answer that "the needs of Burbank Primary School will be considered when the 1975-76 building programme is being prepared" means that the previous advice in the letters is incorrect?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. The Public Works Department will be asked to make whatever changes are necessary to the site works proposed around the library to accommodate future drainage and access requirements of the multi-purpose room at Burbank Primary School.

2–6. Yes.

7. The previous advice contained in letters to the school is not incorrect in that approval has been given to a scheme for the provision of additional class-rooms, an art/craft facility and improved staff and administration accommodation improvements and the work will proceed as circumstances permit. Due to conditions in the building industry and spiralling costs, the department's expectations of progress on its works programme have not been realized and a number of projects have had to be delayed.

ANCILLARY STAFF FOR SCHOOLS.

(Question No. 387)

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Education—

When it is expected that moneys paid in accordance with the recommendations of the Karmel Committee will be utilized by primary school principals and/or school committees for the employment of ancillary staff?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

An amendment of the Education Act to allow school councils and committees to employ ancillary staff is currently under consideration.

APPLICANTS FOR ESTATE AGENTS' LICENCES.

(Question No. 391)

Mr. HANN (Rodney) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. How many applications have been received by the Estate Agents Committee for estate agents' licences under rule 4 of the rules of the Estate Agents Committee in each of the past five years?

2. How many of these applications have been approved by the committee in each of those years?

3. What were the qualifications and experience of each of the successful applicants approved during the past two years?

4. Whether any successful applicant was not qualified; if so, what was the reason for granting him a licence?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The answer is—

1 and 2.

	Applications received	Applications approved
1970 ..	54	22
1971 ..	57	12
1972 ..	64	27
1973 ..	60	8
1974 ..	67	14

3. Of the 22 persons whose applications were approved by the committee in the past two years, nine had passed a prescribed course in another State and three had obtained qualifications in another country which the committee considered of equivalent standard to the Victorian course. Three other successful applicants had previously been licensed as estate agents in Victoria but were not eligible to re-apply under section 11 (1) (*b*) of the Estate Agents Act for the reason that their licences had not been held within the immediately preceding five years.

Two applicants had not passed a prescribed course but had been licensed as estate agents in another State for 18 years and 23 years respectively. The remaining person had been licensed in this State as a sub-agent for the last 28 years and, but for the fact that he was employed by a corporation declared by the Minister under section 11A (2) of the Estate Agents Act, would have been entitled as of right to an estate agent's licence in accordance with the provisions of section 11 (*c*) of the Act.

4. The last three applicants mentioned in answer 3 above had not passed a prescribed course of education. However, I am unable to indicate the reasons for granting licences in these cases as no record is maintained by the Estate Agents Committee of its reasons for granting or refusing applications.

POSTAL VOTING.

(Question No. 406)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Chief Secretary—

Whether, in respect of future elections, he will authorize the issue of a plain envelope for use in returning the postal vote to ensure the absolute privacy of a person's postal vote?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The answer is—

It is assumed that the honorable member proposes that the existing declaration envelope containing the postal voter's ballot-paper should be enclosed in a plain outer envelope addressed to the returning officer so, that during the letter's transit through the post, it would not be apparent that the envelope contained a postal ballot-paper nor would the postal voter's identity be disclosed.

The feasibility of introducing such a procedure is being investigated.

WEDDERBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL.

(Question No. 407)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Education—

When renovations will be carried out at Wedderburn Primary School?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

The preparation of documents for necessary renovations at Wedderburn Primary School has been completed and it is expected that tenders will be invited at an early date.

TEACHER HOUSING.

(Question No. 408)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What is the reason for the delay in the purchase of a further house for staff at Maryborough East Primary School?

2. What total funds were available to the Teacher Housing Authority in 1973–1974 and what funds are available for 1974–75?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. The delay has resulted from the Teacher Housing Authority, despite constant efforts, being unable to locate and purchase a suitable house in Maryborough for this priority. Investigations are still continuing.

2. (*a*) 1973–74

	$
Capital Loan	1,050,000
Maintenance Grant	536,000
Karmel Grant	100,000
Total	1,686,000

(*b*) 1974–75 (on advice to date)

Capital Loan	1,151,000
Maintenance Grant	536,000
Total	1,687,000

GRANTS FOR REGISTERED SCHOOLS.

(Question No. 409)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Education—

Whether the increased *per capita* grants for registered schools as announced in the Budget will be made retrospective to January this year; if not, why?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

Per capita grants payable to the school authorities of non-government schools in 1974 are prescribed in Educational Grants Act 1973 (No. 8495).

For the 1975 school year *per capita* grants to non-government schools will be based on a specifically Victorian measuring stick as promised in the 1973-74 Budget speech.

ASCOT HOUSING ESTATE.

(Question No. 412)

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds) asked the Minister of Transport, for the Minister of Housing—

1. What stage has been reached with plans for the landscaping and installation of adventure playgrounds at the Ascot Housing Estate?

2. When this work will be completed?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer supplied by the Minister of Housing is—

1 and 2. On section 4, bounded by Wingate Avenue, Churchill Avenue and Savage Street, all preliminary paving works are 80 per cent completed.

Contracts for public lighting, car parks and paving in the area bounded by Churchill Avenue, Morshead Street, Ascot Street, Epsom Road and Portal Avenue, have been let and are due for completion early in the New Year.

It is anticipated that tenders for improvements to landscaping and playground areas will be called during November, 1974.

HOUSING COMMISSION TENANCIES.

(Question No. 413)

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Minister of Transport, for the Minister of Housing—

1. How many Housing Commission 2-bedroom, 3-bedroom and 4-bedroom houses, respectively, are currently rented by tenants in—(*a*) Victoria; and (*b*) Geelong?

2. How many were similarly rented as at 1st July, 1973, and 1st July, 1960, respectively?

3. How many commission—(*a*) houses; and (*b*) flats, were in Victoria and Geelong, respectively, as at 1st July, 1973 and 1st July, 1960?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer supplied by the Minister of Housing is—

1. Number of 2, 3 and 4-bedroom houses rented by commission tenants (at 30th September, 1974).

	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	4-bedroom
(*a*) In Victoria ..	4,735	15,130	2,555
(*b*) In Geelong area ..	734	1,038	134

2. Number similarly rented at 1st July, 1973.

(*a*) In Victoria ..	5,048	15,836	2,604
(*b*) Geelong area ..	769	1,049	141
(*a*) In Victoria ..	7,998	16,646	2,957
(*b*) In Geelong area ..	989	1,448	166

3. Number of commission built houses and flats.

	(*a*) Houses	(*b*) Flats
(i) In Victoria		
At 1st July, 1973 ..	58,915	16,933
At 1st July, 1960 ..	37,578	4,775
(ii) In Geelong area		
At 1st July, 1973 ..	5,529	248
At 1st July, 1960 ..	3,281	112

Note: In the above "Geelong area" includes Newtown, Geelong East, Geelong North, Geelong West, Corio, Newcomb, Norlane and Whittington.

MUNICIPAL ELECTRICAL UNDERTAKINGS.

(Question No. 420)

Mr. FOGARTY (Sunshine) asked the Minister for Fuel and Power—

Whether it is the intention of the State Electricity Commission to acquire the electrical undertakings owned by various municipalities; if so, when, and which undertakings are involved?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): The answer is—

The councils, Box Hill, Brunswick, Coburg, Doncaster and Templestowe, Footscray, Heidelberg, Melbourne, Northcote, Preston and Williamstown, operate electrical undertakings on franchises without time limits. The commission does not have the power to compulsorily acquire these undertakings, however it would consider acquisition of any electrical undertaking on a voluntary basis.

SCHOOL MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES.

(Question No. 421)

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston) asked the Minister of Health—

1. Which schools in the electoral district of Preston have been visited by medical and dental units for the purpose of checking the sight, hearing and teeth of pupils?

2. What were the results of such checking and what problems were highlighted?

3. Whether he has given consideration to the employment of a medico-social worker in Preston schools; if so, what was the result of such consideration?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The answer is—

1. Visits have not been made in recent times to any school in the Preston electoral district by staff of the School Dental Service.

Visits have been made by members of the school medical and nursing staffs to schools in the Preston electoral district for many years. In 1973 the following schools were visited—

Primary	*Secondary*
Preston North East 4764	Preston East High
Preston 1494	Preston Girls High
Preston East 4316	Preston Technical
Preston West 3885	Marist Brothers College Preston
Gowerville 4674	
Preston South 824	
Bell 4309	
Sacred Heat, Preston	
Thornbury 3889	
St. Mary's, Thornbury	

In 1974 the following schools were visited or are listed for visiting this year—

Primary	*Secondary*
Preston North East 4764	Preston East High
Preston 1494	Preston Girls High
Preston East 4316	Preston Technical
Gowerville 4674	Marist Brothers College, Preston
Preston South 824	
Bell	
Thornbury 3889	
St. Raphael's, West Preston	
Sacred Heart, Preston	

2. In 1973 a total of 1,385 vision tests were carried out in these schools and 706 full medical examinations (not included in the figure for vision tests). In addition 1,046 children were either reviewed from previous visits or referred by teaching staff. From a total enrolment of 8,258, 3,137 children were seen by the School Medical Service, of whom 342 were referred for action by their own medical advisers.

In 1974, a total of 2,240 vision tests were carried out in these schools, together with 768 audiometric tests, and 614 full medical examinations (not included in figures for vision). In addition 631 children were either reviewed from previous visits or referred by teaching staff. From a total enrolment of 7,137, 4,253 children were seen by the School Medical Service, of which 231 were referred for action by their own medical advisers.

Of the sixteen schools in the electoral district, eight have asked for and received visits from school nurses for the inspection of children in relation to head lice infestation. In these eight schools of 3,764 children examined, 461 were found to be infested. Forty-six visits were made. In all 8,982 inspections were carried out as each child infested has to be examined more than once to ensure that there is no re-infestation.

Apart from this type of information, the School Medical Service does not have the facilities for a statistical breakdown of the various disabilities from which children are found to be suffering.

3. The employment of a medical social worker by the Department of Health for work in Preston schools is not considered necessary at the present time.

The Special Services Branch of the Education Department employs social workers and their work is complemented by services available through the local public hospital and mental health services.

STUDENT HOUSING.

(Question No. 432)

Mr. AMOS (Morwell) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What provision has been made for housing students attending the Gippsland

Institute of Advanced Education, indicating—(*a*) when student housing will be commenced at the institute; and (*b*) when the units will be ready for occupation?

2. What steps will be taken to assist students' housing problems until student units are completed?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. A sum of $290,000 is available for the construction of student residential accommodation at the Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education in the 1973–75 triennium.

It is anticipated that a contract for the construction of this accommodation will be signed in November, 1974 and that the accommodation will be available for use in May, 1975.

2. The institute has secured some rented accommodation for use by students and is attempting to secure additional accommodation.

HOUSING MINISTERS' MEETING IN CANBERRA.

(Question No. 434)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Transport, for the Minister of Housing—

Whether the Minister attended a meeting of Ministers of Housing in Canberra on 13th October, 1974; if so,—(*a*) where bookings were made for the Minister's travel to Canberra; (*b*) on which flights the Minister was booked and on which flights he travelled; (*c*) why the Minister left the meeting before its conclusion; and (*d*) whether he left prior to discussion on revising the needs test for Housing Commission applicants?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer supplied by the Minister of Housing is—

The Minister of Housing did not attend a meeting of Ministers of Housing in Canberra on 13th October. He attended a meeting in Canberra on 11th October.

(*a*) Tentative flight bookings were made on 30th September.

(*b*) The Minister was tentatively booked for flight to Canberra on either Thursday night, 10th October, or Friday morning, 11th October, and to return to Melbourne on either the early or late afternoon flight on Friday, 11th October.

The Minister travelled on—

Melbourne-Canberra Flight AN 396—10th October
Canberra-Melbourne Flight AN 393—11th October.

(*c*) The matter of raising the means test immediately was considered by the Victorian Government to be one of extreme urgency and should be listed for discussion at the Ministers' conference. At the appropriate time the Victorian Minister moved—"that the States have the full responsibility to adjust the means test consistent with the situation applying in any State at any particular time and following any universal wage increases that automatically take place within the community."

The motion was seconded by the New South Wales Minister, the Honorable Mr. L. McGinty.

After discussion it was agreed with Victoria dissenting that the subject of the means test be listed on the agenda for the next conference of housing Ministers.

As Victoria had dissented the transcript of proceedings from this point was as follows—

"Mr. Dickie—As the motion to defer the matter was carried I should now advise the conference of what Victoria intends to do immediately. We are setting up a State Housing and Land Finance Fund which will be money regenerated from previous agreements, and it is quite substantial. We will be announcing today an immediate increase in the means test from $102 to $110 for housing authority applications and from $114.85 exclusive of overtime to $130 exclusive of overtime. We will not be violating the terms of the 1973 agreement in any way. All funds that you have made available will be restricted to those with incomes up to $102 and those in the co-operative housing field who have incomes up to $114.85.

With our State Housing and Land Finance Fund, which has substantial funds in it, we will be catering for these people who today cannot turn to anybody. They cannot get money from the bank or, if they do, it is at an interest rate that they cannot service. Ours is a responsible Government and we feel that we must look after the interests of these people. Therefore we will be raising the means test limit immediately so that we can retain on our waiting list all those people who, through no fault of their own, have an income up to $110, and we will service them under the old agreement money. So far as the co-operative housing movement is concerned, we will create co-operative housing societies for people in the $114.85 to $130 group and service them also with this money which, as a State Government, we control. We have full responsibility for how we spend this money. We will be buying land, which is something which you queried initially. It is for us to decide what we will do with this. We will be buying land and servicing it with these very same funds and reselling blocks of land to low income earners who can be earning up to $200. The reason for this is that these people have nowhere to turn to today. There is no way in which they can be helped. But we as a State Government believe that we have a responsibility to help them. So that is what

Victoria will be doing as from today. We will be announcing the establishment of a $15 million State Housing and Land Finance Fund and we will be raising to the figures mentioned the means test limit for people who can be serviced out of this fund. In doing so we will not in any way be violating the terms of the 1973 Agreement. I am just informing you of the situation.

Mr. Lowe (Minister of Housing, Tasmania)—May I formally move that this conference applauds Mr. Dickie on his initiative? We have been doing that all the time in Tasmania with our revolving funds.

Mr. Dickie—With an announcement on the means test?

Mr. Lowe—Yes.

Mr. Les Johnson—I rather feel that the comments made by Mr. Dickie are quite inappropriate to the proceedings. We are here in respect of housing agreement matters. It is the right of a State to do what it likes with its own funds. Mr. Dickie is saying that his State is going to exercise its rights in this matter as other States have done. I do not know that that has much to do with this meeting. He has given us the assurance that there is no breach of the agreement, in which event it seems to me that we should proceed to the next business.

Mr. Dickie—Very good. I am so pleased.

Mr. Les Johnson—You have raised the matter, but I think you will agree that what you have raised has noting to do with this conference.

Mr. Dickie—I think it has everything to do with this conference because the means test limit in Victoria today will be announced as being increased to the figures I have mentioned.

Mr. Les Johnson—You may announce whatever figures you like in relation to your State programme, but I cannot see that it has anything to do with the matters that are before the conference for discussion.

Mr. Dickie—I am pleased to hear your reaction.

Mr. Les Johnson—I do not think anybody else would have been in doubt about my reaction to a comment of that kind.

Mr. Dickie—Very good.

Mr. Les Johnson—If it is the wish of Ministers we will proceed to deal with agenda item No. 1."

(*d*) The Minister left the meeting before its conclusion in order to return to Melbourne to immediately put the Victorian plan into action.

As can be seen in the above transcript the matter of the means test was finalized. The Minister is now aware that the subject of the means test was again raised later in the conference, but the discussion was not related to Victoria's earlier resolution.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING BOARD.

(Question No. 436)

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) asked the Minister of Transport, for the Minister for Local Government—

1. Who are the members of the Town and Country Planning Board?

2. What are the terms of appointment, indicating when each member was first appointed?

3. What remuneration is paid to each member?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer supplied by the Minister for Local Government is—

Designation	Name	Date of first appointment	Term of appointment	Remuneration
Chairman	R. D. L. Fraser	27th June, 1966	Five years	$22,625 salary, plus $1,000 allowance
Deputy Chairman	H. W. Hein	20th May, 1969	Five years	$19,500
Member	A. C. Collins	27th June, 1963	Three years	$1,500 per annum retainer plus $20 for each meeting attended
Member	P. B. Ronald	29th June, 1971	Until 31st December, 1974	$1,500 per annum retainer plus $20 for each meeting attended

TOWN PLANNING APPEALS TRIBUNAL.

(Question No. 437)

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) asked the Minister of Transport, for the Minister for Local Government—

1. Who are the members of the Town Planning Appeals Tribunal?

2. What are the terms of appointment, indicating when each member was first appointed?

3. What remuneration is paid to each member?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer supplied by the Minister for Local Government is—

Designation	Name	Date of first appointment	Appointment	Remuneration
Chairman	J. F. Kearney	11th June, 1971	Three years	$22,625 salary per annum
Chairman	F. H. Lonie	8th April, 1970	Three years	$22,625 salary per annum
Member	D. G. Mack	8th April, 1970	Three years	$12,000 salary per annum
Member	F. M. Read	8th April, 1970	Three years	$12,000 salary per annum
Member	K. M. S. Holland	5th September, 1972	Three years	$12,000 salary per annum
Member	C. V. Vaughan	4th August, 1973	Three years	$12,000 salary per annum

ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC AUTHORITY.

(Question No. 439)

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Who are the members of the Road Safety and Traffic Authority?

2. What are the terms of appointment, indicating when each member was first appointed?

3. What remuneration is paid to each member?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The answer is—

1 and 2.

Member	First appointed
Mr. J. G. Westland, Chairman	9th February, 1971
Dr. J. Grayton Brown, Deputy Chairman	9th February, 1971
Mr. A. A. Strempel	16th February, 1971
Mr. R. E. Lee	16th February, 1971
Mr. G. A. B. Riley	11th December, 1973
Miss R. M. Fisher	16th February, 1974
Assistant Commissioner, J. G. McLaren	7th September, 1971
Mr. G. W. Trinca	7th July, 1973
Mr. M. D. Windram	23rd February, 1971
Cr. M. W. Eise	23rd March, 1971

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Road Safety and Traffic Authority are appointed for periods not exceeding five years and the nominated members for terms not exceeding three years.

The Chairman currently receives an annual salary of $21,875 and an allowance of $1,000 per annum. The Deputy Chairman receives a salary of $19,500 per annum and nominated members each receive $20.00 per meeting attended.

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION.

(Question No. 442)

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) asked the Minister for Fuel and Power—

1. Who are the members of the State Electricity Commission?

2. What are the terms of appointment, indicating when each member was first appointed?

3. What remuneration is paid to each member?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): The answer is—

1. N. R. White, M.B., F.I.E. Aust.—Chairman.

   T. P. Scott, F.A.I.I.

   B. J. Callinan, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., B.C.E., F.I.C.E., F.I.E. Aust. F.R.A.P.I.

   Sir Roger Darvall, C.B.E., F.A.S.A.

2. Section 5 (2) of the State Electricity Commission Act (No. 6377) allows for the appointment of commissioners for terms of up to seven years.

N. R. White was appointed chairman and general manager of the commission on 1st September, 1971, for a period of three years. This term was subsequently extended by three months to 30th November, 1974.

T. P. Scott was first appointed a commissioner on 12th May, 1960, for a period of five years and was reappointed in 1965 and 1970 for further terms of five years. He was a deputy commissioner from 14th April, 1960, to 11th May, 1960.

B. J. Callinan was first appointed a commissioner on 1st March, 1963, for a term of five years and was reappointed in 1968 and 1973 for further terms of five years.

Sir Roger Darvall was first appointed a commissioner on 19th July, 1969, for a term of five years and was reappointed on 18th July, 1974, for a period of three years. Prior to his first appointment he had acted as a deputy commissioner on several occasions for periods of no more than three months at one time.

3. The remuneration of the chairman and general manager of the commission is currently $33,875 per annum, plus an entertainment and representation allowance of $2,000 per annum. The remuneration of the commissioners is currently $3,500 per annum.

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADES BOARD.

(Question No. 444)

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Who are the members of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board?

2. What are the terms of appointment, indicating when each member was first appointed?

3. What remuneration is paid to each member?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The answer is—

Member	First appointed
E. C. M. Symes Esquire, (President)	17th June, 1970
L. E. Griffiths Esquire, O.B.E., (Deputy President)..	1st January, 1966
J. C. Mogg Esquire	1st January, 1969
K. N. Fisk Esquire	17th June, 1973
Cr. J. P. Brebner	15th October, 1969
Cr. E. V. Johnson, J.P.	17ht June, 1970
Cr. M. Ress, M.B.E.	13th July, 1971
J. Sheridan, Esquire	13th March, 1974

Members are appointed for a three year term ending 16th June, 1976, with the expectation of the president who is appointed for a five year term ending 17th June, 1975.

3. The president currently receives an annual salary of $22,625 and an allowance of $1,000 per annum. All other members serve in an honorary capacity.

BENAMBRA PRIMARY SCHOOL.

(Question No. 449)

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East) asked the Minister of Education—

1. Whether the attention of the Education Department has been drawn to the unsatisfactory water supply at Benambra Primary School No. 1746?

2. Whether he is aware that rainwater tanks at the school required for supplies of drinking water, are being used to supply the septic system?

3. What works are proposed to avoid a water shortage at this school over the summer months?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. Yes.

2 and 3. Approval was given for the deepening of the bore which supplies water to the toilets but difficulty was experienced in obtaining the services of a drilling contractor to carry out the work. The local Public Works Department Inspector of Works has now obtained a quotation and this will be submitted for consideration shortly.

EAST KEILOR WATER MAIN.

(Question No. 454)

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Public Works, for the Minister of Water Supply—

When is it estimated that the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works will replace the private water main with a board main to service Riverside Place, East Keilor?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): The answer supplied by the Minister of Water Supply is—

It is anticipated that the water main in Riverside Place, East Keilor, will be constructed during the first quarter of 1975.

COUNCIL OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.

(Question No. 462)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Education—

In respect of the Council of Public Education—

1. Who is the chairman and what is the term of office?

2. Who are the members, which organizations they represent and what are the commencing and concluding dates of their terms of office?

3. How many times the council has met in the past two years?

4. When the council's report for 1973-74 will be tabled in the Parliament?

5. Whether the paper on the functions and representation of the council, mentioned on page 9 of the council's report for 1972-73, is completed; if so, whether he has received the paper and, in that event, whether he will make a copy available to the Member for Brunswick West?

6. Whether a report has been prepared on migrant education; if so, whether he will make a copy available to the member for Brunswick West?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. (*a*) Dr. L. W. Shears, Director-General of Education, is the president and chairman of the council.

(*b*) The term of office is three years.

2—

(*a*) Professor A. G. Austin—Representative of University of Melbourne.

Mr. G. Bartle—Representative of the Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne.

Dr. B. Bessant—Representative of La Trobe University.

Mr. A. Cahill—Representative of Victoria Trades Hall Council.

Mr. C. Cave—Representative of Council of Adult Education.

Dr. T. H. Coates (Vice-President)—Representative of Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria.

Mr. R. Francis—Representative of Education Department.

Mr. J. Fyfield—Representative of Monash University.

Mr. D. Hayne—Representative of Victoria Chamber of Manufactures.

Mr. F. Heaviside—Representative of Technical Schools Association of Victoria.

Mr. E. Jackson—Representative of Education Department.

Brigadier P. P. Jackson—Representative of Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Mr. T. Kneen—Representative of Agriculture Department.

Miss H. Lyon (Observer only)—Representative of Institute of Early Childhood Development, Kew.

Rev. Fr. F. M. Martin—Representative of Catholic Education Office.

Mr. T. J. Moore (Chairman Registration Committee)—Representative of Education Department.

Mr. R. Parry—Representative of Victoria Institute of Colleges.

Miss R. Powell—Representative of Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria.

Mr. R. Row—Representative of Education Department.

Mr. F. Ruler—Representative of Victorian Agricultural Societies Association.

Dr. L. Shears (President)—Representative of Education Department.

Mr. A. Steart—Representative of Catholic Education Office.

(*b*) The term of office is three years and the present term commenced on the 1st January, 1972, and expires on the 31st December, 1974.

3. The council met five times in 1973 and has had two meetings this year.

4. The 1973-74 annual report has been prepared but not yet printed.

5. The council is still considering the representation and functions of the council; I have not received a paper on this matter as yet.

6. The council did not prepare a report on migrant education.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT BUILDING EXPENDITURE.

(Question No. 464)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Public Works—

In respect of the financial year 1973-74, what payments were made to the Public Works Department for design and project control of Education Department projects from—(*a*) Commonwealth Government sources; (*b*) State funds; and (*c*) joint funds of both Governments, specifying the percentage of the final building expenditure in each case?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): The answer is—

Payments are not made to the Public Works Department but to consolidated revenue. Amounts paid to revenue for Education Department projects for 1973-74 are—

(*a*) Commonwealth Government funds	$1,231,280
(*b*) State funds (excluding maintenance) works and services account	$3,908,094

(*c*) There are no joint funds but expenditure is charged either to appropriate Commonwealth funds or works and services account. These are included in (*a*) and (*b*) above.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, October 23, 1974.

The PRESIDENT **(Sir Raymond Garrett)** took the chair at 4.28 p.m., and read the prayer.

STATUTE LAW REVISION COMMITTEE.

VAGRANCY (INSUFFICIENT MEANS) BILL; VAGRANCY ACT 1966.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province) presented a report from the Statute Law Revision Committee on the proposals contained in the Vagrancy (Insufficient Means) Bill 1974, and on section 5 of the Vagrancy Act 1966, together with an extract from the proceedings of the committee, appendices and minutes of evidence.

It was ordered that they be laid on the table, and that the report, the extract from the proceedings of the committee and appendix "A" be printed.

SOCIAL WELFARE (SENTENCES) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from October 16) on the motion of the Hon. J. W. Galbally (Melbourne North Province) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare): When I was appointed Minister for Social Welfare, Mr. Galbally promised that he would help me in any way he could. This Bill is a demonstration of his good faith. I feel somewhat in the position of a dentist who, when poised with a fast-whirling drill, tells the patient, "this is not going to hurt". In this case, the dentist would probably be right in that it will not hurt the patient or the dentist.

The Bill has been introduced by Mr. Galbally as the result of recommendations made by the Statute Law Revision Committee, of which he is a member. The recommendations certainly accord with the policies of the Government and the feelings of honorable members on all sides of the House. Regrettably, the Bill does not go quite far enough with some of its provisions. There is an element of distinction between different types of sentences and I should like the opportunity of bringing into the House a Bill incorporating the proposals contained in this measure and at the same time go a little further by including certain sentences which are not included in this Bill. These sentences were, in fact, not the subject of examination by the Statute Law Revision Committee, and therefore that committee did not have an opportunity of reporting on them. Nevertheless, the further provisions should be included in a Bill and dealt with at the same time as Mr. Galbally's proposals are brought forward.

For that reason, I should like to suggest that I have the opportunity of introducing in this session, subject to all the problems that may arise—I do not believe those problems are insurmountable—a Bill to include what is proposed by Mr. Galbally and certain provisions relating to other sentences that may be imposed.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province): I am agreeable to the course proposed by the Minister who in fact discussed it with me last night. Perhaps I should tell the House of the chain of events. This Bill was instigated by me as the result of some concern about numbers of persons on remand who could not obtain bail and perhaps spent three or six months in prisons awaiting trial. If such persons are found guilty, it seemed fair that any sentence imposed by the judge ought to be lessened by the time spent in the remand yard. Therefore, if a judge imposed a sentence of three years and a person had been on remand for three months, the sentence would in fact be for two years and nine months.

The Statute Law Revision Committee, of which I am a member, took evidence on this matter and made certain recommendations. I have not

seen the report for some time. I should add that I sat in and heard the evidence but, in accordance with rules of conduct laid down for members of this House, I took no part in framing the report.

When a youth is sentenced to youth training for, say, twelve months, it would appear that no allowance is made for any time spent on remand to be taken off the sentence of youth training. Accordingly, if the Bill is deficient in that respect, it ought to be remedied. Therefore, I would propose that the debate be adjourned to enable the Minister to prepare the necessary legislation. I hope the honorable gentleman is right when he says that he thinks he can introduce the Bill during this sessional period. If that is not possible, the amendments proposed in my Bill ought to be agreed to this session, because many people could be involved. This should not be a problem, as the Minister thinks he will be able to introduce a Bill during the current session.

As I recall, representatives from the Minister's department gave evidence before the Statute Law Revision Committee and if the deficiency had been noticed by them, they might have brought it to the attention of the committee. My own judgment is that they did not notice it at the time.

There is no problem about the matter and perhaps I could move that the debate be adjourned and the Minister can advise the House when he is ready to proceed with his own measure.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): As Mr. Galbally has already spoken during the second-reading debate, it may be preferable for some other honorable member to move the adjournment of the debate.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province): This Bill concerning the length of time that is to be credited to somebody who has already served what might be called part of his sentence by being held in custody awaiting trial created a great deal of interest amongst members of the Statute Law Revision Committee. The committee took comprehensive evidence and heard many witnesses, including members of the judiciary, welfare groups, and other people who were interested in the problem.

Members of the committee felt that the terms of reference were probably wide enough to cover the entire subject and I am rather disturbed by the Minister's statement that this was not the case and that certain aspects of the matter were not referred to the committee. The Minister now proposes to bring in a Government Bill which will include the provisions covered by this Bill. If honorable members could rely upon the Minister's assurance that the Bill will be introduced at an early date, I might be reasonably happy, but my experience in the past is that when the Government has said that it will introduce a Bill, it has run into various troubles and the introduction has been delayed.

Another aspect that occurs to me is whether the Statute Law Revision Committee will have a further look at the matter in the light of the new provisions to be included in the Government's Bill. Honorable members must rest content with the Minister's assurance. However, the matter is urgent. The committee heard a great deal of disturbing evidence on this question. I think I can say that the judges were very much at cross purposes in relating the amount of attention that they gave to the time spent in custody. The Bill is necessary and the sooner that the provisions become law the better. I am willing to comply with the wishes of the Minister and move for the adjournment of the debate, but I hope the topic will again be before the House at an early date.

On the motion of the Hon. HADDON STOREY (East Yarra Province), the debate was adjourned.

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

VICTORIAN PENAL SYSTEM.

The debate (adjourned from October 9) was resumed on the motion of the Hon. J. W. Galbally (Melbourne North Province)—

That, as the punishments provided by the laws of the State of Victoria are anachronistic, have failed to protect the community and to reform the wrongdoer, there be appointed a Select Committee of this House of Parliament to investigate the penal system of Victoria, with special reference to the punishments awarded and, giving consideration to the emerging patterns of violent crimes amongst youth, to recommend appropriate changes in the law.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (East Yarra Province): I welcome the opportunity provided by the motion to discuss and debate the penal system in Victoria, particularly because frequently one finds criticism of sentences imposed by courts or of actions in the administration of the penal system which reflect some lack of appreciation of the over-all philosophy that one ought to apply, and the community needs to apply, in a penal system.

The penal system is one part of the law enforcement process that any Government must engage in to make for good order and peace in the community. It is important that the penal system should reflect the attitudes and philosophies of the community to the implementation of its laws and to the treatment of offenders in that community. Attitudes and philosophies do change. There was a time when the prevailing philosophy on punishment was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; in other words the theory of retribution was applied. Although that expression came from the early history of the civilized world, it prevailed to a large extent until the last century. Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, a famous authoritative writer on the criminal law in England, said 100 years or so ago—

The purely deterrent theory of punishment is utterly unsatisfactory. We should punish not simply to prevent crime, but to show our hatred of crime.

In the same century in England the Gladstone committee, appointed to consider the penal system, reported—

prisoners have been treated too much as a hopeless or worthless element of the community.

and expressed the view that—

prison treatment should have as its primary and concurrent objects, deterrence and reformation.

One could say that those elements still prevail in the penal system today. The old view of retribution, if nothing else, was responsible for prisons which were really marshalling yards or holding yards instead of places of incarceration, where the punishment was the imprisonment itself. Prisoners were placed in prisons preparatory to being taken away and executed, mutilated, hung, drawn and quartered, transported, whipped or dealt with in some other way in accordance with the early law. To a large extent that system was responsible for the foundation of Australia, when transportees were sent to this country.

On page 571 of the 1973 *Victorian Year Book* appears an interesting history of the foundation of the penal system in Victoria. It reads—

The first magistrate arrived from Sydney in 1836 to administer law in the Port Phillip District. The first gaol, which was a lock-up, became necessary in 1837;

It did not take them long to get into action.

Shortly afterwards this gaol was burned down by Aboriginal prisoners.

Later on the article goes on to say—

A treadmill had been installed for prisoners sentenced to hard labour, for it was policy then to impress on prisoners the futility of a criminal life. The gold rushes brought a crisis; the gaols were already overcrowded and a tea-tree stockade had to be constructed in the district of Pentridge, five miles north of Melbourne, along a bush track known as Sydney Road. In wheeled wooden huts it provided sleeping accommodation for 80.

Although the wheeled wooden huts do not still exist at Pentridge some parts of the gaol are still as they were when in 1837 the prisoners were put to work on the construction of a bluestone wall for a prison on the site of Pentridge Gaol.

This century has seen the adoption in penal systems of many of the views expressed by the Gladstone committee, including the idea that a penal system is designed for deterrent and rehabilitative purposes. The prison system has been used to achieve those objectives. Prisons are regarded in various ways by different people. The great Russian writer Solzhenitsyn said that prison is not all bad, but anyone who has read his writings will understand that only a person of a peculiar mould, which is not given to most people, could sustain his human spirit under the conditions in which Solzhenitsyn was imprisoned, because life in a prison contains elements of pain and hardship which are greater than they need be. The deprivation of freedom is the punishment which is inflicted upon the person who is detained in gaol.

This does not mean that we ought not to have gaols and that persons ought not to be incarcerated. It is essential to lock up people who refuse to comply with the laws of civilized behaviour in the community. Nonetheless, the modern approach has been to search for alternatives where possible; not through misplaced pity for prisoners or lack of sympathy for the victims of offenders, but from enlightened self-interest. One must discover an acceptable balance between sternness and compassion in order to undertake a constructive remedy for misbehaviour.

One needs to examine Mr. Galbally's motion in the light of that philosophy. I regret that in my opinion the preamble to the motion fails to reflect the true position existing in Victoria, and to comprehend the present philosophy and policy adopted in this and other States and in other parts of the world towards the penal system. I propose to examine the motion to determine whether that view is borne out.

The motion begins with a reference to the punishments provided by the laws of the State of Victoria as being anachronistic. I invite honorable members to consider what the punishments provided by the State of Victoria are.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: One would not have to go past hanging and flogging for a start.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY: The reference to anachronistic laws makes one think that the laws of Victoria are the same today as they were at the time when prisoners first came to Victoria in the late 1830s, but there is now an understanding of modern approaches to penology and a shift from reliance on prison buildings to prisons which can deal with offenders in the community by serving both aspects of deterrence and rehabilitation.

Victoria was the first State in Australia to introduce the probation and parole system. That has been an effective means of dealing with persons who have committed crimes; often first offenders who are not likely to offend again but who sometimes, with the assistance of parole and probation, can be rehabilitated. For instance, an examination of 252 cases heard in the County Court of Victoria from 1967 to 1968 showed that the failure rate in the case of probationers was 27·6 per cent, and in the case of prisoners placed on bonds was only 11·5 per cent. No doubt those figures reflect the skill and judgment of the judges in choosing those prisoners who could be trusted with bonds—that is, without the need to be supervised by probation officers—and those who require the assistance of probation officers. That was a step towards getting offenders back into the community in a way which still protected the community.

Since that time, minimum sentences have been introduced. They have been a useful tool in the treatment of offenders, because they can be gently let back into the community when they have shown an ability to reform and are prepared to become citizens who are not likely to offend again.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT: In what way do they show that?

The Hon. HADDON STOREY: They show it by their behaviour in gaols. The Probation and Parole Division has to consider all aspects of what a prisoner has done; whether he has behaved in an exemplary manner, perhaps served in the prison shops, or conducted himself well. It is an attempt to get people back into the community.

Recently, the concept of compassionate leave has been introduced. This means that prisoners are allowed to go home unescorted for the weekend because they are trusted, and for the most part this trust has not been abused. The prisoners have been able to retain some links with the community, and this is important, particularly for those who are serving long sentences. Moves have been made to introduce periodic detention, which has worked satisfactorily in Tasmania, where the system has been in operation for two or three years. A system of work release for weekend prison is being studied. All these methods provide the opportunity of allowing a prisoner to be productive and to retain links with the community, while at the same time restraining his activities and thus showing the community's reaction to the crime he has committed.

In an article published in the *University of Western Australian Law Review*, Justice Roma Mitchell, a justice of the Supreme Court of South Australia—and incidentally, the first woman judge of a Supreme Court in Australia—writes about trends in sentencing. She gives good reasons for adopting these approaches to sentencing and dealing with offenders. Justice Mitchell points out that a long period of living as part of a prison community away from society tends to render a person unfit for life as an independent member of the community once that person leaves the gaol. If it is possible to retain those links, there is much more chance of a person being able to resume a useful, lawful life in the community at the end of his sentence. Justice Mitchell points to some pragmatic reasons involved in the cost of keeping people locked up and under secure guard in circumstances where often that is not necessary. In the article she says—

> If therefore the aims of deterrence and rehabilitation of the offender can be achieved equally well by some form of penalty other than imprisonment, there is every advantage to the community from the imposition of such other penalties.

She goes on to consider each of those alternatives. All of them are now available in the State of Victoria as part of its penal system.

Announcements have recently been made by the Minister for Social Welfare that moves are in hand to knock down the old parts of Pentridge Gaol and re-form it into three separate prisons with three separate structures, and to appoint an over-all superintendent with high qualifications in social welfare and prison work. That would provide the opportunity for prison officers to have a greater sense of stability and permanence and to act not just as custodial officers but also as welfare officers to help rehabilitate the prisoners in these gaols. The proposal reflects the modern approach which is being adopted to this perplexing and difficult problem.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: I see we are going to remove the remand yard to keep Ned Kelly company in the old City Watchhouse. That does not seem to me to be a forward move.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY: I am surprised to hear Mr. Galbally's comment that that is not a forward move. Essentially it is a progressive move because it will remove people in the remand yard from the environment of Pentridge, other criminals and the antiquated and poor conditions which exist there. It will bring them closer to the courts which they have to attend from day to day and will cause less disruption to their lives, and allow them to be treated as they ought to be treated, as persons who are being kept in custody pending their trials.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: There is hardly room to swing a cat up there.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY: If Mr. Galbally wishes to argue about the architecture of what is being done, it would represent a disappointing approach to the progressive move being introduced by the Minister and something which has been sought by members of the legal profession and social workers in Victoria for many years.

A further move that reflects this enlightened approach towards the penal system is the appointment, following an extensive inquiry, of a prisons advisory council, the members of which have had a diversity of experience in law, social welfare and penal work. The council is available to advise the Minister and the Government in all aspects of penal reform. I hope the council will be called upon by the Government to give advice as frequently and as thoroughly as possible and that the advice can be listened to and heeded. In this way it will be possible to continue dealing progressively with the situation which can never be a stable one and can never be resolved today for the future; it requires constant revision and attention to the needs of the community.

The next part of the preamble of Mr. Galbally's motion says that the punishments provided by the State of Victoria have failed to protect the community and to reform the wrongdoer. That is a general, vague statement which is plainly not supported by the facts. The community is no less law-abiding today than it has been in the past. There is no higher percentage of wrongdoers who commit further crimes today than there was in the past. Indeed, Victoria's penal system is no less to be indicted than the penal system of any other State of Australia, or of England, the United States of America, Canada or any comparable country. To say that it has failed to protect the community and to reform the wrongdoer is a sweeping statement which is not justified by any facts advanced by Mr. Galbally.

In his speech Mr. Galbally referred to the percentage of people under 25 and under 20 years of age who are in our gaols. It is a shame that so many young people are there but I should like to point out that it is simply a reflection of the fact that young people who have not yet found their niche in society are much more likely to question and to transgress and find themselves in trouble and in gaol. That has been so from time immemorial and I doubt whether there are figures to show that there are more young people in gaol today than there were 20, 30 or 150 years ago. Equally, the figures reflect the percentage of people of the relevant age group who exist in our community today. The community as a whole has a higher percentage of young people than it did in the past.

In considering the reformation of our penal institutions, it is necessary to look at the institutions. Mr. Galbally proposed the bringing together of the Commonwealth and the States to establish penal institutions around the Commonwealth where prisoners can be sent according to the skills or trades in which they can be trained. It is a fascinating concept and one which ought to be given careful consideration. I appreciate Mr. Galbally's advancing it. However, I see substantial objections to it. Firstly, it involves taking the prisoners away from the community in which they exist and in which they ought to retain their links. If they are sent to New South Wales to be trained in, say, woolclassing but they normally live in Melbourne and were convicted in Melbourne, they are removed from their families and there is no opportunity for their families to visit them except by travelling to New South Wales for a weekend or at times when visiting rights are allowed. It renders impracticable the ideas of work release, compassionate leave, periodic detention

and so forth, all of which are recognized as an integral part of the modern penal system. The proposition has those serious disadvantages.

Secondly, it is doubtful whether a large percentage of the prisoners would be advantaged by such a system because it supposes that it is possible to split them up into ten, twenty or whatever number of groups Mr. Galbally envisages, to engage in various pursuits. I suggest that the range of skills and activities pursued in Pentridge, largely through visiting teachers of one form or another, exceeds by far the number of institutions which could be created in the whole of the Commonwealth of Australia. In other words, it would limit the amount of work which could be done within existing institutions.

The third problem I see is that there is a large percentage of people in the prisons who are life's dropouts, who are not prepared to work or to engage in training for skills and who are unable, either through lack of willingness or lack of ability, to accept the benefits of this sort of training. To deal with these persons a more fundamental form of general society management is required.

Having examined the terms of Mr. Galbally's motion, I submit that the arguments advanced do not justify the appointment of a Select Committee. I do not draw from that the conclusion that all is well with the world and that there is nothing left to be done in relation to the penal system because, as I have already said, this is a continuing problem and there are all sorts of matters which ought to be considered. The question of wages for prisoners in our gaols is worthy of consideration. Ought they be given a proper wage less the cost of their keep so that they can have some incentive and some hope of achievement when they leave the gaol?

The question of access of families to prisoners inside gaols, not just for a visit of half an hour or an hour, but possibly to stay with them over week-ends—the reverse of week-end release of prisoners—must be considered. There is the question of long-term prisoners. There are prisoners who have been put into gaol for long terms of imprisonment. Some of these prisoners have committed murder and have had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment or to imprisonment for 20, 30 or 40 years. Over the years the number of these people will increase and there are real human and social problems involved in dealing with them. This is an area which needs close examination. There is also the whole question of sentencing policy which ought to be adopted in the community.

At some stage of his speech Mr. Galbally said that this is the first time since the middle of the 1800s that Parliament has considered the question of the penal system.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY: Since 1868.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY: It may be the first time that Parliament has considered it in the form of a debate on a motion of this type but reports have been made to Parliament, and Parliamentary committees have considered various aspects of the matter. I propose to refer to a report of the Statute Law Revision Committee, which Mr. Grimwade says is a good committee. The report, which is entitled, " Upon Anomalies in the Penalties Provided by the Crimes and Police Offences Acts ", was printed on 26th September, 1961. It has attached to it a memorandum from Stanley W. Johnston, head of the Crimonology Department of the University of Melbourne, in which he recommended the introduction into Victoria of a new penal code and suggested that a major overhaul of sentencing legislation could provide a much more rational system of sentencing in the State of Victoria and could lead to the development of expertise in the handling of prisoners and beneficial results in the community. The Statute Law Revision Committee stated in its report that it saw merit in the codification of Victorian law relating to the

crimes in the Police Offences Act and recommended its investigation. That is a matter which still remains to be investigated.

There still remains the question of who should do the sentencing. Some time ago this House heard a learned address by Mr. Block in which he proposed, amongst other things, that sentencing ought to be done by an expert panel of people on which there might be lawyers, social welfare workers, penal officers and so on, and not left to perhaps the arbitrariness of the courts. That is a proposition which certainly bears close examination. Because of my legal background I do not adopt it. I believe firmly that the courts ought to be the sentencing bodies and ought at least to set a minimum sentence. The type of body to which Mr. Block referred could consider whether the prisoner should be released unconditionally after the minimum sentence, or whether he could be released subject to supervision, subject to returning to gaol at intervals, or subject to some other condition. However, the sentence is one that ought to be imposed by the court because the court is open and can be seen by the community to be imposing sentence. It is subject to an appeal by an independent body, it is independent of the Executive and of the legislature and plays an important and critical role in our legal system. Although I consider the matter ought to be investigated, I do not support the view that sentencing ought to be taken away from the courts.

The issues to which I have referred merit attention being paid to them as will many other matters that honorable members will mention in the course of the debate. I am not satisfied that a Select Committee of this House is the appropriate body to look at these problems. A continuing process is involved. The penal system needs to be studied all the time. Ideas need to be considered, perhaps tried, and re-enforced or discarded as experience dictates. It requires a body which is able to devote the resources and time to a permanent review that a Select Committee would not be able to do and it is something which ought to be administered by a committee like the Prisons Advisory Committee. Therefore, because the preamble to the resolution is not borne out and because a Select Committee of this House does not seem appropriate to this subject, although I do not for a moment suggest Select Committees are not appropriate to the sorts of matters to be considered by this House, I suggest that the motion should not be adopted.

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province): I am sure all honorable members appreciated Mr. Storey's speech. He has shown a keen interest in this subject and is conscious of the fact that there is need for improvement. Unfortunately, it appears from his summing up that he considers that the time is not appropriate for the appointment of a Select Committee. In this latter part of the twentieth century Mr. Storey is still a prisoner of his party. I do not believe that, as a free individual, he would agree that the stage has been reached in punishment reform when we are up to date and there is no need to look further into the causes of crime and the efficacy of and justification for the types of punishment which the community still accepts as being appropriate and morally justified. Therefore, it is unfortunate that a man of Mr. Storey's undoubted learning has reached the point where he says, "Thus far and no farther at this time".

It is tragic that, in view of the relatively slow progress in this field in great contrast to other scientific and technological developments in the last century, Mr. Storey perhaps not willingly has committed himself to slowing down the rate of progress. This is an area which is not directly related to economic growth, stagnation or any such problems; it concerns the development of humanity in our society. One hopes we have at last reached the stage when we are prepared to make much more rapid progress in looking at man's relationship with his fellow man.

It is true that great improvements have been made in attitudes adopted towards the treatment of prisoners. The motion moved by Mr. Galbally refers to punishment. I do not accept the view that punishment as we know it is an appropriate means of dealing with the rectification and prevention of offences. The concept of punishment which our society has accepted for generations is really based on retribution, on a sense of vengeance.

I was interested to hear some of the quotations which Mr. Storey made from the statements of eminent judges. In a book entitled *The Conquest of Violence* by T. A. Critchley, who lived in the period from which Mr. Storey is emerging, the author states—

> Aggressiveness, like crime, is part of the human condition.

This might be interesting to members of the Government party and might account for some of their non-violent attitudes. The author continues—

> The ambitious man who has arrived feels no need for violence because he can get most of what he wants without it.

The anthropologist, Professor Washburn, stated—

> Throughout human history society has depended on young adult males to hunt, to fight and to maintain the social order with violence.

We are still slowly emerging from a popular acceptance of this sort of idea, that violence is and has been appropriate for individuals, and that it is particularly appropriate for the State to punish by violence persons who have applied violence in certain circumstances.

John Stuart Mill said—

> The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community against his will is to prevent harm to others.

This philosophy should be the basis of our attitude to punishment and penal reform. I hope to see the day when much less accommodation is provided in our gaols and when there is a large amount of vacant accommodation in them. If we are prepared to tackle this question seriously and not allow progress to proceed as slowly as Mr. Storey would allow it, within a relatively short time we may reach the situation when very few people will need to be incarcerated.

The only justification for imprisonment is the protection of the public. There are other means of punishment and other penalties which can be imposed upon persons found guilty of crimes instead of depriving them of the opportunity of participating in society. In a civilized community which has a proper sense of morality and of human dignity the fact of proving guilt is in itself a punishment. Instead of using buildings and conditions which degrade human beings and which render their rehabilitation most difficult, it should be possible to protect the community and at the same time to provide the maximum opportunity for true rehabilitation.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN: What are these other penalties to which you refer?

The Hon. D. E. KENT: Surely honorable members are aware that a verdict of guilty in an honest responsible community imposes a penalty on a citizen. I know that in communities such as those in which members of the Country Party reside such a verdict would be a blot on a man for life.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY: Are you suggesting that the mere conviction is enough in every case?

The Hon. D. E. KENT: Progressive moves have been initiated in the way of probation, week-end detention, periodic detention and compassionate leave. I maintain that basically the real and only justifiable purpose of prison is the protection of the community. We must get away from the idea that there is value in retribution.

Mr. Storey quoted the words of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, a name which gives some clue to his ancestry. This famous British judge and historian of the common law expressed

a view contrary to what I am putting, and contrary to that of John Stuart Mill, when he said—

> The feeling of hatred and the desire of vengeance are important elements in human nature which ought in such cases to be satisfied in a regular public and legal manner.

He also said—

> When the question of punishment is raised the degree of moral wickedness is always relevant; if legal punishment were simply to prevent harmful acts this would not be so.

It is time we got farther away from the concept of degrees of wickedness which have to be punished by some degree of retribution or vengeance which demonstrates that we believe in the same sort of principle for which we censure others.

The whole case for violent punishment is based on the legitimacy of hatred or resentment for the criminal and the desire for revenge on him. It is futile for Mr. Storey to suggest, on behalf of the Government, that sufficient progress has been made on the penal code and the whole question of punishment. I sincerely commend the Minister for Social Welfare for the progressive approach which he has adopted. He is trying to humanize gaols. I hope that to a large extent gaols will go out of existence, but that objective cannot be achieved in a short period although the Minister is taking steps in that direction. No doubt the honorable gentleman appreciates that this is only the beginning of a great task which must be achieved. It will not be achieved unless the concept of punishment, which we have accepted for so long, of taking revenge against persons found guilty of particular types of crimes, is broken down. Otherwise, slow progress will be made towards achieving what could be a dramatic step forward in civilization.

The protection of the community is the real purpose of any form of detention. There may be some criticism that I am light on punishment. At this stage I concede that I am not in a position to say to the House that this or that is an appropriate form of punishment for a particular offence for which a person has been convicted. That is why the Select Committee for which Mr. Galbally has moved should be appointed to examine deeply the multitude of problems associated with this complex question which is surely one of the great issues in human relations.

I agree with Mr. Storey that consideration should be given to the emerging patterns of violent crime amongst youth. Quite likely the proportion of crimes committed by youths is no greater now than it has been previously. Much of this can be attributed to the philosophy of their parents and their grandparents before them. I do not believe there is a lesser moral standard amongst the younger generation. They are the descendants of people who believed in violence, and counter violence by the State as punishment.

There are eminent authorities who can be quoted to support any kind of view. I am not going to support the point of view expressed by the former Lord Chief Justice of England, Lord Goddard, who said—

> I do not see how it can be either non-Christian or other than praiseworthy that the country should be willing to avenge crime.

I reject that on both grounds. I commend the philosophy of a great man who is now a constituent of Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Gleeson. I have had many arguments with him—some people would call them discussions. He is a man to whom I owe a great deal of knowledge and understanding. He became a chaplain at one of Victoria's prisons. Prior to that he gave to me a philosophy which I belive is relevant to every aspect of life. He said—

> Hate the sin and love the sinner.

That philosophy is necessary if one is to pass judgment selectively upon a person convicted of a crime. That is the philosophy that we as responsible human beings have to apply to punishment and the administration of law. Steps are being taken in this direction, but I would deeply

deplore the fact that a man, not only of such legal capacity but of such forward thinking as Mr. Storey, should advocate that we have gone sufficiently far and for the rest of the century we should just mark time.

Mr. HADDON STOREY: I did not advocate that.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province): I move—

That the debate be now adjourned.

I suggest that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, 6th November.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province): I agree to an adjournment of the debate, but I do not know whether Mr. Swinburne has considered the fact the House will not be meeting here in a fortnight. Some of us will be in Adelaide. That means that the debate will be adjourned until the middle of November. That is about the time, as I recall in the 25 years that I have been in Parliament, when the guillotine is used—kindly, of course—on private members' Bills. In view of that, perhaps Mr. Swinburne may be ready to proceed with the debate next week. If he is unable to debate the Bill next week we will have to chance having the debate in the middle of November.

THE Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province) (*By leave*): Mr. President, I realized when I asked for the adjournment of the debate for a fortnight that it would be due to be resumed in the middle of the week in which the House will not be sitting. I will not be ready to proceed next week. However, other honorable members may want to go on with the debate then. It means that the debate, if adjourned, will proceed after that period. Mr. Galbally has said that the guillotine is usually then applied. I have never known the guillotine to be applied in those circumstances; every private member's Bill has had its full debate in this House.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): While I am President it will always be so.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: Probably the Leader of the House has more say about which Bill should be called than you, or I, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT: I have never been in agreement with the stifling of a debate.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: The matter will go on, and I will support Mr. Galbally if any attempt is made to try to break the tradition we have always had. I am not concerned with the remaining Bills. There are half a dozen, not only one, that can be debated. Honorable members are entitled to consider the remarks made by Mr. Storey, and particularly the comments just made by Mr. Kent about allowing people to go without punishment. I should like to read those comments in their proper context before I debate the matter to decide whether I agree with the principles put forward. I should like an adjournment of the debate for fourteen days.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): To use the Gilbert and Sullivan expression "to put the matter beyond any possible doubt whatsoever", I make it quite clear that the Government will not use the guillotine on this motion in any way, whether the debate is held in November or December. While the House is sitting we will all be happy, pleased and anxious to see that the matter is debated.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE: It can go on in the autumn sessional period.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: The House will do nothing to prevent the debate and, as Mr. Swinburne has said, it has never curtailed other debates in similar circumstances. I am not going to say that if in December an honorable member thinks up some private member's Bill it will be debated. Fair notice is always given. The late Sir Gilbert Chandler always spoke to the Leaders of the parties in advance; he had discussions and reached agreement before the Bills

appeared on the Notice Paper. I have no intention of altering that procedure in any way.

The Hon. J. W. GALBALLY (Melbourne North Province) (*By leave*): Your warning, Mr. President, Mr. Swinburne's remarks, and the undertaking given by the Leader of the House, have settled the matter. I have no objection to the adjournment as suggested.

The motion for the adjournment of the debate was agreed to, and it was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, November 6.

PHARMACISTS BILL.

The debate (adjourned from October 15) on the motion of the Hon. V. O. Dickie (Minister of Housing) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. I. B. TRAYLING (Melbourne Province): The Opposition does not oppose this Bill. It seems to be desirable legislation, and it consolidates, with amendments, the provisions of Part III. of the Medical Act 1958 which affects the registration and control of pharmacists. I believe that the great majority of 3,800 pharmacists in Victoria generally approve the provisions of the Bill, although I must add that quite a number do not appear to know very much about it. Those who are informed care to be informed.

One of the changes the Bill proposes is that the Pharmacy Board of Victoria should have its membership increased from seven to ten. If that is what is wanted, I will not argue about it; there seems to be nothing wrong with that. The present board of seven members was entirely elected by pharmacists on the register. It is now proposed under this Bill that only five members will be elected by the registered pharmacists, and the remaining five members will represent different bodies. These will be the Pharmaceutical Society of Victoria, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia (Victorian Branch), the Pharmaceutical Society of Victoria, the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (Victorian Branch), and the Salaried Pharmaceutical Chemists Association. Again, I do not have any quarrel with that, nor do the pharmacists themselves.

One of the additional duties of the board will be to approve the premises that pharmacists seek to occupy for the conduct of their business. That might seem to be an unusual encumbrance for the board to undertake, but I have been informed that it is a power that the board very much wanted to have, and something of which, again, the majority of pharmacists approved. The board will also be empowered to give temporary registration for a maximum period of four years to pharmacists who have not qualified in Victoria. That seems a sensible approach. Obviously the board would want to be assured of the standard of training of a pharmacist from outside Victoria when deciding whether to give him temporary registration.

The board has the power to deregister a pharmacist for certain reasons, and the Governor in Council has power to remove any individual from the board. An amendment moved in another placed seemed to give protection to members of the board by adding that this must be in accordance with section 18 of the principal Act. It was an admirable gesture by the Government to incorporate that amendment. A right of appeal is provided.

The Bill also provides for severe penalties to be imposed upon pharmacists whose conduct is contrary to the code of conduct the board considers appropriate to the provision. The Act, and the second-reading explanatory speeches by the Minister of Health in another place and the Minister of Housing in this Chamber, indicate that the Board is most concerned about the supervision that a pharmacist must effect in the conduct of his business. There is a limitation of three retail outlets which a pharmacist can have. I am a little concerned about this provision and about whether the board will exercise its

powers and ensure that the supervision of a pharmacy is properly carried out.

Only today I received a complaint from a constituent who had visited a pharmacy in my electorate. I am not going to name the shop until I have made more inquiries but I have spoken to the pharmacist who owns the business. The complaint was that a cassette which my constituent had purchased was found to be faulty. At the first available opportunity he had tested it and when he returned it to the pharmacy, he was told that he would not be provided with a replacement as it would have to be returned to the manufacturer, who would have the discretion of deciding whether or not the cassette would be replaced.

When I spoke to the pharmacist he indicated that unless the majority of pharmacists diversified their activities to a considerable extent their businesses would not be economically viable. I consider that this is a direct threat to the supervision which the pharmacists, under the spirit and intent of this Bill, should have over the services which they are providing to the community.

The pharmacist to whom I have been referring also conducts a record bar where records, cassettes and cartridges are sold and retail services other than purely pharmaceutical lines are provided in addition to the dispensing of prescriptions. He also retails standard lines of perfume and so on.

If there is an over-supply of pharmacists in Victoria one wonders whether the provision for supervision is as adequate as it should be.

On behalf of the Labor Party, I offer no objection to the Bill. However, I have raised those issues to indicate what is happening in the world of pharmacists when the majority of them have to diversify to survive. I also wonder just how far that diversification will go and to what extent it might affect their personal supervision in the handling of drugs and other substances.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province): This Pharmacists Bill follows upon other Acts, such as the Medical Act and the Dental Act, each of which has given the respective profession its own separate legislation. In effect this is largely a consolidating measure removing from the scope of the Medical Act the pharmacists of the State, of whom there are more than 3,000 in practice.

There are a number of points of concern in the wording of this Bill. Some of them will be raised during the Committee stage. I wish to refer to them broadly now so that the Minister of Housing will be aware of the matters about which the Country Party is concerned, thus enabling him to reply at the commencement of the Committee stage.

The first matter revolves around the composition of the board and the powers of the Governor in Council to remove a member of the board. Mr. Trayling mentioned that an amendment was moved in another place. This amendment occurs in clause 4 on page 4 of the Bill, lines 20 and 21. The Minister was good enough to discuss this with me earlier but the amendment raises rather serious implications. I should explain that the amendment was proposed by the Country Party in another place and the Minister of Health did not give the honorable member for Murray Valley sufficient time to prepare his amendment—it was done orally—and there is now some doubt, owing to the haste of the Minister of Health in accepting the amendment, whether it was correctly worded.

The amendment, which has been incorporated in the Bill, refers to clause 18 of the Bill and deals with the position where a member of the board has been removed. It seems to me the only part of clause 18 which is relevant is sub-clause (3) (vi) which provides that the board may order the removal of the name of a pharmacist from the Pharmacists' Register.

I draw the attention of the Minister of Housing to this aspect to see whether, although the object of the amendment is commendable, this House cannot change it so that it will be more effective and carry out the real intention of the Country Party which moved the amendment in another place. I refer the Minister of Housing to the debate which occurred on that occasion and to consider the haste with which this was done.

I have two serious criticisms on the wording of the Bill. The first appears in clause 21 which is on page 15 of the Bill. I refer to line 7 which refers to a " separate pharmacy practice ". In other parts of the Bill it requires the practice of pharmacy to be carried on in separate premises.

Members of the Country Party have learnt that the Pharmacy Board objects to premises in a country town being used for a camera business and a pharmacy business. For example, a case has arisen where a married woman is a registered pharmacist and her husband operates a camera shop. They wish to operate in the same premises but the board has objected.

However, in Myers or any of the other leading stores in Melbourne there are pharmacies which are surrounded by other departments. If the board is to apply one rule to a small country chemist shop and another rule to an establishment in a large store like Myers, it is most unfair.

I suggest to the Minister of Housing that there is a conflict in terminology throughout the Bill. This should be examined before this House passes the measure. This was referred to by Mr. Templeton in another place and I thank the honorable member for drawing my attention to it. There is obviously a difference between a pharmacy which sells a wide variety of goods, greeting cards and photographic equipment, and the chemist shop which mainly conducts the business of dispensing medicines. Mr. Trayling has pointed out that pharmacists have been forced to diversify their businesses because the business of dispensing medicines is not sufficient to enable them to earn a living.

It seems to me that where separate premises are required by the Pharmacy Board, that relates to the dispensing part of the business. The Government ought to examine whether the Bill should be amended to make separate provision covering the dispensary portion of the business and place the remainder of the premises on a different plane. That is the only way in which the Government will overcome the problem of the chemist shop in Myers.

I spoke to the registrar of the board today, and one aspect which concerns him and the board is the type of material to be used to secure the premises. Honorable members know of raids being made on chemist shops by people seeking drugs. These crimes are increasing. Overseas there has been a plethora of them and if one goes to certain places in North America where drug addicts are registered in their thousands, one finds that the chemist shops are protected more heavily than the banks. Bars are installed around the portions of the shop where the drugs are kept.

This problem will increase, unfortunately, as the use of drugs increases in this community. It seems to me essential that the dispensary of the pharmacy should be entirely secured. If a chemist shop is situated in the middle of a big store, how will the dispensary and its drugs be protected?

This could be said to be a matter of prescription or regulation by the board but I believe it goes further than that. In view of the use of the phrase " separate pharmacy " in this Bill it is almost impossible to have that type of arrangement. I am not saying that we should not have a chemist shop in Myers because it is there for the benefit of the public. However, such facilities should be constructed so that the dispensary that houses the drugs is secured and protected.

Under the provisions of the Bill that does not appear to be possible. The unfortunate case has arisen where a husband cannot have his camera business in the same shop as his wife has her pharmacy.

The other point which concerns the Country Party—Mr. Trayling also referred to this—is the supervision of chemists which, under this measure, has to be constant. In other words, whenever the pharmacy is open the pharmacist has to be present, to supervise. Even if the pharmacist has in the dispensary handling drugs and dispensing medicines a trainee who has completed a three-year course and has graduated but is required to perform 2,000 hours during the fourth year before being registered, he must be present to supervise the trainee.

The majority of our pharmacists have only one chemist shop. This is the policy of the Government and I approve of this. We should not have chains of chemist shops in Victoria as happens in many overseas countries. A pharmacist can have an interest in only three pharmacies. I approve of that situation. However, there is the problem of the pharmacist having to be on the premises all the time his shop is open for business. The Bill should be amended to provide that when a dispensary is open for business the pharmacist should be there, but that he can shut and securely lock away his dispensary and still keep the other part of the shop open.

As I read the Bill, again that does not occur. The Government should re-examine the measure and ascertain whether the word "dispensary" could be introduced into it. This would mean that a chemist, who is a sole chemist, would not have to close for lunch. He would be able to take holidays and time off during the day, provided that he closed his dispensary. The camera or greeting-card section of his business could be carried on by an assistant.

It would be more appropriate to debate a number of matters at the Committee stage, but I have drawn the Minister's attention to these problems so that he can consider them. I do not think the Minister believes the Bill is in its final form, and we hope it can be improved.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clauses 1 to 3 were agreed to.

Clause 4 (Pharmacy Board).

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing): I thank Mr. Trayling and Mr. Clarke for their comments on the Bill. It is the third measure of consolidation of the original Medical Act and Acts relating to dentistry and pharmacy.

In another place the original wording of clause 4 (3) (*b*) was—

> The Governor in Council may at any time by notice in the *Government Gazette*—
>
> * * * * *
>
> (*b*) remove any member (including the president) from the board.

In the debate in another place, the Minister of Health was prepared to accept an amendment moved by the honorable member for Murray Valley that added the following words—

> who is a pharmacist who has been removed from the Pharmacists' Register in accordance with section 18.

I intend to report progress on this clause to permit Mr. Trayling and Mr. Clarke to examine what is proposed. For the sake of accuracy, I will use a submission that has been made to me following which I propose to move that the words which were added in another place be now deleted. There are reasons for this. The amendment to add the above words to the end of clause 4 (3) (*b*) was accepted by the Minister of Health on the basis that it would preclude an arbitrary decision by the Executive Council to remove from the board a registered pharmacist who had been elected for appointment by other registered pharmacists.

While the amendment is laudable from this point of view, discussion with legal officers has brought to light the fact that such an amendment would preclude the removal of any

member unless his conduct as a pharmacist was such that his registration had been cancelled. There are many other offences serious enough to warrant removal of the person concerned from his office as a member of the board. For example, a member of the board could be fined or temporarily suspended from registration for an offence against the Pharmacists Act or the Poisons Act. Should he be permitted to sit in judgment in any case where another pharmacist has been accused of a similar offence? It is felt that all members of a body such as the Pharmacy Board should be above reproach.

Consideration has also been given to the possibility of substituting the expression—

who has had a penalty imposed upon him by virtue of section 18.

for the words added in the Legislative Assembly. However, if this expression were adopted, a majority of the board could seek to get rid of one of its members by ensuring that he was found guilty of some minor offence, reprimanding him and reporting to the Minister its decision concerning him.

After further consideration and as a result of the discussion with law officers, the Minister of Health feels that notwithstanding the reasoning that induced him to accept the amendment to clause 4 (3) (*b*) it would be better if the amendment were cancelled out by repeal in the Legislative Council. Actually as the Bill was originally drafted, it would be possible for the Governor in Council arbitrarily to remove an elected member from the board and for the pharmacist so removed to be re-elected by pharmacists as his own replacement.

I was given details of this proposal only shortly before the commencement of today's sitting of the House. I expect that honorable members will want an opportunity of examining the proposal as the matter was thoroughly debated in another place before the Bill was amended.

Mr. Clarke and Mr. Trayling have referred to a couple of matters, and for those reasons I propose that progress be reported, and that the clause be considered again probably next week.

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. Nicol): Does the Minister propose to move the amendment first?

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE: Yes. I move—

Clause 4, sub-clause (3), lines 20-22, omit "who has been removed from the Pharmacists Register in accordance with section 18".

Progress was reported.

VALUATION OF LAND (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): On behalf of the Minister for Local Government, I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I regret that my former colleague, the late Sir Percy Byrnes, could not be in the Chamber. I should be interested to hear his comments on the proposed legislation regarding the valuation of land. On many occasions he expressed strong views on this subject.

The Bill makes general amendments to the Valuation of Land Act 1960. For the most part the amendments are designed to improve the existing legislation rather than to add new provisions.

Clause 2 adds an interpretation of "registered valuer" to the interpretations at the beginning of Part I. of the principal Act. The expression "registered valuer" was introduced by the Valuation of Land (Valuers) Act 1973 and means a person enrolled on the Register of Qualified Valuers kept by the Valuers Qualification Board. Registered valuers are the only persons entitled to carry on the public practice of the profession of valuer and to charge fees for making valuations of land.

Clause 3 substitutes the expression "registered valuer" for the expression "holder of a certificate of qualification as a valuer issued by the Valuers Qualification Board" in the provisions dealing with the appointment of the Valuer-General and his staff.

A further amendment made by this clause will authorize the Valuer-General to make valuations for the owners of property for taxation purposes. At present there is specific authority for him to make valuations for the purpose, *inter alia*, of the assessment of duties under the Probate Duty Act 1962 and for the assessment of stamp duty under the Stamps Act 1958 on any deed of gift or settlement. The amendment now proposed is to enable him to meet requests for valuations for the purpose of the future assessment of the Commonwealth capital gains tax.

Clause 4 concerns the present requirement that valuers shall maintain the secrecy of all matters which come to their knowledge in the course of making valuations and shall take a prescribed oath of fidelity and secrecy. It is now proposed that this requirement shall be extended to cover members of the administrative staff in the office of the Valuer-General. Although they are not valuers these persons may have access to confidential information.

Clause 5 makes a number of amendments to the provisions of section 7 of the principal Act which deal with general valuations. One of these provisions authorizes the Minister for Local Government to fix the date at which the value of all rateable property in a general valuation shall be assessed. At present the Minister is merely empowered to do this though, in practice, it is always done. The proposed amendment will make it obligatory for the Minister to fix the level of value date for all general valuations.

For the purpose of such general valuations the valuer must have regard to all things and conditions present affecting the value of the land at the time of the valuation. There have been differences of opinion as to the meaning of the expression "at the time of the valuation". Recently it was decided judicially that it means "at the date of the return of the valuation" and it is now proposed to adopt those words in the legislation.

A further amendment corrects some incorrect references to the Local Government Act resulting from amendments to that Act and a final amendment to section 7 repeals references to payments by one rating authority for use of a valuation made by another rating authority. The subject of these payments is dealt with by clause 7 of the Bill.

Clause 6 also repeals provisions dealing with payments for the use of a valuation. These are in section 8 of the principal Act.

Clause 7 inserts a new section in the principal Act dealing with the payment of fees by a rating authority which has received a copy of the whole or part of a valuation from a council or other rating authority.

Clause 8 removes the interpretation of "registered valuer" from Part II. of the principal Act. Clause 9 corrects an error in a reference in section 14 to the Registrar of Land Valuation Appeals.

Clause 10 substitutes in section 16 the expression "registered valuer" for the expression "a person who holds a certificate of qualification as a valuer pursuant to the Act". This is a requirement for persons appointed to the Land Valuation Board of Review Panel.

Clause 11 applies certain provisions of the Evidence Act 1958 to the hearing of any matter before a Land Valuation Board of Review as if the board were one appointed by the Governor in Council. The applied provisions deal with the summonsing of witnesses and procedure when a witness fails to attend. The existing powers of the board in this respect are not clear. Members of the Land Valuation Board of Review panel and the chairman are appointed by the

Governor in Council but the three members who constitute any board are selected by the Minister.

Clause 12 authorizes the Minister —instead of the Governor in Council —to appoint a replacement for a chairman or member of a Land Valuation Board of Review who through illness, suspension or absence, is unable to act. Prompt action is normally required and the need to obtain an order of the Governor in Council results in unnecessary delay.

Clause 13 corrects an omission from section 24 of the principal Act which requires the Registrar of Land Valuation Appeals to keep a register containing particulars of all appeals and objections made to the court or a board. The amendment will require him to record also all claims for compensation. This is at present required by the rules made under the Act.

Clause 14 will increase the money value of claims for compensation which may be heard by a Land Valuation Board of Review. The court may hear any claim irrespective of the amount if it is satisfied that questions of unusual difficulty are involved. Subject to this, a claim not exceeding $10,000 must be heard by a board. Claims exceeding $10,000 may be heard by the court or a board at the option of the claimant. If he does not exercise his option the acquiring authority may do so. It is now proposed to substitute $50,000 for the present $10,000. Land values have substantially increased since the latter figure was fixed in 1965 and it is desired to limit the number of cases requiring attention by the court.

The record of the board speaks for itself. It has done everything the Government has expected of it. It is a boon to people who appeal against acquisition and it overcomes many confusing difficulties. I remember, as an innocent young lawyer, the task of appearing before the Supreme Court in an attempt to obtain fair and just compensation for a client whose property had been acquired. I assure honorable members that it was difficult. The present system has made a great difference to the whole community.

Clause 15 will vary the present rule that compensation for the compulsory acquisition of land must be claimed within two years after service of a notice to treat by an acquiring authority. The claim is deemed to be waived and abandoned if it is not made within that period. However, it is sometimes claimed that a longer period may be necessary for an owner to accurately estimate his loss and claim compensation. It is now proposed that provision shall be made for the parties to agree on a longer period in which compensation may be claimed. If the parties cannot agree the claimant will have the right to apply to a chairman of Land Valuation Boards of Review, sitting alone, who may fix such period as he sees fit. Provision is also made for the claimant to have the right of appeal to the court against a decision of a chairman. In such a case, the court's decision will be final.

Clause 16 corrects an error in references in section 29 to a preceding section—the error resulted from an amendment to the latter section.

A further amendment in this clause concerns payment of costs of proceedings before a court or board in respect of claims for compensation for land compulsorily acquired. At present if an owner fails to give particulars of his estate and interest in the land and of his claim within six months of the service on him of a notice to treat he must bear the costs of proceedings. However, it is now proposed to provide that this rule shall not apply unless the acquiring authority has, within three months of the service of notice to treat, notified the owner in writing of his liability for costs in these circumstances.

Clause 17 concerns the notices of valuation which a rating authority must give in respect of any valuation which it has made or caused to be made. The authority must, in respect of each rate it makes, give notice of the valuation to the owner of each rateable property and the person

liable to be rated—if he is not the owner. It has been claimed that in its present form the provision on this subject permits the rating authority to issue notices of valuation only after making a rate. To put the matter beyond doubt it is proposed to provide that a rating authority shall issue a notice of valuation in respect of each rate it makes or intends to make.

A further amendment is proposed to make it obligatory to show on each notice of valuation the date at which the value of the property was assessed. This is of particular significance in country municipalities where a valuation may be in force for six years. There can be considerable variations in the actual value of land over that period.

Clause 19 amends section 38A which is applied—

where an objection is lodged with the valuer and considered by him.

The objection should, of course, be lodged with the rating authority for consideration by the valuer and appropriate amendments are proposed.

A further amendment to this section is proposed as to the time in which objections may be made to any valuation. At present only one objection may be lodged during any one rating year. However, where a notice of valuation is given on the return of a valuation and a further notice subsequently combined with the demand for the first rate on the valuation it may be possible to make two objections within a period of twelve months extending across two rating years. It is proposed therefore to amend the present provision which prohibits a second objection in one rating year by providing that once an objection has been made to a valuation no further objection may be made for a period of twelve months.

Clause 20 makes a small alteration in the procedure to be followed by a valuer when considering objections to a valuation. In its present form section 39 of the principal Act requires the valuer to give an objector an opportunity to discuss his objection only where the valuer considers that no adjustment is warranted. It would therefore be possible for the valuer to deny an objector the opportunity to be heard by recommending a minor adjustment. The proposed amendment will require a valuer, before determining any objection, to provide the objector with a reasonable opportunity to discuss the matter with him.

Clause 21 concerns appeals to the court or a Land Valuation Board of Review by an objector whose objection to his valuation has not been upheld. The objector must serve notice on the rating authority requiring it to treat his objection as an appeal to the court or a board. The rating authority is required to notify the Registrar of Land Valuation Appeals of every such notice but does not always do so. To assist the registrar it is now proposed to require objectors to lodge copies of their notices to the rating authority with the Registrar.

Further amendments are proposed with respect to the amounts of valuations which determine whether an appeal may be heard by the court or a board. The court may hear any appeal irrespective of the amount of the valuation if it is satisfied that questions of unusual difficulty are involved. Subject to this an appeal must be heard by a board if it is against a capital improved value of less than $10,000, an unimproved capital value of less than $2,000, or net annual value of less than $500. If the valuation exceeds these figures the appeal may be heard by a board or the court at the option of the appellant or, if he does not exercise his option, at the option of the rating authority. The amendment now proposed will substitute a capital improved value of $50,000 for the present $10,000, an unimproved capital value of $10,000 for $2,000, and a net annual value of $2,500 for $500, and will add site value to the other valuation bases. The figure adopted for site value is $10,000.

Clause 22 provides authority for the Registrar of Land Valuation Appeals to determine any application

by consent of the parties for adjournment or withdrawal of any appeal before the board. It also amends certain provisions relating to the awarding of costs in the hearing of appeals. Apart from editorial changes these amendments are as follows—

1. The court or a board will have discretion to award costs in the case of a disputed application for withdrawal or adjournment of an appeal which has been made within fourteen days of the day set down for hearing.

2. A simplified method is prescribed for the recovery of costs awarded by the board in an appeal. This is an adaptation of certain provisions of the Small Claims Tribunal Act 1973.

Clause 23 deals with the question of rating and taxing appeals in respect of a property which extends continuously beyond the boundaries of one rating authority so that it is subject to more than one valuation. Section 50 of the principal Act provides that where an appeal has been made to the court in respect of one part of such a property, notice of appeal may be given to other rating authorities concerned, notwithstanding any statutory time limit on objections to valuations, in order that the different parts of the property may be subject to one appeal.

It is now proposed that such appeals may be heard and determined by a Land Valuation Board of Review as well as by the court and this clause makes appropriate amendments to section 50.

In making a valuation for rating purposes of a property which extends continuously across the boundaries of one municipality the valuer values it as one undertaking and the values of the parts in separate municipalities are each assessed as part of the value of the whole of the land. This ensures that each portion of the land is valued on the same basis as other land in the municipality and attracts an equitable share of the rate burden. Section 50 (3) is cited by valuers as the authority for this practice but doubts have been expressed as to the correct interpretation of the sub-section and an amendment is proposed to settle these doubts. The amendment will be inserted in the appropriate part of the Local Government Act because that Act prescribes how valuations are made. I commend the Bill to the House.

The Hon. I. B. TRAYLING (Melbourne Province): I move—

That the debate be now adjourned.

I do not want to impose too much on the generosity of the Leader of the House in asking for an adjournment of the debate until Tuesday fortnight, but this is an important Bill. I had heard nothing of the Bill or its intended suckling until a couple of days ago and I want to do justice to it for my party. That would not be possible if the period of adjournment were too short.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): I think I can be generous on behalf of my colleague, the Minister for Local Government, although I do not really have to be as the approach of the honorable gentleman is always generous. I certainly give an undertaking that the debate will not be resumed for two weeks, which really means three weeks.

The Hon. I. B. TRAYLING: My suggestion allowed for the week in which the House will not sit.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: That will enable the House to do justice to this complex Bill.

The motion for the adjournment of the debate was agreed to, and it was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, November 6.

The sitting was suspended at 6.30 *p.m. until* 8.3 *p.m.*

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The debate (adjourned from October 16) 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. F. S. GRIMWADE (Bendigo Province): I thank the Governor, Sir Henry Winneke, for his address on the opening of Parliament and congratulate His Excellency on his appointment. I am sure that the constituents of the Bendigo Province would desire me to wish him and Lady Winneke a happy and long term of office and express the hope that the duties are not too arduous for them.

I also pledge the loyalty of my constituents to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. and say how delighted we are that the Prince of Wales, Prince Charles, will be visiting Victoria later this week. Indeed, on Saturday His Royal Highness will be visiting Bendigo, as well as other places within the district. The Royal visitor will attend the Bendigo Show. I hope the visit will be rewarding for Prince Charles because everyone would like to see him return to Australia many times. He has been here previously and understands Australians better than perhaps most English people do.

The Address-in-Reply debate enables the back-bench members to speak on a wide range of subjects which are of great importance to Victoria, and perhaps to Australia. It provides an opportunity for honorable members to draw conclusions and inferences from the problems that beset the State at this time. The community is in a difficult economic position. All thinking members of the community are concerned and worried about the situation. Unemployment has leaped above the magical figure of 100,000 and is close to 130,000 or 150,000. Honorable members have read expressions of opinion in the newspapers that the unemployment figure could reach 200,000 or more by the end of the year. This is worrying. It is easy to quote figures but the figures represent individuals, families and family groups, who must be deeply concerned about the present position.

Honorable members see companies closing, which might have been expected if management had not been sufficiently good, but well-managed companies such as Fibremakers Ltd. at Bendigo, which I mentioned last night, and Watersun Pty. Ltd. at Broadford, are closing their factories and putting their employees out of work. Perhaps even worse, crashes are occurring with companies such as Mainline, Cambridge and the West Australian land company and taking with them not only employees but also people who have lent them money, have traded with them and have purchased shares. The ramifications of these company crashes are enormous.

The problems of inflation are with us. People who are on fixed incomes, superannuants, people who have worked hard all their lives and put money aside and who are now attempting to live on a fixed income, are finding that every day they have less money with which to live. Perhaps even worse is the loss of confidence in the community. How can a community remain confident when companies are crashing? I am reminded by my colleague, the Minister of Water Supply, that the Bendigo Preserving Company is closing its doors and some 200-odd employees will be out of work. How can the community, let alone the man in the street, remain confident? The average person must ask what the future holds.

Nobody can be encouraged by the economic climate or the fear of the unknown and increased taxation in areas where taxation has not previously been imposed, often in a way which nobody yet understands. What particularly worries me is the reaction of the average person that he must tighten his belt. In the farming community, farmers who, over many years, have spread superphosphate to increase production, have said to me that this year they have no money and will not be spreading superphosphate. Naturally, this affects the contractor who spreads the superphosphate and also the business of

the railways in transporting supplies to country areas. Moreover, there will be a loss in productivity and land which has had a high yield will be downgraded.

What do honorable members see in this context? Do we see the Federal Government tightening its belt or taking up the slack? I invite honorable members to reflect that the Federal Budget is expanding expenditure by some 30 per cent. The private sector is withdrawing, clamping up and tightening its belt, whereas the Government in the Federal sphere is letting it out.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): I can permit Mr. Grimwade to touch on Commonwealth Government affairs only in passing.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE: In passing, I was referring to what I consider to be a dangerous trend in the community in that the private sector of the economy within the State and within Australia has been forced to take the full brunt of the effects of the economic climate while the Federal Government is letting out its belt and perhaps rather sinisterly adopting the socialistic theory of taking over and increasing its power.

Another trend is that persons in certain circles go around saying that they have never had it so good and that any contrary view is all hoo-ha. I do not go along with that contention. Another change in the community which worries me is the fact that the individual is being changed to a conglomerate, indicating the demise of the small unit or, if you like, the death of the individual. Alternatively there is the theory that one has to get big or get out.

Honorable members can see this in a number of different ways: In the amalgamations of unions so that they become bigger and bigger; in the amalgamations of businesses where one might find the multi-national companies taking over and becoming greater; and also in the field of small family businesses, mixed businesses, small retail stores and the small farmer who had been the backbone of country towns. It is in this area that one can see an important difference. Nothing could be more difficult than being the owner of a small business in a Victorian country town. The person could be a printer, a farmer, a hairdresser, the proprietor of a retail store, or a person who is attempting by his own enterprise to run a business.

The small businessman suffers from many disadvantages. He has no superannuation, no sick pay—if he becomes ill he closes the business—no holiday pay or the 17·5 per cent loading, no long service leave or automatic wage adjustments. The small businessman is being forced out and does not even keep steady working hours. He has to withstand market competition and pressure from the bigger businesses, and also the pressure of unfair tactics which are imposed on him by the unions because they have more muscles to flex than he has.

It is no wonder that the small businessman is giving up the unequal struggle. I feel that ultimately he will disappear. The small businessman is wondering whether it is worth taking the risks and working hard because if he succeeds he will be taxed and if he does not the business will be lost to the community, but no one seems to care.

I wonder how these people can survive in business or even start in business. To do so, they have to have capital but they cannot get capital by trading because taxation takes care of that. They cannot obtain capital by borrowing unless they have security. If they have security, they probably do not want to borrow. If they do, they have to pay 15 per cent interest.

As an illustration of an enterprising man who is leaving self-employment, I can cite the case of a building contractor who used to employ three or four men and has decided that it is not worth taking the risks of tendering for small jobs, employing the men and having to cover them for the various advantages

which I mentioned and which are not available to the self-employed. This man has decided to give up the unequal struggle, to obtain employment with somebody else, and to let somebody else take the risks by being enterprising.

Professional men such as doctors and lawyers who cannot leave their own employment are deciding not to work so hard. They ask why they should work 60 hours a week when the waterside workers can get away with working only 32 hours a week and also obtain all the advantages. Professional men are now taking three months' break and going away. A lawyer friend of mine says that when the school holidays come around, all the barristers will be away on holidays and court cases will have to be postponed; so again the community is losing.

What about small contractors such as bricklayers and shearing contractors? These men now realize that if they work too hard and become too successful their taxation becomes oppressive, so now shearers do not work on Friday afternoons because half of the extra money that they could earn would have to be paid to the Government in the form of tax. Once again, the community loses.

What is also worrying is that there is a build-up in the community of people who are totally unproductive in terms of community benefits. They do not contribute to the cultural or spiritual advancement of the community. They are invariably highly intelligent people of ability who are using their talents to beat the system. They do not come from suburbs such as Fitzroy. A friend of mine who was travelling in the north-western part of Victoria recently picked up a hitchhiker on the main highway from Mildura. My friend asked the man where he was going, and ultimately the hitchhiker told him the full story. He was registered as unemployed in three different places under three different names and spent his life travelling between the three areas collecting his money! He must have been a man of ability because he was beating the system and doing very well. My point is that it is Victoria's loss.

These trends are now being encouraged further by the present methods of taxation in Australia. A 10 per cent surcharge on capital earned by rents will be reflected in increased rent charges. That is not good. A tax on capital gains will encourage spending, not saving. If the capital gains tax does not make allowance for inflation, it will decimate farmers. Taxation should be positive and encourage people to do the things we want them to do. The Minister for State Development and Decentralization is doing a good thing by introducing the pay-roll tax rebate system. This is a positive means of taxation; people in the metropolitan area are taxed but those who are decentralized in country areas will receive a tax rebate.

I cannot say anything good about probate duty and its incidence. Earlier this week I heard about a man who had been farming on his father's property, only a short distance from Melbourne, for 30 years. The man I refer to is now aged 50 years. His father died, leaving the property to his wife—the man's mother. Last year the mother died, and because of the activities of developers in the area, the property belonging to the estate of the man's mother has been valued at $350,000. At the moment the property is unencumbered but State probate duty will amount to $50,000 and Federal probate duty—because that estate is above a certain cut-off level—will be a good deal more. This man does not have the ability to pay the amount. Blocks in the area in which he lives may not be subdivided into portions of less than 100 acres each. Therefore, if he wishes to sell any of his 600-acre property, he must do it in blocks of 100, 200 or 300 acres. At present he is a viable farmer, but if he is loaded down with a debt of $50,000 or $100,000—provided that he can borrow that amount of money—how can be repay it when the interest will amount to $8,000 a year?

The property is at present viable and provides him with an income, but in order to earn an extra $8,000 a year after taxation he will have to earn $12,000, $14,000 or $15,000 a year. It is not possible to do this. When I ask what a person in such a situation can do, people say that he could borrow from the bank or on a life insurance policy, but in that event he would have to pay 15 per cent interest. He may be able to borrow money from the Rural Finance and Settlement Commission at 8 per cent or 9 per cent, but this taxation is forcing a successful farmer, who has lived for 30 years on a block of land and has done particularly well, to sell his property.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: That is right, and he will finish up as a millionaire.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE: Money consists only of paper; it does not mean very much, but a man may be forced off his property because of this tax. If probate duty is now forcing people off their properties, what will happen in another 30 years' time?

Probate duty ought to be removed or an extension granted of the time in which it can be paid. Alternatively, it may be left as a charge on the property, as can be done with unpaid rates, and recouped when the property is sold. It is important to consider these matters where farming industries are involved.

I summarize by saying that it ought to be recognized that changes have occurred in the community as a result of Government action. The community is viable and responds to the conditions imposed on it. A lack of confidence is prevailing in the community at present and strong leadership is required of the quality provided by Premier Hamer—certainly not of the type given by Prime Minister Whitlam, who spends more time out of Australia than in it. I call on the leaders of this State and this country to make a sincere effort to overcome these problems. After all, they are the elected leaders of the community; they are not the leaders of trade unions, like the Mundeys and the Gallaghers who pursue the private interests of their own groups and are not responsible to the rest of Australia.

What is the Commonwealth Government doing in response to the Victorian Government's offer of action? I read from page 4 of the Governor's Speech delivered at the opening of Parliament, when His Excellency said—

> 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 offer has been made but has not been accepted. Must we now wait until a quarter of a million people are out of work or until the farmers walk off their land? Must we wait until all the businesses collapse or until the Federal election next April?

The headline in the *Herald* tonight reads " We're set to get cracking says Cairns ". I say that we, the people, are cracking, and it is time the Government did something. I am pleased that my argument has convinced members of the Opposition but I wish they would convince their leaders.

I should like now to make specific comments on matters affecting administration in the State of Victoria, particularly relating to agriculture. I shall draw on my experiences in recent months when I was fortunate enough to visit North America, the United States of America and Canada. I shall compare what I saw there with the conditions I have seen in Victoria. I visited the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, where I met Professor Ken Clark. This university has a large number of students and is highly orientated towards agriculture. It has its own large experimental farm of 100 acres attached to the university. The students, research workers and the Department of Agriculture work in close contact with each other and with farmers

outside. The extension services of the Department of Agriculture work hand in hand with the people of the universities, the lecturers and research workers. Professor Clark told me that in the week prior to my visit he had been to about a hundred farms in Manitoba. He was working on a project called ERTS 1. That term refers to the Earth Resources Technological Satellite No. 1. The project is interesting and has implications for Australia. Every eighteen days a satellite goes around the world and at 9.30 a.m. it takes a photograph in three different wave lengths of the State of Manitoba. From the photographs which are available almost immediately, the department for which Professor Clark works can determine the type of crop being grown, the acreage, expected yield, the quality of the grain to be harvested and any diseases that may have occurred in the grain in the past eighteen days. I believe Australia is also using the ERTS system, but I had to travel overseas to find that this was happening. I had not previously heard of it in Victoria or in Australia. I now understand that the photographs are available to Victorians, and I wonder whether the system is being used in Victoria.

During my trip I also met Professor Reuben Albough of the Davis Campus of the University of California. He spoke at great length about the dissemination of information from the research workers to the Department of Agriculture to the university and back to the farmer. In both the United States of America and Canada there is close contact between the farmer, the researcher and the Department of Agriculture.

I believe this has highlighted the need within Victoria for a closer contact between the department, the universities, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization and the farmer. I ask whether or not these various research people are aware of the current problems facing farmers. The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization does a marvellous job, but when did research men from that organization actually visit a commercial farm? Money is collected from Victorian farmers by way of levies on wool and meat and is channelled into research work at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization and the Department of Agriculture, but I wonder whether the research people have the farmer in mind when they carry out their work.

One reads interesting stories of how the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization research staff can change the colour of black wool to white and back again by feeding sheep different minerals, but what do we know of the work being done to control footrot in sheep? This extraordinarily widespread problem has not received attention for about twenty years. The department glibly says that farmers know the answers, but the answers do not work. There ought to be closer contact between the farmers, the department, the universities and the research workers. Who determines what research work is done with public moneys? Who makes the decision whether the moneys go into this or that project?

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD: A committee in each State does that.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE: I wonder whether that committee has ever been on a farm.

The Department of Agriculture desires to set up a district office at Seymour. Although this decision was made two years ago as part of a plan to get closer to the farmer and perhaps become part of the farming community, nothing has been done about it. The department has been unable to find sufficient office space at Seymour. The Public Works Department has been asked to attempt to rent office space but nothing is available. The department does not have the money with which to build. It cannot reach agreement with the shire council which would be happy to borrow the

money to build the offices. This impasse has existed for two years. I ask that the relevant Ministers—the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Agriculture—get together and straighten out the matter. If the participation of the Minister for Local Government is needed, I suggest that the honorable gentleman should take part in the discussions.

About three years ago I raised the matter of a market information service on the selling of livestock. The then Minister of Agriculture, the late Sir Gilbert Chandler, rapidly sat me back in my back bench because he did not believe this service was necessary. I still believe it is necessary and I am now supported by the Cozens report. Seventeen months ago the Cozens report was brought forward recommending that a market information service be provided and highlighting the need for regular, accurate and consistent reports on the sale of livestock either at the sale-yards at auction or at the abattoirs over the hooks. It also made the important suggestion that this information should be available on a classification basis so that when one is talking about a two-tooth wether it is known exactly what animal is being referred to. At the moment the classification " lamb " can mean anything, depending on whether one is a buyer or a seller, from an animal five or six months old to one possible three or four years old. A two-tooth, however, spans the age of a sheep.

This aspect of the Cozens report is not controversial. It is so simple that the Department of Agriculture could provide the service without using additional men or materials; it has the power within the various Acts to require the sort of information to be made known to it if required. The department should give a lead. Perhaps the decision may need to be made by the Minister and, if so, I urge the honorable gentleman to do so.

On farming properties, particularly where livestock has to be mustered, the farmer, his wife, son or employee often uses a motor bike. Even the dog sits on the back. Many people under the age of eighteen use motor bikes when mustering and working the farm. Under the Labour and Industry Tractor Regulations of 1972, No. 251, children under the age of eighteen years are allowed to drive tractors on private farms. They are not allowed to drive those tractors on public roads because they are not licensed nor are they able to be licensed. Unfortunately, the law does not cover or even consider the case of a young adult riding a motor bike on a farming property. I am keen to see this situation clarified because if an accident occurs to a person or property for which there is a claim for workers compensation or third-party insurance, and a person under the age of eighteen years is involved, the legal implications are not clear.

The experience gained by young people riding motor bikes on farming properties is valuable to them because in due course it will make them better riders. In the old days people who rode horses learnt the feeling of them and how to treat them. Young people who ride motor bikes are encouraged to learn about their mechanical construction, to pull them apart and look after them. That is good training. I suggest that the Minister, or the department having been asked by the Minister, should look into the granting of approval, if it is necessary, for young adults between the ages of fourteen and eighteen years to ride motor bikes on farming properties without impinging on their legal rights.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: They can do that now.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE: I am not sure that they can.

Although it is being questioned, particularly by the Federal Government through its actions, I believe a healthy and thriving farming community is vitally important because it enables both city and country to prosper. In order to be productive farmers need incentives. They need

to be conservation conscious and conscious of the long term; farmers should not tolerate the rape of the soil for a short-term advantage. These incentives have been built up over a number of years by previous Governments, and to discard them and the subsidies would be dangerous to all Australian interests. To ignore the special interests of farmers and their communities is to turn one's back on the fact of life that a lapse of time is necessary from the sowing to the reaping. One cannot turn on the production line of meat, wool or wheat, like a water tap and expect instant results from the farming community. However, if it is turned off, the farming community will be quickly killed. The Government that, with lack of understanding, sows the seeds of discontent in the fallow of the countryside, will in time reap the harvest it deserves. I know the Victorian Government is responsive to this situation. I wonder whether the Federal Government is.

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.

ADJOURNMENT.

MIGRANT ENGLISH TEACHERS—DOG ACT—ECHUCA TECHNICAL SCHOOL —UNEMPLOYMENT—MILDURA ROAD INTERSECTION—FERTILIZERS.

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. A. K. BRADBURY (North-Eastern Province): I raise a matter of urgency and grave importance—the teaching of English to Italians in both primary and secondary schools. There is a lack of qualified teachers for this purpose in Australia and as a result our migrant children labour under difficulties. Their mother tongue is spoken in their homes and there are not sufficient teachers to teach them English in the schools. This is a serious disadvantage to the children of migrants who are helping us to develop this country.

I have in mind an Italian who before emigrating to Australia had taught in an Italian primary school for six years. He had obtained the Italian Ministry of Education four-year certificate and had a diploma of primary teaching. He also had a degree in foreign languages and literature. He was a part-time teacher of English and Italian at the International College of Languages, Melbourne. He was issued with a certificate of education as a primary teacher by the Victorian Council of Public Education.

This man applied to the Primary Teachers Registration Board but, despite his qualifications, was refused registration because he had not undertaken the required teacher training in Australia.

In view of the number of remedial teachers required in our schools, people who have obtained degrees in languages in other countries and taught in schools in those countries —and, as in this case, are recognized as teachers because this man received a certificate of registration as a primary teacher—should be given provisional registration so that the State will benefit and the migrant children in our schools will have a chance to learn the English language. The Minister should consider provisional registration for these people so that after a period they may be able to apply for full registration by the primary and secondary registration boards.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province): In view of the answer to the question I received from the Minister for Local

Government tonight in respect of section 32 (3) of the Dog Act, I wish to direct a matter to the attention of the House.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): Before Mr. Walton goes further, Mr. President, I point out that the matter which he obviously intends to raise is *sub judice*. An application for rehearing of the case has been made and agreed to.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province): Mr. President, I am not sure that the matter I intended to raise is *sub judice*. I wonder whether the case should have been heard at all. The answer supplied by the Minister tonight states that the provision is purely enabling and that no penalty is prescribed under the Act for a person who offends against it. Yet the Minister's department initiated a successful prosecution.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): What Mr. Walton has just said is not so, but I again raise the point of order, Mr. President, that if Mr. Walton is speaking about an allegedly successful prosecution he is clearly talking about the court case to which he referred last week. That case was the subject of a successful application for rehearing and it will be reheard.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): Order! In those circumstances, I must uphold the point of order.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province): Like the Minister, I have received correspondence from the blind person concerned. What I am trying to do is to show in some way that this person was not vindictive in the action taken.

The PRESIDENT: Order! This is still a matter under consideration by a court and I must rule discussion of it out of order.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province): I ask the Leader of the House to take up urgently with the Minister of Education the provision of a portable class-room at the Echuca Technical School. I speak both in my capacity as the member representing the area and as a member of the advisory council of the school. Earlier this year the school was assured that it would receive a portable class-room from the Kerang High School, which would become unnecessary there because of a building programme. It was to be supplied at Easter but because of building delays that did not happen. That could be understood.

The current situation revealed at a council meeting on Friday night is that the class-room is not being used at Kerang, but advice has been received that it will be three weeks before it can be transferred to Echuca. The class-room will not be used as an ordinary class-room but will require fitting with some machinery, and that will take several weeks. I ask that it be transferred to the Echuca Technical School immediately to give the staff of the school sufficient time to fit out the class-room for the beginning of the school year in 1975.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province): I raise the matter of unemployment returns which concerns both the Minister for State Development and Decentralization and the Minister for Local Government. Some time ago I asked the Leader of the House for the unemployment figures in the Northern Province and he supplied the bare figures which were given to him.

The Northern Province has three Commonwealth Employment Service officers, who are located at Kerang, Bendigo and Shepparton. It is commonly stated that the number of unemployed in Shepparton is so many, at Bendigo so many, and at Kerang so many. But "Shepparton" includes places as far away as Echuca, "Bendigo" includes all the

surrounding shires and "Kerang" covers five shires, including one in New South Wales.

The Commonwealth Government has invited municipalities to submit projects for unemployment relief within their boundaries. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth Employment Service officers were allowed to release only the aggregate figures for the three areas and were not allowed to inform the municipalities how many unemployed there were in each or the type of persons concerned and the skills they held. As a result, the municipalities could not submit employment projects. What is more, the Commonwealth Government laid it down that a municipality must have a certain percentage of its work force unemployed before it became eligible for assistance.

I contacted the various employment officers who were most sympathetic and helpful as far as they were allowed to be. Unfortunately they were bound by the rule of Mr. Cameron's office in Canberra and were not allowed to supply the figures for the municipalities. I have agitated strongly on this.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Raymond Garrett): Order! Is Mr. Clarke tying this matter into State administration? So far what he has said is a matter of Commonwealth administration.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE: I am doing that, Mr. President. I have been able to supply the municipal councils, where appropriate, with the number unemployed within the municipality. The Minister for State Development and Decentralization is vitally concerned with the acute problems of decentralized industry resulting from the policies of the Federal Government, and the Minister for Local Government is concerned about municipalities. I urge the Victorian Government to do something I have been trying to do and on which I have had some success, that is, to have the Commonwealth figures released to each municipality and to allow the employment officers to inform the municipalities who are unemployed. For example, in the Shire of Cohuna jinker drivers and timber workers are unemployed because it is too wet for them to work. The Shire of Cohuna could put up a project to the Commonwealth Government for the employment of men of that type.

The Hon. R. J. LONG: You are saying that the Victorian Government will have more luck than you have had.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE: I do not regard myself as having had any luck. I regard myself as having done some darned hard work in getting these figures. What I want the Victorian Government to do is to make representations to the Federal Minister for Labour so that these figures will be available each month to the various municipalities which can then work out their projects.

I felt that the Minister for Local Government and I were on a common plane earlier and that we thought this scheme should be administered through the State Government. Unfortunately, it has been taken out of his hands and representations have been going direct to Canberra. My experience of the scheme as administered by the State was that it worked well. As administered by the Commonwealth Government at present, it is slow. It has been successful, for example, at Numurkah. I have heard that Wangaratta is to receive favourable treatment, and other municipalities appear to have missed out completely.

I ask the Minister for Local Government to give this matter his attention and to ascertain whether he can assist the municipalities which most urgently require help. I direct his attention to the Shire of Huntley, which has a large proportion of the work force unemployed. I ask the honorable gentleman to look into this matter and to take the issue directly to Canberra. I hope the two Ministers concerned will examine rural unemployment and afford some relief.

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province): I direct a matter to the attention of the Chief Secretary, through the Minister for Local Government. I received today a telegram from the President of the Mildura Chamber of Commerce, Mr. V. G. J. Elliott, and have had discussions with Mildura City Council on this matter today. It relates to road safety signs at the intersection of Ontario Avenue and Tenth Street, Mildura, which are main thoroughfares and of almost equal importance. At present there are no road signs at this intersection. Recently the Mildura tip has been closed because of flooding and a considerable volume of traffic is proceeding along Ontario Avenue.

In the telegram which I received today Mr. Elliot, the President of the Mildura Chamber of Commerce, advised me that members of his chamber, residents of the area and the council are most concerned about the number of minor accidents and near misses that are occurring. Probably major accidents are not happening because most of the travellers are local people and realize the danger of this intersection. But some bad accidents could occur if interstate or other motorists ventured through the intersection. The chamber of commerce has been making endeavours for some months and the council has approved stop signs for Ontario Avenue. The council is awaiting permission from the Chief Secretary to erect these signs. Apparently they are treated as major control items and a policy decision is awaited.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: Surely that is for the Road Safety and Traffic Authority.

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT: Yes. In any case, the chamber of commerce asked me to make representations so that the road signs can be erected as a matter of extreme urgency to protect this dangerous intersection.

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province): I wish to raise a matter which comes within the administration of the Minister of Agriculture and no doubt also that of the Minister of Labour and Industry. I refer to the provision of fertilizers at a reasonable price to Victorian farmers. Considerable controversy has been caused by statements made about the financial affairs of the Phosphate Co-operative Company of Australia Ltd., suppliers of Pivot fertilizers, which has a monopoly of fertilizer supplies in Victoria. Concern is caused because an election is being held and dissatisfaction is being expressed at the actions of the retiring director. One of the directors, who is well equipped for that industry, happens to be Sir Henry Bolte. It is claimed that the management of the company has put $14 million into reserves instead of providing fertilizers to Victorian farmers at a reasonable price. This matter should be raised with the Australian Government, which has obviously been subsidizing excessive directors' fees.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): Mr. Bradbury made three urgent appeals regarding the disabilities of migrant children in schools, the recognition of foreign qualifications and the recognition of teaching qualifications. Australia is in a unique position. The total number of people who have come to this country in the post-war period is in excess of 3 million. Not all of those persons have come from non-English speaking countries. In proportion to Australia's population, that is a record number of people to have immigrated to a country in that period of time. The bringing of large numbers of children who cannot speak English into our education system has in some cases caused disability problems. We tend to over-generalize because experience has shown in many quarters that young people who are able to speak more than one language often have some advantages; not everyone has disabilities.

I happen to be Minister of Immigration, without pay. Some time ago I attended a Ministerial meeting between Commonwealth and State Ministers. We discusssed the need for extra teachers in schools which

had large numbers of migrant pupils. The then Federal Minister for Immigration recognized that Victoria had a better record than any other State, but that did not mean that there were not children in Victoria who were not receiving specialized care and attention. All I can say is that this matter has been brought to the attention of all Governments and that certainly in the past couple of years a real effort has been made to do something in this area.

The other matters mentioned by Mr. Bradbury are just as pertinent and in some ways more worrying. Mr. Bradbury mentioned the case of a man who had foreign experience in teaching and whose qualifications were not recognized in Victoria. The States and the Commonwealth undertook a survey, which was headed by a Supreme Court judge from South Australia. This committee produced a damning report which was critical of all Governments for all sorts of reasons, including union and professional opposition. Many people who have come to this country have not been given proper recognition. This report has been placed in the hands of all Governments. We were called upon at this meeting to use whatever influence we had to persuade the professions to rectify the situation.

I recall arguing in this House against the attitude of the medical profession. It has always been my view that this profession has been far too restrictive. I also hold similar views in regard to many trades. However, this is not solely a matter of Government, as Mr. Bradbury will appreciate. Professions are largely controlled by their members. Members of the teaching profession have a say in such matters. I can only agree with what Mr. Bradbury has said. If anyone disputes what Mr. Bradbury and I say on this matter they should read the report of the committee to which I referred and which visited every State. The committee was comprised of men of high standing, impartial people, who called on expertise all over the country and proved beyond doubt that we are slow in giving proper recognition to foreign people.

The third point raised by Mr. Bradbury is also pressing and relates to the recognition of teaching qualifications. I do not know whether many professors would be entitled to teach in any of our schools. I do not know how many have the necessary qualifications. Honorable members are aware of the teachers' strikes which have occurred. Parliament has put the recognition of teaching qualifications in independent hands and the teaching unions have a responsible say in those matters. Despite all the practical knowledge and experience and the qualifications which people from overseas have and despite the needs of Victoria, many people are not able to obtain recognition of their qualifications. All I can do is to put Mr. Bradbury's views before the Minister, but I shall make it clear that this matter is not determined solely by the Government.

Mr. McDonald raised the issue of portable class-rooms. It is amazing how valuable these become when one has not got them.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD: This one is certainly valuable.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE: Mr. McDonald was fair enough to indicate that his favourite school, Echuca Technical School, had been promised a particular portable class-room but, because of circumstances probably outside the control of the Public Works Department and the Minister of Education, the school has not received the class-room that it expected. I shall certainly place this matter before my colleague, the Minister of Education, by tomorrow.

Mr. Clarke raised a matter about which he spoke to me last week. He referred to the attitude of the Commonwealth department responsible for unemployment relief. I told Mr. Clarke that the Victorian Government works on information received from that department, although at present the Victorian Government is carrying out surveys of certain industries. I

am well aware of the problems mentioned by Mr. Clarke. In fairness to the officers of the Commonwealth department, I point out that we have had officers from Dr. Cairns's department, Mr. Cameron's department and Mr. Enderby's department working with us for some time and I have found the officers, particularly the senior officers, extremely co-operative. In fact, we have had a number of joint schemes in some of the areas mentioned by Mr. Clarke. We sent officers to those districts, as the members who represent those areas are aware, and we have a so-called joint task force working at present.

Unfortunately, what Mr. Clarke says is true. The figures he quoted do not relate to the municipal areas most affected. Last week I had the opportunity, with the Federal Minister for Urban and Regional Development, Mr. Uren, to go into a number of areas. We brought these matters to his attention and we were looking at the scheme as a whole. The municipalities are distinct in their entitlements. The Minister for Local Government would understand that they would be deprived of assistance if all the figures were added together. The department is not administered by the Victorian Government, but its officers have been co-operative with the officers of my department. Matters concerning the so-called RED scheme were raised and the Minister for Local Government will deal with that aspect. His views have been forcefully expressed and he can inform the House what is the position at the present time.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): The Leader of the House referred to the often-used short title, RED scheme, for the regional employment development scheme. Some of my colleagues read sinister connotations into that name. I thank Mr. Clarke for his question but I want to say that the scheme currently sought to be administered—it is not being administered at all really—is completely cumbersome, certain to break down under its own weight and likely to keep people out of work rather than put them into work.

Under both the previous Liberal Government and the current Labor Government, the former scheme laid down several simple guidelines. These were that tasks undertaken must be labour intensive, they must put people back to work, they must endeavour to keep them in work and they must be for work which is of value to the community. They were simple guidelines easily administered. In Victoria, two officers, Mr. Webster, Co-ordinator of Works, and Mr. Hugh Wilson, special co-ordinator of works in my department, administer that entire scheme which provides millions of dollars to country Victoria and which enables thousands of men to be put back into productive work. It has enabled many worth-while community projects to be undertaken with the minimum possible delay.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: Like planting thousands of trees.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: Yes, like planting trees. Recreation reserves were created and halls were built where the municipalities bore the cost of the material rather than the cost of labour. A great many schemes were undertaken which took up the slack of employment. There were occasions when a municipal engineer was able to ring my department and say, "I have checked the figures with the Commonwealth Employment Office. As a result of the disclosure of a particular plan there are 140 people out of work". Mr. Wilson was able to give authority on the telephone immediately for the reemployment of a number of those men and for the undertaking of the project. The paper work was done later with no delay. Under the current scheme, the new RED scheme, there is a council of five Ministers in Canberra; underneath that there is an officers' committee of public servants, a State committee which officially consists of six officers of Federal departments, and two officers of this State. One of the Federal

officers has delegated his authority to a State officer. That makes five to three.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON: You are attacking the Public Service.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: No, I am critical of the unnecessary delay. Projects have to be submitted to the State committee, by the State committee to the Canberra committee, and in cases of doubt by that committee to the Ministerial committee. If anybody can tell me that a system so organized is designed to get people back to work quickly, I would like to hear his reasoning, for it must be most fortuitous indeed. It defeats the whole operation of the previous scheme and the whole objective of the exercise. The Federal Minister for Labor and Immigration, Mr. Cameron, opened his mouth and made a public announcement saying, "This is the way the scheme is being organized". Despite efforts by his colleagues, this is the way that it is organized. There are also constitutional difficulties and doubts because such money will go to Victoria. Grave doubts have arisen, in view of the recent referendum results, whether that is constitutionally proper.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH: You are happy with this.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT: I am not. I was delighted at the smoothness and expedition with which the previous scheme operated because that was a true example of co-operative Federalism. I am delighted to acknowledge any exercise of co-operative Federalism with any Government, regardless of the party in power. We did under the previous scheme. Reports are being continuously made. I know a number of Federal Ministers would like to see the current system changed and to get back to the expeditious system which formerly applied. The Ministers have not stopped making representations. We propose to review those representations and propose to seek to have retained the previous machinery which caused the scheme to be such a success and which was such a good example of co-operation between the State and Federal Governments in getting people back to work quickly. That should be the clear object of the scheme.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare): I suspect that the matters brought to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture, through myself, were vexatious and flippant, and I would not feel inclined to provide a reply. But in case they were not, I suggest that the honorable member who raised the matters should examine the disastrous anti-primary producer, anti-farmer economic and tariff policies of the Federal Government, and should not look for a scape goat in a producer-owned, most efficient fertilizer company.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.25 p.m. until Tuesday, October 29.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

MURTOA–HOPETOUN RAIL MOTOR.

(Question No. 104)

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North-Western Province) asked the Minister for Social Welfare, for the Minister of Transport—

(*a*) How does the Railways Board arrive at a possible saving of $80,000 per annum if a bus service replaces the Murtoa–Hopetoun rail motor?

(*b*) What is the breakdown of this estimated saving, comparing one service against the other?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON Minister for Social Welfare): The answer supplied by the Minister of Transport is—

(*a*) and (*b*). The estimated saving of $80,000 per annum if the Murtoa–Hopetoun rail motor is replaced by a road service is made up as follows—

	$
Rail motor crew costs	37,000
Rail motor and van, operating and maintenance costs	25,000
Rail motor opportunity costs	24,000
Station staff cost savings	11,000
	97,000
Less estimated cost of operating road service	18,000
Net saving	79,000

The figure of $80,000 which has been quoted is the rounded-off amount, having regard to unknown future inflatable costs. Revenue from the proposed bus service is estimated to be similar to the revenue earned by the existing rail motor service.

COUNTRY RAIL SERVICES.

(Question No. 117)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province) asked the Minister for Social Welfare, for the Minister of Transport—

(*a*) Is the Mildura railway line the best paying country line in the State?

(*b*) How many passengers travelled to Melbourne on Sunday, 8th September, 1974, and Sunday, 6th October, 1974, respectively?

(*c*) What was the average number of passengers for the month of September in 1972, 1973 and 1974 for—(i) Mildura–Melbourne; (ii) all country towns (total)–Melbourne; (iii) Melbourne–Mildura; and (iv) Melbourne–all country towns (total)?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare): The answer supplied by the Minister of Transport is—

(*a*) Separate cost data is not normally maintained in respect of individual lines.

(*b*) Sunday, 8th September, 1974—289 passengers.
Sunday, 6th October, 1974—453 passengers.

(*c*) The average number of passengers for the month of September—

(i) Mildura to Melbourne

1972	*1973*	*1974*
570	650	876

(ii) All country stations on the Mildura line to Melbourne—

The railways are unable to provide details as outward passenger statistics do not differentiate between journeys from country towns to Melbourne and journeys from one country location to another.

(iii) Melbourne to Mildura

1972	*1973*	*1974*
300	406	520

(iv) Melbourne to all country stations on the Mildura line—

Separate details of such journeys are not recorded and the railways are unable to provide this information.

In conformity with the recommendations of the Bland report, the Victorian Railways accounting system is at present under examination. It is expected that the railways will be in a position to provide more meaningful traffic details at the completion of this task.

AMENDMENTS TO WAGE DETERMINATIONS.

(Question No. 138)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North-Western Province) asked the Minister of Water Supply, for the Minister of Labour and Industry—

Can officers of the Department of Labour and Industry in country locations be provided with copies of amendments to awards immediately they become effective?

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply): The answer supplied by the Minister of Labour and Industry is—

Many amendments to determinations of wages boards become effective from a date earlier than or the same day as the meeting of the board. After the meeting, clauses have to be drafted to give effect to the decisions of the board. The preparation, duplication and distribution of copies of amended determinations to country offices also take time. However, the amended determinations are forwarded to country offices as speedily as possible. The Government has recently approved the creation of an additional position to cope with administrative work flowing from the rapid changes in determinations at present taking place.

CONTROL OF DOGS.

(Question No. 143)

The Hon. H. A. THOMAS (Melbourne West Province) asked the Minister for Local Government—

What powers are available to local councils to control the extremely unhygienic habit of dogs defecating and urinating on nature strips and footpaths?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): The answer is—

Any sanctions would need to be imposed on owners and persons controlling dogs, and not on the dogs. None such at present exist in Victoria, and the Government recently and on balance rejected a tentative proposal as being unduly oppressive and not fully practicable or enforceable.

LINCOLNVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL.

(Question No. 144)

The Hon. H. A. THOMAS (Melbourne West Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

When is it proposed to complete the building of the Lincolnville Primary School?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization): The answer supplied by the Minister of Education is—

It is hoped that the Lincolnville Primary School, which is currently under construction, will be completed for term 1 of the 1975 school year.

GAOL FOR SUNBURY AREA.

(Question No. 150)

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT (Melbourne West Province) asked the Minister for Social Welfare—

Is it proposed to establish a gaol in the area of Sunbury; if so—(i) at what location; and (ii) what type of prison is envisaged?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Social Welfare): The answer is, "No".

GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND.

(Question No. 152)

The Hon. J. WALTON (Melbourne North Province) asked the Minister for Local Government—

What are the penalties prescribed, and under what Act of Parliament, for people who offend against section 32 (3) of the Dog Act 1970 dealing with guide dogs for the blind?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government): The answer is—

Section 32 (3) of the Dog Act 1970 entitles a blind person at all times and in all places to be accompanied by a dog bona fide used by him as a guide dog. The section is an enabling one, and hence does not provide a penalty.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, October 23, 1974.

The SPEAKER **(the Hon. K. H. Wheeler)** took the chair at 2.36 p.m., and read the prayer.

ABSENCE OF MINISTERS.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I have to advise that the Minister of Transport and the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation will be absent until later this day.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

NUCLEAR POWER STATION.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): Has the Minister for Fuel and Power or the Ministry held discussions with the Minister for Social Welfare or the Social Welfare Department about the closure of the French Island penal settlement or about the tentative proposals of the State Electricity Commission on the nuclear power station site on French Island? If so, can the Minister give details to the House of the discussions that may have taken place and of the State Electricity Commission proposals for land acquisition for that purpose on French Island?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): I have not had any discussions with the Minister for Social Welfare about the closure of the French Island penal settlement or of proposals for a nuclear power station on the island. I know nothing about any conversation that anyone in either of my departments may have had concerning the penal settlement on French Island. The State Electricity Commission has an area of land on French Island which could be used for a nuclear power station but I would estimate that it will probably be another twenty-odd years before the Government will be considering nuclear power for Victoria.

TRACTOR THIRD-PARTY INSURANCE.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura): Is the Chief Secretary aware that the new third-party insurance premiums for tractors used for primary production in Victoria are $15.45 within the metropolitan area and $15.30 outside the 20-mile radius? Is there any reason for this differential or is it just a gesture towards decentralization?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): There is no question of there being just a gesture towards decentralization; decentralization is a stated policy of this Government, as has

been enumerated many times. The differential in this matter is leading towards a common fee throughout Victoria.

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS ASSOCIATION BUILDING.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): Can the Premier advise the House whether any negotiations have been entered into for the purpose of purchasing the Commercial Travellers Association building in Flinders Street and, if so, what stage have the negotiations reached?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The Government is looking for a home for police cadets for the several years which will elapse before new quarters are built for them at the Police Academy at Mount Waverley. Several buildings have been considered and the Commercial Travellers Association building in Flinders Street has been offered to the Government, but no decision has been reached on the matter. As soon as a decision is reached I shall be in a position to make a public announcement about it. The Government is looking for quarters for the police cadets where they can be housed and trained, pending their transfer to Mount Waverley in due course.

AVOCA BUSH NURSING HOSPITAL.

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara): I ask the Minister of Health: In respect of the Avoca Bush Nursing Hospital presently under construction, will the Minister give an assurance that the remaining Government grant of $215,000 will be forthcoming within the next few months or as soon as it is needed by the hospital committee?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): I will give consideration to the matter raised by the honorable member for Kara Kara. The Government subsidies were recently determined. If there is any outstanding amount it will be examined by me.

MEAT FOR UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

Mr. TREWIN (Benalla): I ask the Premier and Treasurer: Because of the low price existing for fat livestock in this State and elsewhere in Australia, will he give support if a proposal is resolved towards the exporting of the not-so-readily-saleable processed meat to countries which, at present, are suffering from famine and drought, particularly the underdeveloped countries?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): If I understand the suggestion of the honorable member for Benalla correctly, it would involve the purchase by some Government agency of portions of meat carcasses and its gift or transfer at a low price to countries which are in need of food. That is largely the province of the Federal Government.

Mr. TREZISE: You are not passing that one onto us, are you?

Mr. HAMER: I should have thought the whole process of overseas trade and the supply of food to overseas countries was very much a matter for foreign affairs and foreign trade. I will consider the proposition. I should like some more details from the honorable member, because I am not clear in my mind exactly what he has in mind with his proposal. If there is anything in it, I shall consider it.

STATE INSURANCE OFFICES.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Has the Chief Secretary had an opportunity of acquainting himself with the recommendations of the Committee of Public Accounts which recommended that the State Insurance Offices be permitted to enter into the more profitable fields of insurance? In view of the very severe impositions placed on motorists by increases recently enunciated by the Treasurer, is the Chief Secretary able to inform the House when, if at all, he will act on the recommendations of the Committee of

Public Accounts and allow the State Insurance Offices to compete freely with insurance companies, thereby reducing their losses and lessening the savage imposition on Victorian motorists?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The Leader of the Opposition used two phrases—"very severe increases" and "so savagely imposed on Victorian motorists". If it had not been for the Victorian Government, the increases would have been much more savage. The State Government broke them down, as it intended to do.

The matter of a wider franchise for the State Insurance Offices is still under consideration.

STOCK EXCHANGE.

Mr. McLAREN (Bennettswood): Can the Attorney-General advise the House of the result of any investigations made by the Stock Exchange of Melbourne following receipt of the report of the Senate Select Committee on Securities and Exchange?

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General): Yes, I can advise the House, and as I said last week——

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! Has this question been asked and answered before?

Mr. WILCOX: No; what I was about to say will explain the position. Last week the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked me whether I had any information on this matter and I said that I had been in touch with the Chairman of the Stock Exchange of Melbourne, and that when I had some information I would make it available. I am not sure whether I said the latter, but I answered the question in accordance with my usual belief in open government.

Today I have been informed by the chairman of the stock exchange that the investigations and inquiries conducted by the Senate Select Committee into the matters alleged in the Rae report have been completed. I did not know previously, but I now know that seven members of the stock exchange were charged with conduct unbecoming to a member. Two members have been found guilty of such conduct—one member named Parsons and the other named Harman. In one case the penalty imposed was a fine of $5,000 plus suspension for three months, and in the other case the member was suspended for three months.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): I direct a further question to the Attorney-General. Were the charges against the other five members of the Stock Exchange of Melbourne dismissed? Were the members reprimanded, and can the honorable gentleman provide details of what happened to the other five members?

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General): From the information conveyed to me, my understanding is certainly that the charges against the other five members were not sustained.

NEWPORT POWER STATION.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Does the Minister for Fuel and Power share the commendable attitude of the Attorney-General on open government and, if so, will he inform the House of the price the State Electricity Commission proposes to pay for natural gas for the generation of electricity for the Newport power station?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): Although I agree with the concept of open government in certain circumstances, there are contracts existing between private companies and State authorities, and no one would understand them unless he had the documents. It would be confusing and wrong to make this information available.

ACCOMMODATION FOR COUNTRY STUDENTS.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): Is the Minister of Education aware that secondary school teachers from the country who bring groups of children

to Melbourne for an educational experience, and who wish to extend their stay for more than one day, are having difficulty in finding suitable accommodation at a reasonable price? If so, will he approach the State Accommodation Committee with a view to obtaining the use of the premises formerly used as a girls' orphanage at South Melbourne so that they can be used for this purpose?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I am prepared to investigate the proposal.

UNION BASHERS.

Mr. MACLELLAN (Gippsland West): Will the Premier arrange for a conference with the Prime Minister to protect Victorian trade unionists from union bashers?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I think they are capable of looking after themselves. I hardly think they need intervention at Government level.

COOLING OF GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS.

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West): Did the Minister of Health state in a letter to two councillors of the City of Melbourne that it was not Government policy to provide cooling in Government buildings? Is he aware of statements by the Minister of Public Works that this is not Government policy, and, if he is aware of those, why did he write to the two gentlemen stating that it was Government policy, and will he consider providing cooling for Royal Park Psychiatric Hospital?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): On a point of order, at no time have I said that it is not Government policy to provide cooling. I have been misrepresented and I ask for a withdrawal.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): If the Minister of Public Works believes that the honorable member for Brunswick West has misquoted him——

Mr. DUNSTAN: Deliberately.

The SPEAKER: Then I believe the Minister of Public Works is quite justified in asking for a withdrawal of the statement.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, is this a ruling that if an allegation is made that a member has misquoted another member of this House, the words must be withdrawn? If so, what Standing Orders apply?

The SPEAKER: The Minister of Public Works raised objection to the statement made. All that the honorable member for Brunswick West needs to do is to quote from his authority. I am sure that the honorable gentleman would accept it.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): This raises an important matter. The forms of the House entitle a member who feels he has been misrepresented to rise in his place at the appropriate time and, by way of personal explanation, clarify any situation that has occurred. I know of no precedent in this Chamber where the procedures now adopted have ever been taken, where a Minister rises to a point of order—it certainly is not a point of order, whatever else it may be—and a direction is given for a withdrawal on the basis of the Minister's saying that he has been misquoted. In the cut and thrust of this place, members continually claim to have been misquoted. If this precedent is established it will create more than considerable confusion in the running of the House.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, would it not simply be a matter for the honorable member for Brunswick West to repeat his question? The form of the

question that he asked the Minister of Health was whether in fact this occurred. The honorable member could not be misrepresenting the Minister of Public Works if he is already questioning the Minister of Health whether in fact it did occur.

Mr. DUNSTAN: That is not the point.

Mr. WILKES: It is the point, in terms of the question and the procedure. It would seem to me that if the honorable member for Brunswick West is questioning whether the Minister of Health in fact said or did something, the Minister of Health has the right to answer "YES" or "NO" or indeed not to answer at all. In no way could the Minister of Public Works deem it to be an infringement of or a charge against his credibility when he has not been asked a question. I suggest that if the Minister of Health answered the question "YES or "NO", that would clear up the matter. Surely, Mr. Speaker, you could not sustain a point of order on a question which has been asked. At least you could direct that the question be repeated.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The question was directed to the Minister of Health. If the Minister of Public Works believes the statement made by the honorable member for Brunswick West was offensive to him, he may ask for a withdrawal, but in answering a question the member shall not debate the matter to which the same refers. If the honorable member believes he was misquoted an opportunity will be afforded him at the appropriate time to make a personal explanation. The question is directed to the Minister of Health and he should answer it.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): I have no intention of answering such a misinformed, inaccurate question based on information which is dubious.

FLUORIDATION.

Mr. MUTTON (Coburg): I wish to direct my question——

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! It is my decision where the call will go. I make it perfectly clear that since I have been Speaker I have done my best to give the call in turn right around the Chamber. I keep a running order of questions asked, and it can be proved beyond any doubt that fair consideration is given to all sides of the House.

Mr. MUTTON (Coburg): Thank you for your ruling, Sir. I ask the Minister of Health——

The SPEAKER: Order! I have given my ruling and I now give the honorable member for Coburg the call. I want no further interjections on the matter. The Leader of the Opposition will cease interjecting.

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER: Order! Some statements unworthy of this Chamber are being made at present. I should hate the standard of this place to be reduced.

Mr. MUTTON (Coburg): I ask the Minister of Health: Can the honorable gentleman inform the House whether he has issued directions to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works to add fluoride to the water supply system? If so, can he advise what date has been set for the commencement of this procedure?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The answer is, "Not yet".

TECHNICAL TEACHERS' AWARD.

Mr. SKEGGS (Ivanhoe): I ask the Minister of Education: Is there any truth in the reported claim by the Technical Teachers Association of Victoria that the Teachers Tribunal is delaying a new award for technical teachers?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The Teachers Tribunal has been vested by this Parliament with

the power to determine salaries and allowances for teachers. I understand that it has been hearing a number of claims presented by the three unions in recent weeks and that it has not yet completed its determination.

WRITTEN ROAD TESTS.

Mr. RAMSAY (Balwyn) : I ask the Chief Secretary a question regarding the written road tests now required for people wishing to obtain learner-driver permits. Is the honorable gentleman aware of the suggestion, which I believe emanated from the social questions committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, that matters relating to the effect of alcohol on driving ability should be included in the written tests? Will the Minister give this his consideration and introduce it at the earliest possible opportunity?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary) : There have been a number of reports from various committees to that effect and I am at present giving consideration to them.

NEWPORT POWER STATION.

Mr. STIRLING (Williamstown) : Has the Premier had further discussions with the unions involved in the Newport power house construction ban and, if so, can the honorable gentleman inform the House of the outcome of the discussions?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer) : I have suggested to the Trades Hall Council, which is coordinating the unions concerned, that we should meet next Tuesday afternoon, if that is convenient to them, for further discussions. I have had only one round of discussions with them so far, and certain representations were made and certain fears expressed. I have had those matters examined and I hope that at the meeting next Tuesday, if they will come to it, we shall be able to discuss these matters fully and frankly and possibly reach an amicable solution to the whole problem.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell) : Further to the remarks of the Minister for Fuel and Power about open government, can the Minister tell the House whether the principles of pecuniary interest for local government apply to the State Electricity Commission in deciding such questions as the supply for the Newport power station, when one of the members of the commission is also a director of Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd., one of the suppliers of natural gas?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power) : I assure the honorable member that in any discussions that have taken place between the State Electricity Commission and Esso-Hematite on the price of natural gas for the Newport power station, Sir Roger Darvall, a board member of Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd., has not taken part.

"THIS DAY TONIGHT."

Mr. JONES (Melbourne) : Has the Premier given direct or indirect advice to members of Cabinet that in the foreseeable future they ought not to allow themselves to be interviewed by the Australian Broadcasting Commission television programme *This Day Tonight*? If so, can the Premier advise the House why it is the case and how long he expects this embargo to last?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer) : The answer is, "No".

RURAL CONTRACTORS.

Mr. TREWIN (Benalla) : Will the Minister of Public Works inform the House whether there has been a Government decree indicating that, in the interests of decentralization, contractors in rural areas will be given a slight advantage over contractors in metropolitan areas?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works) : I cannot say that a Government decree has been issued along these lines, but it is the policy of both the Government and the Public

Works Department that rural contractors shall be given an edge over metropolitan contractors, all other things being equal.

SUNSHINE HOSPITAL.

Mr. LIND (Dandenong): Can the Minister of Health inform the House whether it is a fact that the Government intends to ignore the Australian Government in the matter of the construction of the Sunshine Hospital? If so, is the Minister prepared to reconsider this decision in order to make funds available to cover the shortfall at Dandenong and other hospitals?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The honorable member has asked a mouthful of a question, because it involves enormous policy decisions that have been made by both the Commonwealth Government and the Victorian Government. Generally, the attitude of the Victorian Government to the Sunshine proposal is that if the Prime Minister wishes the hospital to proceed quickly, the money for the project should be provided through the Government of Victoria. The land has been obtained and planning and the geophysical surveys for the foundations and soil sampling have been proceeding. If the Commonwealth Government goes ahead on the State Government site in the fashion it has indicated, it will mean the tearing apart and ripping up of all the matters that related to the gathering together of the land, the planning, and the evaluation work. It will slow down and inhibit the development of the Sunshine Hospital.

Further, to put it as simply as possible, the Sunshine Hospital is a $70 million project. It involves psychiatric services through the Mental Health Authority, geriatric services, and the provision of public hospital facilities. If the Prime Minister goes ahead, are we to witness separate ambulance, mental health and Hospital and Charities Commission services, to administer the project? The Government is attempting to avoid unnecessary delay and duplication and the cost that is entailed therein. The Victorian Government has stated that it will co-operate in principle with the Commonwealth Government through its Hospitals and Health Services Commission.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): Mr. Speaker, you have given a number of rulings about members not debating questions. You have pointed out that a Minister may answer or refuse to answer a question but must not debate its subject or give opinions. A Minister must give the facts in answer to a question if he chooses to answer it. He must not make allegations about some other Government or Parliament. Otherwise, Sir, question time will become the farce that the Minister of Health would like it to be.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The latter part of the statement of the honorable member for Albert Park was unnecessary. The honorable member raises a point of order with respect to the answer being given by the Minister of Health. It is clear from Standing Order No. 81 that in answering any question an honorable member shall not debate the matter to which it refers. I think the Minister answered the question in the first part of his answer.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the honorable member for Dandenong also alluded to the Dandenong hospital. I have not touched upon proposals for the development of that hospital. I should like to do so, if I may.

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park): Mr. Speaker, what was the ruling on the point of order?

The SPEAKER: I upheld the point of order, but the Minister of Health has pointed out that he had not completed the answer with respect to the part of the question relating to the development of the hospital at Dandenong. The Minister is now doing that.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): Initial capital funds have been set aside for the next year of development of the hospital at Dandenong and $1 million a year for subsequent development and expansion.

The Government believes that if the Commonwealth funds the Sunshine hospital through the State that will not interfere with the flow of funds for the Dandenong project or impede it. The Prime Minister has ignored the advice given in the report of his own Hospitals and Health Services Commission.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

ANSWER TO QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I desire to make a personal explanation. Yesterday, in answer to a question, I said that the chief of staff of the *Age* newspaper had refused to publish a letter which I had forwarded to the paper. I made an error on that point and I apologize for it. I also apologize to the chief of staff of the *Age*. On examining my correspondence file within the department, I found that it was Mr. Perkin, the editor of the *Age*, who had refused to publish the letter. I had mistakenly thought that Mr. Perkin was chief of staff.

STATUTE LAW REVISION COMMITTEE.

VAGRANCY (INSUFFICIENT MEANS) BILL AND VAGRANCY ACT 1966.

Mr. MACLELLAN (Gippsland West) presented a report from the Statute Law Revision Committee on the proposals contained in the Vagrancy (Insufficient Means) Bill 1974, and on section 5 of the Vagrancy Act 1966, together with an extract from the proceedings of the committee, appendices and minutes of evidence.

It was ordered that they be laid on the table, and that the report, the extract from the proceedings of the committee and appendix "A" be printed.

PUBLIC WORKS AND SERVICES BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public 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 Public Works and Services Bill.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works), pursuant to Standing Order No. 273D, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to authorize expenditure on public works and services and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

WILDLIFE BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of this Bill.

STATE FORESTS WORKS AND SERVICES BILL.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It provides authority for the expenditure of $7 million on works and services. An amount of $5·310 million has been approved for expenditure on proposed works for the financial year ending June, 1975. The additional amount authorized by the Bill is to provide Parliamentary authority to continue works until the passing of further legislation relative to the works programme to be approved for the financial year 1975-76.

Clause 1 of the Bill comprises the short title and citation. Clause 2 provides for the expenditure of moneys for the purposes set out in the table in that clause. Clause 3 provides that no moneys shall be expended except under this measure, and has the effect of cancelling unexpended authorities remaining under the State Forests Works and Services Act 1973.

ITEM 1: Fire protection, $1 million —The Forests Commission is responsible for the protection of 5·67 million hectares of State forest from damage by fire and for the control of fire suppression in national parks and approximately 1·2 million hectares of private property located within 1·5 kilometres of State forests and national parks. This territorial responsibility covers almost one-third of the State of Victoria.

The combination of climate and fuels makes Victorian forests one of the most fire-dangerous areas in the world. It is essential, therefore, that the Forests Commission maintains a fire-fighting organization which is capable of carrying out pre-season prevention work, prompt and aggressive initial attack on wild fires, followed by determined follow-up action. Accordingly, provision has been made for the construction of 21 kilometres of roads, 53 kilometres of fire access tracks, 208 kilometres of prepared firelines, 26 water storages and the reconstruction and rehabilitation of 700 kilometres of fire access tracks.

The Government has again made special provision for fire protection in the Dandenongs where the major works will be the removal of fire hazardous materials from the buffer zone and the improvement of access. The commission again will retain a helicopter on immediate call during the height of the fire season; it will be used for transport of crews to remote fires, reconnaissance of going fires and to assist in back-burning operations by aerial ignition.

Work is continuing on the programme of converting the commission's field radio network from a high frequency system to a very high frequency one. The conversion programme has been substantially accelerated by the provision of an additional $230,000 in this year to enable early completion, thus ensuring a more efficient field radio network for the whole State.

The commission's fire-fighting force will be augmented during January and February by the employment of three mobile, self-contained fire-fighting crews; similar crews have proved most valuable during previous seasons.

Work continues on projects designed to provide basic data on fire behaviour and the effects of fire on forest flora and fauna. As well as assisting fire-suppression activities, this data is used in preparation of prescriptions for large-scale fuel reduction burning.

ITEM 2: Indigenous State forest, $1 million—This item provides for a wide range of silvicultural operations in native forests, including the regeneration of recently logged areas and the removal of defective trees in established forests to permit the growth of better stems.

About 2,000 hectares of cut-over ash type forest in mountain areas will be treated to ensure the establishment of a new crop. These areas have a high potential for the production of valuable timber. These operations will necessitate the collection of large quantities of eucalypt seed for sowing by either hand or aircraft.

Regeneration operations using natural seeding will be carried out in other forest types, including mixed species, river redgum and box ironbark. Thinning of established young stands and the removal of useless trees will be continued in these forests. Provision is also made under this item for expenditure on forest recreation facilities and for protection of environmental values generally.

There are now 113 forest parks, scenic reserves and various other special purpose reserves, totalling 56,360 hectares, set aside under the Forests Act for scientific, aesthetic, educational and recreational purposes.

ITEM 3: Extraction roads, $650,000 —This item provides for the extension and improvement of the

commission's existing system of roads and bridges, used for the extraction of forest produce. Before harvesting is completed in already accessible areas, roads must be extended into unroaded areas if timber supplies are not to be disrupted. Additional roads are also required for the utilization of older softwood plantations, for harvesting the eucalypt regrowth stands, principally those resulting from the 1939 fires, and to aid in the utilization of otherwise waste material and lower-grade material in more intensively managed forests. Some of this roading is necessary to ensure supplies to wood-using companies with whom the commission has entered into long-term wood supply agreements.

Surfacing and improvement of existing roads is necessary to cater for the generally larger log trucks and the more sophisticated logging equipment now coming into use. All roads constructed in State forest assist in the protection, management and recreational use of those forests.

ITEM 4: Plantations establishment —Softwoods and hardwoods—including softwood planting undertaken in accordance with the agreements between the Commonwealth and the State, $3·3 million—The planting of new softwood areas under the agreement between the State and the Commonwealth will continue with the aim of achieving the target area of approximately 23,200 hectares over the five years of the agreement. These plantings in the seven established plantation development zones—Central, Benalla–Mansfield, Ovens, Upper Murray, Latrobe, Portland and Ballarat–Daylesford—will create large concentrations of wood which will be available as raw material for major decentralized industries.

Planning of the commission's softwood planting programme makes provision for landscape, aesthetic, and recreational requirements, and for the retention of representative wildlife and plant habitats within the projects. About 20 per cent of the gross area is reserved for these purposes, and plantations as a whole occupy a relatively small area in comparison with the very extensive native forests.

Within the limits of finance, suitable freehold properties will continue to be purchased for inclusion in the softwood programme as they become available at economic prices, with the aim of having a substantial part of each year's programme planted on purchased farmland. Some 2,000 hectares have been purchased over the past two years for this purpose.

The trees required for the programme will be raised at nurseries located at Benalla, Trentham, Rennick, Koetong and Narbethong. The main species used will be *pinus radiata.*

With the increasing demands by large decentralized industries for softwood timber, substantial areas of the older plantations are being clear felled and these clear-felled areas will be replanted with suitable species.

Hardwood plantings will continue in a number of districts throughout the State. The major plantings will be in the South Gippsland hills where some 350 hectares of purchased scrub-covered marginal farmland will be reforested with eucalypts, the main species to be used being mountain ash. Plants for hardwood planting throughout the State will be raised mainly at nurseries established at Olsen's Bridge (Mirboo district), Won Wron (Yarram) and Cooriemungle (Gellibrand). Under the supervision of Forests Commission staff, prison labour will carry out the bulk of the work in these three nurseries and will also assist with planting. Further developmental and planting work will be undertaken at the Olinda Arboretum in the Dandenong Ranges.

ITEM 5: Forest officers' quarters, workshops and other buildings, $400,000—Under this item a residence will be constructed for the warden at the You Yangs forest park

and improvements will be made to some of the older existing residences. A new district office of modern design and featuring the use of timber is to be constructed at Daylesford. Inadequate and obsolescent depot buildings at Ballarat and Castlemaine will be replaced by modern facilities. Other building proposals include additional and replacement garages and stores at various field locations. Construction of a forest research station for investigating the ecology of mountain species will be commenced at Kallista.

ITEM 6: Purchase of land, $250,000—Private property will be purchased by negotiation to improve areas being developed for forest recreation, to provide access for fire protection and timber extraction, and to consolidate the forest estate. The purchase of properties in the Dandenong Ranges is continuing in pursuance of the Government's policy for the preservation of the area and its protection from fire. This item does not include land acquisition for softwood plantation purposes.

ITEM 7: Purchase of plant, $180,000, other than under items 1-5 inclusive—This item provides for the design, fabrication and purchase of vehicles, plant and equipment not financed from the Plant and Machinery Replacement Fund, and includes the purchase of seven additional motor vehicles; the replacement of two "first attack" bulldozers for fire suppression; the replacement of seven four-wheel drive vehicles; and mounting fittings and equipment on eleven new fire tankers.

ITEM 8: Farm forestry, $120,000—This item provides for loans to landowners under the farm forestry loan scheme, to assist them in establishing plantations of commercial softwoods. The maximum amount which can be advanced is $5,000 and loans are interest free for the first twelve years. At 30th June, 1974, the amount committed for advances to agreement holders was $355,000. A steady number of applications is continuing to be received. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. WILKES (Northcote), the debate was adjourned.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): I move—

That the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, November 6.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): On the question of time, the Opposition is dissatisfied with an adjournment of the debate for only two weeks. Because of the nature of the Bill, which is essentially a loan application Bill, is the Minister prepared to give an assurance to the Opposition and the Country Party that if the members handling the Bill are not ready to proceed in two weeks' they will be given additional time?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): I shall be happy to give that assurance.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until Wednesday, November 6.

DOG (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill makes general amendments to the Dog Act. Since the legislation was re-enacted in 1970 various requests and suggestions for amendments have been made by councils, animal welfare organizations and individuals and it is now proposed to give effect to some of these.

Clause 2 is the first of two provisions which will relieve the owners of Alsatian dogs of their liability to pay certain extra fees and penalties. These extra charges were first imposed in 1936. The object was to discourage the keeping of these dogs largely because they were considered a potential danger to the pastoral industry. Representations have been made by individuals and associations

concerned with German Shepherds—which is the preferred name of the breed—and the Government has now agreed to their requests for the abolition of the additional charges. Section 4 of the principal Act provides a maximum penalty of $40—instead of $20—for failure to register an Alsatian and this provision will now be repealed.

Clause 3 concerns payment of registration fees. The principal Act provides that registration of a dog shall expire on 10th April next succeeding the date of the registration. Some municipalities have accordingly claimed that it is not possible to pay a registration fee in advance since the registration so effected would expire on 10th April. The proposed amendment will make it plain that renewal of registration is effective for the year following the expiration of the prior registration. A first registration will expire on 10th April next succeeding the date of registration but when a first registration is effected after 10th October only half the fee is payable.

A maximum penalty of $50 is at present prescribed for the making of a false statement or the omission of relevant information in an application for registration of a dog. It is proposed to increase this to $100.

Clause 4 is the second provision dealing with Alsatians. At present, on the registration of these dogs the owners must pay an additional amount of $15 for each dog. The additional charge is to be abolished and it is proposed that this shall be effective for the next registration year, for example, the year commencing on 11th April next. The provision under which the Governor in Council may proclaim other classes of dogs which would then be subject to the additional fee is also to be repealed.

Clause 5 will enable a council to recover any amount expended in keeping a dog which has been seized under the provisions of the Act. If a registered dog is seized the proper officer is required to notify the owner who may, within eight days after the seizure, claim the dog on payment of a fee. The amount of the fee is fixed by the council but may not exceed $10. In many cases councils have found that owners are not prepared to recover their dogs and the expenses involved must be borne by the council. The new provision will enable a council to recover the amount by proceeding in a Magistrates Court.

Clause 6 will give statutory recognition to a practice which has been common for many years, particularly in the metropolitan area. The Act at present provides that any person who sells, injures or destroys any dog, without being authorized by the owner or pursuant to the Act, commits an offence. Any person who seizes a dog wandering at large is required to forthwith deliver it to the proper officer of the municipality concerned. In practice, a number of animal welfare organizations do pick up stray or injured dogs and care for them. They may do so by arrangement with the municipality concerned or without any such arrangement. In some cases dogs are returned to their owners for a fee or are sold or destroyed. None of the organizations has any lawful authority to perform any of these acts but it is generally recognized that they perform a necessary service and act in the best interests of the unfortunate animals they are trying to help.

The amendment now proposed will enable any animal welfare organization to enter into an agreement with the council of any municipality under which the organization may lawfully carry out its functions in that municipal district. When such an agreement exists the organization will be empowered to seize dogs in the same way as the proper officer of a municipality, to restore dogs to their owners on payment of fees or to sell or destroy any dog. They will be required to notify the owners of registered dogs which have been seized and may

take proceedings against an owner to recover the expenses of keeping a stray dog. A council will have power, after an appropriate period of notice, to revoke any such agreement.

Clause 7 will give effect to a request by the Nurserymen and Seedsmen's Association which has complained that stray dogs have caused hundreds of dollars worth of damage to propagating material on properties used as nurseries for plants, trees and shrubs. An existing provision—section 24—of the principal Act authorizes the owner or occupier of a property on which sheep, cattle or poultry are confined to shoot or otherwise destroy any dog found at large therein. It is usually difficult to catch a dog in such circumstances and the owner or occupier is entitled to ensure that the animal causes a minimum of damage and will not return in future. Similar considerations apply in the case of a plant nursery and it is proposed to include such properties in the present section 24.

Clause 8 will authorize councils to provide dog pounds. There is not at present any specific authority to construct a dog pound nor to borrow money for the purpose. The proposed new section will remedy this deficiency. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. FOGARTY (Sunshine), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, October 30.

APPROPRIATION (1974-75, No. 1) BILL.

(Budget Debate)

The debate (adjourned from October 22) on the motion of Mr. Hamer (Premier and Treasurer) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray): During the Budget debate last night, honorable members who remained in the House were subjected to a speech by the honorable member for Gippsland West on the economic ills of the country. Two features were evident in the honorable member's speech. The first was that his major concern was with the Federal Budget and the economic ills of the nation at large rather than those of Victoria. The honorable member made some interesting thrusts into the international scene by commenting on the situation in the Middle East and on Arab oil. He also made suggestions regarding the beef market in relation to Japan. All of those were passing references to the Federal Budget and the Federal economic situation, but had little to do with the Victorian Budget, which is the subject-matter of the debate in this House today.

The second feature that was evident from the honorable member's speech was that he knows nothing about economics. The honorable member made an attempt to hide his lack of knowledge of economics by making superficial and snide comments and uttering witticisms which had no bearing on the real needs of the Victorian people. I suggest that, because of the importance of the Budget debate, the speech which honorable members heard last evening, interesting though it may have been, was more appropriate to be made at a party rally in San Remo than during the debate on the Appropriation Bill.

The Federal economic scene is one of some importance, and is a matter in which all persons are interested, but it is preposterous to suggest, as many Government supporters have done in the Chamber during this debate, that the Australian Labor Party is largely responsible for the twin problems of inflation and unemployment which have beset this country in the past two years or so. No Government supporter has been able to quote a respectable economist to support his allegations that the Australian Government is responsible for these twin economic difficulties.

The verbal gymnastics of the honorable member for Gippsland West and his new-found interest in the

unemployment situation—it is remarkable that at times like this members of the Liberal Party Government are interested in unemployment—certainly did not follow the pattern set in previous years. Despite these gymnastics, it cannot be claimed that the Australian Government has been largely responsible for the scale of unemployment which exists at present. The conservative preaching of the honorable member for Ringwood was in much the same vein.

Members of the Liberal Party have been attempting suddenly to develop a social conscience after all the years of disregard for the unemployed, and for those in the community who suffer under the socio-economic system. It is in line with the comments and blatant ignorance of the Minister of Labour and Industry that he is still " bashing the Communist can " at every opportunity in this Chamber and throughout the country—a can which, I suspect, is, like the Minister, thoroughly worn out but unable to change tack. It is a pity that the Minister saw fit to keep up this ridiculous line of attack during the Budget debate. In recent years most of Western society, as we know it, has experienced socio-economic tension. This has occurred in countries such as Japan, West Germany, the United States of America, Canada and in much of western Europe.

Mr. STEPHEN: The trouble is caused by the unions.

Mr. FORDHAM: The honorable member for Ballaarat South is turning on his record again by taking up the cry that the unions are causing all the economic ills of the world.

Mr. STEPHEN: The honorable member should analyse the situation.

Mr. FORDHAM: Analyses have been made of the situation, and fortunately the propositions put forward by the honorable member do not receive the support of those who have made such analyses. The economic tension of which I spoke is a result of the high growth factors in the western countries over recent years and the difficulties brought about by rapidly increasing inflation which has developed because of the changing patterns of international trade.

The situation is worse in Australia because of the massive inflow of funds which occurred during the late 1960s and from 1970 to 1972 owing to the complete lack of restriction imposed by the previous Federal Liberal-Country Party coalition Government. As a result the economy became over-heated, and economists of all political hues and persuasions have now come to this conclusion. Naturally, when a break-down in the international situation occurred, Australia was affected.

In December, 1972, the incoming Australian Labor Party Government was faced with two clear choices: Firstly, it could become a compliant tool of the system, trying gently to manipulate the economy which it had inherited and accepting the existing socio-economic structures. Secondly, it could proceed with the social reforms which it put to the Australian people during the election campaign of December, 1972, and again in May, 1974. The Australian Government could have chosen not to proceed with the platform of social reforms upon which it was elected. Any Government worth its salt, if elected with a mandate following the announcement of such election policies, must honour the undertakings it has given. That is exactly what the Australian Labor Party Government has done.

Members of the Opposition have been criticized for using the term " system ". The phrase means nothing more than the existing socio-economic structures, and surely it is a legitimate term to use. Other members of the Opposition who have participated in this debate have been subject to abuse.

The Australian Labor Party has enumerated its endeavours in the fields of tariffs, interest rates and, most importantly, a massive increase in public spending. One can only guess what the economic situation in the country would be today if those measures had not been implemented.

The Australian Labor Party could never accept the socio-economic structures which it inherited when it was elected to office.

It was elected on a mandate to change and those changes have been made. The State Government is hypocritical because of its attitude to the major endeavours made by the Australian Government in pouring massive amounts into areas of State responsibility. Has the State Government at any time rejected any of those funds? At no time has it said to the Australian Government that it does not want them because the areas of concern are State responsibilities.

This is the position in which the country finds itself. The structure of society could not take the change which has been brought about by the Australian Labor Party Government. This is the result of having conservative business leaders in our country—after 23 years one would expect that—and some conservative trade union leaders who were not prepared for the adjustments which were so obvious. There has also been the need to restructure industries within the country. Then the conservative State Governments refused for a host of reasons to accept the fact that the Australian Labor Party had been elected twice in the past few years to govern Australia on a national level. The obsession with State rights by the Liberal Party and Country Party Governments has done much to worsen the economic and social situation facing Australia.

It would be interesting to ascertain whether the changes which have been effected would be permanent. Are the increases in public spending of which I spoke important enough to be retained if there were a change of Government in Canberra? For example, would less be spent on education by the Government in Canberra in the coming years if there were a change of Government? The honorable member for Gippsland West criticized the increased spending by the Australian Government on education. I shall be interested to learn whether that view is shared by the Victorian Minister of Education and by back-bench members of the Liberal Party. In the current financial year there has been a 78 per cent increase in the outlay for education. There is to be an expenditure of $75 million on pre-school and child care. Will any honorable member suggest that that figure will be reduced in the years to come? Of course it cannot be reduced. These changes were needed, and they will not be reversed.

There has been an increase in pension rates, and once again I would not criticize that increase. There has also been an increase in funds for State housing. These are some of the initiatives in the Federal Budget. I suggest that the Victorian Government cannot criticize what has been provided in this field, and I venture to suggest that if there were a change of Government in Canberra, expenditure on State housing would not be reduced. However, the State Government criticizes the Federal Government initiatives in this field, and I believe this is an example of its hypocrisy.

Australia has been described for some time as a lucky country. It is claimed to be a lucky country for some. and at present one could say that it is a lucky country for most. Our concern is with the future. The Australian Labor Party, both at State and Federal levels, is constantly pushing for Australia to be a lucky country for all—not for some or for most but for all—and the policies of the Labor Government in Canberra are geared to that end. However, what is required is a co-operative effort by all people in this country, including Governments, businessmen and trade unions. This co-operation has not been evident to date.

I shall now refer to the State Budget proper. It was interesting to see the different emphasis in the Budget speech of the Treasurer compared with the speeches in previous

years. Instead of the vision of splendour that has been put before, together with talk about the quality of man and the enrichment of his life, on this occasion we found a more sober and austere approach to the problems of Victoria. The Budget signifies determination by the Victorian Government to do all that it can to discredit and bring down the Government in Canberra, a Government elected only some months ago.

The Victorian Government made it clear when it framed the Budget that its aim is to discredit and to bring about the defeat of the duly and properly elected national Government of Australia. Instead of a policy of co-operation, which one would have hoped for in the interests of this State, it is a policy of confrontation.

That is tragic for the people of Victoria and for the welfare of the country as a whole because unless State and national Governments are able to co-operate rather than confront each other, which is the obvious policy of this Government, the social progress that we wish for will not be achieved.

The Victorian Government has adopted a remarkable attitude to its relationship with the Australian Government. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition briefly referred to a question to which he received a reply on 22nd October, 1974. The first part of the question was—

> What amount has been made available by the Commonwealth Government to the State of Victoria, in addition to tax reimbursements and amounts agreed to by the Loan Council, since January, 1974, indicating the individual amounts and the purposes for which they were made available?

As I have no desire to weary the House I shall not refer to the individual amounts, but this year the sum of $293 million has been made available by the Australian Government to Victorian departments, apart from loan funds and tax reimbursements grants.

Every Victorian department benefits from that outpouring of funds, and it is hypocritical for the State Government to be critical of the Australian Government. What is even more interesting is the second part of the question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—

> What amount has been offered by the Commonwealth to Victoria since January, 1973, which has yet to be accepted, indicating the individual amounts and for what purpose they were offered?

The answer was—

> There have been no offers of money by the Commonwealth to Victoria which have not been accepted.

This highlights once again the hypocritical attitude of the Victorian Government. With one hand it accepts this money from the Australian Government and in the other hand it has a knife which is constantly being plunged into the heart of the Australian Government, a properly elected Government which has provided more funds to the Victorian people than any previous national Government.

Minister after Minister takes every opportunity of being critical of the funds which are being made available on a scale far greater than any other Federal Government has provided in past years. The Minister of Education, in a carping, critical way, is continually attacking the Australian Government for its initiatives. The Minister of Health has refused to co-operate. Honorable members have witnessed the disgraceful behaviour which has occurred over the Sunshine Hospital and which is continuing. This is because of the attitude of the Minister of Health and his ineptitude to organize the Department of Health to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government.

Honorable members heard the ridiculous criticism by the Minister of Transport of the Federal Government. He refused to visit the train exhibition that the Australian Government had set up on Victorian Railways Board property, obviously with the support of the Railways

Board. Why do these confrontations occur between State Ministers and the Labor Government in Canberra? It is because of empire building by Ministers and the obvious reason inherent in an interjection by the Minister of Public Works, that the Government does not like Socialists.

MR. DUNSTAN: We detest them.

Mr. FORDHAM: The Government detests them despite the fact that the Australian Labor Party forms the duly elected Government of the nation. The State Government has deliberately rejected a policy of co-operative Federalism. Instead it has adopted a policy of conservative State rights which belongs to a past era. The confrontation will become worse because of the attitude of the Victorian Government and its repeated failures to meet the challenge of the nation and particularly of Victoria.

The first keynote in the Treasurer's speech was the attack on the Commonwealth Government. It is remarkable that on one page the Treasurer criticizes the Australian Government for not exercising restraint in Government spending and on another page he criticizes the Australian Government for not giving Victoria enough money to meet the State's obligations. This is the hypocritical and double-dealing attitude of the Victorian Government, which uses every opportunity to twist and distort the facts facing the people of Victoria.

The other claimed keynote of the Treasurer's Budget speech was that Victoria was set on the path of progress and that the development programme that had previously been enunciated was being continued in the fields of education, mental health and environment protection. The duplicity of the first keynote is evident to anyone who bothers to study the Treasurer's Budget speech, and the facade of the second is similarly evident. The record of the Victorian Government is one of neglect of the people of this State.

I shall briefly refer to mental health. There is no doubt in the minds of honorable members on both sides of the House that the most disgraceful feature of the Victorian Government and the Victorian political scene is the waiting list of 500 urgent cases for entry to institutions under the control of the Mental Health Authority. This signifies the lack of concern and the neglect by this Government and particularly the inability of the Minister of Health to convince his colleagues that more funds should be made available to meet this situation. For a number of reasons I do not like to quote from newspaper editorials but I believe the editorial in today's *Age* accurately sums up the position concerning the Victorian Minister of Health. It states, *inter alia*—

> There are many in Victoria—particularly those most vitally concerned with public health problems and including many in Mr. Scanlan's own party—who believe we have done him greater justice than his Ministerial performance deserves.
>
> In pressing the cause of those who are now known as The Minus Children, we have embarrassed Mr. Scanlan on two recent occasions. We promise him more of the same on every occasion his Ministerial deeds fail to match his self-serving words.

The Victorian Government's record in mental health is a disgrace and I hope that those members on the back bench who have some feeling in this regard will bring pressure to bear so that the matter can be rectified as early as possible.

The other matter to which I wish to refer briefly is environment protection. I was one of those who, when the Environment Protection Act was introduced, looked forward to seeing some real progress in environment protection in Victoria. Promises were made and the community was behind the claimed endeavours of the Victorian Government and the establishment of the Environment Protection Authority. Since that authority has been established there has been a history of manipulation of public servants

and of environment protection policies by business and industrial interests instead of the avowed policy of the Government to do all it can do to preserve the environment and control pollution in Victoria. The Government has the name and the powers but it does not provide the manpower or equipment to allow the Environment Protection Authority to do the job that is so urgently needed, particularly in the metropolis. The men are not available to do the licensing, the inspections, or the investigations that are required. Until the Government is able to provide this manpower and equipment, the Environment Protection Authority will continue to be the toothless tiger that unfortunately it is at present.

The main subject about which I wish to speak is education. On page 1 of his Budget speech the Treasurer said—

> A record increase in expenditure on education, absorbing a record proportion of the Budget . . .

That is not simply true. It is about time the Victorian Government was exposed concerning the repeated claims about a record proportion of the Budget. This is one of the great myths of education in Victoria. If one looks at the Budget figures for the past three years, one finds that in 1972-73 the total Budget was $1,381 million, of which the claimed education expenditure was $507 million or 36·7 per cent of the Budget. For the year 1973-74 the Budget total was $1,610 million; the claimed education expenditure was $572 million or 35·5 per cent. In 1974-75 the Budget total expenditure is $2,005 million; the proposed expenditure on education is $686 million or 34·2 per cent. How anyone can claim that that is an increase in the proportion of the Budget spent on education over those years is beyond me and I look forward to any reply from a member of the Government who wishes to contest those figures. However, the matter does not rest there; it is obviously and unfortunately far more complex.

What does the Government mean when it refers to "expenditure on education"? At page 32 of the Treasurer's Budget speech and in the attendant papers there is a summary of expenditure. Those headings are meaningless because there is no division or breakdown as to what is involved. Aspects of tertiary education are mixed up with the schools programme and a host of other factors is involved. The annual report of the Education Department for the year contains different figures because the internal components of what is claimed to be education expenditure are different in the various cases.

After more than twenty hours' work I have arrived at a dissection of education spending. I shall now try to explain a refined figure in terms of spending on education. In 1972-73 the claimed education expenditure was $507·3 million. If one deducts the contributions by the Australian Government towards the schools programme for that year, which was nil, one still has $507·3 million. If one deducts the tertiary component for the Victorian expenditure on education of $115·8 million, one is left with a net amount of $391·5 million and if one deducts the assistance granted by the Victorian Government to private schools one is left with a net figure of $377·3 million.

For 1973-74 the claimed expenditure was $572·4 million. If one deducts the Australian Government contribution of $18·6 million, the tertiary component of $79·8 million, and the private school component of $19·5 million, one is left with $454·5 million as a net figure.

Finally, for the year 1974-75, if one deducts the Australian Government contribution of $75·4 million, the tertiary component of $41·4 million, and the private school component of $25 million from the claimed education expenditure of $686·4 million, a net figure of $544·6 million remains. I have selected those amounts for comparative purposes and to gauge

the amount of money spent by the school system on primary, secondary and technical education.

In 1972-73, the proportion of the Budget figure allocated to this expenditure was 27·3 per cent; in 1973-74, it was 28·2 per cent; and in 1974-75 the figure was 27·2 per cent. The proportion was approximately the same in those years. There have been no massive increases in the expenditure on education. For the years 1972-73 and 1973-74, there was an increase of 17·1 per cent, and for 1973-74 and 1974-75, an increase of 16·5 per cent. It could be said that there are significant increases of expenditure by the State Government on primary, secondary and technical education. However, if one examines the consumer price index for the same period, unfortunately the picture is not so favourable. In the years 1972-73 and 1973-74 the increase in the consumer price index was 14·8 per cent; the estimated increase for the following year is 20·8 per cent. The Victorian Government's outlay in solid dollars on primary, secondary and technical schools has not increased; it has dropped. The figures I have quoted are incontestable.

Mr. JONA: The honorable member was speaking yesterday of the millions that were coming from the Government. Now he says that they are not there.

Mr. FORDHAM: It is a pity that the honorable member for Hawthorn was not present when I explained the break-up of the figures. The Victorian Government's capitation grant to private schools in 1971-72 was $7·6 million; in 1972-73 it was $9·6 million; in 1973-74, $13·9 million, and in the next year, $18 million. The increase was 26·3 per cent between 1971-72 and 1972-73; a 44·7 per cent increase between 1972-73 and 1973-74; and a 29·5 increase between the years 1973-74 and 1974-75. Clearly the priorities and initiatives of the Victorian Government lie in increasing funds to the private school system. The State school system has been allowed to wallow and remain at about the same level of expenditure, but the priorities in the private schools have been significantly different.

Mr. RAMSAY: The honorable member's figuring is false.

Mr. FORDHAM: I shall be interested to note whether the honorable member can demonstrate that my calculations are incorrect. I suggest that if he analyses the statistics I have quoted, they will be found to be correct.

The Minister of Education is now present in the House. I am tempted to begin again, but I shall not do so. I refer briefly to the presentation of education spending in the Budget Papers. I hope the Minister will seriously re-examine the method of presenting this information. At present the statistics are incomprehensible. For example the amount of expenditure on schools includes pay-roll tax that the Victorian Government pays to another department. This is not shown by the expenditure pattern directly. Some of the funds made available by the Australian Government are included in the summary of expenditure, but some are put through a trust account which is a different Budget item. Only a few are summarized. Page 33 of the Budget Papers is headed, "Statement of payments from Commonwealth grant during 1973-74". It is difficult to calculate the actual amount of money that is provided by the Australian Government, and more importantly, where it will be spent. It took me many hours to analyse these papers and the annual reports of the department, which should be clear to any interested member of the community and certainly to members of Parliament. I hope the method of presentation of this important item will be reviewed.

The increase in the spending of the Victorian Government should be compared with that of the Australian Government. As the Minister is now present, I will briefly recapitulate my contention that the Victorian proportion of expenditure on education

has not been increased over the past three years. This is evident when one analyses the Minister's claim concerning expenditure on education, particularly taking into account the adjustments I have suggested, and the consumer price index. In the year 1972-73 $77 million was spent on education by the Australian Government in Victoria; in 1973-74, the amount was $185 million; in 1974-75, it was $332 million. This reveals increases of 140·3 per cent and 79·4 per cent respectively.

Mr. THOMPSON: What about the money spent on tertiary education?

Mr. FORDHAM: If the tertiary component and the amounts spent on aid to private schools are deducted, and the expenditure on primary, secondary and technical schools in the State system is analysed, it will be found that in 1972-73 the Australian Government provided $13 million. At that time there was a different Federal Government in office. In 1973-74 an amount of $33 million was provided, representing an increase of 153·8 per cent. For 1974-75 the projected expenditure is $98 million, an increase of 197 per cent. The Minister will acknowledge that even further funding under the Karmel programme is to be provided. For the information of the Minister, I repeat that the Victorian Government's increased expenditure over the same periods on the State school system of primary, secondary and technical education was 17·1 per cent and 16·5 per cent. Obviously this does not compare with the endeavours of the Australian Government. As a percentage increase the expenditure of the Victorian Government leaves much to be desired, and has certainly not kept up with inflation. My assertion that the Victorian Government's expenditure on education has fallen over the past few years is incontestable.

Mr. THOMPSON: It was a recommendation of the Karmel report that we should maintain money at the 1972 level, and the Commonwealth would lift its contribution.

Mr. FORDHAM: The Karmel report recommended that the Victorian Government should maintain the 1972 level as the minimum.

The claim by the Treasurer that there has been a record proportion of expenditure on education is nonsensical. The developments in education in Victoria in pre-school and special education, assistance for disadvantaged children, and libraries have resulted from Australian Government initiatives. It is time that this Government and Parliament gave credit to the Australian Government for its assistance.

The Victorian Government and its constructing authority, the Public Works Department, have a tragic record in meeting this challenge and these initiatives which the Australian Government has provided. The Victorian Government has shown without any doubt that it is unable to cope with the inflow of funds from this source. In reply to a question which I directed to the Minister of Education on 8th October, 1974, I was informed that, in 1973-74, for primary school libraries the Federal Government made available $580,000; the Victorian Government requested only $425,000 and spent only $127,000. For secondary school libraries the Commonwealth allocated $4·937 million; the Victorian Government requested $3·745 million and spent only $3·709.

Mr. JONA: What do you mean by "spent"?

Mr. FORDHAM: It is the word used by the Minister in his reply to my question. For disadvantaged schools the Commonwealth Government made available for buildings $1·5 million; the Victorian Government requested $400,000 and spent $291,000. For science laboratories the sum of $3·118 million was made available by the Commonwealth; the Victorian Government requested $1.4 million and spent $1·772 million. For technical education the Commonwealth Government allocated $8·34 million; the Victorian Government requested $6 million and spent $4·927

million. Finally, for special schools, the Commonwealth Government made available $1·345 million; Victoria requested $1·175 million and spent $903,000.

The Minister cannot deny those figures, which have been provided by his department. They are a disgraceful indication of the inability of the Education Department and the Public Works Department to gear themselves to spend the money made available to this Government by the Commonwealth. The Minister of Education keeps claiming that the money is now committed. Therefore the Victorian Government is going to use the money a year later than it could have, and this means that because of inflation it has lost some of the value of the funds available, and time. Thousands of children who should now be receiving the benefit of those funds will not benefit.

Mr. JONA: You are completely misleading the House.

Mr. FORDHAM: Is the honorable member suggesting that, if a primary school library had been built, students would not be receiving benefit from it? Obviously those children will not benefit this year, although others may in the future. A year has been lost, and money value has been lost. It is evident that the Government has been unable to gear itself to spend these funds.

In regard to over-all spending on works and services, I should be interested if the Minister of Education could explain why the Victorian Government spent $1 million less of its own funds on works and services, school buildings, in the year 1973-74 than in 1972-73. This is not denied by the Minister. The fact is that in 1972-73 the sum of $49 million was spent on works and services, school buildings, and in 1973-74 an amount of $57 million was spent. Of the latter sum, $9 million was supplied from Canberra, so $48 million of State funds was spent on school buildings, despite inflation and increased needs. No wonder there is criticism of the Government by persons who are involved in education and people in schools who learn that in 1972-73 the Australian Government offered the Victorian Government $16 million for school buildings but only $9 million was spent. The Victorian Government was not able to spend the money. If the schools had had the opportunity, they would have spent it. Simply because of the ineptitude of the Victorian Government this money has not been spent during this period.

This question will be dealt with in far more detail later when the House resumes the debate on the school building programme following the Ministerial statement by the Minister of Public Works last week. Members of the Opposition look forward to that debate. We hope some backbench members of the Government party will have some comments about schools in their electorates which have experienced one or two traumas in their dealings with the Education Department and the beloved Public Works Department.

I wish to comment briefly on a number of other aspects of education. Firstly, technical education has long been neglected by the Victorian Government despite the needs of industry and for apprenticeships in Victoria. This matter has already been touched upon by the shadow Minister of Labour and Industry, the honorable member for Reservoir. Despite the wish of some thousands of boys and girls leaving school to undertake apprenticeships, and despite the needs of industry for these people, places are not available. In reply to a question asked by the honorable member for Reservoir on 25th September, 1974, the Minister of Labour and Industry admitted that 1,708 applicants last year were unable to obtain places. In addition, 433 apprentices from country areas were unable to obtain their technical training at a local school and commenced their apprenticeship too late

in the year to be directed to continuous courses in 1974. There are more than 2,000 young people whose lives have been disrupted by the inability of this Government to provide for them.

Mr. STEPHEN: Have not the strikes of secondary teachers disrupted the children's lives?

Mr. FORDHAM: How puerile and low are the comments of the honorable member for Ballaarat South. The honorable member is trying to divert the House away from the real problem of technical education.

The annual report of the Apprenticeship Commission was recently tabled in the House. I commend it because it is one of the few bodies which present their reports on time. Its latest report, for the year ended 30th June, 1974, is critical of the shortage of places for apprentices and the resulting impact on industry. The honorable member for Hawthorn commented earlier on the shortage of skilled tradesmen. It will not be easy to overcome that shortage unless places are made available in the metropolitan area and in country areas. I hope the Government realizes that it is courting disaster by its attitude to and neglect of technical education, not only for the sake of the economy but also in terms of industrial relations with the various trade unions and employers. It would be wise for the Government to rethink its attitude towards this matter.

Mr. THOMPSON: This is what we have asked the Commonwealth to do.

Mr. FORDHAM: It is the same old story of the Victorian Government saying, "It is our constitutional responsibility; this is what Victoria should and must do," but when it comes to performance it asks Canberra for finance. The Minister of Education states that he intends to seek more money from the Commonwealth. I point out that last year the Commonwealth Government allocated $8·5 million for technical education but the Victorian Government spent only $5 million.

In the past, instead of gearing itself by the preparation of plans for building works the Government has waited until the money has arrived and has then started planning. It wonders why it is unable to spend its allocations! This situation is in contrast with the system adopted by most of the other States of Australia which have a bank of plans ready so that when money is made available they are able to commence building straightway. I understand that this system has now been adopted by the Education Department, but it took two years to do so. The Karmel report was presented in May, 1973, so the Government had plenty of warning that finance was coming. Commonwealth grants for science laboratories, and so on, have been made for years. There is no excuse for Victoria not having plans ready.

I wish to comment briefly on the favourite topic of the Minister, the Teaching Service. In 1945 it became a major issue when the Teachers Tribunal was under discussion. I am afraid that this situation is likely to be repeated in the near future if the Government continues with its present method of dealing with the tribunal. The Teachers Tribunal is being made inoperative by the Government's policy of not instructing its representative on the tribunal. The provisions of the Act explicitly lay down that the Government shall have a representative on the tribunal, but the tribunal is not operating because the Government representative is not acting as its representative. I hope this question will be debated in the House in the near future.

When one examines the salaries and conditions of teachers one realizes why the resignation rate is increasing. In reply to a question which I asked of the Minister on 8th October, 1974, I was informed that since the commencement of the

1974 school year 967 secondary teachers have resigned from the service. That means that about 10 per cent, or a little more, of teachers in the secondary service have resigned so far this year, and there is a fair amount of the year to go. If that is not a sign of discontent on a massive scale, what is?

The resignation rate has been increasing. The latest report of the Teachers Tribunal for the year 1972-73 shows that in that year 678 secondary teachers, or 8·5 per cent of the total, resigned. That is an excessive figure in view of the obvious needs of Victorian schools and the chronic staffing difficulties faced by many Victorian secondary schools. What has been the Government's response? Instead of trying to improve the salaries and conditions of teachers through the Teachers Tribunal, the Government is now relying on importing teachers from overseas. About 600 teachers are due to come to Australia next year. I support the policy of bringing teachers from overseas because it is obviously an enriching experience for Victorian schools. The position is quite ludicrous for the Victorian Government to rely on the importation of teachers on such a scale from overseas to bolster up the failure of the Teachers Tribunal and its failure to retain teachers within the Teaching Service. It is obvious that the whole question of the tribunal and the Government's performance must be questioned.

The turnover of teachers is not only evident in secondary schools; in terms of technical teachers 254 teachers have resigned since the start of this year. This is a massive and significant increase—the last available figures were 173 for the full year. The Government was warned that the rates of pay for tradesmen and people doing the same sort of work as many technical teachers are significantly higher than those which technical teachers are receiving in Victoria. Therefore, there is an inevitable trend in the turnover of staff.

If the Government is not prepared, through the tribunal and by its own endeavours to do something about it Victoria will find itself in an increasingly difficult situation in the staffing of schools. God knows, it is difficult enough now. If the position gets worse obviously there will be an even greater outcry against the failure of the tribunal to implement better conditions. I shall cite some examples of how the tribunal works. I instance the 1968 award of the Teachers Tribunal—an independent body. The award was first requested on 14th December, 1966, and it was brought down on 17th November, 1968. The 1972 award was requested on 5th August, 1970, and it was finally given on 7th May, 1972.

These were major cases but it took too long for the Teachers Tribunal. At the moment, since the first week in September, the Teachers Tribunal has been looking at a salary claim. It was a simple matter; no restructuring was allowed in these discussions, but some two months have elapsed and no decision has been announced by the tribunal. Out of the 1968 and 1972 major decisions a whole host of anomalies resulted from action taken by the Minister's department and the tribunal which have been most difficult to overcome. During the period in which the problems will be overcome some hundreds—even thousands—of teachers will be disadvantaged. The tribunal created these anomalies without looking into the matter as closely as it should.

One should briefly return to the question of recruitment of teachers from overseas. This matter will be raised further in Parliament concerning the most extraordinary way the Government has approached this overseas recruitment programme. By terms of appointment, overseas staff have been supplied with airline tickets instead of with money. It is interesting to note that it is only since the questioning of the Opposition on this important matter this year that in this year's Budget Papers

a new allocation — a separate allocation — has been made for the Victorian overseas teachers' selection programme. At last this expense has been brought into the open. Why was it hidden before? Why did not the Minister show this expenditure pattern? I will be interested in the comments of the Auditor-General when his report is tabled in this House. I shall be most surprised if the Auditor-General does not comment on the way the Government has approached this overseas selection programme. It is only now that the House is getting information on how this remarkable programme is functioning.

The subject of promotion and inspection has been in the news in recent times and one aspect is evident. I do not intend to go over the evidence and canvass the difficulties.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. McLaren): Order! The honorable member for Footscray has one more minute.

On the motion of Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds), an extension of fifteen minutes was granted.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray): In terms of promotion and inspection, it was a deliberate policy on the part of the Government to bring about confrontation, and since that confrontation has started, the Government has now introduced a system that does not work. However, it has agreed to introduce changes in 1975. These changes will be welcome, I suspect, by the Minister's own department and the teachers' union concerned. Why has it taken until now for these negotiations to be held? Why could they not have been held earlier this year in an attempt to reach settlement of this important matter, instead of causing disruption to school children and the schools of Victoria? Teachers and many children are going to be disadvantaged. What becomes evident from these various aspects of salary, conditions, recruitment and promotion? They are all in the melting pot and they must be urgently reviewed. Members of the Opposition will be raising this matter again during this sessional period and they hope for major changes in the operations of the Teachers Tribunal for the welfare of our schools and the teaching profession of Victoria.

There are a host of other matters on which one could comment in terms of education, special services, the failure to attract staff as mentioned in the annual report of the department, and the provision of insufficient equipment particularly at the Audio-visual Education Centre which has had piffling increases in funds made available to it. The last annual report to Parliament referred to hundreds of requisitions for films returned from schools because equipment and manpower were not available to deal with them. That problem is going to continue because of the failure of the Minister of Education to deal with it.

The disadvantages that are evident in country areas today could be significantly overcome if extra incentives were given to the Teacher Housing Authority to make available facilities for housing so that senior staff could be appointed to country schools. This was mentioned in the Karmel report and a host of other reports have commented on the same disadvantages in Victoria. Despite the pleas of the Opposition to provide sufficient funds to house teachers, this has not been done. The last report pleaded with the Government to supply extra funds so that country schools and houses could be updated to assist teachers in country areas. I hope this problem will be overcome in the near future.

I could cover a host of other areas. What is evident is that the Budget does not face up to the needs of the State. The Government has indicated beyond any shadow of doubt that its basic intention is to confront the Australian Government, and to refute the view of the Australian people at the last Australian election, and for that matter the one before. The whole thrust of this Victorian Government is not to co-operate but to confront

the Australian Government. The Budget indicates the failure of the Victorian Government to use those methods which could increase its own economic standing.

In his debate on the Budget, the Leader of the Opposition spoke about the State Insurance Offices. It is inevitable that the State Insurance Offices will go into general insurance business. The Government may put it off for a year or two, but it will happen. The Committee of Public Accounts, comprising members of all parties, unanimously recommended that this should happen, but we find the conservative front-bench members of the Government party against it. Similarly, it is inevitable that the State Savings Bank will become a general bank in the interests of the people of this State.

A lands commission will be established in Victoria, if not this year, certainly within the next few years, to control and assist in the development of land for housing. The Esso-B.H.P. agreements must and obviously will be renegotiated because of the ineptitude of the Victorian Government when it first entered into the agreements. Of course, a Prices Justification Tribunal will be appointed in Victoria, as is slowly happening in other States. The South Australian Government has shown that it can work; but the Victorian Government is hiding its head in the sand. The Budget shows that it is not prepared to face up to these important fiscal measures to ensure the economic stable growth of the country. There is fear in the Tory hearts of the Victorian Cabinet; there is a fear of social change, which is always evident with this conservative Government. The tide has now begun to turn following the election of the Australian Labor Government. The social changes about which I spoke earlier are coming about.

Government expenditure will not be reversed even if there is a change of Government in Canberra. The situation will not be reversed by a Victorian Liberal Government, but Australia is at least waking up out of the doldrums of the 50s and 60s. The Victorian Government may try to halt that tide for a short time but it will not succeed. I look forward to the creation of a Victorian Labor Government in an endeavour to co-operate in that social change and progress so obviously needed by the Victorian people.

Mr. HANN (Rodney): In rising to speak to the Budget debate this afternoon, one tends to wish that the Treasurer who introduced this State Budget might be preferred to the person who introduced the Commonwealth Budget because there was a distinct difference between the two Budgets. In the State, most people were surprised that there were no nasty tax increases in the Budget. There were some increases in small taxes, but generally nothing of any major amount that would cause a significant burden to the people of Victoria.

The various measures brought down by the Federal Government in Canberra have created a position in which, from a financial viewpoint, many people in this country will be forced to suffer severely in the years to come if certain financial measures are carried out. I hope the honorable member for Footscray is right when he indicated that there could be a change of Government. We hope that change comes about very soon; the sooner the better, because if these policies continue, many people in the nation will be hurt. Many people at present are in the process of being hurt.

What concerns me most, when one hears speeches by members of the Opposition party in this House, is that they do not acknowledge that the policies of the present Federal Government are having a crippling effect on the ordinary person in the street—the ordinary workers—who are suffering as a result of those policies. Nowhere more than in the rural areas in this nation has there been a complete lack of concern, a complete lack of acknowledgment, and as the honorable member for

Gippsland East said, a complete lack of understanding of the problems. This was borne out by the Federal Minister responsible for agriculture when he was discussing this problem in Townsville on a television programme on Monday night. It emerged clearly that the honorable gentleman did not understand the portfolio of which he is in charge. The Federal Socialist Government has adopted a deliberate policy to bring to fruition its policies of Socialism. It is endeavouring to reduce or completely eliminate the incentives for people to work and to develop their roles in the community.

The Federal Government has adopted deliberate policies to force people into a situation where it has complete and absolute control over all the financial institutions of this nation, the economies of the country, local government and all the individuals of the nation. That Government has introduced a capital gains tax, and if it is allowed to proceed, ultimately, it will eliminate the family farm.

It was pleasing to see common sense prevail in the Budget presented by the Treasurer. One hopes that the trends of the Labor Government in Canberra, which have proceeded unchecked, will not continue for much longer; that there will be a change of Federal Government, and that Australia will be able to return to the task of building a healthy and financial nation.

Looking at the details of the Budget, I turn first to education. The honorable member for Footscray has given a fairly detailed account of his views on the Education Department. It has been pointed out by the Treasurer that this year there will be a record expenditure of $686 million on education. Of this amount the salaries of teachers alone will account for $343 million. Yet there are enormous problems in the field of education.

A larger number of children are in need of remedial teaching. Young people, after proceeding through the tertiary levels of education, including university, find that although they have the necessary qualifications, no jobs are available for them. One wonders whether this situation will continue indefinitely. Before the Government continues to pour millions of dollars into education, it should conduct a survey to determine the total needs of education, and investigate both the education aspect and the needs of young people who must try to find jobs. A programme should be implemented to ascertain whether the education of the individual matches the jobs available.

Perhaps the community is creating a situation in which there are too many academics and not enough skilled labourers. Many people would be happier in a job which does not demand academic skills. They should be encouraged to consider those positions, instead of being encouraged to embark upon an academic career. The Federal and State Governments are spending millions of dollars on the training of people who find that jobs are not available.

Finance for capital works has become a serious problem, because of the burden of inflation and the fact that the rate of progress of the school building programme has been reduced owing to enormous increases in building costs and wages, the shortage of materials, and so on. Taking assembly halls as an example, I point out that three or four years ago the rate of construction was ten to twelve a year. At present the annual rate of construction is only five to six assembly halls. It was indicated in the reply to a question placed on notice that a large number of schools are on the waiting list for assembly halls.

Some schools have the necessary finance for an assembly hall. One school in my electorate has already raised $30,000. It has been waiting for two or three years and the only indication it has received is that it may be another four years before the school is likely

to have an assembly hall. The community has to work hard to raise these funds. The Government should provide a solution to the problem. It may be that the present economic crisis has a bearing on the situation.

An additional problem to be faced is that many schools need replacing. At present the teachers and pupils must work in sub-standard conditions which should not be tolerated in any school. The Government prefers to construct schools in new areas before replacing existing schools. This is despite the fact that in some new areas when a school is erected it is fully utilized for a number of years but later there is a change in the age groups of students attending the school. I have been led to believe that this situation exists at Fawkner, where a new school was constructed but now the school is not fully used because of the changed pattern of people living in the area. The parents have had their families, and as the families have grown up and left the district the school is not fully used.

A detailed examination should be made of these situations. The Government should look closely at schools in definite need of replacement. One is the Echuca Technical School. I understand from the honorable member for Gippsland East that the Bairnsdale Technical School is another.

For a number of years the Cohuna Consolidated School has been endeavouring to have a new school erected. It was only last year that action along these lines was promised by July, 1974. No progress has been made and at the end of this week the principal retires without seeing his dream fulfilled. He has to hand over to the new principal a school which is in a shambles and is comprised of small buildings which have been moved into the area. They are deteriorating and are now sub-standard. The school is a disgrace to the town and to the district. I hope rapid progress will be made in the early construction of a new building.

The honorable member for Footscray referred to the staffing of country schools. This was a serious problem at the commencement of the 1974 school year. The Minister of Education has announced that the department is endeavouring to recruit teachers from overseas. I hope this will alleviate the shortage and that the situation which prevailed this year will not occur in the early days of 1975. It is in the first few weeks of the school year that it is important for a sufficient number of teachers to be available at all schools, not only in the metropolitan area, but also in country districts.

One of the major problems causing teacher shortages in country areas is the lack of suitable housing. It is difficult to induce teachers to move from the metropolitan area—not so much the teacher as his wife—unless adequate housing, at least equal to the standard provided in the metropolitan area, is available. In the past few years there has been an improvement in the standard of teacher housing and I hope the department will receive sufficient finance to continue this work. I understand that the Government is endeavouring to see whether the teacher housing programme is eligible for assistance under the terms of the Karmel report.

Reference was made to an improvement in understanding between country people and metropolitan residents. Early in this spring sessional period I asked the Minister of Education a question on the possibility of hostel accommodation being made available in the city at a relatively low cost for groups of school children who came to Melbourne from country areas. As a result, I received a communication from the director of the Youth Hostels Association of Victoria to the effect that following the receipt of a $50,000 grant from the Government, the association was establishing low-cost accommodation which would be

available for use by country school children or groups who wished to come to the metropolitan area to study for a period of time. The association also has facilities available in South Yarra. I am pleased that the Youth Hostels Association, supported by the State Government, will be providing this type of accommodation.

I hope the Minister of Education, and perhaps the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation, will be able to assist the Youth Hostels Association in promoting this valuable service, which will help to break down the barrier between the country and the city. In Echuca similar facilities are available at the Southern Cross Lodge, which is conducted by the Wisemen's Club at Echuca. Groups of children from the metropolitan area and other parts of Victoria go to Echuca and as a result of their visit gain a much better understanding of country areas.

In the field of health services, one of the most pressing problems is the need for doctors in country areas. It was pleasing to learn that the Minister of Health has instituted a programme to recruit about twenty doctors from within the State and overseas and to encourage these doctors to practise in country areas. In some country towns small local hospitals have had to close because of the shortage of resident doctors.

Apparently it is difficult to obtain a doctor to work in a remote country area because a young doctor prefers to work in an environment where there is another doctor nearby and they can consult each other on a professional basis. It may be necessary to establish groups of doctors on a regional basis from which they can provide a service for two or three country towns.

I am pleased that the Government has acknowledged this problem and will give serious attention to it because the burdens and problems of country people are increased if they do not have ready access to a doctor. Two examples of this are the Pyramid Hill area and the Boort area, which is represented by the honorable member for Kara Kara.

On the question of social welfare and housing, there appears to be a serious need for low-cost housing to help a certain section of the community, particularly in some of the larger country towns. A certain section of the community is finding it difficult, on present living standards, to afford accommodation. In many instances their present housing is already condemned and yet they find it difficult to obtain Housing Commission accommodation, even when it is available, because they cannot meet the rent payments. It appears that there is an urgent need for low-cost, low-rental accommodation for these people.

I support representations made to the Minister for Social Welfare on the provision of emergency housing. A social welfare committee in the City of Echuca raised the question whether the Government would support the provisions of emergency accommodation or housing in the larger country centres for people suddenly thrown out of their homes in the middle of the night, perhaps because of floods, family problems, or fire. These people can be placed in a difficult situation which continues for weeks. The social welfare committee advanced the proposition that the Government should consider subsidizing, on a $1 for $1 basis, emergency accommodation, so that if an emergency occurs the local social worker has somewhere for these people to stay for a short time until alternative accommodation can be found for them.

I am disappointed that insufficient finance has been allocated in the Budget to rural Victoria, particularly to the farming community. At present the beef industry is reaching a point of crisis. Four or five years ago the so-called experts—the academics and professors in this country—went around Australia telling everyone that

the only solution to the farmers' problems was to diversify and go into beef production. Consequently, large numbers of farmers did so. I am deeply concerned that the situation could get much worse in the forthcoming months. At present large numbers of farmers across Victoria and in other States of Australia are experiencing a financial crisis. They have bought or raised stock in the hope of a reasonable market, but in many markets they cannot even get a bid for the cattle, or they sell them at a ridiculously low price.

Mr. CURNOW: How do you get overseas buyers back?

Mr. HANN: By a change of Government in Canberra. The Federal Minister for Primary Industry and the Federal Minister for Overseas Trade do not understand their portfolios and take no interest in their roles. I realize that the bulk of the problem is out of the hands of the State Government, but I hope it will attempt to get the message through to the Federal Government that at this time it should be providing financial support for the beef industry. Support has been provided for the wool industry, but the growers are virtually only lent the money at a high rate of interest. I am deeply concerned that, unless dramatic action is taken immediately, many farmers will be forced to walk off their farms with large debts over their heads.

Mr. GINIFER: Can the honorable member indicate what the Commonwealth Government can do to help the beef industry?

Mr. HANN: Many factors have had a bearing on the situation. One was the revaluations brought about by the Commonwealth Government and the promotion of so-called trade with China, although according to reports virtually no orders were written at the trade fair. While the Government is playing around with China, the Federal Minister responsible for agriculture is in Japan attempting to negotiate. Honorable members are aware that there is not a great deal of friendship between China and Japan at present. Obviously, Japan will not write contracts for the beef trade when the Minister for Overseas Trade, who should have gone to Japan with the Minister for Primary Industry, is playing around in China. The Federal Government should accept responsibility for hard negotiation with overseas countries. It has been realized too late that the most important country to Australia is the United States of America. The Prime Minister has realized that only in recent months. Therefore, in reply to the interjection of the honorable member for Deer Park, the only major solution at present would be a change of Government and a change of portfolio so that there would be people in Government in Canberra who understand the problems of the nation.

The Government has implemented a policy of decentralization in the State Budget. The Federal Government has created problems in an attempt to pay off its major supporters in the Federal campaign by its tariff policies.

Mr. GINIFER: Tell us who they are.

Mr. HANN: I am referring to a major retailer in the city of Melbourne. He has had the pay-off because of the tariff policies of the Commonwealth Government. This retailer has made a fortune but because of that policy, hundreds of people in Victoria are out of work. I hope more industries will move into country Victoria with the continued support of the State Government.

It is important to note that the Government saw fit to expend the sum of $100,000 in the field of tourism to break down the barriers created by the problems last summer. This campaign has been successful, with the consequence that the Echuca Regional Society is running the Rich River Festival with a resultant influx of approximately 10,000 to 20,000 people into the town. The Premier visited Echuca last Sunday, when Echuca retained the William Randell Cup by winning the Rich River Boat Race. It was pleasing that

the Premier opened the public campaign for funds for the Echuca port restoration and generously gave a grant of $10,000. This was a surprise to the organizers and they were delighted. We thank the Government for its assistance, which we know will continue.

The Budget was a surprise in that it did not contain any major stings. I hope the sting will not be in the tail as it were, and that a mini-Budget will not have to be introduced, as is being promoted at the Federal level by leading members of the Labor Party. Members of the Country Party support the Budget and hope there will be balanced development throughout Victoria, and that country people in the towns, cities and rural areas will get their share of finance from the State Government. It is hoped that the movement away from the metropolitan area to a better way of life in the country will continue.

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara): Members of the Opposition consider the Budget to be totally inadequate and inflationary. Although most of the sting, referred to by the honorable member for Rodney, was not in the Budget, it has certainly come since. The contempt of the Premier for the rural areas is well demonstrated in his Budget speech. In something like 28 pages he did not refer once to agricultural matters. He briefly mentioned water supply in the works and services programme, and he paid scant attention to rural finance and settlement matters.

Mr. HAMER: What about decentralization?

Mr. CURNOW: What has been done for decentralization? Industry is shutting down all over Victoria, thanks to the Premier's rotten policies. I am also concerned about the provisions of the Egg Industry Stabilization Act which comes into effect in January, 1975. I believe if the Act is implemented it will be a disaster for the poultry industry in this State. The Poultry Farmer Licensing Review Committee has issued 1,578 quotas, of which 991 were for fewer than 1,000 birds, which makes up 61 per cent of the total quotas issued. At the same time 370 appeals have been received for an increase in quota. Of the 370 appeals, 230 were lodged by people with fewer than 1,000 birds and 140 with more than 1,000 birds. The Poultry Farmer Licensing Review Committee has increased the quotas of those with more than 1,000 birds in 129 cases, and of the 230 who have appealed with fewer than 1,000 birds, only 29 have been successful. This demonstrates the total inadequacy of the Act and the disaster that is facing the poultry farmers in the State. The period on which the quotas were based was 3rd March, 1970, to 3rd March, 1972. As a result of a formula used in that period, 1,578 quotas were issued. The system of reviewing the allocation of base quotas was as follows—

The independent Poultry Farmer Licensing Review Committee has been set up under Part V. of the Act and upon application of a person not classified as a poultry farmer under the Act, may allocate a base quota to the applicant.

The review committee will have regard to the circumstances listed in section 31 (2) of the Act, which are as follows—

(*a*) the operation of the poultry farm of the applicant during the relevant period 3rd March, 1970, to 2nd March, 1972 was affected by fire or localised adverse seasonal conditions;

(*b*) any hens owned or kept by the applicant during the relevant period (3rd March, 1970 to 2nd March, 1972) were affected by disease;

(*c*) the operation of the poultry farm of the applicant during the relevant period (3rd March, 1970, to 2nd March, 1972) was affected by the absence of the applicant or of his son due to his being engaged on service—

(i) in the Regular Army supplement rendered under the National Service Act 1951, as amended from time to time, of the Parliament of the Commonwealth; or

(ii) as an officer in the Regular Army supplement in pursuance of an appointment referred to in sub-section (1) or (2) of section 28 of that Act, as so amended;

(*d*) that the operation of the poultry farm of the applicant during the relevant period (3rd March, 1970, to 2nd March, 1972) was

affected by the illness of the applicant or of his spouse, son or daughter during that period.

(*e*) that the base quota of which the applicant was notified pursuant to section 20 was calculated incorrectly;

(*f*) that the base quota of the applicant would be increased if the reference in subsection (2) of section 18 to the relevant period 3rd March, 1970, to 2nd March, 1972) were a reference to a period of two years ended on the 29th day of June, 1972; or

(*g*) there are other special circumstances of any kind which in the opinion of the review committee warrant an increase in the base quota or the allocation of a base quota (as the case may be).

Approximately fifteen people have approached me regarding appeals under the Egg Industry Stabilization Act. In all cases, although the grounds of appeal appeared reasonable and far-reaching, none of the people have received an increase in their base quota. I shall demonstrate some of the circumstances of the people who have had their applications rejected. One person wrote to me and stated that after the drought in the month of October, 1972, he purchased 140 pullets, and subsequently, 250 day-old chicks. When they were reared, this would not be a large number of hens, but it was something to supplement the farm income. This person had a reasonable case for a quota but he received none. The Poultry Farmer Licensing Review Committee advised him that because he had not lodged twenty returns between 30th March, 1970, and 30th March, 1972, he was not eligible for a quota. It said that it could see no special circumstances to justify altering that condition.

It seems that the committee is working on a formula which it has devised itself and not that which is laid down by the regulations made under the Act. Surely, if a person decides in 1972 that he will enter the poultry farming industry, he is not to know that in 1975 an Act will come into operation to prevent his doing so. This amounts to a person being told that he cannot earn a living.

Another serious case concerns a person who, during 1972, had up to 2,000 birds. His wife became so ill that she had to have five operations. He had to go to work to earn the money to keep the family together and consequently the number of hens was allowed to decline. Illness is a ground for appeal under the regulations, but after this person lodged an application he was given a quota of 270 hens although during the relevant period he had up to 2,000. On appeal he was given very little consideration by the Poultry Farmer Licensing Review Committee and he still has a quota for 270 hens. To put it crudely, these people slaved their guts out to build up decent sheds and a brooder house and to instal a piped water system and many other facilities. All those years of work and the cost involved have gone down the drain because of the implications of the Egg Industry Stabilization Act.

In 1969 a man purchased a run-down poultry farm. At that time it was not in a fit condition for birds. During the two years following he built new sheds, repaired old ones, and purchased plant and equipment. He built up the number of his birds to 3,200 but, because in the early part of the period from 1970 to 1972 he was working to renovate the place and replace much of the equipment, he was allowed a quota of only 812. Since he became established with 3,200 birds, he has become a full-time poultry farmer. Now, because of an Act which comes into operation five years after he purchased the farm, he has to go back to other work because he cannot earn his living as a poultry farmer. This is totally unfair and cases of this type will have far-reaching repercussions.

In 1970 another man was geared for more than 1,000 hens but was advised that he should cut down voluntarily on his poultry farming operations, and he did so. Because of that he now has a quota of 565 birds, whereas if he had kept up the number of birds during 1970 to 1972 he would have a quota exceeding

1,000 birds. Bad advice given to him by the industry is forcing him to cut the number of his hens by half.

Surely, in the light of some of the cases mentioned, the Minister cannot allow this Act to be proclaimed and come into operation in January of next year. Another person, from Geelong, bought land in 1970 and spent $20,000 on sheds and other equipment. In about September, 1970, he wanted to erect a house on the land but he was delayed by the Shire of Corio, I think it was. It was not until early in 1972 that he could erect the house on the property which he had bought to develop as a poultry farm. As a result, he could not conduct the poultry farm in the normal way. His total outlay was worth approximately $60,000 and he now faces disaster merely because there was delay in obtaining permission to shift a house to the property. He could not envisage that in 1975 an Act to stabilize the egg industry would come into operation and prevent him from operating a poultry farm.

I suggest to the Minister of Agriculture that the Act should not be proclaimed. The honorable gentleman should take steps to have it revoked or to bring in a new Bill with proper provision for people in situations such as those to which I have referred. The Poultry Farmer Licensing Review Committee has been a complete failure in dealing with appeals. I regret that it is working under its own rules and not those laid down in the regulations.

Last night the Minister of Labour and Industry and Minister of Consumer Affairs spoke about the serious problem of inflation. But the honorable gentleman has done nothing to prevent prices from rising in Victoria by something like 20 per cent during the past year. Although I do not like the *Sunday Observer* generally, I take notice of the column "Observer Pricewatch". The article on 20th October showed that foodstuffs that cost $20 on 11th March, 1973, now cost $25.12. It is pointed out that just the other day grocers and storekeepers were presented with a list of 300 items marked for price increases. In other words, the prices spiral for consumer goods will continue. Yet the incompetent and hopeless Minister of Consumer Affairs blames everything on the Federal Government. Although he has the power to do something about prices, he will not do anything.

Mr. STEPHEN: What can he do?

Mr. CURNOW: He could introduce price control in Victoria, but he will not. During the debate on the motion for the adoption of an Address-in Reply on 11th September, I referred to the *Sun News-Pictorial* of 24th August. Four Square stores advertised 25 to 30 specials but the price of all except 5 were higher in the country than in the city. As well as country people having to face higher freight rates—which will rise by as much as 22·5 per cent—in the supermarkets every week prices rise because the Government will not do anything about them.

Since the Budget was brought down there have been increases in pay-roll tax, Housing Commission rents, water rates, State Electricity Commission tariffs, rail freights, and hospital charges. Tonight the *Herald* reveals that motor car registration fees will rise by 50 per cent. Yesterday we received the blow of the news that third-party motor car insurance would rise by more than $24 a year. What is the Government doing to the people of the State? Inflationary pressures are working in the economy and it is up to the Government to show some restraint. The Government has increased taxation and charges in every sphere of its operation.

Not only is the Government the greatest cause of inflation in Victoria, but it does nothing to help—instead it hinders—the attempts of the Australian Government to fight the great inflationary pressures which are forcing this country into some disorder. Because of other back-door measures of the Government, cigarettes and beer will increase in price.

Driving licences and stamp duty on cheques will cost more. How can the Government logically argue that wages are causing the problem when all State charges rise as a result of the Budget?

This is not the position only this year. Last year, as reported at page 3212 of *Hansard* of 6th December, 1973, I pointed out that there were then increases in Housing Commission rents, car licence testing fees and fees for auctioneers, estate agents, and hairdressers. There were rises in stamp duties and charges on mortgages and land transfers, motor registration fees, insurance licence fees, charges on life insurance policies, duty on various mortgages, motor boat registration fees, miners' rights fees and commercial goods licences, as well as other increased charges.

The Government is hindering the attempts of the Australian Government to do something about inflation and it is getting in for its chop. It is not concerned with the poor person in the community. We have heard about bankruptcies recently and of many people being on the verge of collapse. Every person in the State is on the verge of collapse because of increasing charges.

The Labor Party will vote against the Budget because it is to the detriment of the people of the State. With costs and charges running riot as they are in this State, the pensioner on a fixed income suffers most. This State blundered into a system intended to subsidize rates paid by pensioners last year but it was told by the Opposition that the system would not work. It took the Government twelve months to wake up to its failure, and it has now introduced a 25 per cent rebate for pensioners rates.

I want to know whether the scheme covers the water rate, garbage rate and sewerage rate, as well as the general rate. If the proposal covers only the general rate, the benefit to any one pensioner will be less than $10. Unless the scheme relates to all rates, no pensioner will greatly benefit from it.

Another disability suffered by pensioners in country areas is their lack of access to public transport. Unlike their city colleagues, they do not have available bus services on which they can travel at half-fare. If a country pensioner owns a car, he must drive it to go shopping. If he does not own a car, he has to get a taxi or walk. Pensioners in country areas should receive rebates on motor registration fees and third-party insurance premiums.

Furthermore, the Treasurer ought to consider taxi fare concessions for pensioners. After all, the honorable gentleman intends to give private bus operators concessions to enable them to keep their fares down and purchase new buses. If the Government has this sort of assistance in mind, it is only fair that it should consider some means of helping pensioners, who live in the country and who cannot take advantage of the buses, by subsidizing taxi fares and introducing rebates for motor registration fees and third-party insurance. These would be effective ways of assisting pensioners.

The Budget does little to help anyone. It fails to come to grips with the $100 million deficit or with the 35 per cent increase in hospital charges which are the highest in Australia. It does not come to grips with the inflationary spiral. Accordingly, the Opposition will vote against the Budget.

Mr. BILLING (Heatherton): The Budget highlights the ability and resourcefulness of the Victorian Treasurer. No person who has to face up to the major problems of inflation and increasing costs which have been brought about by the centralist policies of the Federal Socialist Labor Government can deny that the Treasurer has presented an excellent Budget and one which has, overall, been publicly accepted by

the people of Victoria. Previous Treasurers have not, to the same extent, been faced with such blatant attempts by a Federal Government to control State finance or the rightful constitutional activities of the State.

Yesterday, in blissful silence, I listened to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition extol the virtues of the handouts from the pockets of Big Brother in Canberra. I suppose the Deputy Leader of the Opposition expects Victorian taxpayers to go into hysterical gratitude because they are receiving a small portion of the taxes they they have poured into Canberra for years. Certainly previous Governments did not give us what was our right, but Victoria would expect that a Federal Government which speaks so loudly of its concern for the individual would have given Victoria more of the public purse. I suppose that taxpayers of Victoria, including members of this House, should be thankful that the Federal Government is lending them considerable sums of their money at high interest rates.

The problems of the Treasurer in framing the Budget were made more difficult by inflation. A lot has been heard on inflation in this Chamber and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition went to great pains to tell honorable members of the amounts, in singular terms, of grants and allocations from the Federal purse.

In the section of the Treasurer's Budget speech dealing with health services and hospitals, honorable members are informed quite rightly that, in 1974-75, the Treasury estimates that the people of Victoria will underwrite to the extent of $73·5 million the cost of the so-called Commonwealth free medical service for pensioners. Also, at page 12 of the speech, the Treasurer said that there are clearly limits to the extent to which the general taxpayer can be called upon to subsidize the running costs of hospitals.

Unfortunately, the exercises which have been going on in Canberra for quite a while have forced the Victorian Government to increase hospital fees by 35 per cent. I trust that all honorable members, particularly those in the Opposition, recognize that if the Federal Government would meet only 50 per cent of its obligation for the cost of its pensioner free medical scheme, this State would not have had to increase hospital charges. At present, for every public hospital bed occupied by a pensioner, the State receives from a munificent Federal Socialist Government that is so concerned with the needs of the people the miserly sum of $5 for each day on which the bed is occupied. However, a bed costs anything up to $50 or more a day to maintain.

During the discourse on payments and grants from the Federal Government, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and other Opposition speakers have not mentioned any assistance which this socially conscious Government in Canberra has given to expand facilities for the treatment of the mentally ill. The State Budget has increased, from State resources, the amount of money for the treatment of the mentally ill. It is not nearly enough and I would rather see the expenditure on education decreased and the money thus saved diverted into an area where it could be used to equal or more benefit. Many people who receive treatment in our mental institutions are the product of the brain-washing that they have received in the education system and I defy any honorable member to disprove my statement.

I also sugggest that there is a greater need for build-up in the area which provides supportive help to those people who unfortunately have had to seek attention in our mental institutions. They need support when they come out of hospital just as any other person who has suffered an illness. The State has established clinics which are doing a fine job,

particularly one which is closest to my electorate, the clinic at Dandenong. Undoubtedly the honorable member for Dandenong will support my contention that Dr. Kessell and his staff at the Dandenong clinic are doing a magnificent job on a shoestring budget to rehabilitate people and return them to their employment.

The Victorian Government and the Government of the Commonwealth, which professes concern for the less fortunate in the community, should bend over backwards to provide all the facilities possible rather than listen, in some instances, to persons in the education system who are being well paid, do not want to work, and are creating many of the problems being faced in the mental health field by directing young people in directions where they do not know they are going.

Unfortunately, in the education field, thousands of people with academic qualifications have not the aptitude or the ability to tie their own shoe-laces because they have been taught nothing outside the education system or how to cope with life. The Bill which was introduced only last week to allow students the opportunity to go out to work away from the class-room will help to alleviate the position. Many persons are victims of circumstances and when one analyses the average age of members of the Teaching Service, from the primary level through to the tertiary level, the majority of the teachers have done nothing other than go to school. They have come out of university with a degree and are given a job on a platter by the State. These teachers have scant knowledge of what goes on outside their sphere of interest.

I want to refer to the difficulties which inflation has placed in the way of the Treasurer in framing his Budget. From time to time, through the press and other media, honorable members have heard statements by Federal politicians, by the Treasurer, Mr. Crean, by other expert economists, Dr. Cairns, and by the Prime Minister himself, that Australia is not ahead of the world in the percentage increase of inflation, and that this is a problem all over the world. The last point is conceded but I challenge the statement that Australia is not ahead of other countries. In this respect I quote from an article on the front page of the *Herald* on Monday, 21st October last. Under the headline "Living costs leap 5·4 per cent: 23-year high", a news item states—

> Today's Bureau of Statistics report shows that Australia's yearly inflation rate is 16·3 per cent.
>
> This is running ahead of the average figure for the major industrialized nations of the world.
>
> The August figures issued by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) showed that the average rate of inflation for all countries which are members of OECD was 13.4 per cent.
>
> At a rate of increase of 16 per cent a year in August, the cost of living would double in less than five years.
>
> With the rise compounding, in five years it would take $212 to buy what $100 buys today.

Of course, we have not yet heard the whole story from our big brothers in Canberra. Following inflation is the problem, in both the State and Federal spheres, of unemployment. The number of unemployed given at present is approximately 159,000. I do not know the exact figure because it seems to change every day. Honorable members are told that the number is increasing by 1,000 a day and that job opportunities are decreasing at a similar rate. Despite repeated offers made by the Premier and Treasurer, representing the Government of Victoria, to the Prime Minister that this State would bend over backwards to co-operate in halting the rate of inflation, the only response has been a complete lack of co-operation from the Federal Government.

Residents of the Heatherton electorate have had the benefit of being employed within 5 to 10 miles of their homes. They followed industry

and settled in the area because it was economically advantageous for them to do so. They participated in the development of the community and have been represented on school and pre-school committees and other public organizations which develop a community. It is disheartening for people like them to read newspaper articles such as that which appeared in the *Dandenong Regional News* of 16th October, under the heading "Unemployment up 400 per cent". The article stated—

Unemployment in Dandenong has increased by more than 400 per cent in the past 12 months.

. . . . . .

District firms have sacked hundreds of workers this year because of falling demand for their goods.

Recent developments on the district industrial scene have included the threatened shut-down of the Pilkington ACI float glass plant.

Nearly 500 people would be affected if this company went ahead with its plan.

The article also states—

Unemployment figures in the region will soar when hundreds of school-leavers register with the Commonwealth Employment Service in December.

Some students are expected to stay at school next year rather than be left looking for work.

. . . . . .

Clothing and shoe factories were the first hit and other secondary industries have also retrenched employees in recent weeks.

Floor covering manufacturers have laid off 38 workers in the past fortnight.

The Balatum factory in Sinclair Road, Dandenong, has ceased production.

Its warehouse is still functioning but 18 workers were laid off last week.

. . . . . .

Minster Carpets Limited have retrenched 72 workers from its Dandenong factory since June this year.

The company's rubber reclamation plant in Cheltenham Road has reduced its production staff.

Four more men were dismissed from the factory last week.

The slump in the carpet industry has affected a Noble Park engineering firm.

Imeed Engineering of Futura Road makes machinery for carpet manufacturers.

A spokesman for the company said there was now no demand for its products.

He said; "We had 40 on the staff in January and we now have six. Four of these are office workers.

Eight of our remaining ten production employees were sacked last week".

In August, the closure of the Hollandia Shoes factory in Maxwell Street put 32 local people out of work.

So the story goes on. The situation is due mainly to the economic mismanagement of the Federal Socialist Government which continually assures the people of Australia that it has their welfare at heart.

An article which appeared in the *Age* of 22nd October, 1974, under the heading "Yarn maker to close two plants", stated—

Australia's biggest yarn maker, Fibremakers Limited, will close its Geelong and Bendigo plants because of depressed conditions in the textile industry.

The company employs 102 workers at Bendigo and 36 in Geelong.

. . . . . .

Earlier this year Fibremakers retrenched 51 employees at Bendigo, 38 at Geelong and 134 at other plants.

Of course there are some benefits in being unemployed. For instance, a glassmaker, a shirt-stitcher, a pants-maker or a yarn-spinner who is out of work can go to the Social Security Department and say that the Federal Government put them out of work and they would like to be retrained as harp players; by the time they get a job, if they are more than 50 years of age, if they have any optimism they will want to know how to play a harp. If a person had been receiving $90 a week as a yarn-spinner at Bendigo, the Federal Government, which is so concerned about unemployment, will pay them $130 a week to learn to play the harp. If a person does not wish to work at all, he can register for unemployment benefits and shack up with two or three other fellows.

Honorable members interjecting.

Mr. BILLING: I have no objection to homosexuality in the community provided that legislation is not introduced to make it compulsory.

The unemployment figures issued last week were questioned in today's *Age* by Mr. Phillip Lynch, who had been Minister for Labour in the previous Federal Liberal Government. I shall not weary the House by quoting the figures and I shall not suggest that the statistics be incorporated in *Hansard* but I commend the article to honorable members.

Closer to home, in Clayton, last week the firm of Johns Consolidated Products Pty. Ltd. retrenched 25 per cent of its staff, again as a result of the actions of the Federal Government. Eighty people were retrenched, many of whom have families to support. Inquiries in the Clayton shopping area concerning the drop in turnover of business caused by the disappearance of people from the industrial areas who used to spend money there revealed that there has been a considerable reduction of income earned by local business people. Honorable members are led to believe that unemployment under a Federal Labor Government is vastly different from what it was under the administration of the former Liberal Government. It must be a consolation to an unemployed person to read such a statement, if he can afford to buy a newspaper, but it is no consolation for him to find that because he is unemployed he is in the same position as anybody else.

In yesterday's *Age* a small article under the heading "Treasurer retains his brilliance" stated—

> What a joy it is to return from overseas and to find that our Treasurer (Mr. Crean) has lost none of his brilliance.
>
> It has taken him a mere two years to learn that excessive wage demands can ruin industry and hence ultimately, the worker and the country itself—congratulations Mr. Treasurer.
>
> Would it be possible some time for your paper to run a feature article on Mr. Crean's most prominent pronouncements over his period in office? It will, I am sure, enthrall your readers—and unemployed.

The bank credit card system, about which views for and against have been thoroughly aired, may be replaced by the issue of the Crean credit card. If anyone would accept such a card, people may be able to buy some of Dr. Cairns's Chinese crackers. Unfortunately, the actions of the Labor Government will now deny honorable members the pleasure of buying those crackers.

I invite honorable members to contemplate the future proposed by the Labor Government. An article appeared in last night's *Herald* under the heading "A Government in Distress". I suggest that the heading should have been "People in Distress" because in Victoria thousands of people and hundreds of families are in distress because of the economic mismanagement of this country in regard to people's incomes being returned to a State which has the wherewithal, the know-how and manpower to expend it.

Recently, the Victorian Government approached the Federal Minister for Labour, Mr. Cameron, and asked him to make funds available so that the Victorian Government could immediately employ 1,000 people who are at present out of work in the rural areas. The reply was that Mr. Cameron was investigating the matter. According to reports in today's press, Mr. Cameron wants to establish another department or sub-department within the Social Security Department to employ 500 more public servants to alleviate the unemployment position, and wants them to be allocated the task of finding jobs for unemployed people. The Victorian Government already has positions available for such people in this State.

It will take the Federal Government from now until the New Year to set up this sub-department and obtain the services of 500 public servants to do work which the Victorian Government could do without spending large amounts on salaries and other allowances.

The leading article which appeared in the Melbourne *Herald* of 22nd October, under the heading "A Government in Distress", stated—

Australia is now in the dangerous situation of having a Federal Government that can no longer cover up the collapse of its fundamental policies.

What threatens us nationally as a result is that the Government will try all sorts of rapid patchwork on its crumbling edifice, and launch desperately into improvised new theories, rather than face even now the extent of its errors and the harm they have done.

We have an unnerving example of this already in the latest statements by the Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, the Labor Minister, Mr. Cameron, and the Treasurer, Mr. Crean.

Faced with new evidence each day that inflation is raging out of control, and that the economy is sinking sickly to its knees, they have come out collectively with their belated recognition of the utterly obvious. Excessive wage demands are a major cause of inflation, and our economic and social structure must collapse unless these are contained.

This being the case one might expect Mr. Whitlam and his colleagues to carry their inspired new insights further. They might concede, for example, the futility of their hit-or-miss methods of cutting tariffs and squeezing credit with one misguided theory, while trying to contain with another the unemployment and business decline that these policies must cause as surely as night follows day.

We have seen the result of this in the business field with the collapse of companies, structurally and otherwise, which have provided this community with thousands of well-paid jobs and have contributed to the security of thousands of families both in Victoria and the rest of Australia. The article continued—

THE TAX ILLUSION.

They might at last confront the fact that it is both dishonest and self-defeating to claim they have "cut" taxes while continuing to strip millions in extra government tax revenue out of the inflationary situation, and to pour this spurious gain back into the economy in vast government spending programs.

They might pluck up the nerve to acknowledge that appeals to the unions for restraint are nonsensical when the ACTU and Labor Party president Mr. Hawke, can still chant that the unions must get higher pay to meet the inflation that demands for high pay are causing. Instead of making such dubious appeals, the Government should at least apply to wages the same downward pressure that the Prices Justification Tribunal is applying to prices.

But of course—and tragically for Australia—Mr. Whitlam and his colleagues, with the unions as their power-base, and Caucus acting virtually as the union lobby, do not confront the harsh truths of our plight in this fashion.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Is there any need for the honorable member to quote so extensively?

Mr. BILLING: I wish to make this point because despite the fact that the Labor Opposition would say that the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. is the tool of the so-called Capitalist Government of this State, this was a leading article in last night's *Herald*. The article continued—

Mr. Whitlam instead can come up only with the mind-blowing idea that, if union demands continue to be outrageous, the companies that become innocent victims to these unions, under strikes and other pressures, should be penalized with extra heavy taxes!

As a result of this policy and the fact that Victoria has been confronted with so many difficulties, what response has there been from the boss of the Labor Party? Last night there was a squawk from Hawke. He said, "Do something!" All panic buttons were out. One of the unions vitally affected by the policies of the Federal Labor Government was mentioned in a press report which stated—

The Federal Executive of the Textile Workers Union decided to withdraw its financial support from the ALP.

The union's Federal President, Mr. L. A. North, said the union blamed Government import and economic policies for 13,000 textile workers losing their jobs in recent months.

The Victorian branch alone pays the ALP $11,000 a year in affiliation fees.

During his presentation to the House, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned the magnificent help that had been received by municipalities through grants from the Commonwealth Grants Commission. He alleged that the City of Moorabbin had

not applied. It had indeed applied, along with other councils. It applied well before applications closed. The City of Moorabbin *News-Pictorial* of 16th October reports a council meeting held at Moorabbin and definitely proves the lie of the statement made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Three councillors of the City of Moorabbin took the trouble to wait in Canberra on the Special Minister of State, Mr. Lionel Bowen. According to this report, Mr. Bowen listened courteously and attentively to councillors H. R. Stevens, Alf Alexander and Don Bricker, and then quietly pointed out that the council did not rate its people high enough.

What an attitude for a Federal Government concerned with the finances of municipalities to adopt! Perhaps the reason was that this area has been represented by the Liberal Party for many years, and perhaps the people in Canberra misguidedly think that all people who support the Liberal Party can afford to pay more than the average person for ordinary, everyday expenses, particularly rates. Nothing is further from the truth. Although Moorabbin council received no grant, Mordialloc received a large one.

Mr. CURNOW: Maybe Mordialloc has a more competent council.

Mr. BILLING: I do not want to canvass the ability or the administrative efficiency of a municipal council, but I suggest that the cities of Moorabbin and Mordialloc are as efficiently administered as any other municipality in Victoria. Perhaps my suspicious mind makes me believe that Mordialloc received a better deal because it has a new Federal Labor member who has hardly opened his mouth on any public issue since he was elected. Honorable members must appreciate the difficulties that have been placed in the way of the Government of Victoria. Those difficulties would have been placed just as squarely on a Labor Government if it occupied the Government benches because the prime objective of the Federal Socialist Government is the abolition of State Governments, whether they are administered by their own people or not.

The City of Springvale received $245,000 from the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Its State member is myself, and its Federal member is Mr. Oldmeadow, who is doing a good job. Can the ratepayers of the City of Mordialloc, portion of which is in the Heatherton electorate, and the ratepayers of Springvale, more than half of which is in my electorate, expect, by virtue of the large grants from the Federal Government. any reduction in their rates? I venture to say that what has been received will be spent in a "tied" manner even though it has been publicly stated that this will not be the case. Plans and ideas were submitted to Canberra regarding the purposes for which the money was required. The money was provided for those purposes and it will be spent on them even though it may involve ratepayers in increasing expenditure to finish projects that have been started.

The general position of this State has been made more precarious in this budgetary area by the machinations and activities of the Federal Socialist Government. The public evidence of mismanagement is so wide that it would be impertinent of me to try to make a wider case. One reads it every day. The bankruptcy courts will be full of its results. The Social Security Department in Spring Street will have queues, and I hope we will not return to the days of the 1930s when food parcels and so on were handed out.

The activities and the administration of the Federal Socialist Government could be compared with the successful surgeon who, when reporting to his senior surgeon on an operation, said, "Professor, the operation was a complete success but the patient died".

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West): I rise in this debate for a number of purposes, one of which is to support the point of view, which has been put forcefully by the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, that what the House is faced with is not a good Budget and there is no way known, given the type of Government in office in Victoria, in which this could be a good Budget. I wish to enlarge on that point at some length because, although much of the contributions from members of the Government party has been about Federal Budgets, this is a State Parliament and honorable members are debating a State Budget.

In many of the areas of State activity covered in this Budget there has not been the activity for which one might have hoped, and there has not been the exercise of social conscience that would have assured amelioration in some areas which need the assistance of the State Government. Provision of this type is not included in this Budget.

Before I discuss the Budget, I must say that I am disappointed that the honorable member for Heatherton is not present. I was equally disappointed that the Minister of Education and the Treasurer were absent before dinner when the honorable member spoke about education and suggested that the education vote in Victoria should be severely reduced. The honorable member made that statement in so many words. He went on to say that much of the money that was spent on education in Victoria was entirely wasted. It is interesting to imagine the important matters that must have been discussed in the party room when this Budget was being debated. The honorable member for Heatherton said, in effect, "I do not want extra teachers for my electorate or new schools. I believe we should cut the education expenditure". Despite the efforts of the honorable member for Heatherton, the Treasurer announced a record increase in expenditure on education, absorbing a record proportion of the Budget, expansion of pre-school education and so on.

Mr. WILKES: That shows how much influence the honorable member has in the party room.

Mr. ROPER: One never knows what might happen if a certain discussion scheduled for next Wednesday goes on. The honorable member might not have any sway at all.

The principal matter about which the honorable member for Heatherton would be concerned appears at page 9 of the Treasurer's printed Budget speech. The honorable gentleman spoke at some length about the need for more money to be spent on education. If the Treasurer had been in the House when the honorable member for Footscray was speaking he might have realized that much of the increased expenditure on education, which he was proudly announcing, was made possible by the Australian Government, as are so many other items in the Budget.

Mr. LOXTON: Whose money is Australian Government money?

Mr. WILKES: It is money that Victoria has never had before.

Mr. ROPER: The honorable member for Footscray quoted figures which will be available next week when *Hansard* is printed and which show that the Australian Government has made money available for education the like of which has never been seen before. The honorable member for Heatherton was critical of all the initiatives that have been taken—and which were supported by the Country Party in the Senate of the Australian Parliament last December, despite the opposition of the Liberal Party—to provide money for primary education, for disadvantaged schools and for special education, none of which has ever been provided before. The honorable member for Heatherton would have Victoria not take this money and would reduce the amounts made available for these important areas.

The honorable member for Heatherton has two faces in this House. I have previously heard him say that he had school problems in his area which he asked the Minister to remedy. No doubt the honorable member talks to the local newspapers. I suspect that he did not think the local newspapers would regard his Budget speech as worthy of comment because they had run all the stories before, so the honorable member attacked the education grants in front of his fellow party members. Although the honorable member might take that action because he considers that the grants are too large, I attack the education grants because they are too small and do not come to grips with many of the problems that concern schools in disadvantaged areas such as that which I represent, or country areas for that matter, which members of the Government party and members of the Opposition also represent and care about.

I shall leave aside for a moment the speech of the honorable member for Heatherton, which was basically concerned with suggesting that money should be taken away from education and applied to other areas, because I wish to examine some portions of the State Budget about which there has been a lot of hot air but not much action. I suppose the best area to examine is that of consumer affairs. Yesterday the Minister of Consumer Affairs carried on about prices throughout Victoria. He said that the Leader of the Opposition had misled the House about such things as beef prices. No doubt the Minister pulled up at the supermarket in his fine Government car.

Mr. WILCOX: Read what was said.

Mr. ROPER: Unfortunately for the Attorney-General I shall deal later with some aspects of his department where moneys, which are vital to many ordinary people in a time of inflation, have been cut in this Budget. For the moment I shall deal with the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

It is interesting that the amount allocated for consumer affairs has been doubled. When one examines the position more closely one finds that this is entirely due to the fact that the Ministry is now going to run for a full year. There is no increase in the capability or the capacity of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs to undertake its most important task. One could speak for hours on this topic—I do not intend to do so—examining the activity or the lack of activity of the Consumer Protection Bureau.

A good starting point is to discuss what one might term Rafferty's warnings, which are frequently given. Some time ago trouble arose in the petrol industry. The Treasurer and the Minister of Consumer Affairs spoke at length about rip-offs. In fact, a newspaper headline stated, "Minister will stop rip-offs". That term seems to have fallen into disuse, except in the Federal Parliament by members such as Mr. Chipp. The Ministers said that the most fearsome action would be taken and that if necessary legislation and regulations should be and would be introduced. Because I believe Parliament should be aware of the work that went into those press statements, which received page 1 and page 3 reportage—they did not even have to buy their space, unlike other Ministers—on 19th September this year I asked—

How many petrol selling outlets were visited by officers of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs?

The answer was, "Nil". Despite statements about profiteering, no petrol selling outlets were visited by officers of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, although the Minister was making allegations and threatening activity against these undesirable people.

I also asked—

How many operators were found to be charging above the normal price per gallon, specifying the operator and address of the station?

Again the answer was, "Nil". Naturally none was charged because they were not visited. I also asked—

What action was taken against each such operator and with what results?

The answer was, "Nil".

You and I, Mr. Speaker, the newspapers, and motorists who paid somewhat higher prices in that week, are aware that some operators charged above the normal price, but the Minister of Consumer Affairs and his officers did not at any stage visit any of these petrol selling stations with a view to taking action. The Minister did what he usually does; he put out a press release and gave a warning. I shall refer to that form of action later in my speech.

Mr. WILKES: The Minister has not had to insert any paid advertisements.

Mr. ROPER: I said that the honorable gentleman got newspaper space, but he did not take any action, nor did the Premier and Treasurer before they made their announcement.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: There was no way in which they could; it was an empty threat.

Mr. ROPER: Any threats uttered by the Minister of Consumer Affairs are empty because he is not prepared to introduce legislation which would give him the power required to deal with the kind of economy that exists today.

I shall now turn to another matter which I have mentioned on many occasions in this House, that of house cladding. For years the reports of the Consumer Affairs Council have referred to the inadequacy of legal restrictions on house cladding organizations and on the proposals for referral selling. On three occasions last year I raised this matter in the House. The Minister could never be accused of moving hastily; he gave his customary warnings, which were printed in the newspapers. He got his name in the paper and finally, after a long time, after four years of pressure on the Government by numerous organizations and people, there was printed in the *Herald* of 18th September, the headline "Government Acts on House Rogues". I have here a number of statements about how the Government will act on house rogues. In the Governor's Speech no mention is made of that important legislation. The Minister said that he would introduce such legislation, but he never gets around to doing it. It is now four years since this practice was criticized.

I note in all his criticisms and fine press releases warning people against referral selling, not once did he mention large organizations like Custom Credit, which deliberately financed the rogues that this Minister referred to, and continued to demand their money for them long before any work had been done or even after any prospects of work had been finished. The Minister of Consumer Affairs has never done much about the practice of referral selling, the practice of brick cladding or the practice of finance companies not placing money in some form of trust fund until the work is done. Indeed, the fraud squad of this State believes there are laws that will allow money to be placed in trust funds until the work is completed. The Minister of Consumer Affairs does not worry about those things. He is happy for the people of Victoria to be preyed upon by these people, and then by organizations like Custom Credit, so long as he does not have to do anything other than issue newspaper warnings.

One can take other subjects, and for the interest of the House and for my own edification, over the past few months I have been collecting some of the Minister's warnings from the Parliamentary Library and from newspapers. He is a great one for warnings. In the *Sun News-Pictorial* of 8th May he warned that errant firms may be named. He said "The Government might name firms that consistently appear before the small claims tribunal". One

would imagine that we would be starting to hear of these firms being named and the Minister introducing legislation to ensure that they cease carrying out their depredations. Only last week the Minister said there was nothing he could do about Milleradio. For years that firm has been preying on the people of Victoria and has had more mentions in the reports of consumer affair bodies than any other organization in this State.

On 24th August there can be seen another one of these warnings—

Minister warns on heir letters. The Minister for Consumer Affairs, Mr. Rafferty, today warned people to be wary of letters hinting they might be heirs to English fortunes.

If the Minister goes to London, if he is successful in the Cabinet ballot, he might be heir to such a fortune, but he was giving a warning. There is nothing in any legislation of his suggesting that these letters are illegal or nothing in his organizational apparatus set up in the Budget to do anything to dissuade people from sending bogus letters of this type.

Let me take another couple of his warnings. This is an article by Bruce Baskett of the *Herald* on 16th August 1974. It stated—

Householders were being trapped into paying up to $22 a month for encyclopaedias or child development programmes, the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Mr. Rafferty, said today. He said the Consumer Protection Bureau had told him that some door-to-door salesmen were misrepresenting themselves as market promoters to get into houses.

That might have been used by the Minister of Consumer Affairs, but the Consumer Affairs Bureau reports in 1970 and 1971 brought this activity to the attention of this House and the people of Victoria, and absolutely nothing has been done. Organizations like *Encyclopaedia Britannica* were able to dupe the people of Victoria into purchasing these books through a variety of methods long after those methods had been condemned by the Consumer Affairs Council, but it was left to the Minister not to bring an Act into this Parliament, not to enforce any Act of this Parliament, but rather to issue one of his traditional warnings. One wonders what happens to all these warnings. No doubt they do alert some people to the problems that exist. What happens if they go to the Consumer Protection Bureau in accordance with the Consumer Protection Act? I was interested to find out what actions flowed from an Act of this Parliament, so on 17th September I asked the Minister of Consumer Affairs—

With reference to the three months period following commencement of the Consumer Protection Act 1973 on how many occasions the Director of Consumer Affairs has instituted proceedings on behalf of a consumer or in his name?

The answer was, " Nil ". I then asked him—

On how many occasions the director has defended a consumer in actions brought against the consumer?

That posibility was laid down under the Act. Again the answer was " Nil ". I then asked him—

In which courts such actions have been instituted or defended, specifying on how many occasions the director was successful and how many cases are still in progress?

There were no courts because there had been no offences or prosecutions. And later I asked him—

Whether he has laid down any conditions which determine the course of action by the director; if so, what conditions?

The answer was, " No ", he had not laid down any conditions. It was never the intention of the Government to use those useful provisions of the Act against the people who are duping the consumers of Victoria and who are causing consumers great hardship. If there were adequate laws, they would be summarily dealt with. One almost despairs of the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

The honorable gentleman might believe that there are a variety of Budgets to be discussed. The Budget we are discussing is the State Budget of Victoria, and the particular part I am discussing concerns the Consumer Affairs Bureau and that lazy do-nothing Ministry that does absolutely nothing.

The Oak Insurance firm has advertised in the press on a number of occasions sickness benefits of $1,000 a month. In the *Age* of 6th August there was quite a discussion on Oak Insurance. It was pointed out that their advertising was misleading; they were suggesting that for $1 one could receive $1,000 a month extra cash when in hospital. On closer examination, particularly of their policy, it is found that this is an introductory offer to get one in—then they put up the price substantially. The key point is that even after they put up the price their premiums are still so much below those of any reputable insurance company in Victoria or any hospital insurance company—and some of those are not the most reputable—but there is nothing in the departmental file at any stage to suggest that the State Actuary had been consulted, that anybody at all had been consulted about whether this firm was deliberately taking money from people and then would not pay the benefit at the end. That is the clear impression one gets after reading their advertisement. There is no way known, using any kind of actuarial principles, that they can comply with the promises which they make either in their advertisements or in their policy. Again the Minister of Consumer Affairs did not protect the consumers of Victoria. We did not get a warning on that.

Mr. WILKES : Victoria is the Mecca of commercial immorality in Australia!

Mr. ROPER : Yes. I now proceed to one of the peculiarities of the Minister of Consumer Affairs and this is the very important group in this State known as, " the Rafferty raiders " which go around to supermarkets and look at prices. Frequently they do not get them right. It might be the Minister who does not get them right. Honorable members might recall that last night in the debate on this Bill the Minister suggested that rump steak could be bought for 59 cents a pound. I went around the butcher shops in Brunswick this morning looking for such steak.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler) : Order! The honorable member for Geelong should not cross the floor as he has just done.

Mr. ROPER : Mr. Speaker, it has been instructive on occasions. The honorable member for Geelong often crosses the floor. What is advertized at 59 cents is a full ox rump, not quite the same as rump steak, and if either the Minister of Consumer Affairs or the member for Geelong believe they are the same he should look again or make sure that he never does the shopping. The rump steak that I looked at in the shops this morning costs 89 cents and $1.09 a pound. The Minister has no idea what the prices are, but let us look at some of his remarks. In the *Herald* on 9th September he is reported as follows—

> Rafferty warns shops on prices. Supermarket managers today were warned to make sure the prices marked on their shelves were the same as the price of the article on the shelves.

That seems to be a reasonable request, but if one goes to supermarkets around Melbourne at the moment, one finds some in which this is not the case. However, that is not coming to grips with what happens in supermarkets where one of the reasons for the increase in the wages bill is the fact that so many of their employees spend their full time changing prices. The Minister further went on to say in the *Herald* of 26th August—

> Shops told : Watch it!

It appears the Minister had received complaints, and—

> Victoria's Consumer Protection Bureau is considering prosecutions against some Melbourne supermarkets after a series of raids in the past few months.

Mr. WILKES : Again like the " Rafferty's raiders "!

Mr. ROPER : If they were acting like the Minister did when on the raids he found he could buy rump steak for 59 cents, one could imagine that almost anything is possible, but could one really imagine that the " Rafferty raiders " and the Minister are going to do anything whatsoever about the big supermarkets in this State which are putting up prices as quickly as

they can change them on many items. If anyone doubts that prices are going up, he should visit the supermarkets.

Mr. STEPHEN : Why wouldn't they go up?

Mr. ROPER : I take up the interjection of the member whose seat is now threatened.

Mr. WILCOX : You have not been here long enough to understand about threatened seats, but you will soon learn.

Mr. ROPER : As I was pointing out to the honorable member opposite, firms do get orders in at a particular price, the price is then increased, and they take a greater additional profit on their original stock. Everyone in this House knows about this and everyone in this House, including the Minister of Consumer Affairs, has mentioned it at one time or another as an evil.

What the Minister of Consumer Affairs is not prepared to do is to take appropriate legal action under any part of the Consumer Protection Act or alternatively to use his powers in the Government to persuade it that the Acts he administers ought to be amended so that he can take action.

I now come to one of the main reasons why the Ministry of Consumer Affairs has not performed, will not perform, and cannot perform. In the *Age* of 10th October there was a small story—it was not a paid advertisement—which indicated that the Minister of Consumer Affairs had said that at the moment there was no prospect of or any real need for expansion in the number of officers employed in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs. When honorable members examine the staffing schedule for this year, they can understand why that comment was made. In the year 1973-74 there were 27 officers, a very small number to carry out the tasks required under the various Acts under the control of the Minister of Consumer Affairs. In this financial year—when, because of the warnings which have been issued and the need for new prosecutions—one might have imagined that the staff would have been increased, the staff remains at 27 in number. The Government has no intention of increasing the capacity of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs or to improve its performance.

When the Minister of Consumer Affairs was in London he issued grandiose statements that consumers would be able to have household items tested to see whether they complied with the original specifications. The Government has no intention of doing anything to assist the consumers of Victoria. So long as the Minister of Consumer Affairs can issue his warnings and get his name in the newspapers that is all he wants, and the Government will not take effective action.

Few honorable members could recall a consumer affairs matter which they have drawn to the attention of the Minister of Consumer Affairs and which has been dealt with or even considered. It has been suggested by the honorable member for Melbourne that there are none, but there may be one which the Minister of Consumer Affairs may know about.

Other areas of Government activity referred to in the Budget have not been improved by the Treasurer. On a number of occasions honorable members have heard that we live in inflationary times and that everyone faces great difficulties. One of the problems people in my area face is that of rapidly increasing rents. There has been an increasing trend for landlords and estate agents to increase rents or even evict people from houses so that rents can be raised.

A person in receipt of a low income cannot afford to have the rent increased from $25 to $35 or $40 a week. The press has reported activities of this type. No doubt

constituents of other honorable members are in a similar situation. Some heart-rending stories have been brought to me of families being evicted simply because the landlords or the estate agents have increased rents. These rents have "gone through the roof".

The Government has been responsible for many amendments to the Landlord and Tenant Act to reduce the protection of tenants. One of the first measures introduced into this Parliament to assist tenants and to restore some of their rights was the private member's Bill introduced by my colleague, the honorable member for Moonee Ponds. It is to be hoped that measure will have a safe and secure passage through this House, and another place, and will be placed on the statute-book. In the meantime, whilst the Government talks about the need to protect the small person and to restrain inflation, it is doing nothing about rental matters in this State.

I was astounded when I looked through the Budget Papers to learn that for the Law Department the amount provided for rent control has been substantially reduced. This is only a small item, but it is the small items such as consumer affairs, the Rental Investigation Bureau and the Metropolitan Fair Rents Board on which the Government stands condemned. Large amounts of money are not involved in improving these services, and this could be done easily without reducing the Budget allocation for education, as advocated by the honorable member for Heatherton. In 1973-74 the sum of $132,000 was made available by the Treasurer for rental control but in 1974-75 only $114,000 is provided.

Mr. Ross-Edwards: How can be honorable member justify rent control 35 years after the war?

Mr. ROPER: I do not know whether the Leader of the Country Party is a rentier. I do know that the absence of effective restraint on rents or protection for tenants is a real disaster for thousands of people throughout Victoria. It is no wonder that a man on $90 a week who is advised by his estate agent that he has to pay an extra $10 a week is keen to seek a wage rise to cover the increase.

Mr. Ross-Edwards: What about all the pensioners who own homes and let them?

Mr. ROPER: In recent times I have been taking a keen interest in this aspect. Pensioners might own a home which they rent, especially if they live in the electorate of Shepparton, but very few pensioners own flats or homes in the Brunswick area or in nearby areas. The increased rents have been mainly for flats. If flats are owned by pensioners, this is only because of the liberality of the Labor Government in Canberra which has made the pension available to Sir Henry Bolte, Sir Robert Askin and others. These are the people who own flats and are pushing rents "through the roof".

The number of evictions has greatly increased, and the State Government has done nothing except reduce the resources provided to enable investigations to be carried out. The Government has absolutely abrogated what has been a fairly traditional responsibility in this area.

I have been receiving assistance from the honorable members for Geelong North and Melbourne, and it has been drawn to my attention that in the electorate of Shepparton at present a number of Aborigines are being evicted by the Government.

Mr. Ross-Edwards: Those people are being evicted because, as a result of the actions of the Government in Canberra, they have no work.

Mr. ROPER: The interesting attitude expressed by the honorable member for Shepparton illustrates the fact that the Government will evict people who are unemployed. That is the point I was trying to make. This is occurring in a period when more people are renting properties. It has been estimated that more than 20 per cent of the family units residing in Victoria are renting properties. The Government is not prepared to intercede on behalf of the disadvantaged or unfortunate. This affects most people throughout the community, even persons who live in the electorate of Ballaarat South.

Other avenues of Government administration leave a considerable amount to be desired. I shall refer briefly to health services. I do not wish to go into much detail because in the near future there will be further discussion on health matters. The *Age* this morning opened a new aspect of discussion. However, the State Government has never been able to cope with the health needs of Victoria, particularly the mental health needs. The amount of State resources allocated the Mental Health Authority has not increased from the miserable pittance provided ten years ago. What are the effects of this? One item in the Health vote which should concern everyone relates to the Royal Park Psychiatric Centre located in the electorate of Melbourne, near my electorate.

Mr. BILLING: Has the honorable member heard what the staff has had to say?

Mr. ROPER: Just as the honorable member for Heatherton has a defect in his views on education, he also has a defect in hearing as he probably believes I referred to Mount Royal hospital. I am talking about Royal Park Psychiatric Centre. The Minister of Health, when confronted with the situation at Royal Park Psychiatric Centre had this to say—

> While I am concerned about some defects at Royal Park, I feel some of the allegations made about conditions are somewhat exaggerated. It should be emphasized the conditions in Royal Park compare quite favourably with conditions at many psychiatric and general hospitals in this State.

He went on to point out that his chief justification for not doing much at Royal Park was that many hospitals and institutions throughout the State were in a worse condition. It is ridiculous that the Minister of Health should justify the situation prevailing at Royal Park by stating that there are worse areas in the State.

If honorable members consider the administration of the Minister for Social Welfare they will find that the same thing occurs. In many areas of public importance the Government has done nothing, and it does not intend to do much. It is eight years since the honorable member for Brunswick East had a number of stories printed in the *Herald* about the Allambie Reception Centre. He pointed out that there were children sleeping on the floor, that there was heavy overcrowding and that the services provided were extremely poor.

This year the Allambie Reception Centre had an open day when people were invited to attend. I was unable to attend because I had other business in my electorate. So, to gain some information about Allambie, I decided to ask a question. The honorable member for Sandringham, who is interjecting, should be interested in the reply. If the information is published in *Hansard* and can somehow enter the honorable member's mind, he may take some interest. I asked the Minister of Agriculture, for the Minister for Social Welfare—

> How many children the Social Welfare Department recommends as (*a*) the maximum; and (*b*) the desirable, number of occupants?

On a previous occasion the Minister of Agriculture, who was formerly Minister for Social Welfare, stated that he found nothing objectionable about people sleeping on the floor, and that comment has been confirmed by the present Minister for Social Welfare. It is difficult to imagine what their reaction would be if the private boarding schools which their children attend decided that they had to sleep on the floor. The answer I received included the following statement—

(*b*) The desirable maximum number of children making allowances for the provision of a bed, bedside locker and a reasonable amount of floor area for each child, is 200 children.

I also asked how many children had been in residence. I was informed that a year ago there were 288. Honorable members should remember that the desirable number is 200. On 1st October, 1974, there were 244 and only once has the number of children in residence fallen below the desirable number.

The desirable number actually in residence is smaller than the number under Allambie care because many children, for obvious and various reasons, are temporarily away from Allambie. Further relevant information was provided under the heading "Number of Floor Beds"; that expression refers to mattresses on the floor stuffed into the corners of the room. I notice that the honorable member for Sandringham is not jumping up and down in praise of what are called floor beds. On the first of this month 24 children were sleeping on these floor beds. If this Government has any social conscience, it should first make adequate provision for children who are undergoing a period of substantial social stress. These children are experiencing and are likely to experience more difficulty than other children, even the children of the Minister who answered the question. To place these children in such facilities and leave them there is tantamount to a crime. One can imagine members of the Government being little concerned, but I am most concerned, because in recent months a number of children living in my electorate have been placed in Allambie's tender care; one child has been sleeping on a floor bed.

When one compares that situation with the care and attention these children would have received in a home, and to which they are entitled in any institution run by a Government in Australia, one cannot but be horrified. The Government, through its lack of provision in the social welfare field, particularly child welfare, is merely storing up problems. Tragedies happen all too often with people who are consigned to the care of the Social Welfare Department.

This Budget and previous Budgets of the Government have not adequately provided for social welfare. The problems of Allambie have been public for ten years or more. Time and again the institution has been criticized in the report of the Director-General of Social Welfare, but the Government has done virtually nothing to overcome such problems.

Mr. STEPHEN: The honorable member has fixed everything else; what about a run on unemployment?

Mr. ROPER: One of the key concerns of Parliament should be to do what it can about the aspects of inflation over which it has some influence. I have already mentioned that the Government is prepared to rave about prices, but that is all it is prepared to do. The Government has done practically nothing about land prices throughout Victoria. Young couples are faced with almost impossible situations in attempting to buy an average block of land at $12,000. Last night the honorable member for Murray Valley mentioned that in Wodonga a certain development company had bought 140 acres of land for $100,000. Eight months later the company sold the land to the Housing Commission for

$600,000. One cannot help but wonder about housing expenditures, and so on, which are contained in the Budget when that type of profligate expenditure occurs. A similar thing happened in Melton and Sunbury when the State Government passed across substantial sums of public money for the benefit of private developers. On no occasion has the State Government taken action to reduce the price of land by either increasing the supply of cheap blocks or preventing private developers from making huge profits on the market.

Mr. GUY: Whom should it buy the land from?

Mr. ROPER: If the Government had one ounce of planning sense it would have realized when it declared Wodonga an area of accelerated development that it would probably have to buy houses, and rather than wait for the Australian Government to provide the impetus to draft complementary legislation, it would have introduced that type of legislation into the House in 1970. Members such as the honorable member for Gisborne have no interest in stopping profiteering in land. It is not in their interests. They are concerned to ensure that one group of people makes a substantial profit at the expense of other groups of people.

Mr. GUY: What other groups of people?

Mr. ROPER: Those interested in buying property.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I appeal to honorable members to cease interjecting.

Mr. GUY: I find the honorable member's remarks objectionable.

Mr. ROPER: I find objectionable the Government's practice of not taking action to suppress inflation in the areas over which it has some power or control. It is not prepared to do anything about commodity prices, land prices, rents, and so on.

Finally, I refer to an area which is sadly neglected by the Government—the serious social and other problems faced by immigrants in Australia. For 25 years Australia has had a substantial migration programme. Hundreds of thousands of people of Greek, Italian, Yugoslav and British descent have entered the country. For the past twenty years significant problems of an educational, social and health nature have existed in the State. State Governments have done little or nothing to overcome these problems. It was not until 1968 that the Education Department provided special facilities for migrant education in a limited way.

It is the proud boast of the Minister of Education that Victoria does more for migrant education than any other State in Australia. I should like to submit two points to the House. Firstly, the sad aspect of the Minister's boast is that the remainder of Australia is even worse off than Victoria, because no one can claim that the migrant education programme in Victoria effectively ensures that migrant children have an equal chance in the education system. Secondly, the programme, such as it is, is almost solely funded from Australian Government sources. It is a classic example of how the State Government puts little of its own resources into an area which is clearly a State responsibility. The State Government merely pockets the cheque from the Commonwealth Government.

The situation is even more serious. Schools in areas of high migrant concentration are turning out people who are socially illiterate and who could not read the excellent words of members in this place. More importantly, in an evaluation of literacy, they could not understand the sporting pages of the *Sun News-Pictorial*. The literacy level of these people is extremely low. Schools in my electorate and in electorates all over the State are producing people

with this level of literacy. The substantial reason is that no adequate system exists for teaching English to migrants in Victoria.

The schools in the electorates of members of the Opposition are not the only ones affected. Substantial numbers of pupils in schools in Malvern—Malvern Primary School and Malvern East Primary School—are unable to read at the level of a third-grade student when they leave those schools. They go to high school and never properly progress, because the additional language facilities they so urgently require are not provided. If the Government programme continues, these facilities will not be provided, even when teachers are available. The conditions under which these teachers have to work must be seen to be believed. That situation is improving as a result of the programme instituted by the Australian Government, but there are still many migrant classes in store-rooms, corridors, sick bays and principals' rooms throughout the State. This does not seem to worry the Government.

In one school in my electorate the migrant English class comprises eight small pupils or six large pupils, because the room is so small. The highly-trained teacher is not in a position to teach a class of ten pupils, so the school has to double up on the number of classes provided

It is not only in the educational area that the Government does nothing for migrants. The Budget speech contained a reference to new initiatives in the migrant area. It said that a special bureau to help migrants will be set up and also a migrant advisory council. As I represent an electorate which has a large proportion of migrants, I asked the Minister of Health, for the Minister of Immigration, what the great plans were that were blazened forth in the Budget speech. I asked in which department the bureau would be located, and I was told that it would be located in the Premier's Department. I asked when it would be established, and the reply was that it would be established as soon as possible. I asked what staff and officers the bureau would have, and I was informed that adequate resources would be provided.

Nowhere in the Budget documents is any provision made for finance or staffing for the advisory council and the bureau. In setting up this grandiose structure, the Government has no intention of placing any flesh on the bones or of providing the required assistance to migrants. If there is any doubt about that, honorable members should read the answers to questions about the interpreting services available to various Government departments throughout the State. I have not received all the answers. I have not yet received an answer from the Attorney-General, but I look forward to that with great interest. Twenty-five years after the population of the State began to include a substantial proportion of people with a non-English language as their first language, not one Government department in the State has set up the necessary facilities to provide interpreting and translating facilities for migrants. If there is any doubt about the tragic human results of that situation, one should look at the Education Department and the Department of Health.

Mr. B. J. EVANS: Why do they come here if they do not want to learn our language and our customs? The honorable member should look at our own deprived people before he worries about the migrants.

Mr. ROPER: I am interested in the interjection of the honorable member for Gippsland East. One would imagine that all honorable members would be concerned about all people who are facing difficulties in the State, whether they are Italian, Indian, Greek, or whatever they happen to be. No group should have priority. Obviously the honorable member for Gippsland East considers that migrants should be last.

Melbourne has the fourth largest Greek population of any city in the world. The city has markedly changed because of the impact of migrants from Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia and Turkey. Any suggestion that English is the only language spoken in Victoria ignores the fact that the main language of hundreds of thousands of people, particularly in Melbourne, is not English.

I do not like taking up interjections by the honorable member for Sandringham but, in this instance, I have been provoked by his simple suggestion that migrants should learn English whereas the Government has done almost nothing to enable them to do so. The problems of adult migrants learning to read and write English effectively are immense and many adult migrants who come to this country will never have the same facility for understanding English as has an Australian born citizen, particularly in dealing with the problems of the State Government bureaucracy which has failed to provide proper facilities for assisting migrants. One has only to speak to officers of the Housing Commission, the Mental Health Authority and the Law Department to find out how many migrants are unable to comprehend adequately the English that is required of them.

Mr. BILLING: They know what a dollar is.

Mr. ROPER: They may know what a dollar is but when they are faced with legal documents or a detailed form it is a more complex matter. For example, even the honorable member for Heatherton would have great difficulty in understanding the agreement that was entered into between Esso-Hematite and the State Electricity Commission because that is a complex document. In this instance, that is one level of comprehension and even the Minister for Fuel and Power has said that no member of this House, apart from himself, could understand it.

Other levels of comprehension exist and one is the understanding of simple forms and simple processes. One can go into the courts of the State and time and again find that people are substantially disadvantaged in obtaining equal justice because they just cannot cope with the system. These problems exist not only with migrants but also with many other people. The Budget does nothing about providing funds for legal aid because the Government considers that that is a private matter.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): The honorable member has one more minute.

On the motion of Mr. WILKES (Northcote), an extension of fifteen minutes was granted.

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West): The honorable member for Ballaarat South, who is interjecting, will be dispossessed by his own party or by the Labor Party at the next election.

Government supporters keep on suggesting that one should deal with inflation and unemployment, but those matters have been adequately canvassed; what should be stressed is what the Government is doing in its Budget. I have suggested many areas where the Government could expend small amounts of public revenue to improve considerably services to the people, but the Government has not chosen to do so. All it has done is bleat about the Federal Government and not use its own undoubted powers to overcome the problems confronting the community and substantially improve the quality of life—a phrase which members often hear from honorable members opposite—for people in Victoria.

It is interesting that many members on the Government benches are quite happy to remain silent about the problems besetting the State because of the inadequacy of the Consumer Affairs Bureau, the total failure of the Government to do anything about prices, about

rents, or about the hundreds of thousands of migrants. One imagines that they also remain silent in the party room.

Two things need to be said about the broad issue of Commonwealth-State relations. The House should be indebted to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and to the Premier in answering him, for providing information about the assistance that this State has received from the Australian Government. The Budget speech refers to a huge increase in funds for pre-school education.

Last year, I can remember reading a document—it was printed by a number of papers—published by the Minister of Health stating that the State Government would vastly increase the number of pre-school centres. The only way in which the Government can fulfil that promise is to accept the $4·2 million which is coming from the Australian Government. There is an additional 3 million Australian Government dollars coming into this State for pre-school education and an extra $1 million from State resources.

There is no way known that it cannot be said that in area after area, the key to the desirable change that is reflected in the Budget results from Australian Government action.

Mr. LOXTON: Is it a Canberra dollar or an Australian dollar?

Mr. ROPER: It is an Australian dollar. Honorable members opposite do not like to hear that somebody is prepared to spend money on socially desirable and equalization schemes. In area after area, such as migrant education, community health services, which despite the Minister of Health we are getting in this State, housing, drug education, vast sums of money adding up to nearly $293 million will flow to this State following action taken under the socially progressive policies of the Australian Government.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission has been criticized as a supposedly politically biased organization which favours the Labor Party. The commission has existed for many years and its members were appointed long before the present Australian Government gained power in Canberra. One non-Labor stronghold, the City of Horsham has received $90,000 and the Wimmera region in general has received $481,000; the central highlands, $666,000; and the south-western region, which includes municipalities such as Camperdown and Dundas, received $715,000. No one can suggest that these are Labor strongholds, although on occasions, certain areas strongly support the Labor Party. The Warrnambool City Council received $120,000. Honorable members opposite contend that because Moorabbin did not receive a grant, it is bad.

I am reading these figures into the record to show that grants were made in numerous areas where the Labor Party has never held a seat. The Barwon area received $774,000; Northern Mallee $547,000; Loddon-Campaspe $927,000; Goulburn, $883,000, north-eastern. $558,000, East Gippsland, $497,000, and Central Gippsland $809,000. These areas are outside the Melbourne metropolitan area where local municipalities were gravely in need of finance but they had never received untied grants from the State Government, whereas they received such grants from the Australian Government.

Despite this, honorable members opposite carry on about political bias. The councils in their areas will bank the cheques and spend the money because it is socially desirable expenditure, for which the State Government should have made provision a long time ago. Until the Government introduces untied grants to local government organizations, the Opposition will continue to criticize its Budgets. The Government

imposes more ties on local government funds than does the Commonwealth in the grants it makes to the State Government.

A total of $14·2 million in untied grants has been paid to local government throughout Victoria, plus substantial untied moneys to the Board of Works. These grants will substantially improve the standard of living and of the environment, and will enable local government to function properly. This is something which the Federal colleagues of honorable members opposite would never have done; they made none of these proposals in their 23 years of office in Canberra.

The Budget is designed to do two things. Firstly, it indicates that the Government intends to restrain inflation, whereas it has done nothing in any area over which this Parliament has control. Secondly, the Budget pretends to criticize the Australian Government for spending money.

Mr. THOMPSON: That is more than the Federal Government does.

Mr. ROPER: The Treasurer criticizes the Australian Government for spending money, whereas the Minister of Education has constantly criticized that Government for not providing enough money for education. The honorable gentleman has been supported by the Assistant Minister, the Minister of Health and virtually every bleating Minister opposite. The Government wants it both ways. It wants Federal moneys from the Australian Government and wants to be able to criticize that Government for spending more money. The Government has referred to the bloated Australian Public Service which has grown at a much slower rate than the Victorian Public Service.

Members of the Opposition will continue to criticize any State Budget which fails to give attention to what is happening in Victoria. The present Budget does nothing to assist the fight against inflation. It does nothing except in those areas where the Australian Government has forced the Victorian Government to do something. For those reasons, the Opposition strongly opposes the Budget and believes it should be totally rejected.

Mr. WILLIAMS (Box Hill): Australia faces the greatest political and economic crisis in its history and the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the honorable member for Footscray —he should know better as he is a Bachelor of Commerce—and the latest academic, the honorable member for Brunswick West, have been getting off the point on trivialities and continuing the denigration of our economic and social system which, in my opinion, can only create further unemployment and do the greatest possible harm to the little people whom honorable members opposite should be representing in this Chamber. I have an extract from the *Australian Economic Review*, the journal of the prestigious Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, whose editorial board includes such famous names as Professor Downing, Professor Henderson and Dr. Ironmonger, all of whom have been pro-Labor in previous elections, and have assisted the Federal Labor Government with economic analysis. This is what these men say—

> In 1974-75 Australia faces, for the first time in its history, the very real possibility of a developing hyper-inflation.

Hyper-inflation is the sort of inflation that occurred in Germany in the 1920s and after the second world war, and destroyed the value of the German mark. The authors go on to say—

> . . . wage increases of 25 per cent and above —have already determined that prices will increase during much of 1974-75 at an annual rate in excess of 20 per cent.

This is what they say now—

> the country faces the most serious economic situation since the depression days of the 1930s.

. . . . . .

Partisan politics must be put aside by all parties in the face of a true national emergency.

I call on such people as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who in my opinion represents all that is good and decent in the Australian Labor Party, to try to exercise common sense and avoid the constant extremism which can only drag us all down into a vicious dictatorship. I urge all members of the Australian Labor Party to read the Treasury press release No. 85 dated 19th October, which contains extracts of a speech given by the Federal Treasurer, Mr. Crean, at the 1974 International Drycleaning, Laundry and Linen Supply Convention in Melbourne. Only this afternoon the honorable member for Footscray, who is a Bachelor of Commerce, told us the causes of inflation. For the benefit of the honorable member I point out that his colleague in the Federal Parliament said—

the major causes of price increases in Australia during the past year are not to be found in external factors.

Mr. FORDHAM: I said 1972.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am talking about the recent past. This is what the Federal Treasurer is talking about. He went on to say—

We have suffered less than most others from the oil price escalation. Rather, our problems arise from the conjunction of the demand and cost pressures experienced during 1973 and the momentum built up then is still having its effects despite the abatement of demand pressures.

We have heard from the Leader of the Opposition about the private enterprise system. The honorable member referred in a sneering manner to rip-offs. To my regret, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke about a large retail store whose chairman of directors supported his party during the last elections. I assume he was talking about a store run in conjunction with the Australian Council of Trade Unions. All he can do is to denigrate the profit system. This is what the Federal Treasurer, Mr. Crean, said—

... readiness to invest in plant and equipment is a vital sinew of economic growth. If we want shorter hours, more leisure, better environments, more consumer purchasing power, we must, over the longer term, increase the amount of capital employed.

Where are we to get this capital other than through profit margins? Most large companies invest at least one half of their profits. If we are to denigrate the profit system we will destroy everything in which the great mass of wage earners in this country believe, because 80 per cent of the work force is employed by private businesses.

If this constant denigrating and slander of large companies is continued, instead of 200,000 people being unemployed at the end of next year there will be 500,000.

We are now in a situation in which two of every three businessmen are in the depths of despair about the future of Australia. The Capitalist free enterprise system depends on risk-taking and growth. People will take risks only if they can look to the future with confidence. Many businessmen who thought they were clever last year in supporting the Labor Party have come to regret their actions. Certain members of the Labor Party believe that profits comprise a large element of prices. That is completely untrue.

The annual report of the Commonwealth Tariff Board shows that profits after taxes constitute an average of only a little more than 4 cents in every dollar on sales. If half the profits are reinvested into the business, prices can be reduced by only 2 cents in every dollar. There is very little scope for reducing profits there.

I have some statistics that show that the world's twelve largest industrial corporations received total net profits equal to only 7 per cent of sales. So much for the gross libel that the multi-national corporations are the causes of inflation. I am appalled at the utter stupidity of members of the Labor Party in destroying the system which will provide jobs, better living standards and happiness for every man, woman and child who lives in a Labor electorate. It is to the Labor Party's eternal disgrace that it should

jeopardize the little people. The big people can look after themselves, but the little people who live in Moonee Ponds, Northcote and Footscray cannot invest their capital overseas, and they must tolerate low standards of living.

Members of the Labor Party have also attempted in this Parliament and in the national Parliament to denigrate the Liberal Party and the Country Party. I have here an impartial economic booklet entitled *OECD Economic Surveys*. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, which prepared this booklet, was set up in 1960. The survey was prepared in 1972 by the Economic and Development Review Committee, which had discussions with officials of the Australian Government. I presume that refers to the Australian Labor Party Government. The following words appear on page 17 of the booklet—

> Undoubtedly, certain features of the Australian economy and its development in the past 20 years helped in the maintenance of both a high level of employment and relative price stability, but policy also appears to have made a contribution.

In other words, the political wisdom of Sir Robert Menzies and the economic brilliance of Sir Robert Wilson and the late Maurie O'Donnell gave this country, while Sir Robert Menzies was Prime Minister, an economic and social system which was the envy of the free world. Australia had a master stateman who, although he did not know economics, completely trusted his economic advisers. There was no denigration of the Commonwealth Treasury while Sir Robert Menzies was Prime Minister. Regrettably, his successors not only thought they were statesmen but also thought they were economists.

This country has disaster staring it in the face because the Federal Government, which imagines it knows all the answers, has decided to scorn the advice of its Treasury officials.

I return to the Victorian Budget. The whole point of the matter is that unless we have a strong national economy and the Government in Canberra does not solve our problems, there will be little hope for us, and the State Budget will make no contribution to the health, welfare and happiness of the people of Victoria.

The Federal Budget has increased its expenditure by 32 per cent but the Victorian Budget is proposing an increase of only 12 per cent. However, with an inflation rate of 20 per cent, that means that the Federal Government has increased its income by 40 per cent, largely through inflationary income rises. However, it is giving back to the States only a miserly 23 per cent. We cannot progress in this State unless the Federal Government gives back greater control of our economy. I have probably devoted too much of my time to this topic but economics is my profession.

I now want to refer to poor, humble, parish-pump politics and complain about the policy of the Federal Government in denying grants for road works in Victoria, particularly in my municipality. The proportion of the petrol tax returned to the States for road works has progressively fallen until this year it stands at a little over 50 per cent. For $1 of petrol tax that motorists in Victoria pay, the State receives only 50 cents. Over the next three years Victorian motorists will pay well in excess of $500 million in petrol tax but the State Government will receive only $228 million, which is far less than the amount recommended by the Federal Bureau of Roads.

This must cause unemployment and it will be disastrous in electorates such as my electorate of Box Hill. The *Doncaster-East Yarra News*, published on 15th October, in its leading article stated—

> Doncaster and Templestowe council is facing a crisis over the state of the city's roads.
>
> It is considering raising a loan of $500,000 to carry out work on Doncaster Road, and it faces the problem of inadequate finance to resurface roads damaged by heavy rain last winter.

The City of Doncaster and Templestowe has 50 miles of main and unclassified roads, most of which are in a shocking and disgraceful condition. The council needs tens of millions of dollars for road works.

Mr. GINIFER : You had better stand for the council.

Mr. WILLIAMS : I did represent my city as a councillor.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler) : Order! I suggest to the honorable member for Box Hill that he confine his remarks to the State arm of Government.

Mr. WILLIAMS : No matter what avenue of activity honorable members examine in the State Budget, they will find that because of the manner in which the Federal Government has manipulated income tax revenue, the State suffers. Most State revenue sources are inelastic and, unless the Government desires to harm the business community, nothing will be gained by increasing stamp duty or imposing heavy taxes on it.

As an old supporter from way back of taxation on the unimproved capital value of land, I would not hesitate to impose land tax on speculators. However, I have grave doubts about placing prohibitive taxes on primary producers, the creators of our national wealth. In this regard I share the sympathy expressed by other members. I am not afraid to say in this House what I believe because I abhor the action of speculators who push up the price of land and expect young married couples to pay it off at exorbitant rates of interest over the remainder of their lives.

If the Government is not able to tax businesses, it is left with power to impose taxes on what I call the frivolities of life—taxation on Tattersall's, soccer pools, the Totalizator Agency Board and other activities. I, personally, do not believe we have taxed them enough.

I am proud to be associated with the Budget presented by the Treasurer, but I still believe he has not gone far enough in imposing direct taxes. The Treasurer could increase the taxation on the unimproved capital value of land, or persuade the Board of Works to do it because it is a scandalous situation in Greater Melbourne that, for Board of Works rating purposes, residents are still taxed on the net annual value of their land. In my opinion they should be taxed on the unimproved capital value of land. Approximately 60 per cent of the municipalities in the rating area covered by the Board of Works rate on unimproved capital value. The same system should be good enough for the Board of Works. If the Board of Works changed its rating system, it would receive 50 per cent more revenue without increasing the rates payable by three-quarters of home-owners.

The practice of the Board of Works in imposing huge rate increases based on the net annual value of land will create grave political difficulties for those honorable members who represent Liberal areas, because net annual values in Liberal areas are far greater than in other areas.

If the Treasurer is limited in the areas from which revenue can be raised, he should take similar action to that taken by Mr. Dunstan, the Premier of South Australia. In my opinion the only two responsible political leaders in the country at present are the Premier of Victoria and the Premier of South Australia. The Premiers of the other States and the Prime Minister of this country seem hell-bent on an ideological confrontation under which we could all go down. The only way to true progress in this country is a consensus between people such as the Premier of South Australia and the Premier of Victoria.

If it is not possible to achieve sanity and co-operation between the wage earners and the decent progressive businessmen in this country, we shall finish up either with the sort of Fascist dictatorship which now operates

in Brazil or Chile or the South American countries where businessmen and the army——

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I do not think the honorable member should refer to Brazil and other countries.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am attempting to demonstrate that on the one hand there could be a Capitalist system backed by a military dictatorship and on the other hand a Socialist-Communist system backed by the dictatorship of the proletariat, if we do not have the sense in Parliaments such as this to continue the Parliamentary democratic system. People like the Premier of Victoria are prepared to talk calmly to the other fellow, not to engage in histrionics, and always to tell the truth. The polls show that the Premier of Victoria commands the support of about 80 per cent of the people of Victoria, and that the Premier of South Australia commands the support of about 70 per cent of the people of South Australia. No other political leader in Australia can get within cooee of that. Instead of indulging in histrionics in this Chamber about small-time things, honorable members ought to be facing up to the sorts of problems that top economists have been warning us about. It is about "five minutes to midnight". If we do not come to our senses in the next twelve months, and forget all this talk of the Leader of the Opposition about rip-offs, God help this country.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): One cannot help making one or two brief comments on the matters mentioned by the honorable member for Box Hill who is often referred to in this place as the headquarters man and the machine man of the Liberal Party, the man of ideas. In his own words, the honorable member has come here as an economist tonight to put this State right, to tell us in a way that we have not heard before to put party politics aside in an endeavour to achieve co-operation. For the next fifteen to twenty minutes he proceeded to criticize the Australian Labor Party, the Opposition in this Chamber, and the Australian Labor Government.

Not as an economist, nor an academic, but just as a layman, I should like to put forward one or two views on the State Budget introduced by the Treasurer. If one were to be charitable one could say that the Budget certainly maintains the present level of administration but it attempts to take much of the credit for the Australian Government's initiative.

In the Treasurer's Budget speech of the eleven highlights that the Premier mentions on the second page, eight have only been made possible because of the initiatives taken by the Australian Government in making available money to the States to enable them to provide services which have been needed for many years. For the remaining three highlights the Treasurer can take the credit because they increase stamp duty, introduce tobacco licence fees and increase liquor licence fees.

The Budget speech also dealt in large measure with the problems of inflation. In talking about inflation, and the Budget for the current year, 1974-75, one has to rely to a great extent upon statements made by the Premier and Treasurer. However, if one examines the record of this Government over the past two or three years, one sees a great credibility gap, and one wonders whether to accept as absolutely factual what the Treasurer says in the Budget speech.

Much has been said in this Chamber about inflation and probably a great deal more has been said publicly outside the Chamber about the Treasurer's attempts to combat inflation by bringing about an immediate wage freeze on politicians, top public servants and judges. Honorable members know that nothing could be more farcical because members of Parliament were given a pay increase last December; judges were given an increase recently and top public servants also recently received an increase.

When one considers the time at which those increases were granted and the frequency with which they are given, one realizes that it will be quite some time before further increases will be made in those areas in Victoria. Therefore the talk of a wage freeze is so much humbug. It is not a field in which Hamer makes it happen.

Much has been said in the Budget about the need to curtail wage and price increases in order to allow Victoria to continue to provide services for all. The Treasurer mentioned a way in which this could be achieved. The question again arises of the credibility of the whole Budget document. One only has to look at what this Government means by price restraints. On 17th October the honorable member for Deer Park asked the Minister of Consumer Affairs a question regarding meat prices. The question was supplementary to a question answered by the Minister of Agriculture which indicated that beef was being sold in the Newmarket saleyards for 10 cents a pound. The honorable member asked what action the Minister and his department had taken and whether an inquiry had been instituted to determine whether or not low prices were being passed on to consumers. If they were not being passed on, the Minister was asked to give an undertaking to investigate the reason. Here is the proof of the Government's intentions regarding this matter. Here lies the credibility. The Minister replied—

> The answer is firstly that there has not been any investigation. Secondly, there is no price control in Victoria. Thirdly, I will not give an undertaking that the matter will be investigated at present.

The Opposition again questions the credibility of the Treasurer's statement.

On 25th November, 1973, in a radio broadcast called *Liberal Magazine* on 3XY the Premier and Treasurer, the Honorable R. J. Hamer, E.D., M.P., spoke about prices and incomes. The 25th November was after the announcement by the Australian Government that a referendum would take place to ask the people of Australia to give the national Parliament powers over prices and income. The Premier said: "We say 'No' to both questions." Just before that time, on 12th September, 1973, the Liberal Party was calling for wage and price restraints. In the Budget speech of 1973–74 the Treasurer talks about this matter. On page 39 of the Treasurer's printed Budget speech, he says—

> Victoria has offered to co-operate in full, and without reserve, in whatever is necessary to support a proper anti-inflation programme which includes constraints on wages as well as prices, and suitable action in relation to credit and money supply and interest rates.

Again the Government is not concerned about wage and price controls. It is concerned about wage freezes and the other results to which the Treasurer referred.

The Government procrastinated before finally accepting the offer of the Australian Government on land purchases and the purchase of cheap residential land for young married couples wishing to build homes in Victoria. Land prices in Victoria have escalated far beyond increases in land prices in South Australia, where the South Australian Government accepted the Commonwealth's offer in the first instance. The South Australian Government was able to reduce and to keep land prices at a much lower level.

The shortage of building materials is a major cause of inflation in the building industry. When the building boom was at its highest peak, the Treasurer called on the Federal Government to make more money available for the building programme. When there was an acute shortage of building material, he asked the Federal Government to reduce the amount of money available for the building programme so that the shortage of building materials could be overcome. All the time the Government and the Treasurer were aware

that this Government had the constitutional power to do something meaningful about the availability of building materials. Under the Local Government Act and the Town and Country Planning Act the Government had the power to restrict the large increase in the erection of city buildings. It had the power to restrict the growth of office buildings, which remain unoccupied in the city, and to divert the building material so used to housing and important Government projects such as schools, mental health, and so on, for which the Public Works Department was responsible and could not implement because of the shortage of building material.

We are often told by the State Government that the Australian Government will not take the necessary action to reduce inflation. The State Government says that the Australian Government will not exercise controls over wages or incomes. It is aware that the Commonwealth Government does not have the constitutional power to exercise control. The State Government does not use its own powers to combat inflation and to provide the necessary services required by its citizens. It is interesting to note some headlines and statements made in this Chamber. The remarks of the Treasurer in the current Budget give the impression that he blames all the ills of the State on the Australian Government. Members of the Government who have spoken during the debate have criticized the Australian Government, and said that it is a terrible Socialist and centralist Government, and so on. One gains the impression that all the ills of Victoria are brought about by the awful centralist Government that has been in office since 2nd December, 1972.

I quote from the speech in 1970 of a former Premier of Victoria, Sir Henry Bolte, which is reported on page 406 of volume 299 of *Hansard*. He says—

> I don't propose to go over again the ground I covered in that statement.

The former Premier is referring to a statement he made on 10th March of that year—

> Suffice to remind honorable members that in February the Premiers presented a unanimous recommendation to the Prime Minister, that in the long term, only the return of income tax powers to the States would meet their problems. The Commonwealth rejected this proposition. The implications which flow from that rejection were dealt with in my March statement, and I hold to what I then said, that as a consequence of that rejection this Parliament will not exist in a generation from now.

In the same Budget debate the former Premier referred to some State costs and the cost to the taxpayers of the Victorian Railways. On page 410 in the same volume of *Hansard*, he is reported as saying that he had written to the Prime Minister advising him formally and officially on behalf of the Government of Victoria that it is prepared to transfer the Victorian Railways to the Commonwealth. He continued—

> I have indicated to the Prime Minister my hope that he will express his willingness to enter into discussions with us—
>
> . . . . . .
>
> If the Commonwealth is not prepared to take over the railways, I can foreshadow that we will have to give the most serious consideration to a further attempt to have our case considered by the Commonwealth Grants Commission.

This was the Premier of Victoria talking about handing over the Victorian Railways to the Australian Government. The offer was made and retracted as quickly as it was made because the new Australian Government in Canberra was willing and able to take over the Victorian Railways and reduce the burden of its debt to Victoria.

In 1969, the previous year, the State Liberal Government criticized the Commonwealth Government in the Budget debate and said that all the ills of the State were caused by the policies and budgetary measures of the Australian Government. This was not

referring to an Australian Labor Government but an Australian Liberal-Country Party coalition Government. On that occasion the Premier of the day, Sir Henry Bolte, said—

> Nothing could illustrate more dramatically—and yet more simply—the wholly unsatisfactory financial position of the States as against the affluence of the Commonwealth. Nothing could underline with greater emphasis that this problem of State and Commonwealth financial relationships is the challenge of the 70s. This indeed is the great challenge to be faced up to and met during the course of this financial year 1969-70.

He continues to imply that because of the policies of the Australian Liberal-Country Party coalition Government the States could be faced with an increasing loss of powers to the Commonwealth centralist Government, and be left with little to do within a generation or so. That Government had not introduced the financial returns to the State which the present Australian Government has offered in the field of pre-school education, mental health and education. The former coalition Government was taking powers away from the States and was not prepared to give anything in return. The present Premier suggests that the current problems faced by the State are caused by the Australian Labor Government.

I again refer to Commonwealth-State financial relations which have been strained for many years. Victorian Premiers have criticized the Commonwealth Government because they felt that the States were not receiving the money to which they were entitled. On 27th February, 1970, an article in the Melbourne *Age* dealt with the comments of the then Premier, Sir Henry Bolte. It stated—

> "The States are being sold out for all time," Sir Henry said.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "If the Premiers have any regard for the sovereignty of the States they will remind themselves that they are being sold out for all time."

Those remarks were made, not about an Australian Labor Party Government but about a Liberal Party-Country Party coalition Government in Canberra. On 3rd February, 1969, the *Herald*, a paper not known for its pro-Labor views, stated—

> States want justice, says Bolte.
>
> Sir Henry said today: "If the House is pretty evenly divided they don't want enemies about."

Sir Henry was making the point that, if the Federal Parliament had fairly even numbers the States would achieve some of their objects.

> "My problems would be solved for a long time if Canberra carried out its responsibility to look after social services."

That is what a Liberal Party Premier said about the previous Federal Government. Since 1972 there has been a change in the character of the provision for the underprivileged in Australia. That is what Sir Henry Bolte said he wanted.

The article continued—

> "But they keep us on our knees meeting their responsibilities, and they give us a pittance towards responsibilities which are entirely State—hospitals, education, agriculture, water supply and housing."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Each time they horn in they usurp more power."
>
> "They give some sort of a handout with strings to it."

It was again a Liberal Party Premier and Treasurer speaking about a Liberal-Country Party coalition Government. A report in the *Age* on 1st January, 169, states—

> The Premier (Sir Henry Bolte) said yesterday the special meeting between the Prime Minister (Mr. Gorton) and State Premiers in March would be abortive unless the States received immediate financial assistance.

The Victorian Premier was complaining that Victoria was not receiving sufficient financial assistance from the Commonwealth and that State powers were being taken over by a centralist Government. Sir Henry was not receiving, as Treasurer, the unprecedented amounts of money from the Commonwealth for State purposes which the present Premier and Treasurer is receiving from the Australian Government.

The House owes a debt to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for asking the Premier and Treasurer

about the level of financial assistance flowing to the States from the Commonwealth. That money has enabled the Victorian Government to bring forward a Budget for the normal requirements of the State and to make certain changes which are desirable and necessary. Without the Commonwealth moneys this State could not provide those additional services.

The Budget refers to items of expenditure in certain areas, and I want to mention a couple. One is close to your heart, Mr. Speaker, the running of this Parliament. On occasions, other honorable members and I have referred to the conditions under which members work in this Parliament and the way in which they are expected to meet their responsibilities.

If the Government is sincere in its belief that the States have a role to play and that State Parliaments are necessary and in saying that it is fearful that no role will be left for State Parliament, it must be sincere about providing services for members of this Parliament. If the Government adopts that attitude, it should take responsible action to ensure that members of this Parliament have proper facilities to carry out their responsibilities. Otherwise it must give up its calls for State sovereignty. It must not say on the hustings that there is a need for State Parliaments and that they have a role to play and constitutional powers which must be administered for the benefit of Australia and the State unless it is prepared to provide these facilities for members of this Parliament.

Nothing is more farcical than for a member of Parliament, when working for his constituents and organizations within his electorate, to have to queue up like a patron at a football grand final to use the duplicating machine in the post office or to have to book and wait for telephone calls to the country. If the State Government believes it cannot afford to give members of this Parliament subscriber trunk dialling services, it must give up its thoughts about the role of State Parliaments and the need for them to continue as they are.

If a Government is not prepared to bring about a situation which allows members of Parliament to provide proper services to their constituents, as members of the Commonwealth Parliament and members of Parliaments in other States are able to do, it is failing to live up to its responsibilities. I understand that when the national Parliament met in this building an air-conditioning system operated and that the year it left here, or thereabouts, that system broke down. It has not been repaired or replaced. We have an archaic system of fans around this Chamber and an archaic system of heating. We have the most uncomfortable working conditions of any Parliament in Australia.

If we are sincere about the value of the job we do and the role we play in the community, we should look at those things which make working conditions not more enjoyable but bearable.

Because of the time they have available in Melbourne, country members have certain disadvantages in relation to telephone calls to the country and the amount of work which can be done by the typing pool. I ask the Government to give consideration to these matters, not just for members representing country electorates but for members generally.

Much credit has been given to the Australian Government for the massive infusion of money into education in Australia and particularly into Victoria. The Treasurer mentioned increased Public Works Department spending on Education Department facilities. But more thought needs to be given to one area of education and one level of spending which is perhaps the most neglected. This is the area of the education of the under-privileged, the students catered for by Psychology and Guidance Branch of the Education Department.

It is only in the last decade that many people have come to realize that those in our community who have not reached high levels of achievement have had poor opportunities within the primary schools and almost no opportunities within secondary schools. A lot of this lack of opportunity could have been overcome if adequate psychology and guidance services had been available in the early days. Today, the Psychology and Guidance Branch of the Education Department plays an important role in assisting children with learning difficulties, in assessing the dyslexic child at an early age and deciding what sort of remedial teaching is necessary to overcome the difficulties. The Government is failing in its duty if it neglects to make adequate financial provision for Psychology and Guidance Branch services.

An indication of the Government's failure is the administration within the Latrobe Valley which has been selected as an area for accelerated development. The area is administered by three separate sections of the Psychology and Guidance Branch. One area is serviced from South Melbourne, another area from Dandenong and a third area from Sale. Needless to say, the Sale administration is undertaken by a psychologist with one staff member and the centre's administration extends as far as the New South Wales border.

Clearly, there needs to be a proper regionalization of the branch's services. If the Government is regionalizing education administration within the State, the administration of the Psychology and Guidance Branch desperately needs examining. Its services in the Latrobe Valley should be administered from the one centre which ought to be located in the valley and not at South Melbourne, Dandenong or Sale, where one psychologist has had enormous responsibilities placed on him by this incompetent Government.

When honorable members have the opportunity of going through the Budget item by item in another debate, many of the matters that are vexing the minds of honorable members can be raised. In speaking against the second-reading motion on the Appropriation Bill and expressing my support for the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, I am attempting to demonstrate to the House and to the public at large that they ought not to take the word of the Treasurer or others Ministers when they say that the ills of the State are the fault of the Australian Government. The public and honorable members opposite should examine the Governments credibility and the credibility of some of the statements that have been made by so-called responsible State Ministers.

I am pleased that so many members of the Government party are present because I challenge them to consider seriously the statements that have been made by Ministers and by the Treasurer on the subject of inflation and about the non-existent powers of the Australian Government in dealing with many of the problems which are within the power of the Victorian Government to alleviate. I earnestly call upon members of the Government party to examine clearly the arguments submitted by the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and indeed by the Leader of the Country Party because, although the Country Party has indicated its support for the Budget, it has done so with tongue in cheek. Often, members of the corner party are ridiculed for sitting on the corner benches and sometimes voting with the Government and sometimes with the Opposition. It is tragic that on this occasion Country Party members have been fooled by the Treasurer's statements.

The people of Victoria are now realizing that many statements of Government policy by the Premier and Treasurer are simply not true

and that many of his statements about the ills of Victoria are not true. I feel sure that the Leader of the Country Party and the honorable member for Benambra also believe that the statements made by the Treasurer will bear closer examination. If the State is to progress and be responsible, members of the Government party, who continually claim that Victoria ought to continue as a State and that honorable members should not talk about centralism and so on, should closely examine the matters to which I have referred. The credibility of the Government is at stake and every honorable member should seriously consider voting against the Budget and at least demonstrating that they have not been fooled.

Mr. LACY (Ringwood): I wish to examine closely the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition when he resumed the debate on this Bill on 15th October. Essentially, the honorable member made three points which were more important than the other matters referred to. Firstly, he said that union-inspired wage demands did not contribute to inflation; secondly, that a national plan based on a consensus between the Commonwealth and the States was not needed as a weapon to combat inflation; and, thirdly, that he opposed Commonwealth legislation to guarantee the States a fixed proportion of income tax revenue.

I relate my remarks to the Budget speech delivered by the Treasurer and I intend to read a few passages commencing at page 5 of the printed speech. The Treasurer said, *inter alia*—

> Australia, however, can ill afford to see its Government in Canberra devoting so much of its energies to invading areas for which the States are responsible to their electors, especially when so much needs to be done to combat inflation and promote development. This calls for co-operation, not domination. Victoria has certainly offered full co-operation. We are prepared to pool our legislative powers and our administrative resources with the Commonwealth in pursuit of a national plan to combat inflation.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> If we are to implement together a sensible and coherent national plan, what is needed above all is a clear sense of direction, a positive anti-inflation strategy, and an evident intention to carry it out. It cannot be said that these exist at present.

Later, the Treasurer said that the States are willing to play their part in controlling inflation. The Treasurer went on to say—

> Or should we not be more concerned with the evident slump in economic activity and rapidly rising unemployment?

I wish to touch upon those points made in the Budget speech and the reactions from the Leader of the Opposition. Essentially, the Treasurer referred to two important matters—a national plan involving co-operation between the States and the Commonwealth, and the slump in economic activity and confidence and rapidly rising unemployment.

In debate, one needs to know what an opponent has to say on the major topics of the debate. The problem is that the Leader of the Opposition said nothing about one of those two matters. He said nothing about unemployment That makes the position rather difficult, but it is nevertheless worth making a point on that because in itself it is significant. I want to take that second point first in regard to unemployment or the slump in economic activity, because the speech of the Leader of the Opposition took up ten pages of *Hansard*, and in none of those pages is there to be found a reference to unemployment.

One ought to be fair. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Opposition spokesman for labour and industry, and the member for Brunswick West, did not make a substantial contribution on that subject. Indeed, I listened as much as I have been able to the speeches by the members of the Opposition, and I have not yet heard one comprehensive statement on the unemployment rate in this State and in this country. Why have we suddenly reached a stage in this Parliament where none of the Opposition members are saying anything about unemployment?

There are some serious facts to be absorbed by members of this House and serious facts to be noted by the public. I suggest they are these: That there are now 159,000 people, or 2·7 per cent of the work force unemployed; that 1,000 more people every day are put out of work; and that the Commonwealth Department of Labour and Industry has said that by March of next year, 280,000 people or 4·3 per cent of the work force will be unemployed. These are serious matters.

Mr. WILKES: Mr. Speaker, I draw attention to the state of the House.

A quorum was formed.

Mr. LACY: These facts are important. They are worth noting and they are worth speaking about because they concern human beings who are suffering seriously. I ask: why are these gentlemen saying nothing? Why are they silent? Why are they mute? Why are they dumb on this matter? They do not express concern for the workers that they suggest to us they represent; they do not criticize the Whitlam Government for its handling of the economy; they do not criticize the unions' wage demands; they do not advance one reason why this situation has developed, nor have they given one answer to this enormous problem. Of course, there are thousands—the situation is moving to hundreds of thousands of people—who are out of work or suffering as a result of it. It would seem that if there is a subject that needs to be talked about, and something that needs to be debated in this House, it is unemployment.

In 1972, when the unemployment rate was affecting only half this number of people, the same members of the Opposition were clogging up the pages and volumes of *Hansard* with their speeches criticizing the Government of the day for its handling of this problem and the unemployment rate. There must be some reason for this and I want to ask why they are now so silent about these things. What has happened to the much publicized social conscience of the members of the Opposition? What has happened to the much advertised social conscience thrown across this House to members of the Government party? Why are the members of the Opposition not speaking out now on this subject?

I want to refer members of the Opposition to a very serious comment made by Lord Denning, which is worth noting. He said—

> Silence is not an option when things are ill done.

It was not an option in 1972 and it is not an option today. Let the members of the Opposition, with their social consciences, stand up and be counted, let them stand up and show the people of this State that they do care about the social problems, and let the members of the Opposition who represent the workers speak. I understand their problems. I understand the bind that they are in. The number of alternative explanations for this social problem has now narrowed down to two. A week ago there were six; today there are only two. Either this unemployment prevails as a direct result of the Whitlam Government's policies, or it prevails as a result of the wage demands of the unions. Alternatively, it could be a combination of both. On this point the Leader of the Opposition did have something to say, and I refer briefly to his comments on page 1053 of *Hansard* on 15th October, 1974, as follows—

> The first view that runs through the Liberal party, as a national party, is that the biggest single contribution towards inflation is union-inspired wage increases. It has been put many times and in many ways, not merely by the Federal Leader of the Opposition but also by the Victorian Minister of Labour and Industry. It is expressed in varying degrees of "union bashing" which distorts out of all proportion the contribution that increases in wages and salaries produced by union action make in the over-all inflationary price spiral.

In that comment the Leader of the Opposition came close indeed to saying that the wage demands of the unions do contribute to inflation; very close, but not quite. He reached

the brink, saw the chasm, and maybe at that moment he had a vision in which he saw the President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions standing there with his union bosses, and saying, "Come over that brink and you have had it". I am glad to see the Leader of the Opposition has woken up. Perhaps it was from another vision.

The Leader of the Opposition moved back from the brink. He would not quite say it. He stepped back from that point, but the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer were not frightened to move up to the brink and to step over it. Indeed, that is precisely what they did. They did not take such fright; they diagnosed the problem. It was eighteen months too late to do anything about it, if it was going to have any effect on the poor unemployed people in this State. Nevertheless, over the week-end they recognized the problem and have spoken out about it. I refer briefly to what they said. In the *Age* of 22nd October the Prime Minister is reported as having said—

> There should be no doubt that this severe inflation will continue if there are excessive wage claims. Wage claims in the coming months will determine whether the rate of inflation will be reduced.

On page 5 of the same paper, the Prime Minister is reported as having said—

> It is in the interests of all workers to refrain from making unreasonable wage demands because—let me be frank—inflation costs jobs.

Similarly over the week-end, Mr. Crean has come out and spoken about this matter. He has not moved back from the brink of the chasm. He has spoken out well, and as reported in the *Age* of 21st October, he said—

> If excessive wage claims were pressed in present circumstances, one man's large pay packet will become another man's job.
>
> The major causes of these increases in the past year were not external factors, but demand and cost pressures in 1973.

Late as it is, these two gentlemen have finally made their decision. They have recognized one of the major causes of inflation and unemployment in this country. Therefore, they must now agree with the actions taken by the Victorian Premier in instituting a programme of wage restraint. They have agreed with the warning which he has issued that, if wage restraint is not put into practice, serious social problems will occur in this country. The Premier took action in regard to the salaries of members of Parliament, senior public servants, and judges and called for restraint from unions in their demands. Mr. Whitlam and Mr. Crean are now on the record; they agree with him, but the Leader of the Opposition has not gone on the record. He has said nothing about this matter. What is his view? It is important for the people of Victoria to know what the alternative Premier would have to say on this subject, and he should not remain silent on the issue.

The honorable member for Reservoir, the Opposition spokesman for labour and industry, had nothing to say about the matter, and neither did the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, nor any other member of the Opposition. The only reference to the subject has been made by Government supporters. All that has been heard from these gentlemen with social consciences is their carping criticisms of the Premier's actions and words. Why is the Leader of the Opposition mute? Why is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition dumb on this issue and why is the Opposition spokesman on labour and industry silent? That is the situation and those honorable members do not deny it. These same members are quick to criticize the procedures, forms and traditions of this House. They are quick to call this House some sort of Disneyland, but they do not use the procedures and traditions of the House to put forward an effective voice on the most serious social problem that is affecting this country. That requires some consideration by honorable members opposite.

Why are they silent? It is because they are Socialists. I do not say this; they say it themselves as a designation of their political philosophy. They are bound to the objective of the democratic socialization of the means of production and exchange, as expressed in the Blackburn clause of 1921 which is in their platform. They are bound to that and they stick to it. Their objective is to change the free enterprise system of this nation into a Socialist one. I suggest that they are pursuing that objective of the socialization of Australia with their silence on this issue. They would not dare blame the unemployment rate on the unions' wage claims, and they would not dare blame the inflation rate on the Whitlam Government, because they need both. When it is all boiled down, what is a few hundred thousand people unemployed in the face of the objective of socializing this nation? The silence of members of the Opposition proves that they do not think it means anything.

Similarly, the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues deliberately and clearly state that they do not want consensus on a national plan to be achieved. I quote the words of the Leader of the Opposition recorded at page 1054 of *Hansard*. He said, referring to me in the first instance—

> ... but he should not engage in the rank political hypocrisy of saying that a type of Commonwealth consensus is needed.

At the end of the page the Leader of the Opposition said—

> The implication is that if the Prime Minister or anyone else will talk to them,

presumably the Victorian Government—

> agreement can be reached and some type of national plan formulated.

The Leader of the Opposition criticized the Premier for calling for a national plan and for seeking a conference of the Commonwealth, States, employers and employees. He criticized the Premier for seeking to solve the inflation and unemployment problems by consensus. Why does he object to consensus? Why has consensus suddenly become a nasty thing? Why should it be ruled out as a means of solving the problems of this country? Firstly, because as true Socialists the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues do not want to solve these problems. Secondly, because Socialism is a modified form of Marxism dressed up in democratic clothes and given a veneer of respectability for the purpose of bringing about a conflict in a free enterprise society. It is a sugar-coated pill; the coating is sweet but the pill is bitter. Socialism as a derivative of Marxism is based on Hegel's dialectic.

Mr. MUTTON (Coburg): Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. For the past half hour honorable members have been listening to a contribution to the debate which has nothing to do with State politics. The honorable member for Ringwood has embarked on a heresy hunt concerning Socialism. He should be called to order and told to debate the subject-matter before the Chair.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. LACY (Ringwood): The philosophy of Hegel encourages the conflict strategy. It says to any political party which wants to adopt this fine point of philosophy that social change will not be brought about in any society by consensus or in a society which is in harmony, but only by encouraging conflict. For this reason consensus is anathema to the Leader of the Opposition, because as a Socialist he believes that the only way to change society is by conflict. Consequently, when the Treasurer said at page 6 of the Budget speech that he is looking to a national plan to combat inflation and is looking to consensus between the States, the Commonwealth, employers and employees, the Leader of the Opposition must say, "No, we cannot have consensus because it is against the Socialist objective of creating conflict in society".

Although the Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research referred in its current review to a very real possibility of developing hyper-inflation and the risk of inflation moving completely out of control in 1975 and the urgent need for a national consensus in the face of economic threat, the Leader of the Opposition says, " No, we cannot have consensus, we must have conflict."

It is interesting to note that in a statement in the *Age* yesterday, Mr. Whitlam said—

> We now expect the Labor movement in its industrial wing to respond to the Government's call and co-operate in a community-wide effort to stop inflation.

Once again, the Leader of the Opposition is mute ; he has nothing to say about that because now it is Mr. Whitlam who has called for co-operation and consensus.

Similarly, Mr. Dunstan, the Premier of South Australia, stated on national television on Tuesday night that he has a series of propositions, which are supported by all the State Premiers, which he wants to put to the Prime Minister for joint State-Commonwealth action. There is silence again, and the Leader of the Opposition is mute in the face of such support for consensus. While other Labor leaders speak, the Leader of the Opposition says nothing because he is opposed to consensus. He is opposed to a harmonious society because his Socialist philosophy cannot take only that sort of environment.

The third point which the Leader of the Opposition made and with which I now wish to deal, is to be found on page 1057 of *Hansard* where, during the debate on this Bill, the Leader of the Opposition is reported as having said—

> The Premier and Treasurer might at this stage, in the political desperation of his Federal Leader, get his colleague's arm up his back and obtain a statement from him that the States ought to be compensated on the basis of a specified alternative income tax.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> There is nothing new about that form of taxation. It was first canvassed by Sir Henry Bolte.

At that stage, I interjected and said—

> But do you agree with that proposal?

The answer of the Leader of the Opposition was—

> No, I do not agree with that proposal. I think it would not work.

That was his comment. What a remarkable statement coming from the man who presents himself to the people of this State as the alternative Premier!

The Leader of the Opposition is opposed to this State receiving even an adequate proportion of the only form of taxation which is equitably applied to the wage structure throughout the country. It is the only form of taxation which hits the rich without affecting the poor. In effect, the Leader of the Opposition is saying, " No, we don't want that ; what we need to look for is other alternative forms of taxation in the State field ". This, then, is the tax which redistributes wealth from the rich to the poor, but, as reported at page 1058 of *Hansard*, the Leader of the Opposition is saying that we should be looking for something else. He opposes the only effective form of taxation which grows according to the wealth of the community—the only form of taxation which can guarantee the independence of the State from economic domination by the Commonwealth.

The Leader of the Opposition opposes the only form of taxation which will allow this State to fulfil the tremendous range of social policies outlined by the Treasurer in his Budget speech. He objects to the only form of taxation which would make it possible for this State to totally fulfil all the objectives already laid down in the fields of education, child care, transport and decentralization. He rejects out of hand a legislative proposal which would guarantee that this State would be economically viable and

that this Parliament would be democratically meaningful into the 1980s and beyond.

Why does the Leader of the Opposition reject that form of taxation? He does so because, to achieve national Socialism, he needs to abolish the States and Federalism. What the Leader of the Opposition wants is a centralist economy—one which is dominated from Canberra.

I congratulate the Treasurer on his sound, sane and sensible analysis of the economic situation which is prevalent in this State and nation. I also commend him for continuing to pursue the undertakings and introducing the initiatives that he promised the electors in May, 1973. I am confident that those objectives will be fulfilled before May, 1976. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. JONES (Melbourne), the debate was adjourned.

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

PAY-ROLL TAX BILL.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill, which was foreshadowed when the Pay-roll Tax (Rate) Bill 1974 was introduced, is designed to close a loophole in the Pay-roll Tax Act, the use of which is becoming increasingly widespread and is causing a significant loss of revenue.

The Pay-roll Tax Act has always recognized individuals, separate companies and separate partnerships as separate employers for the purposes of pay-roll tax. This situation existed when pay-roll tax was a Commonwealth tax and did not alter when it became a State tax.

The Act contains a general exemption from tax for the first $20,800 of wages paid by an employer in a year. At a rate of 5 per cent this represents an annual pay-roll tax benefit of $1,040.

The exemption was designed for the benefit of the small business man, but it is being exploited by larger organizations to reduce their pay-roll tax liability and, in some cases, to avoid the tax altogether.

Because every employer is entitled to claim the general exemption, an organization which chooses to operate, for example, through two subsidiary companies can obtain twice the pay-roll tax exemption that can be obtained by an organization operating through one company with two branch offices. Again, a partnership of three individuals which organizes its operations so that the staff are employed by each partner and additional partnerships of two persons can obtain seven times the exemption of $20,800 under the Act, that is, an effective exemption of $145,600 representing a tax saving of $7,280.

As the rate of pay-roll tax has risen, some organizations have taken advantage of this aspect of the legislation to create additional employers, in the form of either additional companies, or partnerships between individuals or between companies, to avoid pay-roll tax.

While there are obviously new companies formed on a bona-fide basis as part of the normal development of an organization, the Government has become aware of specific cases of action taken to avoid pay-roll tax by the splitting of one organization into a number of parts, each claiming a general exemption. In one instance, an organization threatened with proceedings for the recovery of unpaid tax, paid the outstanding tax and notified the commissioner that it had restructured and registered 100 new companies, none of which would pay wages in excess of $20,800 per annum. At current tax rates this action involves a loss of revenue to the State of $104,000 per annum. Again, other instances of organizations creating large numbers of employers within the organization have come to the Government's notice. Perhaps the most outstanding case

is one organization which would appear to have in excess of 1,000 "employers", and perhaps as many as 1,700. In this case the loss of revenue to the State is between $1 million and $1·7 million a year.

In many cases, "employers" are indeed only nominal employers, inserted into the structure of the organization for the purpose of avoiding pay-roll tax. The situation is one where the whole objective of the general exemption in the Act is being subverted. It was designed to help the small businessman; it is being used by large organizations to reduce their pay-roll tax liability. This is a situation which the Government cannot allow to continue both because of the implications it has for the State's revenue, and on grounds of equity.

The methods which have been used to create nominal "employers", both through the creation of companies and through partnership operations, are extremely complex and varied. As a consequence, the Bill now before the House is, of necessity, of a technical nature. The problem is not confined to Victoria, and this legislation has been prepared after consultation with other State taxing authorities, especially in New South Wales. The New South Wales Government has foreshadowed appropriate legislation to cover the situation at any early date.

The underlying principle of the legislation is that related and associated employers will be grouped together for the purposes of pay-roll tax, and will be allowed only the one $20,800 exemption to which they would be entitled as one employer.

In the case of companies, those that are related companies for the purposes of the Companies Act—that is, in a holding company—subsidiary company relationship—are to be treated as a group for the purposes of pay-roll tax. In addition, a further set of six tests is included in the legislation to determine whether other companies are related for the purposes of the Pay-roll Tax Act and therefore grouped together. These tests cover the situation, for example, where two companies that are not subsidiaries of another company, or are not related in a subsidiary-holding company relationship, are nevertheless both under the same control or direction. The tests in the Bill for this purpose are based on those sections of the Companies Act which determine for the purposes of that Act whether or not companies are to be regarded as associated companies.

The Bill provides an exception for companies which, though under the same control or direction, are not related companies in terms of the Companies Act, and where the commissioner is satisfied that they are not carrying on business with an intention either directly or indirectly of avoiding pay-roll tax.

For employers other than companies, three tests are contained in the Bill which are directed towards the activities of the employees. In broad terms the tests cover situations where the employees of an employer are performing duties for a business carried on by the employer and another person, or for a business carried on by another person, or where in respect of the employment or the performance of duties by one or more of his employees an employer has an agreement or arrangement with an associate relating to his trade, business or profession. In these cases, the employer and the other person wil form a group for the purposes of pay-roll tax and be entitled to only one general exemption.

Again, in these cases, exceptions are provided where the commissioner is satisfied that the trade, business or profession of the employer and of the other person are carried on independently and not with an intention of avoiding pay-roll tax. Once a group has been established for the purpose of pay-roll tax, the members of the group will be free to nominate one member of the group to receive

the general exemption on behalf of the group. The group will have the choice of continuing its present administrative arrangements whereby individual members of the group submit separate pay-roll tax returns to the commissioner, or of submitting one consolidated return on behalf of all the members of the group.

As I have explained, this legislation is, of necessity, complex, and an explanatory memorandum has been circulated for the information of honorable members. I wish, however, to add two things: Firstly, the circumstances which have resulted in this Bill have been under consideration for some time and there have been interstate discussions at officer level because of the common problems involved. The Government believes the legislation now before the House represents the most effective and equitable solution to the problem.

Secondly, in a number of places throughout the legislation a discretion is given to the Commissioner of Pay-roll Tax. The Government has chosen this course after very careful consideration of the alternatives available. It concluded that because of the nature of the legislation a commissioner's discretion is warranted in order to ensure effective and equitable operation of the legislation.

When this legislation was foreshadowed it was announced that the new provisions would operate as from 1st October. At that stage it was envisaged that the legislation would be introduced before that date. However, the finalizing of the legislation to ensure its operation on an equitable basis has taken a little longer than was expected. In view of this the new provisions are now designed to operate in respect of wages paid or payable on or after 1st November, 1974.

The amount of additional revenue which this Bill is expected to provide could be significant, but until the details of cases have been analysed by the commissioner no precise estimate can be made. For budgetary purposes an amount of $2 million was included in the estimates for 1974-75.

Five additional matters are covered in this Bill. Firstly, provision is included in clause 2(2) to change the definition of wages to exclude amounts paid to employees as allowances for prescribed travelling or accommodation expenses. The type of allowances contemplated are travelling allowances paid on a mileage basis and accommodation allowances paid on a time basis. As the legislation stands at present, payments for such purposes are subject to pay-roll tax unless they are exact reimbursements of expenses incurred. This situation is a matter which has been brought to the Government's attention by the Taxpayers Association of Victoria.

The change in the definition of taxable wages to exclude travelling and accommodation allowances marks a departure from the uniform definition of wages adopted throughout Australia for the purposes of pay-roll tax. This new provision will not be proclaimed to come into operation until further discussions are held with the other States.

Secondly, provision is made in clause 3 to allow the commissioner to sue for the recovery of tax in a Magistrates Court. This will be of benefit to all concerned where the amount is small. The provisions in the Bill for this purpose are modelled on those already existing in the Land Tax Act.

Thirdly, clause 4 increases the penalty in respect of unpaid tax from a rate of 10 per cent per annum to 20 per cent per annum with a minimum penalty of $5. This change is now necessary to ensure prompt collection of revenue. Under present interest rates 10 per cent is hardly a penalty.

Fourthly, clause 5 provides for an administrative change so that an Assistant Comptroller of Stamps as

well as a Deputy Comptroller of Stamps is recognized for the purposes of the Pay-roll Tax Act.

Fifthly, the Bill also includes an amendment to section 292 of the Companies Act to provide that in a liquidation, pay-roll tax, the major source of State taxation revenue, will stand with income tax, land tax, and municipal rates ahead of unsecured creditors.

The Government is conscious that with the present exemption level many businesses previously exempt are being brought into the pay-roll tax field. We are looking into this matter with a view to affording some relief and, as I have already indicated to the House, we will be seeking consultation with the other States in view of the need for uniformity. One of the conditions which would make it possible to review the exemption level is to ensure that the larger taxpayers pay their fair share of tax. That is the purpose of this Bill. I commend it to the House.

On the motion of Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, November 6.

LAND (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands): I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It makes four amendments to the Land Act 1958. Firstly, the Bill inserts a new section—22F—in the Land Act to provide that the Minister of Lands, on the recommendation of the Minister for Conservation, may purchase any land which he considers should be reserved for conservation purposes.

The Land Conservation Council is investigating all the public land of the State having regard to the present and future needs of the people in relation to recreation and the preservation and conservation of our heritage.

With so much of the State already alienated there is little need to say that there are areas of alienated land which should also be conserved for the benefit of posterity. There have been several cases where citizens have offered their land for purchase by the Crown for those purposes. It is considered that the Minister should have the statutory power to purchase by agreement any land which should be reserved for any conservation purpose. At the same time the power compulsorily to acquire is needed to deal with those cases where the preservation or conservation of the lands is of national importance but purchase by agreement cannot be obtained.

Compulsory acquisition is used only as a final resort, but where there is danger of the extinction of any native bird or animal, or of the destruction of an area of natural beauty or historical significance, the Government should surely be able to acquire lands to prevent such a catastrophe. Indeed, if any Government did not take such action it would be failing in its duty to the people. Any holders of lands so compulsorily acquired are entitled to fair and reasonable compensation, and the provisions of the Lands Compensation Act and the Valuation of Land Act are incorporated with the new section of the Land Act.

In addition to the purchase of land the section provides for the purchase of easements or rights, such as rights of access, in respect of conservation reserves. Any lands purchased or acquired under the section will be deemed to be temporarily reserved under the Land Act for the appropriate public purpose.

The Game Act 1958 and the National Parks Act 1970 made provisions for the purchase or acquisition of any alienated lands for the preservation of wildlife or national parks respectively. These provisions will be omitted from any re-enactments of those two statutes. The

purchase of lands for all conservation purposes will thus be consolidated in the Land Act.

Secondly, the Bill amends section 149 of the principal Act in respect of the fee payable for an Apiary Occupation Right. The fee of $2.50, as provided in that section, has remained unaltered since the power to grant such rights was enacted in 1941. It is proposed that the fee will be determined by the Minister, having regard to the value of the occupation from time to time.

The maximum fee that may be so determined has, however, been set at $10. The Lands Department is desirous of bringing the fee into line with that adopted by agreement between the authorities which are empowered to grant such rights.

Thirdly, the Bill inserts a new section 224A. into the Land Act. This section will provide that the Treasurer may, in certain circumstances, guarantee a loan to a lessee of a Crown reserve for the purpose of improving public amenities on the leased land.

Honorable members will be aware that over the past decade or so several Acts have been passed which authorize committees of management to lease for the purposes of sport or recreation, portions of the respective reserves under their control. Those Acts which pertain to the grounds used by Victorian Football League teams are a typical example.

There are such lessees which propose to expend large sums of money on the provision of better public spectator facilities or other public amenities and which moneys will, in the main, be raised by way of loan from private sources. Although the lessees will be responsible for the servicing and amortization of the loans, they have requested that the Government guarantee the repayments. As any buildings or improvements will be erected on Crown land, they will virtually be Crown property and it is reasonable that the Government should provide the guarantees.

It is intended that any guarantee will only be given where the lessee is a corporate body, is constituted with the basic object of promoting sport or recreation, and where the loan is for the purpose of providing amenities for the public. It is also intended that the provisions of the section will not apply where the amount of any loan is less than $100,000. Any lessee which proposed to raise a loan for a similar project but of a much lesser amount repayable over a short term could achieve Government guarantee by forming a community advancement society under the provisions of the Co-operation Act.

Finally, the Bill inserts a new section 362A. in the principal Act. The new section will provide that certain conditions in Crown grants, commonly called easement conditions, may be declared null and void. These conditions would generally be in favour of such authorities as the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, the State Electricity Commission or a municipality, permitting the authority to carry out such works as water channels, transmission lines or sewers or drains respectively.

Any Crown grants containing such a condition would be mainly in respect of rural lands, particularly in respect of blocks on former closer settlement estates. The position has naturally arisen where the rights contained in the condition have been abandoned by the works becoming redundant or where the authority is desirous of relocating its works through any granted lands. The absence of any statutory provision to have the obsolete condition expunged from a Crown grant has, in some cases, caused embarrassment to an authority in its negotiations with a landholder for the creation of an easement in a new location. Moreover, it is holding up subdivision or development in respect of certain lands.

The new section includes provision for the payment to the Crown of such monetary consideration, if any, as the Governor in Council may determine.

In many instances, particularly where rural land is concerned, it is unlikely that the existence of the easement condition would have been the cause of any reduction in the purchase price actually received by the Crown at the time of the grant. In such cases it may well be appropriate for any expunction of the condition to be effected without any monetary consideration other than the prescribed fee.

However, there will be some occasions where the nature of the condition may have seriously restricted the potential use of the land —for example, where electricity transmission lines would interfere with siting of buildings on an urban allotment. In these circumstances it is likely that the purchase price would have been reduced because of this. It would accordingly be reasonable to require the present owner to pay a further monetary consideration representing the enhancement in value of the land if the easement condition is removed.

There will also be another category where the right to construct works was acquired by an authority when the land was held in leasehold estate. Compensation would have been paid by that authority to the lessee, but no variation would have been made to the purchase money payable to the Crown.

In this instance it would obviously not be fitting for the Crown to require further monetary consideration for the expunction of the condition. In all cases the consent of the relevant works authority would of course be a prerequisite to any submission to have such a condition in a grant declared void. 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 Wednesday, November 6.

ADJOURNMENT.

GIPPSLAND LAND UTILIZATION PROJECT — HONORARY PROBATION OFFICERS—LICENSED CLUBS—STREET LIGHTING AT BENDIGO.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education) : I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell) : Yesterday I asked the Premier a question regarding land utilization projects in the Latrobe Valley, Gippsland, or anywhere else in Victoria. In his answer the Premier referred to an article in yesterday's *Age* newspaper about the establishment of a wood-chip industry in Gippsland.

I directed a further question to the Premier pointing out that I had not asked about a wood-chip industry but about a land utilization project. I asked whether the Premier had had discussions with Japanese interests on the matter. Part of the Premier's answer to the first question indicated that he had not met or spoken with any Japanese interests. The Premier said that the second question was incomprehensible and suggested that it be placed on the Notice Paper.

I have subsequently had an opportunity of checking with a number of people. I was concerned, firstly, that my question was not answered and, secondly, that the question I asked was being confused with an *Age* article about a wood-chip industry. I was able to ascertain from a Mr. Niyakawa, the Japanese Consul in Melbourne, that Mr. Ishi who, I understand, is the Deputy Prime Minister of Japan, the Japanese Consul in Melbourne, and Mrs. Ishi, the wife of the Deputy Prime Minister of Japan, met with the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture at approximately 4.30 p.m. on 16th October.

I accept the Premier's reply that perhaps they had not talked about a wood-chip industry. I also understand that the Minister of Agriculture and representatives of a Japanese firm visited Gippsland to look at certain areas of land. I find it hard to accept the proposition that that visit was not referred to when these gentlemen met the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture in his office at 4.30 p.m. on 16th October.

As I have indicated, it was firstly a question of the Premier saying he did not understand the question I asked and confusing it with the establishment of a wood-chip industry and, secondly, a question of the Premier saying that he had never met any Japanese interests when the Japanese Consul in Melbourne is saying that he did. I ask the Premier whether the Japanese Consul in Melbourne has misinformed me, whether the Premier was incorrect, or whether a more serious charge should be levelled — that the honorable gentleman has misinformed the House.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne): I direct this matter to the attention of the Treasurer. Last year the Honorary Probation Officers Association applied for a travelling allowance for the work they do on behalf of the Social Welfare Department. The application was referred to the Treasurer in July, 1973. The 800 active honorary probation officers in Victoria, on whom the service depends, receive no allowance for telephone calls. The Social Welfare Department will not accept reverse charge calls from the country, and a country probation officer can spend in excess of $100 on telephone calls. These honorary officers receive no travelling allowance and no allowance for postage. They receive no honorarium. Because they are not paid they cannot claim tax deductions on equipment, plant or motor vehicles.

They perform valuable work which receives the recognition of the State Government and they suggest that their travelling expenses should be paid. I would go further and suggest that their telephone expenses should also be paid, or that some arrangement be worked out whereby the Government makes a contribution to the cost of the work they perform. If the sum of $100 a year were paid for each of the 800 honorary probation officers, that would cost $80,000 a year. The contribution they make to the work of the Social Welfare Department is worth much more.

In the metropolitan area travelling expenses might not be so much, but in the country an officer could travel hundreds of miles. Many have between six or twelve cases at any given time.

The matter has been allowed to drag on since July, 1973. It would have been better to give them a decent, " No ", fifteen months ago, but I hope, instead, it will be an honourable, " Yes ". I ask the Treasurer to do something about this as soon as possible.

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West): I direct certain aspects of the activities of the Liquor Control Commission to the attention of the Chief Secretary. I have received complaints from a number of licensed clubs in the electorate of Brunswick West and I understand that other honorable members have received similar complaints. The clubs have been under some pressure from the commission. I direct these matters to the attention of the Chief Secretary so that he can determine whether action should be taken to change the attitude of the commission.

The first matter is the restriction on the number of members which clubs may have. Like many other honorable members, I believe the restriction is unnecessary. The best check on membership is the number a club can cope with and the making of democratic decisions by its members is the best way to determine that.

The second matter is that there has been pressure on certain clubs to restrict the use of their facilities by associations of which their members

are part. Both the Brunswick Club and the Brunswick Returned Services League Club frequently hold functions for other organizations in the area, and it has been suggested to them that these should not be held as they have been in the past.

The third matter is that some clubs have been forced to sign a declaration that they will abide by a certain set of prices before being allowed to make changes in their constitution. The declaration has been held over the heads of clubs to ensure that they go along with a price-fixing arrangement.

These are serious matters. The licensed clubs of Victoria are generally extremely well run. In my opinion they are better run than many hotels, particularly in the control of liquor. Such restrictions as having to be parties to a price-fixing agreement are detrimental to the clubs.

Mr. McCLURE (Bendigo): I raise a matter concerning an application by the Bendigo City Council for improved street lighting on the Midland Highway from Baxter Street to the northern boundary of the city. Today, I received from the Minister for Fuel and Power an answer to a question on notice which caused me much concern.

It is almost five years since the Bendigo City Council first sought improved street lighting in the area and it took almost two years for the State Electricity Commission to consider the first application. At that time, there was a change in the arrangement whereby costs would be shared. Accordingly, the Bendigo City Council put in a further application in January, 1972, which is almost three years ago.

Today, I have been advised that the application has not been referred to the Street Lighting Committee because the design of the proposed installation has not yet been completed as it is dependent on the design of future road improvements. On 9th May this year, the Country Roads Board approved the lighting installation on the Midland Highway in principle and requested the State Electricity Commission to prepare the necessary design after consultation with the board's divisional engineer. The board has indicated to the commission that it will be six to twelve months before the required information is available to enable the design to be undertaken.

I am particularly concerned because back in 1972 a proposal to continue the operation of a section of the Bendigo tramway service was vigorously opposed by the Country Roads Board. A major plank in the board's opposition was that the street involved, which is part of the Midland Highway, was in such desperate need of reconstruction that it could not last a further twelve months without being completely ripped up. That was almost three years ago, and the Country Roads Board has not even set about the elementary design.

In the provision of street lighting the only elements of street design that need to be given are the distances that the kerbs will be offset from the building line and the vertical alignment of those kerbs; it is not a terribly difficult engineering assignment. I should not like to suggest that the Country Roads Board is still vigorously opposing the successful tourist tramway in Bendigo and is determined to stamp it out if possible. I hope that is not the reason for the Country Roads Board's delay in this matter.

I ask the Minister of Transport to follow up the matter with the board without delay to ensure that the information is provided to the State Electricity Commission to enable it to design improvements to this section of street lighting. It is no consolation to think that recently a child who was killed at night on the highway could well be alive if there had been proper street lighting.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The honorable member for Morwell raised a matter which he

mentioned yesterday. The main difficulty is the honorable member's apparent inability to ask a simple question simply. In his question yesterday he referred to new forest resources.

Mr. AMOS: Land, not forest.

Mr. HAMER: It was reported as forest resources by *Hansard*.

Mr. AMOS: I have checked it on the tape recorder, and I referred to land.

Mr. HAMER: In that case, I must have misheard the honorable member, as did the *Hansard* reporter. It was somewhat natural because of a report in the newspaper of the same day referring to a wood-chip industry on 10,000 acres in the honorable member's electorate and a report that I was supposed to have had some conversations with Japanese industrialists about it. The whole thing is pure imagination and, as I said, I have had no conversations with Japanese interests on any wood-chip industry at Morwell or anywhere else. I hope that is quite clear.

The second question which the honorable member raised during question time related to a conversation about a land resources policy in which discussions were supposed to have been held with an unnamed Minister. I asked the honorable member to give particulars and to place a question on notice, which I would answer. I am still unaware of what the honorable member refers to, but he did mention the name of a Japanese called Mr. Ishi.

Mr. Ishi is a member of the Japanese Diet and I saw him at the request of the Institute of Foreign Affairs as he was visiting this State and wanted to pay me a courtesy call. Mr. Ishi was accompanied by the Japanese Consul-General and discussed all manner of things connected with Japanese trade and Japanese interests in Victoria. He mentioned that he was indirectly interested, as I understand it, in a feed lot project near Sale. He did not go into details and I did not inquire because he was with me for only a comparatively short time and it was a courtesy visit. I hope I have set the record straight. If the honorable member wants any more information, he can put a question on notice and I will answer it.

The honorable member for Melbourne referred to allowances for honorary probation officers. I have not seen the application to which he referred but I will certainly look into it. If it is possible to provide allowances for travelling, telephone and other expenses on an equitable basis, which can be reasonably controlled, I shall be glad to consider it.

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): Three matters concerning the Liquor Control Commission's responsibility with regard to licensed clubs were raised by the honorable member for Brunswick West. I suppose every honorable member has received representations from licensed clubs within his electorate concerning the operations of clubs and the functions of the Liquor Control Commillion under the Act and the commission's responsibilities for clubs as laid down by the Act.

I am in the process of examining the propositions placed before me by honorable members concerning the three matters raised by the honorable member for Brunswick West: A restriction on the number of members; a restriction on functions in clubs by charitable organizations; and the important aspect concerning the responsibility of the commission and the Licensed Clubs Association of Victoria with regard to the operations of the Commonwealth Restrictive Trade Practices legislation. I am not in a position to make a concrete statement on the matter. It is a matter of Government policy and the Government is looking at the Act and its operation.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport) I have taken note of what the honorable member for Bendigo

had to say about street lighting in Bendigo. I will investigate the position and advise the honorable member in due course.

The honorable member expressed the hope that the Country Roads Board would not frustrate the use of trams in Bendigo. I merely comment that retention of the trams in Bendigo is a matter of Government policy and even if the board wanted to frustrate it, it would not be able to do so.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.24 *p.m.*

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

The following answers to questions on notice were circulated—

SCORESBY PRIMARY SCHOOL.

(Question No. 311)

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What is the current enrolment of Scoresby Primary School?

2. What are the expected enrolments in 1975 and 1976?

3. When the present school buildings were constructed?

4. Why the school was withdrawn from the 1973–74 building programme?

5. When it is expected that the school will be rebuilt?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. Enrolment 23rd October, 1974 271

2. Anticipated enrolment 1975 320
Anticipated enrolment 1976 372

3.

Original school building constructed	1872
Bristol building constructed	1950
Addition to the Bristol constructed	1963
Light timber class-room block constructed	1965

4. The replacement of the Scoresby Primary School was delayed temporarily because of the totally inadequate loan funds made available by the Commonwealth Government to Victoria in June this year.

5. It is expected that a contract will be let shortly for the construction of the new school.

BENDIGO STREET LIGHTING.

(Question No. 325)

Mr. McCLURE (Bendigo) asked the Minister for Fuel and Power—

In respect of an application by Bendigo City Council for improved street lighting on the Midland Highway north of Baxter Street to the city boundary—

1. When the application was received?

2. When the application was referred to the Street Lighting Committee?

3. When approval was granted?

4. When the installation work will be commenced and what is the estimated date of completion?

5. Whether other lighting projects approved after the date of the approval of the Bendigo application have been completed and are now in operation; if so, which projects?

6. What is the reason for the delay in proceeding with the Bendigo installation?

7. Whether he is aware of a recent fatal accident which occurred at night on this section of highway?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): The answer is—

1. An application from the Bendigo City Council to have the cost of a proposed new lighting installation on the Midland Highway for a length of 2·7 miles between Baxter Street and Buckland Street shared on the basis of one-third Country Roads Board, one-third State Electricity Commission and one-third council was received by the Country Roads Board in January, 1972.

2. The application has not yet been referred to the Street Lighting Committee because the design of the proposed installation has not yet been completed as it is dependent on the design of future road improvements. As soon as the design of the lighting installation has been completed the application will be forwarded by the Country Roads Board to the Street Lighting Committee for consideration to the sharing of costs.

3. The Street Lighting Committee has not yet approved the installation for cost sharing purposes.

4. Until the design is completed no estimated date of completion of the installation can be given.

5. Since the receipt of the application in question, lighting schemes have been installed in Bendigo city at the intersections of the McIvor Highway with Chapel Street and Lyttleton Street. The Country Roads Board has also provided information to the

State Electricity Commission to enable lighting schemes to be designed for the Calder Highway along Barnard Street and from Barnard Street to the Loddon Valley Highway, together with the Loddon Valley Highway from Creeth Street to McGowan Street.

6. Because of the many initial applications received from councils throughout the State to have the existing and proposed street lighting schemes shared in accordance with the provisions of the Country Roads Act it was necessary to establish priorities for processing the applications. To give early financial assistance to municipal councils applications for existing installations were given first priority and proposed new installations which had been designed by the State Electricity Commission were given second priority. The application from Bendigo City Council in respect of the Midland Highway was for a new lighting scheme for which design had not commenced and it was therefore given a lower priority.

On 9th May, 1974 the Country Roads Board approved the lighting installation on the Midland Highway in principle and requested the State Electricity Commission to prepare the necessary design after consultation with the board's divisional engineer. However, as the board proposes to reconstruct and upgrade the Midland Highway from Baxter Street to the city boundary when funds become available, it is necessary for the design work concerned with future road works to be completed before work can commence on the design of the lighting installation. Accurate information on the proposed position of kerb lines is required so that light poles can be correctly located.

Having regard to the relative priority of road works within the board's Bendigo division, it is expected that it will be six to twelve months before the required information is available to enable the design of the lighting installation to proceed between Baxter Street and Nolan Street and three to six months between Nolan Street and Buckland Street.

7. Yes.

GEELONG–MELBOURNE RAILWAY.

(Question No. 334)

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Minister of Transport—

1. What distance of duplication works has been completed on the Geelong-Melbourne rail route over the past twelve months?

2. When it is expected that duplication of the route will be finally completed?

3. Whether requests have been made to the Commonwealth Government for assistance in such duplication works; if so, what were—(*a*) the dates; and (*b*) the details of such requests?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

1. No duplication works have been carried out in the past twelve months on the single line section of the Geelong-Melbourne rail route between Little River and Corio. However, work has continued on the quadruplication of the tracks between South Kensington and Footscray which will greatly benefit travellers on the Geelong line.

2. It is not known when duplication of the section of line between Little River and Corio will be completed as this depends on the availability of finance and its priority in relation to other major projects.

3. To date, no requests have been made to the Commonwealth Government for financial assistance in relation to the work of duplicating the section of line between Little River and Corio, because the area is currently the subject of a Commonwealth financed investigation.

Plans for rail improvements on this line will be re-examined when the results of the study are available.

TATTERSALL CONSULTATIONS.

(Question No. 336)

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Treasurer—

1. Whether Tattersall's are compelled to notify all prize winners in consultations of their success?

2. Whether this notification similarly applies to all Tattslotto winners; if not, why?

3. What is the amount of unclaimed prizes for each such Tattersall's operation over the past twelve months?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The answer is—

1 and 2. There is no legal responsibility on Tattersall's to advise individuals that they have won a prize in a Tattersall consultation or Tattslotto.

3. Under the provisions of the Unclaimed Moneys Act and the regulations made pursuant to the Tattersall Consultation Act 1958, the trustees are not obligated to account for unclaimed prizes until the expiration of three years. Tattersall's accounting records do not treat prizes as being unclaimed until these three years have elapsed. It is not possible therefore to give the amount of unclaimed prizes relating to any individual drawing in the past twelve months.

DRIVING LICENCES.

(Question No. 343)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Chief Secretary—

In respect of the learner-driver permits provisions of the Motor Car Act 1958—

1. What fees were charged for a learner's permit and the driving test for a licence, respectively, prior to and after the 20th September, 1974?

2. What is the estimated revenue from the permit and driving test fees charged after 20th September this financial year and for a full financial year?

3. How many full-time personnel are involved in testing for permits and driving licences, specifying the number of civilian testers, police and other personnel?

4. Whether he has received representations from driving schools in respect of fees and procedures; if so, whether he has considered recommending the change of either fees or procedures?

5. What is the cost of administering both the issue of permits and the testing of licences in a full year?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The answer is—

1.

	Prior to 20th September, 1974	After 20th September, 1974
Learner permit fee	No permit system was in operation.	$2
Driving test fee	$4	$10

2.

	Financial year 1974–75 (from 20th September, 1974)	Full financial year
Permit fees	$160,000	$240,000
Driving test fees (including appointment fee)	$1,200,000	$1,800,000

3. There are 26 police officers, 75 licence testing officers and 5 Public Service clerical officers engaged in the procedure for testing for permits and licences.

4. Yes. Changes are not contemplated at this stage.

5. The estimated cost of administering both the issue of permits and the testing for licences for a full year is $1,090,000 based on the issue of 120,000 permits.

WEST COBURG TRAMLINE.

(Question No. 348)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Transport—

1. Whether investigations concerning the desirability and feasibility of extending the route of the West Coburg tramline beyond Bell Street have taken place in the past ten years; if so, what were the results of such investigations; if not, whether investigations will be undertaken?

2. Whether the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board owns or is negotiating the purchase of properties for the extension of such tramline, specifying the address of each such property and the date of acquisition?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

1. Yes.

An extension of the tram route from the present terminus in Melville Road at Bell Street is recommended in the Metropolitan Transportation Committee's 1985 plan.

2. The Board does not own, nor is it negotiating the purchase of any properties for the extension of such tramline.

POLICE RECORDS.

(Question No. 364)

Mr BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East) asked the Chief Secretary—

Whether police records are made available to any Government department, authority or instrumentality; if so—(*a*) which departments, authorities or instrumentalities have received such information; and (*b*) what are the reasons for such policy?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The answer is—

Information from police records is made available to other police services and to certain Government agencies which are responsible for the initiation of action against persons who are alleged to have committed breaches of laws administered by such agencies. It is required that the other police services and the Government agencies demonstrate that the information sought is essential to the effective performance of their respective functions.

Checks are made of the records at the request of a number of Government agencies in respect of applicants for employment in certain positions and in relation to applicants for the issue of licences of various types. In the latter case, the majority of requests emanate from the Magistrates' Courts which are dealing with applications for the issue of licences.

I do not consider that it is appropriate to list the names of the agencies to which I have referred.

MARYBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL.

(Question No. 405)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Education—

Whether the Education Department will now accept the tender as recommended by the Public Works Department for the Maryborough High School library; if not, why?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

It is expected that a tender for the provision of a Commonwealth library at the Maryborough High School will be accepted shortly.

ESSENDON PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS.

(Question No. 410)

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds) asked the Minister of Transport—

What stage has been reached with the proposed Buckley Street pedestrian overpass near the Essendon railway station?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

Buckley Street is an unclassified road under the control of the Essendon City Council.

On 6th March, 1974, the Essendon City Council advised the Country Roads Board that it approved one particular alternative proposal for the construction of a pedestrian overpass across Buckley Street. However, the construction of an overpass at this location would require the acquisition of a small area of land from St. Columban's College and following an objection from the college, the Country Roads Board suspended work on the design of the overpass.

At the request of the college, the Essendon City Council has made arrangements for a meeting of all interested parties to be held on 11th November, 1974, to discuss the project.

PRESTON YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS.

(Question No. 418)

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation—

1. Which youth organizations in the electoral district of Preston have applied for assistance from the State Youth Fund during 1973-74?

2. How many of such organizations received requested assistance?

Mr. DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation): The answer is—

The following youth organizations in the electoral district of Preston have applied for and received assistance from the State Youth Fund during the 1973-74 financial year—

Preston Methodist Boys Club	$50
Preston West Methodist Youth Club	$100
Thornbury Opportunity Youth Club	$2,000
Thornbury Salvation Army Youth Group	$75

It has been the practice and it will continue to be the policy of my department to inform all members of Parliament of grants made to youth organizations in their respective electoral districts. All members were informed of grants made from the State Youth Fund during the 1973-74 financial year.

ALGAE IN GIPPSLAND LAKES.

(Question No. 425)

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East) asked the Minister for Conservation—

Further to the answer to question No. 759, asked on 20th March, 1974, whether a report has been produced following investigations into the algae bloom in the Gippsland lakes earlier this year; if so, whether he will make such report available or, if the report is not available, when it is expected to be available?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation): The answer is—

The honorable member will no doubt recall that, in my previous answer, I indicated that a report on the observation made in the Gippsland lakes during the period of algae bloom would be produced by the Environment Protection Authority. This report is in the course of preparation and is expected to be completed within the next few weeks.

ST. ALBANS PRIMARY SCHOOL.

(Question No. 428)

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Education—

What plans the Education Department has for the provision of staff-room extensions and a men's toilet at the St. Albans Primary School?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

A visit to the school by departmental officers has been arranged for next week. When requirements for the necessary staff accommodation improvements have been determined a brief will be prepared and forwarded to the Public Works Department with a view to the work being put in hand when funds are available.

PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR DEER PARK NORTH.

(Question No. 429)

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Education—

When it is proposed to build the Deer Park North Primary School?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

It is expected that a contract for the construction of the Deer Park North Primary School will be let before the end of the current school year.

GIPPSLAND RAIL SERVICE.

(Question No. 430)

Mr. AMOS (Morwell) asked the Minister of Transport—

1. On what date the 6.3 p.m. Gippsland-bound passenger train first had a first-class air-conditioned car attached?

2. Whether it is the usual practice to clearly mark this car as reserved for passengers travelling beyond Warragul?

3. Why it is possible for passengers only travelling to stations before Warragul, such as Berwick, to disregard this rule and take advantage of this car?

4. Whether he is aware that Gippsland travellers wishing to travel to stations beyond Warragul sometimes find great difficulty in locating vacant seats in this car?

5. When it is expected that the suburban service will be extended to cater for these passengers travelling to stations before Warragul?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

1. Air-conditioned cars were first used on the Gippsland evening service in November, 1959.

2. A notice is displayed on the first-class air-conditioned carriage to the effect that the carriage is available for passengers in possession of a reserved seat and for other passengers travelling to Warragul and beyond.

3. It is possible that passengers other than those for whom the air-conditioned carriage is set aside do travel in the carriage. However, in view of the fact that only one stop at Berwick, is made before Warragul the railways are unable to justify the cost involved in patrolling the carriage.

4. The air-conditioned car has seating accommodation for 48 passengers. The railways do not have sufficient air-conditioned carriages available to add further carriages to this train and it is therefore not possible to provide this type of accommodation for all first-class passengers.

5. It is expected that the suburban service will be extended to Pakenham early in 1975, when the 6.3 p.m. Sale train will be altered to leave Flinders Street at 6.8 p.m. and to run express to Warragul.

COUNTRY ROADS BOARD.

(Question No. 438)

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) asked the Minister of Transport—

1. Who are the members of the Country Roads Board?

2. What are the terms of appointment, indicating when each member was first appointed?

3. What remuneration is paid to each member?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

1. The members of the Country Roads Board are—

Chairman—Mr. R. E. V. Donaldson
Deputy Chairman—Mr. J. D. Thorpe
Member—Mr. T. H. Russell

2. Mr. Donaldson was appointed chairman on 1st September, 1971, for a period of five years.

Mr. Thorpe was appointed deputy chairman on 1st September, 1971, for a period ending on 10th January, 1975. On 11th January, 1975, Mr. Thorpe will reach the age of 65 years.

Mr. Russell was appointed member on 1st September, 1971, for a period of five years.

3. Chairman—$26,125 plus an allowance of $1,250 per annum.

Deputy chairman—$22,625 per annum.

Member—$22,625 per annum.

PAY-ROLL TAX.

(Question No. 453)

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) asked the Treasurer—

How many organizations administering or managing Crown reservations in Victoria are subjected to pay-roll tax, indicating what amount of tax was paid in each case in 1973–74 in respect of each reservation?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The answer is—

There are 25,589 pay-roll taxpayers and the commissioner's index does not show the nature of their business. It would not be possible therefore to ascertain which of these taxpayers were organizations administering or managing Crown reservations.

In any event section 5 of the Pay-roll Tax Act prohibits the disclosure of information concerning a taxpayers affairs without his consent.

OPERATION UPGRADE.

(Question No. 456)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Education—

In respect of "Operation Upgrade"—

1. How many task forces were set up, what was their membership and what were their terms of reference?

2. Whether all task forces have completed their reports, specifying the dates of completion?

3. Whether he will make such reports public?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. (*a*) Six as follows—

Primary libraries
Art and crafts
Science
Staff improvements
Disadvantaged schools
Special schools

Programmes for replacement and improvement were prepared by the divisions of the department, not by task forces.

(*b*) The task forces comprised a professional teacher (or teachers where more than one division was involved), a member of the Educational Facilities Research Laboratory, a member of the Buildings Branch and a leader appointed because of his particular interest or involvement in the area concerned.

The schools visitation teams comprised members from various task forces and they were accompanied by an architect from the Public Works Department.

(*c*) Role of the task forces—

Determination of standards.
Investigation of existing facilities.
Recommendation of needs.
Establishment of priorities.
Submission of priority lists to Directors of Divisions for approval.
Following Divisional endorsement of priorities, preparation of brief, in conjunction with Public Works Department.
Submission of brief to Public Works Department, via Divisional and Buildings Branch.
Continual and direct liaison with project architects.

2. There are a number of reports involved—

(*a*) the over-all report of Upgrade Operation,

(*b*) reports by individual task forces,

(*c*) individual reports on individual projects.

Most of these reports are of a progressive nature which have been updated because much of the information is factual and changes as the work of the various groups continues. The first over-all report was prepared in December of 1973. It has now been brought up to date because of the far greater number of projects that have subsequently emerged.

3. Yes. It is intended to publish the activities of the task forces shortly.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES RESEARCH LABORATORY.

(Question No. 457)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Education—

In respect of the Educational Facilities Research Laboratory—

1. How many officers are employed?

2. Who is the officer-in-charge, what was the date of his appointment, and his classification in the Public Service?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. The staff of the Educational Facilities Research Laboratory is—

8 seconded teachers

1 Public Service typist/stenographer

2. The officer-in-charge appointment is a professional officer grade II. of the Education Department. Since the resignation of Mr. D. Matters in January, 1972 the position has not been advertised. The present officer-in-charge (acting) is Keith F. Bubb who has been acting officer-in-charge since 24th June, 1974.

FREEWAY CONSTRUCTION.

(Question No. 466)

Mr. JONES (Melbourne) asked the Minister of Transport—

Further to the answer to the question without notice asked on 15th October, 1974, relating to the reported memorandum of the Chairman of the Country Roads Board concerning freeway construction, whether he will provide honorable members with a copy of the memorandum by Mr. Donaldson, dated February, 1974, referred to in the *Age* newspaper of 14th October, 1974?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

There was no memorandum distributed by the Chairman of the Country Roads Board.

The matter referred to by the honorable gentleman was a copy of a minute written by the Chairman of the Country Roads Board on reports submitted by engineers concerning the Hume Freeway. The minute was dated February, 1973, not February, 1974, as mentioned by the honorable gentleman.

As the minute and those of the other two board members formed part of the board's normal decision making processes, I am not prepared to publish copies.

However, as I indicated to the honorable gentleman in reply to a recent question without notice, I have read the minute, which was not published in full by the *Age*, and I am satisfied the implication of the minute as published by the *Age*, is not an accurate representation of Mr. Donaldson's attitude to government policy.

There is no conflict whatever between the Country Roads Board and the Government.

MINISTRY OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS.

(Question No. 469)

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East) asked the Minister of Transport, for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs—

1. What total amount, indicating the source of such funds, has been expended by the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs in each of the past three years?

2. What amount was spent in each area of activity of the Ministry?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer supplied by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs is—

1.

1971–72 FINANCIAL YEAR—		
Expenditure—	$	$
Aboriginal Affairs Fund		938,667.37
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account		137,559.81
Total Expenditure		1,076,227.18
Source—		
Aboriginal Affairs Fund—		
Rent, Loan and Miscellaneous Receipts	90,959.52	
Contribution from Loan Funds	332,000.00	
Contribution from Vote Funds	410,000.00	
Transfer of Grants from Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account	120,000.00	
Balance carried forward 1st July, 1971	931.94	
		953,891.40
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account—		
Balance carried forward 1st July, 1971	103,656.10	
Commonwealth Housing Grant	280,000.00	
Rent, Loan and House Sales Receipts	21,116.93	
		404,773.03
Total Funds		1,358,664.94

	$	$
1972–73 Financial Year—		
Expenditure—		
Aboriginal Affairs Fund	1,144,616.39	
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account	428,914.77	
Total Expenditure	1,573,531.16	
Source—		
Aboriginal Affairs Fund—		
Rent, Loan and Miscellaneous Receipts	101,919.29	
Contribution from Loan Funds	310,000.00	
Contribution from Vote Funds	410,000.00	
Transfer of Grants from Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account	446,256.00	
Balance carried forward 1st July, 1972	15,224.09	
		1,283,399.38
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account—		
Balance carried forward 1st July, 1972	267,213.22	
Commonwealth Housing Grant	357,000.00	
Rent, Loan and House Sales Receipts	44,277.52	
		668,490.74
Total Funds		1,951,890.12
1973–74 Financial Year—		
Expenditure—		
Aboriginal Affairs Fund		1,279,887.35
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account		720,848.28
Total expenditure		2,000,735.63
Source—		
Aboriginal Affairs Fund—		
Balance carried forward 1st July, 1973	138,782.99	
Rent, Loan and Miscellaneous Receipts	111,367.84	
Contribution from Loan Funds	310,000.00	
Contribution from Vote Funds	410,000.00	
Rural Unemployment Grant	6,744.04	
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account—Transfer of Grants	440,500.00	
		1,417,394.87
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account—		
Balance carried forward 1st July, 1973	239,575.97	
Commonwealth Housing Grant	557,000.00	
Rent, Loan and House Sales Receipts	46,206.43	
		842,782.40
Total Funds		2,260,177.27

2.

1971–72 Financial Year—		
Expenditure in areas of activity indicated—		
Aboriginal Affairs Fund—		
Salaries	336,080.29	
Administration Expenses	86,536.18	
Assistance	59,366.75	
Education	127,122.31	
Employment Training	6,148.38	
Land Trusts	83,710.68	
Housing	216,619.79	
Health Projects	8,187.16	
Hostels and Centres	14,895.83	
		938,667.37
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account		137,559.81
Total Expenditure		1,076,227.18

1972–73 FINANCIAL YEAR—		
Expenditure in areas of activity indicated—	$	$
Aboriginal Affairs Fund—		
Salaries	366,701.28	
Administration Expenses	125,392.82	
Assistance	71,760.19	
Education	154,163.60	
Employment and Special Works	37,720.14	
Land Trusts	68,362.43	
Housing	288,666.28	
Health Projects	9,098.50	
Hostels and Centres	22,751.15	
		1,144,616.39
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account		428,914.77
Total Expenditure		1,573,531.16
1973–74 FINANCIAL YEAR—		
Expenditure in areas of activity indicated—		
Aboriginal Affairs Fund—		
Salaries	479,562.84	
Administration Expenses	140,758.45	
Assistance	36,905.29	
Education	197,342.80	
Employment and Special Works	120,670.25	
Land Trusts	60,120.70	
Housing	138,854.18	
Health Projects	79,272.95	
Hostels and Centres	26,399.89	
		1,279,887.35
Aboriginal Housing (Commonwealth) Trust Account		720,848.28
Total Expenditure		2,000,735.63

ADVERTISING ON TRAMS.

(Question No. 472)

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston) asked the Minister of Transport—

1. What revenue was derived by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board from the leasing of advertising space on the inside and outside of trams operated by the board in each of the financial years 1971–72 to 1973–74, inclusive?

2. When advertising contracts were last reviewed?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

1. 1971–72 $214,150
   1972–73 $258,550
   1973–74 $281,100

2. The board's present agreement with its advertising contractor for interior and exterior advertising on trams and buses was negotiated in 1971. It is for a term of five years from 1st July, 1971.

A separate agreement covering the use of the two specially decorated advertising trams is subject to an annual review of the rates to be charged. These rates were last altered on 1st February, 1974.

TEACHER HOUSING.

(Question No. 479)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What is the reason for the delay in the provision of teacher flats at Boort and Donald?

2. Whether he will ensure that the flats are proceeded with immediately so as to be ready for occupation by the commencement of the 1975 school year?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The answer is—

1. Preliminary site planning has been completed by the Teacher Housing Authority which will be in a position to negotiate a contract for the provision of the flats as soon as funds become available.

2. Because of the authority's current financial position and having regard to the time needed to complete a contract of this nature, such an assurance cannot be given.

GOULBURN-MURRAY IRRIGATION DISTRICT.

(Question No. 481)

Mr. BAXTER (Murray Valley) asked the Minister of Public Works, for the Minister of Water Supply—

In respect of the Nine Mile Creek in the Goulburn-Murray Irrigation District—(*a*) how many licensed diverters draw water from—(i) downstream of the township of Wunghnu; and (ii) upstream of the township of Wunghnu; (*b*) what drainage channels flow into the creek; and (*c*) what irrigation channels outfall into the creek?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): The answer supplied by the Minister of Water Supply is—

The Nine Mile Creek offtakes from Broken Creek at the Katandra weir, passes through the township of Wunghnu and rejoins the Broken Creek, some 8 kilometres north west of Wunghnu, in the Parish of Mundoona.

In 1961 the Parliamentary Public Works Committee recommended that the Goulburn-Murray Irrigation District be extended to include lands adjoining the Broken Creek between Katamatite and the River Murray, and lands adjoining the Nine Mile Creek. The committee also recommended that the landholders be granted "Extra Water Rights" to the limits available upon application, as provided in the Water Acts. Subsequently, this arrangement has proceeded and, other than domestic and stock water diversion permits, irrigation supplies are allocated along the Nine Mile Creek by way of "Extra Water Rights" and not by way of licences.

Replies to the specific items of the question are as follows—

(*a*) there are 38 landholders with "Extra Water Rights" allocations above Wunghnu and 12 landholders below Wunghnu;

(*b*) eight Water Commission drainage channels flow directly into the Nine Mile Creek. They are—

Pine Lodge drain—Dr. 11
Marionvale drain—Dr. 12
Dr. 13
Dr. 13A
Dr. 14A
Dr. 14B
Dr. 15
Dr. 16;

(*c*) two Water Commission irrigation channels outfall directly to the Nine Mile Creek. They are—

East Goulburn Main Channel.
East Goulburn Channel No. 34.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, October 24, 1974.

The SPEAKER **(the Hon. K. H. Wheeler)** took the chair at 11.5 a.m., and read the prayer.

ABSENCE OF MINISTERS.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): I have to announce that because of official duties, the Attorney-General, the Chief Secretary, the Minister of Labour and Industry, and the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation will be absent from the House today.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

FREEWAY F2.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I ask a question of the Minister of Transport. Did he give the Freeway Action Group, which he met yesterday, any assurances regarding Freeway F2? If so, will those assurances make any difference to the route that is proposed from Bell Street to St. George's Road, Northcote? Finally, does this mean that because of the assurances the Minister has given the Freeway Action Group, that portion of Freeway F2 between Bell Street and St. George's Road, Northcote, will not be completed.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): I had a full and frank discussion with the group yesterday concerning all the problems associated with this proposal. I assured them that, before any decisions were made on any part of the proposal, there would be full and frank discussions in the light of the investigations currently being carried out into all possibilities.

STOCK EXCHANGE OF MELBOURNE.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): In view of the absence of the Attorney-General, I direct a question to the Premier.

Following the suspension of two members of the Stock Exchange of Melbourne after an inquiry and as a result of the Rae report, is it the Premier's intention to have discussions with the committee of the Stock Exchange of Melbourne with a view to amending the rules so that the set of circumstances which occurred during the last mining boom will not occur again?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The Attorney-General has had several discussions with the Chairman of the Stock Exchange of Melbourne on what was reported by the Rae committee. I do not think any of us would want to see a repetition of what happened during the mining boom about two or three years ago. We might like to have another mining boom, but not the stock exchange reactions to it. I cannot say from my own knowledge how far these discussions have gone, but I am quite sure that the Attorney-General will confer with the stock exchange to see what rules ought to be altered and what changes ought to be made to ensure that this situation does not arise again.

MOUNT ROYAL.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds): Has the Minister of Health seen statements made by social workers employed at Mount Royal hospital for the aged which suggest that reports on conditions at Mount Royal have gone to the State and Federal Ministers of Health? The reports contain the information that the State Minister of Health said that he would inquire into the conditions at Mount Royal. If these reports are correct, will the Minister inform the House when he intends to inquire into conditions at Mount Royal, with a view to their improvement for the geriatric patients?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): We are always inquiring into conditions at Mount Royal and constantly seeking to improve the facilities available. It would help considerably if an additional geriatric unit were located at Sunshine—I am not referring to the public hospital at Sunshine, but to a geriatric unit—which would ease some of the pressure on the older wards at Mont Park. I might also add that the Henry Pride wing at Kew has 70 beds available and is currently being filled with patients.

Mr. WILKES: Are you not going to build a hospital at Bundoora?

Mr. SCANLAN: Bundoora is another one which has a high priority for relieving the pressure on Mount Royal. The important thing is that the honorable member has misread the press report. I have never seen or received a copy of the report which caused the newspaper reports to be made. It was submitted to the Commonwealth Government Hospitals and Health Services Commission chaired by Dr. Sydney Sax and to the committee of inquiry being conducted in Victoria by Sir Colin Syme and Sir Lance Townsend. To date a copy of that report has not been made available to me.

We are not happy about a number of the allegations made which would reflect upon the nursing staff, although it is admitted that there are physical deficiencies at Mount Royal and we should like to get rid of these.

My proposal is that if reports are furnished to me with corroboration in regard to matters of professional conduct, they will be examined and inquired into, if necessary, by the professional associations responsible for those whom the allegations concern—for example, the Victorian Nursing Council or other similar bodies. However, I should like to receive, together with reports, specific confirmation, dates and times and the names of the persons involved in these so-called incidents.

DONCASTER BUS SERVICES.

Mr. WILLIAMS (Box Hill): Can the Minister of Transport inform me why the tramways union refuses to carry good workers from the City of Doncaster and Templestowe in the new buses which are being made available for those areas?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The first new buses, which were due for delivery last December, but which were delayed for various reasons such as shortages of parts, were not delivered until last week. They were to have gone into service on the Doncaster line, which was the route for which they were purchased, last Monday.

Members of the tramways union at North Fitzroy carried a resolution to the effect that the putting of these buses on the Doncaster line was discrimination against other lines serviced from North Fitzroy, and they would not allow the buses on the Doncaster line to run. As a result there has been curtailment of the use of these buses. They are not running, and the services which should have been operating on the Doncaster line have not yet been commenced. The members of the union who refused to man the buses have been suspended.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): I direct a question to the Premier. At a deputation held some months ago with representatives of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council, was it pointed out to the Premier that the Holmesglen housing factory was holding the completed components of ten schools which were waiting in stacks to be removed and erected on site? Was it also pointed out that Holmesglen's capacity for school erection was not being fully utilized? Did the Premier undertake to inquire into these matters and, if so, can he inform the House whether he has made such an inquiry and the results of any such inquiry that he made?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): Yes, I spoke with a deputation from the Trades Hall Council seeking an expansion of contracts for school construction at Holmesglen. It was indicated to me that a number of components for ten schools had been completed and stored pending erection. It is true that earlier this year the Government gave contracts to Holmesglen for ten schools.

The school sites are in the course of preparation, the components made by Holmesglen will be erected, and we expect that those schools, with one possible exception, will be ready for the beginning of the next school year.

Mr. GINIFER: I hope Lincolnville is not the exception.

Mr. THOMPSON: No.

Mr. HAMER: There is one possible exception, but nine out of ten will certainly be ready barring any incidents which cannot be foreseen at the moment. I hope the tenth will also be completed.

The purpose of the deputation was to ascertain whether Holmesglen could be given further contracts. At present it costs more to have a school prefabricated and built by Holmesglen than by using conventional methods. The original purpose for using the facilities at Holmesglen to produce modular-type schools was a matter of economics and the skills available at Holmesglen, but a regular programme of making modular units is obviously attractive.

Discussions have taken place between the Public Works Department, the Minister of Housing and the Minister of Education, and investigations are proceeding. The Government certainly wants Holmesglen if possible to have a regular construction programme which it can keep going not only spasmodically but also throughout the year so that economies can be made in that way, provided, of course, it does not affect the primary purpose of Holmesglen which now has to produce about 1,000 houses a year.

TECHNICAL TEACHERS' SALARIES.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura): As the Teachers Tribunal has approved of a salary increase for teachers employed in the Primary Schools Division of the

Education Department, can the Minister of Education inform the House what progress has been made on a similar salary claim made on behalf of teachers employed in the Technical Schools Division of the department?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): This is a matter within the jurisdiction of the tribunal. A decision on salaries by the Technical Teachers Tribunal will be made by the Chairman, Mr. Sampson; the Government representative, Mr. Baker; and the technical teachers' representative, Mr. Burns. I could not give an exact indication of when they will reach a decision. However, I can state that if the award already decided upon by the Primary Teachers Tribunal was applied across the Teaching Service, it would cost the State Government an extra $54 million.

UNCLAIMED LOTTERY PRIZES.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North): I address my question to the Premier and Treasurer. In view of the fact that many hundreds of thousands of Victorian people each week invest 50 cents or more in Tattersall consultations or Tattslotto, and many of those people lose their tickets or perhaps do not check the results, particularly the minor prize results, is the Premier aware that legally Tattersalls is not obliged to, and does not notify prizewinners, particularly in Tattslotto? Therefore, I presume many thousands of dollars of prizes are not paid to the people. I ask the Premier whether he will investigate the situation and take steps to ensure that people who win prizes in Tattersall consultations or Tattslotto are notified if they do not claim the prizes they have won.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): I am prepared to have a look at that. It is a fact there is no legal obligation on Tattersalls to notify winners. In most cases I do not suppose it is necessary, because it would be a rather unusual investor who did not check to see whether he had won anything. Obviously, there might be circumstances in which a person could lose his ticket or could fail to check the results for other reasons. They have three years in which to make a claim before the moneys are regarded as unclaimed. In the meantime it should be possible to make a check, and I will have this aspect investigated to ascertain the number of investors who win prizes but who for one reason or another do not make a claim. I will further ascertain whether there is any way in which a check can be made after a period of time and winners who have not lodged a claim notified.

THOMSON RIVER DAM.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): Further to the announcement by the Government on the Thomson Dam project, can the Premier inform the House whether the Government has accepted the recommendation made by the Public Works Committee in 1967 concerning the more-than-single-purpose-use of catchment areas, and, if the Government has made a decision concerning such catchment areas, what effect that decision will have on the proposed Thomson dam?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): Once again I find myself in some doubt as to the exact question the honorable member for Morwell wants to ask.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Does the Premier want the question reframed?

Mr. HAMER: No; If this answer is not sufficient, I shall ask the honorable member to submit another question. The Government has accepted the recommendations of the Public Works Department on the Thomson River dam, known as Thomson III. The dam is to be used for a dual purpose, for irrigation water in Gippsland and for water supply to Melbourne; as far as possible there will be multiple use of its catchments, as recommended. The Government has not varied that recommendation or objected to it. On

the contrary, it has adopted it. If that does not answer the honorable member's question, I request that he ask a supplementary question.

SUNSHINE TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

Mr. FOGARTY (Sunshine): I ask the Minister of Education: When will final detailed plans and specifications be completed enabling tenders to be called for the Sunshine Technical School project? When does the Minister expect that tenders will be called and approximately when will the project be completed?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): It is impossible to give exact dates for the calling of tenders and the completion of a project of the size of Sunshine Technical School which, in total, will cost the State an estimated $4·2 million and the construction of which will take place over a period of years. What I have said and what the Government will stand by is that tenders will be called next year for the erection of the first stage of Sunshine Technical School. The Assistant Director of Technical Education, Mr. Middleton, attended a meeting last week or the week before at Sunshine Technical School and explained the outline plans. The Public Works Department has been asked to proceed with expedition with the completion of the final plans to allow the first stage to go to tender in the latter half of 1975.

POOL SYSTEM FOR TEACHERS.

Mr. SKEGGS (Ivanhoe): Has the Minister of Education given consideration to the introduction of a pool system of teachers to provide relief when staff go on long service or sickness leave?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): This aim has been achieved in the primary service, where there is a pool of emergency or relief teachers. The department aims to achieve this situation at the secondary level but there are several factors that make it difficult to attain. Firstly, there have been progressive and laudable moves for the reduction of class sizes. Secondly, there has been an extension in the range of courses being offered at secondary schools.

There has been an upgrading in the academic and training standard of teachers for registration as teachers in the secondary service, and there has been a steady and almost alarming reduction in the teaching loads, which in Victoria at present stand at 17½ hours as compared with 22 hours in the United States of America, 22 hours in Canada, and 21½ hours in the United Kingdom. I suggest that this pool could already have been established if teachers in Victoria were teaching anything like the same hours as teachers in the United States of America and Canada.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): In the light of the answer given by the Minister of Education to the question asked by the honorable member for Sunshine, can the Minister give the reasons why component parts for complete schools are still lying at Holmesglen, as there is an acute shortage of these parts, sites have not been cleared, and the schools have not been erected?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The Housing Commission was asked to erect ten schools for next year. As indicated by the Premier, nine of those schools are expected to be ready on time. I think the one at Footscray will be delayed a little. A meeting was held this week to extend the programme for the Housing Commission. There are two problems. The Housing Commission desires to erect new schools as distinct from extensions to existing schools, and 70 per cent or more of the school building programme consists of extending existing schools as distinct from erecting new ones. Furthermore, the Housing Commission desires a certain type of site and its schools are more costly. Last year we went to some trouble to find flat

sites on which this type of construction would not present problems. At present the Public Works Department is working on a number of suggestions for the further use of the Holmesglen construction plant for the erection of new schools, and possibly for the erection of free-standing Commonwealth science and library blocks so that maximum use can be made of this plant.

INNER-SUBURBAN SCHOOLS.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): I ask the Minister of Education whether the Education Department has a plan for assisting the inner-suburban schools on limited sites, particularly where the playing space is further limited through the existence of a caretaker's cottage. Has the department a plan to purchase nearby houses when they come on the market for sale, so that the house which is occupied by the caretaker can be pulled down and utilized for playing space?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): Yes, I believe that is a sensible suggestion. The department is spending a substantial proportion of its site money on extending sites within inner-suburban areas. A number of schools are existing on 1-acre or 2-acre sites and are badly in need of site extension. I am aware of the particular school which the honorable member for Albert Park has in mind. It is the department's plan to utilize some of the funds available to it this year to purchase an alternative house so that the present caretaker's cottage can be demolished.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION.

Mr. HOLDING (Leader of the Opposition): Has the attention of the Minister of Education been directed to the serious downturn in the building industry? If so, has the Minister given any and what consideration to accelerating the school building programme for the purpose of absorbing some of the excess capacity now existing in the industry? If so, in order to hasten the procedure, is he prepared to consider, as a flash programme, requiring private architects to draw plans if these cannot be done by the Public Works Department, and to produce an accelerated school-building programme to take some advantage of the surpluses now being generated in the building industry?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): The department has been working on this approach for six months. The Leader of the Opposition will recall that a special submission was made to the Commonwealth Government in June of this year for an additional $28 million to be used in the general school building area because of the marked increase in costs and because of the slack that was obviously developing in the building industry generally.

Unfortunately, in September we were informed by the Federal Minister that the request for an additional $28 million had been turned down. However, we are prepared to raise the matter once again with the Commonwealth Government because, as I have stressed from time to time, in the new school building area we are obliged to combat an 87 per cent increase in costs with a 16 per cent increase in loan allocation. Subsequently that allocation was raised to about 27 per cent and a further 10 per cent was announced in the Federal Budget, but this still falls far short of what is required.

The honorable member referred to the use of private architects. My colleague, the Minister of Public Works, has indicated that at present on nearly 50 per cent of projects of the Public Works Department private consultants in the form of architects, engineers or similar personnel are being used and will continue to be used. I will be happy to again ask the Commonwealth for further funds to take up this period of slack so that our new school building programme, as distinct from the upgrading programme, can be accelerated.

WATER CATCHMENTS.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): In view of the Premier's statement that the Government has agreed to allow multi-purpose use of the Thomson River catchment area, I ask the honorable gentleman whether the Government also intends to allow multi-purpose use of catchment areas under the control of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): For some years the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works has been conducting experiments at Coranderrk to determine whether and to what extent multi-purpose use of catchment areas would be feasible. The board is naturally concerned with water run-off and the extent of retention of rainfall because until now it has been dependent on stream flows throughout the year.

These experiments have been approached with a great deal of dedication for at least ten years. They will take some years yet to complete, in the light of rainfall records, the effect of clearing in a water catchment area on the quality of water, the retention of water and stream flows in a controlled area. When the experiments are complete there will be a picture which will show whether multi-purpose use of these catchments is desirable.

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF HOUSING COMMISSION.

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara): Did the Premier censure, or direct a censure of, Mr. Alan Ashman, the Deputy Chairman of the Housing Commission, following statements he made about church leaders who called for an inquiry into the commission?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The honorable member for Kara Kara has managed to floor me. I do not know what he is talking about. So far as I am aware, there has been no censure of Mr. Alan Ashman or anyone else.

WEST GATE BRIDGE.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North): I ask the Minister of Transport when it is expected that the West Gate Bridge will be completed and open for traffic.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): It is hoped that the bridge will be opened in about mid-1976.

YALLOURN TOWNSHIP.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell): I direct a question to the Minister for Fuel and Power. Some weeks ago I asked the honorable gentleman whether he would consider the allocation of vacant State Electricity Commission houses at Yallourn to persons who had been waiting for long periods for Housing Commission accommodation in the Latrobe Valley. The Minister said that he would investigate the matter. Can the Minister now inform the House whether he has investigated the matter and what the considerations have been?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power): I recall the question and I did make some investigations into this matter. From 1st January, 1973, to now, a number of people have been provided with accommodation in Yallourn but a number of people have vacated the town so that the number of houses which are empty remains about the same. I have asked the commission to seriously consider providing accommodation for people who really require it. As I indicated when the honorable member asked the earlier question, the commission is reluctant to do that because of the ban placed on the removal of the houses by the Central Gippsland Trades and Labour Council.

Mr. De Campo has returned from overseas and is back on duty. He will be the officer in charge of the Latrobe Valley and I shall be happy to take up this matter with him again. Perhaps, as the honorable member has repeated the question, I should provide him with some figures on the number of houses

which have been allocated and the number of persons who have vacated the town since January, 1973.

PAPERS.

The following papers, pursuant to the directions of an Act of Parliament, were laid on the table by the Clerk:—

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—

Geelong Planning Scheme 1959, Amendment Nos. 18, 1971; and 24, 1974 (City of Geelong).

Shire of Werribee Planning Scheme 1963, Amendment No. 26, 1973.

SCHOOL DESIGN AND BUILDING PRACTICES.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray): I move—

That this House takes note of the Ministerial statement relating to inter-departmental liaison and school design and building practices.

For many years honorable members have been aware of criticism by school councils and school committees of delays and lack of consultation in the school building programme within their electorates—I refer to the general building programme, and to maintenance and special works that are required at schools. Honorable members know of the buck-passing that has gone on over the years between the two departments involved—the Education Department and the Public Works Department—and I am sure that they are familiar with the private criticism that has been voiced by officers of each department of the other. This is an important matter.

Earlier this session the situation was highlighted by the problems at the Brunswick Girls High School, where an enthusiastic principal, staff, students and local community were determined to fight the apathy and frustration they had found in their dealings with the Education Department and the Public Works Department. They were determined to ensure that the school would have expanded and proper facilities.

The tragic story of what happened to those people and their endeavours has already been recounted in this House by the honorable member for Brunswick East. Honorable members saw a situation of unsatisfactory feasibility studies which have since been rejected by all, an obvious breakdown in liaison between the two departments concerned and, perhaps most important of all, a lack of consultation by the Public Works Department with the local school committee. I wish briefly to remind the House how this matter came to the attention of honorable members.

On 17th September, during questions without notice—this is recorded at page 261 of *Hansard*—I raised with the Minister of Public Works the two important matters of principle, the relationship between the Public Works Department and the Education Department, and the degree to which the Public Works Department involved local school communities in its work of school design and construction. The Minister replied that the matter was under consideration.

I again raised the matter on 25th September, again making it clear that I was referring to these two important matters of principle. I refer honorable members to page 599 of *Hansard*, where the Minister is reported as saying that the report that he had requested still had not been provided.

I raised the matter once more on 9th October. *Hansard*, at page 932, shows that I said that the Minister should consider making a statement to the House to explain to Parliament and to the people what the current arrangements and what the department's practices are on these two matters, which have tremendous ramifications on the school building programme. I am delighted that, in his reply in this Chamber on 17th October, the Minister said—

I am beginning to understand what the honorable member has been aiming at in his questions over the past three or four weeks. If I have understood him correctly tonight, I shall only be too happy to prepare a statement and seek the advice of the Deputy Premier, on the best method of making the statement in the House.

It should be apparent to all honorable members—it was to me, and to the House and hopefully to the Minister—that what was required in this reply was a statement on two important matters of principle, firstly Government policy as to the relationship between the Public Works Department and the Education Department on school building works and, secondly, a statement of Government policy on local community involvement in school building works.

I now refer to the statement itself. Firstly, I suggest that it ignores or avoids the first issue and offers only a scant explanation of the department's involvement in the Brunswick Girls High School planning fiasco. Secondly, the statement attempts to come to grips with the second issue I have outlined, but only in a superficial, perfunctory and certainly in a most non-professional way. One gets the unavoidable impression that the statement was made late at night by the Minister himself, is lacking in educational philosophy and completely lacking in detail on these two important matters.

I am sure all honorable members are concerned, and particularly the Opposition. The statement is unworthy of the Minister, the department and of the Government. It will serve only to bring further friction on the Government by those in the community who are concerned at the total lack of liaison between the two departments and the total lack of communication at the local level. It is not my intention to refer again to the situation at the Brunswick Girls High School. The background is already on the record. The Minister's comments add nothing to what was known before and we await with interest the pending reports of the architect, appointed by the Minister, Mr. Evan Walker, and the work of the new Assistant Director-General, Mr. Maddocks, on this important matter within the Brunswick area.

I shall now concentrate on the matter which the Minister has deigned to comment, namely, community involvement within the local school-building programme. As I indicated, the Minister's comments were most superficial and totally lacking in understanding of what community involvement is all about. One gets the distinct impression that the Minister and the Ministry have completely ignored previous statements on this matter by the Assistant Minister of Education and the Director-General of Education in their oft-made pronouncements in terms of community involvement in the schools and the school-building programme. The Minister made two key statements in his brief paper, and I shall quote his comments as follows—

> Community involvement in the planning processes will increase the time factor leading up to construction and will also provide individual solutions which may prove to be expensive in some cases and poor in others.

Well, well! The Minister deplores providing individual solutions to individual problems! He further states—

> I do not oppose community involvement but I believe that it must be under the control of government to ensure uniformity and equality.

Once again there is an obsession on the part of the Minister with uniformity. Once again he is not prepared to face up to the individual problem being faced at the school level. This is the philosophy of the Minister of Public Works, and one presumes of the department. It is obvious that the Government is divided on the matter because it is certainly not the philosophy—from repeated statements—of the Assistant Minister of Education and the Director-General.

In amplification of the attitude of the Public Works Department, I should like to comment on some statements made by the Director-General of Public Works, Mr. Gordon Serpell, as reported in the *Teachers Journal*, a publication of the Victorian Teachers Union, of March, 1974. I have since discussed these statements with Mr. Serpell and I know he sincerely believes in them following his years of experience. The Opposition rejects them, and from my understanding I believe that much of the

Education Department does also. I briefly quote Mr. Serpell's statement from pages 73 and 74 of the *Teachers Journal*. He said, *inter alia*—

> The Public Works Department would heartily welcome the opportunity to be more adventurous—even radical—in its designs for new schools, but it is bound to give its client, the Education Department, what it asks for. . . . Of course, people are put off by the light timber construction type of primary schools. These are nothing more than a string of classrooms joined by a corridor.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Mr. Serpell said that in practical terms the Education Department's thinking led to a totally unreasonable and wasteful over-expenditure of resources because too many schools were being built.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> I believe the economics of the present policy are crazy.

Mr. Serpell then concluded—

> Finally, let it be said that while Public Works Department staff are ready to discuss with school principals and staff the needs of the school and the changes being made, we cannot allow ourselves to be too much influenced by what these people want.

Here can be seen an amplification of the philosophy of this Minister and of his department—in which no doubt they sincerely believe. However, the members of the Opposition make it quite clear that they want no part of that philosophy. The Director-General has stated the difference between the two departments, but it is not this aspect on which I wish to concentrate during this unfortunately brief debate. The outcome of these doctrines and philosophies that the department has been using is that second-rate buildings have been built at a minimum cost without regard to quality and the real needs of the local community, the school community and the wider community which these buildings are planned to serve.

There is a bureaucratic jungle of frustration between the departments and the schools. The Government has only recently accepted community use as being a social philosophy in which it is to participate. It now accepts that the community other than the immediate school community can have the use of school facilities. Surely even prior to this philosophy becoming part of the Government's armour, it was essential for the local teachers and parents who are to work in the school, to be consulted and involved in school design and planning to meet their local needs. Surely they are more in touch with the requirements of their district than are senior officers of departments—whichever department it may prove to be. It is doubly so with the principle of community involvement. A school should be designed to meet not simply the needs of the school children but the over-all social needs of that community. Unless that community is involved in the design and building programme, how in the world can those needs be transmitted to those who are making decisions at the moment?

The Victorian Council of School Organizations recently submitted a proposal on this matter to the Australian Council of School Organizations, and it was adopted this week. It is a principle that the Labor Party fully supports. I should like briefly to quote from the statement as follows—

> The planning and design of school buildings must be consistent with the needs of the community it serves.
>
> The requirements of a particular school are best understood by the parents, teachers, students and local community which use, or will use, its facilities.
>
> The responsibility for establishing the basic philosophy of a particular school must be devolved to a local committee with access to private or Government professional planning advice to formulate the educational specification for the school.

Obviously what is required is a complete dismantling of the past approach and practices of this Government, which has failed dismally, and that must be acknowledged by all who are involved in local schools. Firstly, the over-all control of the building programme must move from the Public Works Department to the Education Department. Secondly, the Education Department must have a much expanded educational facilities research laboratory within a building branch of its own to set basic guidelines and requirements. Thirdly,

the Public Works Department should be responsible for the setting of building standards and codes. Fourthly, the local school committee, in conjunction with the Education Department, should have the choice of engaging either a private architect or an architect from the Public Works Department to undertake its particular work.

Fifthly, the Public Works Department should act as the Government's construction authority, either in its own right or through the letting of contracts to private builders.

If it made these moves the Government would be able to harness local initiative and be able to gear its building programme to local needs. What are the objections of the Minister to this proposal? They were briefly alluded to in the Minister's ill-considered statement. The Minister said—

> The design and construction of the other facilities can be, and sometimes are, under the control of private architects employed by school committees. In some cases there have been problems in the latter methods and there is the danger that community school projects in the wealthier suburbs will be of a better standard than those in the less privileged suburbs.

What a superficial, ridiculous statement to make! As if the department concerned cannot set the standards that are to be applied, whether they are in wealthy or non-wealthy communities.

What are the problems that the Minister claims exist? There is no reference in the Minister's statement to whether they can or cannot be overcome by the type of programme I have outlined.

The Minister has given no evidence to support his allegations that the further use of private architects can lead only to difficulties. In fact, it has been forced upon the Government already, but instead of allowing private architects any initiative—with one exception, for over-all schools—the department has simply delegated detailed documentation and has not given scope for initiative in design and consultation with the local community. The one exception is the Princes Hill High School. The construction of that school took two and a quarter years from commissioning to occupation; that is less time than is taken for the Public Works Department's similar buildings in inner-suburban areas. Tenders came in under budget, which must have occurred for the first time.

The Public Works Department standards at Princes Hill High School were adhered to, and there has been no complaint about them. That is an example of what can be done, but it has not been repeated because the Public Works Department, despite pressures from the Education Department, has refused to do so.

A similar situation occurred at Brunswick Girls High School. The Education Department initially asked the Public Works Department to obtain the services of a private architect to carry out a feasibility study but the Public Works Department refused the request. It should not have the power to do that, and that is what we are talking about. Over-all control must lie with the Education Department rather than the Public Works Department. Even if it could be seen that there may be some delays—and that has not been shown—with local community consultation and involvement, is it not better for the educational specification to be correct from the start rather than having it adjusted later so that the school can be built and geared to meet local needs? The errors of the Government's policy on this important matter are evident. There are buildings throughout Victoria which are totally inadequate in their function.

In 1974 a fiasco occurred at the start of the year when thousands of school children were turned away. This year Victorians have seen the inability of the State Government to spend funds made available to it by the Australian Government. The outlook for classrooms at the opening of the 1975 school year is depressing. Discontent is growing year by year at the

failure of the Public Works Department and the Education Department to relate to communities and to take their needs into account. Rumblings have been heard within these departments, and the Minister has been talking vaguely about the buildings branch of his department being upgraded. In response, the Public Works Department is setting up a special schools section. All these things are happening too late and certainly will not solve the problems I have outlined. Far more drastic surgery is required on this present monolith along the lines I have indicated.

Schools are essentially people, not bricks and mortar to be plonked in a single design into a particular situation. The individual needs of local communities must be the over-all factor to be considered in determining school design and school building practices. The Government's record in this regard is regrettable and the Opposition deplores the failure of the Government to involve local communities in the school building programme.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East): The motion relates to the statement of the Minister of Public Works on inter-departmental liaison on school design and building practices. Curiously, in the copies of the Minister's speech distributed to honorable members, reference is made to the Brunswick Girls High School. I am apprehensive about whether the debate has been brought on because the problems of the Brunswick Girls High School have been highlighted so much in recent times, or whether the Minister's statement is related to many other situations with regard to educational development within Victoria.

It would be unfortunate if the first proposition were the reason for this debate, because it is to be deplored if the tactics adopted by that school, and particularly by its principal, have to be followed by other schools with equal or greater problems in order to direct the department's attention and that of the community in general to their problems.

In many cases the opportunity to obtain this type of publicity is not available to school principals and school councils. It would be unfortunate if school principals had to dissolve in tears on television programmes and display banners in the Legislative Council Chamber on the opening day of Parliament to attract attention to their plight.

The Minister's statement might have been better framed if it had referred specifically to the problems of the liaison between his department and the Education Department without naming the Brunswick Girls High School, which is only a symptom of a disease which is prevalent throughout the whole of the Education Department and the Public Works Department.

I make no bones about adopting a parochial outlook on this matter because of the severe problems which have beset the Bairnsdale Technical School for many years in its endeavours to obtain consideration of its difficulties. In a moderately sized country town with ample open space, and what ought to be its attendant advantages, the technical school is confined to $1\frac{1}{3}$ acres of land. Its 700 students are desperately trying to obtain a technical education in antiquated, broken-down and dilapidated buildings.

The people concerned about this school have been trying to resolve those problems for more than twenty years. It has been extremely difficult to attract the attention of the Education Department, in the first instance, and to induce it to take practical and worth-while steps to resolve the problem.

Some action has been taken—it has not been entirely without progress—in that the local community, in accordance with the basic philosophy behind the argument being put forward today, has agreed through its

racing club to vacate the existing racecourse site to provide a unique opportunity for the principles propounded in the Minister's statement to be put into effect.

An opportunity should be given for community involvement in the planning and design not only of the school buildings but also of the educational system. It is time that the Government looked at the educational system which has operated over the years.

I believe it was silly to separate the technical and secondary aspects of education. The responsibility of the Government over the years has been to provide an educational system which will meet the needs of the children at all stages. It is unfortunate that the secondary level of education has been fragmented, as in many cases this has led to disastrous consequences. Children have embarked on technical education early in their secondary educational life but later have lacked the opportunity to change from technical to high school curriculum as their interests and educational attainments have changed.

The parents of many children aged eleven or twelve have made the wrong decision on their children's education. Because of the fragmentation of the secondary system, the children have not been able to change successfully from one system to the other or have resisted the change where change ought to have taken place.

In addition, within areas of scattered population, such as those I represent in Gippsland East, there is need for the Education Department to provide a flexible system to meet the demands and needs of communities of different sizes. In some communities the children have to travel long distances to attend school, and opportunities should be provided for those children to take full advantage of the educational system.

In Bairnsdale an area of 97 acres almost in the centre of the town is being made available for educational purposes. A tremendous opportunity is available to put into effect the principle of community involvement, not only in the planning of the school system but also in allowing the community to participate in the actual design and layout of a major educational institution.

To date it has been impossible to obtain a response from the Government or an indication that there are likely to be any innovations or real interest generated in a new approach to education to meet the needs of isolated communities. The circumstances appertaining in Bairnsdale would present an opportunity for the Education Department to experiment in a new approach to meet the needs of that area. It would provide valuable information on the approach to be followed by the Government in providing secondary education, not only in isolated areas but also throughout the State generally.

The principle should be adopted of having an educational system split on a horizontal rather than on a vertical basis. In other words, there should be senior and junior secondary schools rather than high and technical schools. If that principle could be adopted for Bairnsdale, I am sure it would meet with favour in that community. I hope the Minister of Education and the Minister of Public Works will cooperate with the local people as I believe the establishment of the principle I have enunciated would be worth while.

Some years ago the Minister of Education expressed the view that it might be better to have senior and junior secondary schools rather than high and technical schools. However, the motion under consideration does not seek an expression of opinion; it is simply a vehicle for the expression of views by honorable members who desire the opportunity of commenting on the educational system. The opportunity should not be by-passed, and it should be pointed out to the Ministers concerned that honorable

members believe there is need for greater co-operation and co-ordination.

I do not support the suggestion that the Education Department should have its own construction branch.

Mr. FORDHAM: That is Country Party policy.

Mr. B. J. EVANS: I am expressing a personal view. I cannot visualize any real problems arising over liaison between the two departments. It should be on the same basis as occurs between two branches in one department. The respective officers have only to communicate by telephone. I am of the view that no real improvement would be achieved if the Education Department was responsible for its own construction work.

Already the Minister of Education has a heavy workload which ought to be shared by another Minister. The construction of schools is one area which lends itself to delegation to another Minister. I do not consider that any advantages would be obtained by combining the two functions in the one department.

I do not have anything to add, except to emphasize the trend for the community to have more say in the operation and planning of schools. I hope that principle will be put into effect; although it has been stated that that is the intention of the Government, it has not yet been given effect.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): It is amazing that the Government is refraining from answering the charges that have been laid and carefully explained to the House by the honorable member for Footscray. This is a frequent occurrence; Ministers refuse to support their own departments. On this occasion one would have thought the Minister of Public Works would have had something to say in defence of his department. The Minister of Education must be at wits end to get the Public Works Department to do something for the Education Department as a client department. The Public Works Department has failed dismally because it is incompetent. I move—

That the following words be added to the motion—

> "and deplores the failure of the Government to meaningfully involve local school communities in the school building programme".

The statement by the Minister of Public Works, doubtless prepared hastily, traverses one or two matters which have been thoroughly covered by the honorable member for Footscray. One would think the statement dealt exclusively with the attitude that the Government has adopted regarding the Brunswick Girls High School. But that is not the case. An oblique reference is made to it, but there are three principal issues in this miserable little statement.

Firstly, a few statements were made about the Brunswick Girls High School, which has been the subject of debate and questions in this House since 1967. Two or three weeks ago the honorable member for Brunswick East took great pains to expose the Government's weaknesses and failures with respect to the Brunswick Girls High School. Members of the Opposition are not sure whether anything dramatic has happened in that direction; the honorable member for Brunswick East may have something to say on the matter.

Secondly, the Minister went to great lengths to refer to the liaison between the Public Works Department and the Education Department. There is no such liaison and during this Government's reign there has been none.

Thirdly, the Minister mentioned his great interest in community involvement. He agrees with this in principle. In other countries the words "community involvement" have a true meaning. In the United States schools are built so that the community can obtain full value and use from them. In Victoria there has been little change of any consequence in school design. Any change that has occurred has been made to suit the pockets of the Government;

changes are not tailored to meet the needs and demands of the education system. Any material change in architecture is made for cheapness and not in the best interest of education.

In 1969 the Government was forced to engage a team of public consultants to investigate the Public Works Department. The Government was so dissatisfied with the incompetence of the Public Works Department and its relationships with its client, the Education Department, that it engaged this group of consultants to go through the department from top to bottom and to submit a report. That investigation cost a lot of money. The Premier at the time, Sir Henry Bolte, said that the report was confidential and that he did not wish to make it known to Parliament. It highlighted what the Opposition and the Country Party have been saying for years, that there is no liaison between the Education Department and the Public Works Department.

I do not blame the Education Department on this occasion, although it can be blamed for many other things. The Public Works Department has failed to appreciate the requirements of the Education Department. Educationists in the department ought to know what is best in matters of design.

A third ingredient has now been introduced—the Housing Commission. However, the Public Works Department shies away from the commission just as it does from the Education Department. The Minister of Education attempts to cover up what is taking place between the Housing Commission and the Holmesglen housing factory. Holmesglen has a magnificent potential for overcoming the shortage of school buildings; in fact, no greater potential exists for overcoming the immediate crisis regarding school buildings—not over a long period perhaps, because even Holmesglen would have to be modified to suit the application of school buildings to the modern system, but as an emergency measure.

At Holmesglen ten schools are at grass with component parts ready, but because of lack of liaison between the two departments the schools remain at grass. Honorable members are told that a flat block cannot be obtained. That is rubbish! Holmesglen production can be adapted for buildings on any site. High-rise structures for elderly people can be built on grano-dioride or basalt, and the miserable excuse that flat blocks cannot be found fails to convince anyone who knows anything about the building industry.

While this lack of liaison exists there is a shortage of schools in Victoria, and maintenance has never been worse. At one stage there was a Board of Land and Works in this State but it did not work. In debate in this Chamber, it was pointed out that one of the reasons for the failure of the board was that it could not get on with the Public Works Department. Surely when three Ministers are involved—the Minister of Housing, the Minister of Education and the Minister of Public Works—their departmental heads can operate in the best interests of the principal client. Eighty per cent of the work carried out by the Public Works Department is Education Department work. If it were not for the Education Department, the Public Works Department would be out of business, and sometimes I wonder whether it should not be.

Year after year there is stupid confrontation between the Education Department and the Public Works Department at the expense of education. This Ministerial statement highlights it. The Public Works Department ought to do what the Minister of Education wants it to do, and do it quickly in the interests of education, without procrastination and disagreement about plans, and without refusal to co-operate with the Housing Commission.

It is true that the Holmesglen factory is not geared to construct buildings to attach to existing buildings but it could be geared to make

portables on which the Education Department at present seems to be largely dependent. Holmesglen can produce those at a greater rate than they can be produced by private suppliers, both here and in South Australia, which supply this Government. Holmesglen ought to be used for this purpose. It can produce schools which satisfy the Minister of Education and which therefore should satisfy the Minister of Public Works. Those schools are an innovation that was arrived at by careful planning and consultation with experts from other countries in which prefabricated schools are built. Honorable members on both sides of the House ought to be asking questions about whether Holmesglen can supply their immediate future needs in the education field.

Finally, the Minister spoke about participation and made a few quotations which I do not intend to read. "I do not oppose community involvement" said the Minister "but I believe it must be under the control of Government". How can community control be achieved when a Government is dictating how the control will operate? Community control means community participation, in which everybody has a voice. I am not arguing that community participation is good or bad; I am merely pointing out that if it is under the jurisdiction and control of this Government it will not work.

Of course there will be teething problems if the change that is demanded by everyone at all tiers of education is made, but the problems should not be magnified by statements that this community involvement must be controlled by the Government. These bodies must be permitted to put their views on how community participation will work at an educational level. It works in other countries of the world and it will work here, if the Minister and the Government apply the big stick and allow people to discuss the matter around the table. It is of no use the Minister saying in one breath that he agrees with that, and in the next breath that this involvement must be under Government control. Members of the Opposition reject that concept, and reject the statement by the Minister that all is well between his department and its client, the Education Department. The whole education programme in the State has suffered, not only this year, but over the past ten or fifteen years as a result of the relationship between those two departments. It is a disgrace, and the Minister should do something about it. If he can create this liaison between the two departments, he can make a name for himself; as a comparatively new Minister of Public Works, where some of his predecessors have failed lamentably. The Public Works Department will thus be able expeditiously to carry out the 80 per cent or 90 per cent of its work which is required for the Education Department.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works): I shall refer to the comments of the three honorable members who have spoken to my Ministerial statement. The honorable member for Footscray referred to private criticism of the lack of liaison between the Public Works Department and the Education Department. I understood from his remarks that officers of both or one of the departments have made this criticism to him privately. How substantial is private criticism when its source is not revealed? I should like to know who the officers are.

Mr. FORDHAM: I bet you would.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Yes. I should like to know who made this private criticism to the honorable member for Footscray. Are they senior officers, junior officers, or a cleaner or caretaker of one of the departments? This private criticism cannot be taken seriously if its source is not revealed to the House. Public attacks on Government departments are often made under the guise of anonymous private criticism. It is not good enough. I cannot accept it.

The honorable member for Footscray asked questions last September, and also raised a matter on the motion for the adjournment of a sitting. The delay in replying to the honorable member was caused by the difficulty I had in understanding the question.

Mr. FORDHAM: It was simple English.

Mr. DUNSTAN: I am delighted that one member of the Opposition has had the benefit of an education and can speak simple English. I understood the English, but I did not understand the question. After the second question was asked, I certainly detected an attempt to create disharmony between the two departments. The honorable member for Footscray referred to lack of liaison. It almost became a cliché. There was no elaboration or detail. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not mention my statement, so surely the honorable member for Footscray was entitled to the same broad canvass.

Mr. WILKES: I said it was a miserable statement.

Mr. DUNSTAN: The honorable member referred to lack of liaison and, as I said, it was beginning to sound more and more like a cliché. His remarks then became more academic. I admire his academic approach to the subject but it was more academic than pragmatic. He totally misunderstood the subject he was canvassing.

Mr. WILKES: The honorable member knows more about education than anyone else in this place.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Certainly the honorable member would know much more about education than I do.

Mr. WILKES: Or I.

Mr. DUNSTAN: I would agree with that, but the House is not discussing education. It is discussing the lack of liaison between two departments, and that is certainly not a matter of education.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: The Minister is discussing education to the extent that school buildings are the subject-matter of the motion.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Yes, but school buildings are not an academic aspect of education.

The honorable member for Gippsland East also parrotted the lack and the problems of liaison between the two departments. I deny that the liaison between the two departments is weak. It is constant. Almost daily the Minister of Education and I discuss means of improving this liaison. During the dinner break on Tuesday of this week, the Premier, the Minister of Education, the Assistant Minister of Education, the Minister of Housing, the Minister of Public Works, and two senior officers of the Public Works Department, spent an hour and a half discussing the problems of the school building programme, not for 1975 but for 1976. We discussed methods by which the Housing Commission can become even more involved in the school building programme and other matters raised by the Minister of Education. This discussion was devoted to improving the liaison which, according to the honorable members who have spoken, is so sadly lacking between education, public works and housing officers. I appreciate the House taking note of the statement, and I appreciate the views expressed by honorable members. I do not agree with them entirely or necessarily.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made a generalized criticism, mainly levelled at the Public Works Department but not related in any way to the statement that the House is supposed to be noting. It was a general attack. In fact, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has perhaps developed as the most negative knocker the House has known in the past twenty years. In the unlikely event of the Socialists in Victoria forming a Government, this is not equipping the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the position of Deputy Premier. In view of the honorable member's intelligence, political experience and sensitivity, I wish he could be constructive. I shall wait and

hope. The comments of the Leader of the Country Party are always constructive, even sanctimonious at times.

The honorable member for Northcote has moved as an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion—" and deplores the failure of the Government to meaningfully involve local communities in the school building programme."

I am at a loss because I am not well educated and cannot understand what " meaningful " means. It sounds like a lyric from *Some Enchanted Evening.* Is it related to being generous? In any case, I am delighted that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is showing signs of culture.

If in the course of the debate it can be explained what " meaningful " means, I might be able to understand the amendment. I do not propose to take up the remaining 30 minutes, as the Leader of the Country Party will make a devastating contribution to the debate if he receives the call.

Mr. CURNOW: What you are saying is not very meaningful.

Mr. DUNSTAN: We now have two enchanted evenings. Until the honorable member for Kara Kara or one of his colleagues can explain what is meant by " meaningful " the Government will not decide whether to vote against the amendment or not.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition failed to read my statement. I said that I supported community involvement and should like co-operation from school committees and other organizations in the planning of projects associated with schools. By that I meant subsidiary work such as libraries, assembly halls or, as the Assistant Minister of Education has frequently advocated in this House, publicly, and in Cabinet, community complexes including schools, preschool centres, and local community halls.

Mr. FORDHAM: Is that what you are doing now?

Mr. DUNSTAN: It will be done in co-operation with those municipalities which are prepared to allow municipal facilities to be incorporated in one complex.

Mr. LOXTON: It will have some meaning.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Yes, it will be meaningful. Without criticizing school committees and councils, I point out that one sometimes wonders whether, if a committee or advisory council became involved in the construction of a school, there would be delays because of disagreement among its members.

Obviously, people in any area, proud of their town, city, or whatever it might be, would perhaps want a more expensive and more elaborate school than the Government has the money to provide even from the generous Budget allocation for school buildings. If the school committees had the say advocated by the honorable member for Footscray, the construction of schools could be delayed and costs could become even greater than they are now.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned lack of liaison. I give an example of liaison within the past seven days. Last week, when this House rose on Thursday, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, as the honorable member for Northcote, mentioned to the Minister of Education that the guttering at the Westgarth Primary School had been only half completed and that there were leaks from the other half during the rain that week. There was no correspondence and no question in the House. While I was walking out the door of the Chamber, the Minister of Education mentioned this to me.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: They are not all like you two.

Mr. DUNSTAN: The Leader of the Country Party has interjected and I repeat what he said so that it will be recorded. He referred to two outstanding Ministers and, without any ambiguity, meant the Minister of

Education and the Minister of Public Works. This is a happy day for me, following an enchanted evening.

Early on Friday last, after the Deputy Leader of the Opposition had raised the matter with the Minister of Education, who raised it with me, I raised it with my department. No time was wasted on correspondence. On Tuesday of this week the honorable member thanked me for the excellent job that had been carried out post-haste.

It is now 23 minutes until the House will suspend its sitting for lunch. I am developing a healthy appetite but, before the Government decides to vote against the amendment, perhaps some honorable member will explain the meaning of this beautiful word "meaningful".

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): I make the position of the Country Party quite clear: It will support the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I shall not take long, as I want to give other members of the Country Party and, hopefully, Government supporters, a chance to speak in this debate. One of the great weaknesses in Government administration in Victoria is the lack of liaison with local authorities. This does not apply only to the Public Works Department but applies to all Ministries. For their own reasons, public servants do not want to become involved with local communities; it is just too much trouble.

What I suggest should happen is that before any new Government building is constructed the architect and the public servants involved should visit the particular electorate and speak to the local municipal council and, if a school is involved, the school committee. An outstanding example of what happens relates to the rebuilding of the police station in Shepparton by the Public Works Department. Although representatives of the department came to the area, they did not speak to the municipal council or the local member of Parliament. However, it was decided to rebuild the police station. The department did not know that the Country Roads Board intended to divert the Midland Highway and change its entrance into Shepparton.

When the building was half completed, I acquainted the Public Works Department with the news that the highway would pass the new building. I was told that it did not know. But that was because it did not confer first with the Shepparton City Council. The important thing is that in many provincial centres the local municipality is the planning authority and if the planning authority is not consulted it cannot be known where new highways or roads will be built. That is elementary.

As a second example I point out that a 2-story building is being constructed at the Shepparton High School, mostly with Federal money, as a library and science block. Later, a third story will be added. The children will be shifted out of the building, the roof will be taken off, and a third story built. There was no consultation with the local people. There are about 25 class-rooms there. I had to take a deputation to the Minister to point out the stupidity of the proposal. This sort of situation applies time and again and wastes the time of the Minister and the members of the deputation. These things should not happen. It is embarrassing that public servants should become subjects of abuse, but that is a fact of life.

Nobody suggests that a local committee should design a school, but it would be good public relations and common sense to obtain local opinion because often members of a committee can explain local conditions. Admittedly, most committees have a genius who thinks he knows more than the officers of the department. However, quite often a member of the committee can acquaint the department with a certain amount of useful local information on other

construction projects in the area, and this could avoid the Government's being involved in invidious situations.

In the cause of good government, Cabinet should set down a procedure on what should happen before buildings are constructed in a new area. The procedure could be simple so that consultations may be held with the local council or the school committee. The local people should be consulted and told what is proposed. A lot of the criticism that is directed at the Government results from people being kept in the dark concerning the Government's proposals. If they are told what is going to happen this year and next year, many of the problems will be resolved and unnecessary criticism will be avoided. Local members would benefit by the introduction of such a procedure and eventually so would the Public Service.

The Country Party supports the amendment because it could lead to obvious improvement in Government administration in this State.

Mr. RAMSAY (Balwyn): The debate has led into an area that is important to members on the Government side of the House. I do not support the amendment. During the brief time in which I have been a member of Parliament, there has been meaningful involvement with local school committees in the planning and building of schools.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: Not always.

Mr. RAMSAY: It would be foolish to say that meaningful involvement occurs in every instance. In this area, the role of the local member is of some importance. If the Leader of the Country Party had been paying close attention to matters in his electorate, he might have been able to ensure that meaningful involvement took place.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: But a member has to take action after the decision is made; the honorable member is playing politics.

Mr. RAMSAY: In my electorate, there have been examples of meaningful communication. It would be worth while for all honorable members, including the Minister of Public Works, to consider the three words, communication, consultation and negotiation. Let us not pretend that everything is always in apple-pie order. This applies in all areas of government, particularly where individuals in the community are concerned.

I draw the attention of honorable members to the agreement of the Minister of Public Works on the point when he said—

> I do not oppose community involvement but I believe it must be under the control of Government to ensure uniformity and equality.

I take issue with the Minister's use of the words " control of Government ". The ultimate decision must rest with the Government and with the department under the Government's control, but in this context the use of the word gives the wrong impression. The community must be involved in discussions on the planning of schools or other community facilities. If the Government tells the community that no matter what it says it is going to do something, the system will break down. The Minister will agree that that was not what he meant by the use of the word " control ".

The Government has responsibilities over the whole State and it cannot allow each individual community to do what it wants in its own right. It must be part of the overall administration. I would encourage the Minister and the Government to approach the matter in this way and improve the lines of communication with the people of Victoria. This could be done with the assistance and co-operation of every honorable member.

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West): Mr. Speaker——

Mr. JONA: The honorable member is an expert on this too?

Mr. ROPER: At least the Secretary of the Cabinet believes I have some expertise, a feeling which I do not reciprocate. The great tragedy of this debate is that the statement made by the Minister is not what the honorable member for Footscray asked for, nor is it the statement which the Minister of Public Works agreed to make.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Perhaps the honorable member for Footscray should have written it for me.

Mr. ROPER: I remind the Minister that on 9th October he was asked for comments on the current arrangements and the department's practices on two particular matters—the relationship between the two departments and community involvement. The honorable gentleman said that he would make a statement on these subjects. What the Minister has done, particularly in the title, is to attempt to deal with the Brunswick Girls High School and then rush off a few comments on parental and community involvement.

The honorable gentleman claimed that no specific instances had been brought to his attention. He also claimed that community involvement would increase the time factor. Any honorable member who has had dealings with the department on new works in his area will agree that it is almost impossible to imagine any circumstances which would increase the amount of time taken in the planning stages. In the House recently, the honorable member for Murray Valley dealt at great length with the lack of liaison concerning a particular school in his electorate. He referred to files being lost between the departments. If the Minister of Public Works wants examples, no doubt the Minister of Education could provide them.

In my own electorate, I have had numerous cases where letters from the Education Department have not corresponded with letters from the Minister of Public Works. There is no way known in which the two letters could be put together. In one instance, one letter said that a feasibility study had been undertaken or was under way, whereas the other letter stated that draft plans were nearly ready. Those two letters could not in any way be said to bear any relationship one to the other.

To quote another specific example, last week I directed the attention of the Minister to a school in my electorate where a portable class-room was delivered on 25th July, but it was ready for occupation only last week because somebody had forgotten to supply the steel caps. There was no communication so far as one could work out between the Education Department and the Public Works Department. They were both equally at fault in this matter. This happens again and again. It is not just the Public Works Department that stands on trial; it is also the Education Department, because that department is not much in control of its building programmes either. It has allowed its Educational Facilities Research Laboratory to run down. The previous director left in 1972 and that position has not been filled permanently or even advertised. No proper attempt has been made by the Education Department to build up its building and planning strength. We believe that this should occur, and that the role of the Public Works Department should change basically.

In the few minutes I have left I should like to mention the question of community involvement, what is meaningful and what is not. It is interesting to note that at the end of his remarks the Minister of Public Works came to the nub of his views. He mentioned subsidy work. Members of the Opposition and the Country Party and the honorable member for Balwyn have been talking about the general school aspect; the kind of community involvement that occurred at Princes Hill High School. This involvement of outside community interests produced one of the best schools in Victoria.

If that kind of involvement occurred from the beginning of the Brunswick Girls High School project, the present problems would not have arisen. The problem with which the Education Department is confronted in Brunswick arose from the failure of the Education Department and the Public Works Department to involve the local people at the appropriate time, and now they are in difficulties in getting out from under. Further, community involvement means all that the Assistant Minister of Education said, it means consultation at the beginning. Consultation is of no use after expensive decisions have been made. It means surveying what already exists in the local area, and it also involves surveying the local council and other community groups' future demands. This is what the Public Works Department does not do. When it carries out a feasibility study it does not look into the over-all requirements of the area; it looks at the site available for a particular school building. That is completely inadequate, but that is the practice of the Public Works Department and that is what we deplore.

If the Minister of Public Works wishes to discuss the way in which community involvement occurs, he can do that best by looking at the developing situation throughout Australia. He can look at involvement in places such as South Australia, and in the Australian Capital Territory; he can have lengthy discussions with the Director-General of Education; but he will find that they are talking not about subsidy works and works on a particular school, but about major works. He will find that a broad view is taken by people, but this view is not shared by the Public Works De-Department. I should like to refer briefly to one such example and a suggestion in the report on "Murray New Town—Educational Incentives" issued by the South Australian Government. This report made deliberate mention of the need for community involvement in planning and education structure. It said that this involvement would be a desirable method of attracting people to a decentralized area; one of the reasons people moved to a particular area was because of the education system that was offering.

The report then stated—

> In the long run, a decentralized education system can become one of the features of Murray, and its appeal might extend to a much wider group of potential settlers. . . . An educational system best serves its varied clientele and performs its diverse functions if there is substantial power, wisely administered, at the local school level.

That is what the Minister of Public Works and his department have failed to understand. They are quite happy to involve the local community when the local community is putting in some of the funds, but they are not happy to involve the local community when only Government funds are being used. I am not going to read the Minister's speech; it stands by itself. He advocates uniformity and control; he is not in favour of the creative activities which the Education Department would wish to engage in.

Mr. DUNSTAN: And equality.

Mr. ROPER: There are a number of ways of defining equality, one of which is that everything is equally bad. This is largely what the Public Works Department is about. Uniformity and equality have a number of other aspects. Many schools will undergo substantial upgradings for which the Public Works Department has not been able to get the plans done, simply because they are "one-off" jobs. If a school was being demolished and being replaced by a set plan without any regard for the needs of the particular area the Public Works Department could have the plans done much more readily but, as all honorable members know, each school and each site has different requirements, particularly concerning additions to a school. If additions are to make any sense, they have to be done on a "one-off" basis.

I cite the example of the building of a library. Frequently a part of an existing school building is the best place for a library rather than

having it built in the yard; in wet weather children have to run through the rain to get to it. When the Public Works Department and the Education Department build a new library, it is placed in the yard even though it might be eminently cheaper and more practical to build some other facilities in the yard of the school and make the library part of the original school building.

Mr. McCLURE: Who lays down the conditions that exist?

Mr. ROPER: This is not the kind of flexibility that the Public Works Department or that the Education Department has. A number of suggestions have been made on this matter but they have not got very far. A similar situation arose with the building of Princes Hill High School. This is a most important and impressive work, and the Ministerial statement and the resolution on it should take this into account as an excellent case study. The architects who were employed involved the teachers, the community, and people living outside the area in designing it. The Melbourne City Council was also significantly involved. The architects also suggested a need for closer relationship between the existing building and the new building, and among other things it was suggested that the library should be placed in the centre. There was great difficulty in convincing the Public Works Department of this.

Inordinate difficulties were encountered on many occasions, even inflexibility. There was difficulty in getting incandescent lighting for a theatre area. The Public Works Department policy for lighting was fluorescent, but for drama that has certain difficulties. The light can be turned on or off but there can be no variation. It might be a simple matter, but it was not simple to the Public Works Department. When the theatre was finally built fluorescent lighting was installed and also incandescent lighting, because the Public Works Department inflexibility on this matter was such that rather than forgo fluorescent lights, it decided that the incandescent lights had to be put in as well.

This was a significant school in other ways. It was built much quicker than most schools in this State. Because of pressures the Education Department was quite properly able to bypass the Public Works Department. The school was also produced at a lower cost than the Public Works Department estimate of $1·3 million. With many extras, a great deal more flexibility and with far more attention given to the needs of the local community, this best secondary school in Victoria was built for $1·1 million.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The time prescribed in Sessional Orders for General Business to be interrupted by Government Business has now come. The uncompleted General Business items will remain on the Notice Paper. The honorable member for Brunswick West will have the opportunity of completing his speech at the next time appointed for General Business.

The sitting was suspended at 1.1 *p.m. until* 2.4 *p.m.*

JOINT SITTING OF PARLIAMENT.

COUNCIL OF LA TROBE UNIVERSITY.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education): I move—

That this House meet the Legislative Council for the purpose of sitting and voting together to choose three members of the Parliament of Victoria to be recommended for appointment to the Council of the La Trobe University, and, as requested by the Legislative Council to name the place and time of such meeting, name the Legislative Assembly Chamber at half-past five o'clock on Wednesday, October 30.

The motion was agreed to.

APPROPRIATION (1974–75, No. 1) BILL.

(Budget Debate).

The debate (adjourned from the previous day) on the motion of Mr. Hamer (Premier and Treasurer) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne): The great difficulty, logically, with the States-rights position of the State Government, as reflected in the Budget speech of the Premier, is that it advances insufficient evidence to justify the survival of the State system as we know it. I could have understood it if the Premier had said that it was of paramount importance to maintain the State system because the system is capable of a greater degree of imagination, originality and potential for good, provided that the finance is available, than any other system of Government. However, one would be hard-pressed to see in the speech of the Premier such a glowing declaration about the capacity of the State Parliament and the State Government. Some of us are beginning to suspect that the bland, calm exterior of the Premier only conceals a bland, calm interior, and the promises of all the things that would happen have not been fulfilled. The constant excuse which honorable members have been fed for months has been that the Government is unable to do what it wants to do because of the hostile enemy in Canberra, and therefore it does not presume to put forward any positive or creative ideas of its own.

The tragedy is that one looks in vain in this Budget and in this Ministry for new initiatives in housing, education, transport, local government or social services. To some extent governmental initiatives have been taken, virtually by default, by the Commonwealth Government, and the State Government has become a not particularly efficient middle-man. Certainly the State Government has failed to make use imaginatively or creatively of the taxing powers which it still retains, especially in the area of land tax and the exploitation of the Esso–B.H.P. natural gas deposits off the Victorian coast. I shall turn to that later. Many honorable members and, I think, many voters are disappointed about the failure of the Premier to initiate a large-scale programme of reform. However, before I become involved in discussing specific items of the Budget, I could not lose the opportunity of taking up the vexed question of unemployment which was raised again last night.

There has been a lot of talk about the nature of the Labor Party's brand of Socialism, and it was extraordinary to find the honorable member for Ringwood bringing into the discussion the name of Hegel. As you will recall, Mr. Speaker, the honorable member said that Hegel was the initiator of dialectical materialism. Of course, as Hegel would have been the first to agree, that was the exact reverse of the situation. Hegel's dialectic was entirely non-material, or idealistic. It was Marx who introduced the idea of dialectical materialism by saying, " I have turned Hegel on his head ". People must be careful when using words like " dialectical " in a context which they do not fully understand. Debate is a form of dialectic. In the working out of the dialectical principle, one has a thesis, opposed by an antithesis, and the resulting struggle leads to a synthesis. If we work properly as a debating Chamber, the Government is the thesis, we are the antithesis, and what ought to come out of this Chamber in terms of the Hegelian dialectic would be a synthesis, something new and, hopefully, better than what has gone on before.

That is, that every piece of legislation which comes out of this Chamber ought to be better than the thesis submitted by the Government. But because of sheer weight of numbers, rather than logic in working out what is happening in this place, what emerges is not in Hegelian terms, as the honorable member for Ringwood said, a synthesis at all; it is only a thesis recited and governed by the weight of numbers. That is one of the ways in which this debating Chamber loses the real significance that it ought to have.

As for the principles of Socialism of the Labor Party, and honorable members on the Government side of

the Chamber know them perfectly well, the Australian Labor Party has adopted more of the Fabian style and tradition of the British Labor Party which has evolved from the trade union movement than the European Marxist tradition. I am happy to adopt much of Marx's intellectual tools of analysis although I would regard myself as a Methodist Marxist. I have possibly read and examined Marx's writings and methodology more rigorously than any other member of this Chamber.

There is one sovereign principle to be obtained from Marxist's intellectual methods—it gets one away from triviality and superficiality. Marx may have been wrong in many of his predictions; he was never trivial. What concerns the Opposition about the method of analysis presented to the Chamber yesterday by honorable members opposite was the complete superficiality of the argument. If ever there was hypocritical cant in this Chamber it was heard in the nauseating way honorable members mouthed their platitudes about employment. Honorable members opposite spoke about unemployment as if it was some thing that the Labor Party had invented Federally and that we were indifferent to it at the State level. That is a contemptible hypothesis to put forward. The unemployed are our supporters, and to suggest that the Labor Party derives some kind of benefit from unemployment is absurd.

Returning to Marx's analysis of society, I do not follow that analysis all the way, but in many ways I agree that we now face "a crisis of the system." Honorable members are laughing. We shall see during the next hour or so whether they are still prepared to laugh.

Honorable members opposite who grew up earlier this century fail to realize that we are passing into what has been called the post-industrial revolution. The basic problem of the industrial revolution lay in the need for more production. Now the basic need is to guarantee a high level of consumption. Economic problems related to productivity have, for a large part, been solved. There is now virtually no correlation between the number of people employed in a particular industry and the productivity that comes from it.

One of the most remarkable examples of this is in agriculture. The decline in farm population in political terms marks the future extinction of the Country Party—I do not say whether that is a good thing or a bad thing. In terms of the future economy of this nation's economy, this rural population decline is simply inevitable.

The most productive agricultural system anywhere in world history, is of course the United States. Productivity in United States agriculture has increased rapidly, while the number of people actually employed in agriculture has declined dramatically.

In fact, the extraordinary superabundance of production has been a major problem. Crops have to be ploughed under and produce burned in certain areas to maintain price supports. But there has been a consistent decline in the number of farm workers involved. There is no correlation between the number of people involved in agriculture and its returns.

In the United States in 1950 there were 7·2 million people involved in agriculture of a total labor force of 63·8 million—11·3 per cent. By 1955 the percentage was down to 9·4 per cent. In 1960 it was 7·6 per cent. By 1965 it had dropped further to 5·7 per cent. By 1970 it was 4·1 per cent and by April, 1972, it was 3·8 per cent. So in a period of 22 years there has been a decline in the percentage of the work force involved in agriculture pursuits from 11·3 per cent to 3·8 per cent.

Has there been a decline in productivity? No, to the contrary; there has been an enormous increase in

productivity. It has been estimated, for example, taking into account the condition of the markets at that time, although the latest figures are not to hand, that in 1820 the average farm worker in the United States was able to support 4·1 consumers.

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I am sure that the *Hansard* reporters are having great difficulty in recording the speech of the honorable member because of interjections from both sides of the House. I ask honorable members to refrain from interjecting.

Mr. JONES: In 1900 the figure was 6·9 consumers; in 1940, 10·7; in 1950, 15·4; and in 1963, 30·7. In other words, the average farm worker in agriculture was able to support 6·6 more people in 1940 than he could in 1820, and 20 more from 1940 to 1963. However, if one looks at a country like India, where an enormous number of people are involved in agriculture—probably something like 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the work force—it has very low productivity. One could say that the larger the agricultural work force the lower the productivity.

The problem is an agonizing one. This is true of all the sophisticated industrial societies—that is, that the need for people to be employed particularly in manufacturing industries is likely to decline very dramatically. The reality of the situation is that certain areas of industrial activity are already more productive than necessary. I refer, for example to companies which manufacture toilet products, soap and so on.

Both Unilever and Colgate–Palmolive have, within their own factories, the capacity to produce 150 per cent of the total production needs of the Australian consumer. Those two firms, if they wanted to produce at full capacity, could produce three times the needs of the entire Australian economy, without regard to any other toilet manufacturing firm.

Mr. WHITING: What about exports?

Mr. JONES: Exports would account for an insignificant amount of the total production, and even if those companies were exporting it would not need to take up the entire production capacity; similarly in the case of the motor car industry, which economically is one of the most sensitive and alarming indicators at present. I do not under-stress the seriousness of the matter. It is not something to be raised just for the purpose of trying to gain a certain political advantage as between the Liberal Party and the Labor Party.

It is notorious that a few years ago there were six firms manufacturing Australian-made cars. Then, within a comparatively short time, four firms were manufacturing Australian-made cars and now there are three. It is also obvious—this point hardly needs to be explained—that two firms, the Ford Motor Co. of Aust. Ltd. and General Motors-Holden's Pty. Ltd., can between them, without any difficulty, meet the entire motoring needs of Australia. Of course, one appreciates, apart from the Leyland company, that if one other firm were to be closed by the application of the balance-sheet mentality such as we get from the other side of the House, the shock wave in the Australian economy would have a tremendous impact and must be avoided at all costs. In the next ten or fifteen years, as techniques of manufacturers become more sophisticated and as we move into the era of automation, computerization and containerization, with more central planning, and changes in certain methods of merchandising and manufacturing take place, there will be long-term structural employment. This has little to do with labour costs. Since the second world war economic events have not waited on legislation. The changing appetite and tastes of people and the changing pattern of buying and selling within the community have grown without any legislative supervision. Several

major assumptions will have to be made. One is that before the end of the decade an increasing number of people will be shifting to a four-day working week. Already in the Public Service people are working 36 hours and 45 minutes. School teachers, when they are in front of their classes, have a maximum of 30 contact hours.

Changing patterns are taking place in the retail field, where increasing numbers of small stores which employ a large number of people relative to turnover, are being forced out. An increasing number of retail sales are going through supermarkets with bulk buying and so on, and this means a serious decline in the number of people who will need to work in the retail industry.

Similarly, as women gain increasingly certain control over their reproductive cycle, a greater number of qualified women will be competing with men in the labour market force. This is particularly true in the professions and in some of the service industries. With increasing expectation of life and more people going on to tertiary education, one would expect a contracting number of people in the entire population to make up the work force.

This is not to be marvelled at. It has been a characteristic for a century that the more sophisticated the economy, the smaller the number of people relative to population involved in the work force. In a country such as India or Ceylon the fact that a large number of people are involved in the work force is an indication that it is an economically backward country. The most sophisticated countries—the United States, Canada, Scandinavian countries and so on—have a small proportion relative to population in the work force, given that retiring ages are becoming lower and people are living longer.

I was depressed to see in a recent volume, *Comparative Social Policy and Social Security—A Ten Country Study*, by P. R. Kaim-Caudle and published by Martin Robinson in London, the following comment—

> The rising standard of living which all the ten countries have enjoyed since the war has been the result of production increasing faster than population. Each worker on average produced more, so that in 1970, for example, only two men produced the goods and services which it took three men to produce in 1960. Rising productivity (output per man-year), however it is brought about, contribute to making men redundant: the man who loses his old job becomes available to produce something else. This additional output is reflected in the ever higher standard of living for which society strives. Thus redundancy of labour is an inherent feature of economic growth and not the consequence of poor economic planning or incompetent industrial management. Ideally, the man who becomes redundant should be able to find new employment without any difficulty, but in practice this does not always happen.
>
> One of the recognized major objectives of government is the maintenance of a high and stable level of employment. This cannot be achieved solely by counteracting cyclical fluctuations through monetary policy and demand management, but requires also other measures, for example industrial training programmes, regional capital investment and more opportunities and incentives for geographical labour mobility. However, a high and stable level of employment is in certain circumstances incompatible with other objectives of public policy—stable prices or a correction of an imbalance of payments.
>
> It may well be that in retrospect the 1950s and 1960s will appear as a golden age of low unemployment, relatively stable prices, rapid economic growth and few industrial disputes.

Mr. LACY: That is no consolation for the unemployed.

Mr. JONES: One is not concerned with handing out soft soap in a situation like this. It is not a matter of handing out appropriate platitudes. In looking at the structural nature of the situation we must realize that the way to deal with it is not to say, "We must go back to the 1960s". The entire relationship of man and his work is in the process of change and it is nothing less than a new industrial revolution.

Is it not possible that the Secretary of the Cabinet who has interjected, could sometimes try to look at causes rather than simply whinging

about effects? I sometimes think it would take a brain transplant to convey any new ideas to members on the opposite side of the House.

I suggest that the problem is enormous. It is not confined to Australia. It is a universal and long-term problem which will not be resolved by a change of Government in Canberra. That has nothing to do with it.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! I again appeal to honorable members to cease interjecting.

Mr. JONES: It is a question of the long-term restructuring of the whole economy. This is one of the reasons for the degree of anxiety within the trade union movement for the immediate future, because the trade union leaders are far sighted enough to recognize that the prospects in the next ten or fifteen years for semi-skilled or unskilled workers are extremely hazardous. Honorable members should not be deluded that members of the Opposition are not concerned with this problem. We are almost obsessionally concerned with it because the whole future of political democracy depends on making sure that people are not simply put off the shelf economically. This demands a long-term restructuring. Before the 1980s we may have to face the prospect of work rationing—an increased proportion of people may be working for only eight months in the course of the year. Whether it is a matter of working four weeks on and two weeks off, or eight months on and four months off, I do not know.

I agree very much with the views put forward by Professor John Kenneth Galbraith. These views are expressed in a number of books including the *Affluent Society* and *Economics and the Public Purpose.* Galbraith of course is considering conditions within a capitalist system and not as a Marxist, but he goes into the same type of issue with which I am dealing. He sees the prospect that in a number of areas of the economy productivity will continue to rise. In fact, productivity can increase in almost an exponential curve without any particular relationship to the people involved in the working force. In other words, if bottles or some other commodity are produced in a factory that employs 100 people compared with another factory that employs ten people, the factory employing ten people may have more sophisticated equipment and may run at a lower operating cost and be much more productive.

On page 261 of the book *Economics and the Public Purpose,* Galbraith says—

> The effect of higher prices (in the absence of other action) will be smaller purchases, smaller output and less employment in the market system than would otherwise be the case. This must be accepted. The market system now serves as an employer of last resort. By lowering their wage those who cannot find employment under the much more favourable conditions of the planning system are able to find employment—or employ themselves—in this sector.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The solution, however, is not to enforce a permanently lower reward on all who are in the market system. Rather it is to bring return in the market system more or less into line with that in the planning system and to provide an alternative income to those who, under these circumstances, are not employed or cannot be employed. Only thus can the market system be kept from being a residual employer at rates below those of the planning system. Only by such action can there be an approach to equality as between the two systems without the weight of reform—any move toward equality—falling on those who are left without any income at all. Thus we come to the last and most urgent in this series of reforms. *That is the provision of a guaranteed or alternative income as a matter of right to those who cannot find employment.*

It will be recalled that Galbraith first put this forward in 1958 in what was at that stage a fairly revolutionary statement in his book *The Affluent Society.* But even within the Nixon administration there had been increasing support for a guaranteed minimum wage, irrespective of productivity of the work the individual is engaged in.

Galbraith makes the point that in a society such as ours when the problems of productivity are broadly

speaking solved, the only irrecoverable situation is if there is a catastrophic fall in demand. If there is a catastrophic fall in demand or consumption, it is at that stage that people begin to panic and the economy goes completely out of control. Galbraith made the point that by the 1980s the stage would be reached where people would be pegged to particular wages for the time being. I assume that we are referring essentially to people in the middle and lower income groups.

The people in the middle or lower income groups would be pegged to a particular wage and the wages would be allocated according to their particular needs, size of families, and so on. They would receive that wage irrespective of whether they worked 52 weeks a year, 39 weeks a year, 26 weeks a year, or in fact if they did not work at all, because from Galbraith's point of view it was more important to ensure that everybody continued to consume. In other words, there are more producers in some ways than are needed. What is really needed is consumers because it is only if there is a withdrawal of consumption that the economy collapses.

I referred to the motor industry previously. If we were able to control our own rising level of expectation of demand, in a sense we could all go for a twelve months' period without buying any new cars. There is no one here who could not manage to squeeze an extra year's service from his car. We could do it if we wished to impose this type of restraint, but the impact on the motor industry would be catastrophic. If not one car was bought or needed to be made for twelve months, the effect on the economy can be imagined, not just on the families of people working in the motor industry but in related industries, such as tyres and component parts. It would send shock waves throughout the entire community. That illustrates Galbraith's point that consumption must be maintained.

This is an immensely serious problem. This is why members of the Opposition are so concerned at the habitual, carping, small-minded, short-sighted attacking of the Australian Government which is experiencing a period of unparalleled difficulty. I should have thought all State Governments, whether Labor or Liberal, would be prepared to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. BURGIN: What about Don Dunstan's remarks? Dunstan says the same words as the Victorian Premier but he says them differently.

Mr. JONES: Don Dunstan makes reasoned and principled criticisms. The criticisms from this State Government are neither reasoned nor principled. Members of the Opposition are concerned only with the political grandstanding towards the Commonwealth Government.

I turn to specific items in the current Budget and refer to some alternative way in which the State Government could improve its finances. The most obvious relates to the Victorian Railways. The story of the railways has not been a success story but it could be. It depends on how the industry is viewed.

If the industry is seen as yet another industrial project whose purpose is to make a profit, they have not been a success at all. If they are seen as being a public utility which provides a service in the same way as services are provided for education, health and so on, the value is difficult to compute.

The Government should take up the suggestion made by Sir Henry Bolte in the 1970s, that the railways should be given to the Commonwealth Government. In 1964, the railways operated at a profit of $1 million but they were not required to meet debt funding. Under the provisions of the Railways (Fund) Act interest and other debt charges were not imposed on the railways in 1961-62, 1962-63, and 1963-64.

However, since then funding for the railways has become completely out of hand and their losses have increased from $2 million, after meeting debt charges, in 1965 to $65 million in 1973-74, while the estimated loss for 1974-75 is $83 million. The accumulated losses of the railways over the past eleven years amount to $260 million.

In 1970, Sir Henry Bolte, the Nestor of the Liberal Party, supported by his Ministers, including the present Minister of Transport, offered the railways to the Commonwealth Government. But the then Prime Minister, Mr. John Gorton, would not accept them. However, the present Labor Government would accept them. It is simply a matter of the Premier and the Minister of Transport making the offer. If they did that, the Budget would not have to provide for a loss of an amount of some $83 million.

The Australian Labor Party is committed to the principle of public transport and the initiatives being urged by my namesake, the Federal Minister for Transport, Mr. Charles Jones, are designed to greatly increase the role of public transport and, in the long term, reduce the decisive impact of the motor car.

On the whole, cities such as Melbourne will not survive another ten or fifteen years of the war of attrition between the urban environments and the motor car. Once again, this is a long-term problem which must be faced.

As recently as 1970-71, the then Treasurer was able to attribute the entire deficit of a Victorian Budget to losses on the railways. I suggest to the State Government that if it wants to divest itself of the railways the Federal Government would be glad to accept them. The problem is that, in a way, the Victorian Government is so determined to maintain what the Leader of the Opposition calls the "States righteousness" position that it refuses to part with them. The State Government cannot operate the railways at a profit or along ordinary business lines but it is prepared to change the locks on the doors rather than allow the Commonwealth in to take over the railways.

Another alternative source of revenue for new projects which the Government could undertake if it really wanted to would be the renegotiation of the whole Esso-BHP agreement. It becomes clearer as we hear more about the negotiations relating to off-shore oil and gas in the North Sea with British and European interests that the Victorian Government was taken to the cleaners.

In 1971 the State Government of Alaska had dramatic off-shore discoveries of gas and oil. If the formula applied there had been applied in Victoria, by now this State would have something of the order of $200 million extra. The Opposition believes that the agreement should be renegotiated. The difficulty is that the Labor Party will not be in office until 1976 and by that time the State will have lost the benefits of two years of the additional income it should have.

More emphasis should be placed on land tax. In November, 1910, the Commonwealth Government introduced land tax but abolished it after 1952–53. So land tax is the province of State Governments. It is clear that, with the techniques of the great Theatre of the Absurd, where Ministers go to the wailing wall at Canberra each year, and take out their begging bowl at Premiers Conferences, they prefer to beg rather than look for alternative sources of revenue for themselves.

The 1973 Hamer Budget exempted the ordinary home block of land from land tax by increasing the full exemption for such land from $9,000 to $15,000. It also extended from $13,500 to $22,500 the level at which partial exemption ceased. At the same time it proposed to increase the rate of land tax where the unimproved capital value exceeded $170,000. At that time the marginal rate of land tax reached a maximum of 3·21 per cent at that stage.

In his Budget speech the Premier and Treasurer said that above that figure the marginal rate would be progressively increased to a maximum of 5 per cent when the unimproved capital value exceeded $1 million. Subsequently, no doubt as a result of pressure from land developers, the maximum of 5 per cent was reduced to 4 per cent. All land used for primary production was exempted from land tax apart from land which had been zoned for urban living purposes under a Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works planning scheme.

In 1972–73, land tax provided $29 million; in 1973–74, the sum was $42 million; and the estimate for the current year is $55 million. The Treasurer expects the total receipts for the State in 1974–75 to be $2,005 million. As land tax will amount to only $55 million it will provide a very small share of State revenue. Expressed as a percentage of the total State income, in 1973–74 land tax contributed, and in 1974–75 will contribute, 2·7 per cent.

Mr. MACLELLAN: Would you like it increased?

Mr. JONES: I would certainly like it increased but I am not the Treasurer nor the prospective Treasurer. In looking for additional sources of revenue, we must realize that existing State taxes are mostly indirect taxes on consumption. Taxes on consumption tax the poor at exactly the same rate as they tax the rich. Therefore, it is completely inappropriate for members of the Opposition to defend increases in pay-roll tax or stamp duty.

Mr. LOXTON: Would you like a form of income tax?

Mr. JONES: No, it is appropriate that the Commonwealth Government should have a monopoly in income tax on assessable income, whereas taxes derived from the capital value of property are entirely appropriate for the State Government to look to for increased revenue. Revenue from pay-roll tax amounts to $320 million, whereas land tax raises an absurdly small $55 million. There is quite a discrepancy and yet everyone knows that the industrial and commercial fabric of this State is dependent overwhelmingly on the value of land, either directly or indirectly. No honorable member could believe that there is an equity in a situation where pay-roll tax brings in six times more revenue than land tax.

The State Government ought to look towards the possibilities of developing land tax along the lines which I understand were put forward by the honorable member for Box Hill. I regret that I was outside the Chamber when he spoke last night but I know he thinks very much along those lines.

History shows that State Liberal Party Governments have been reluctant to increase land tax but they have had no hesitation in increasing indirect taxes such as pay-roll tax. It is somewhat significant that an analysis of land tax returns shows that the land on which land tax is paid is valued at $2,007 million whereas the total value of land is in excess of $8,000 million. Accordingly, there is an enormous untaxed source of revenue in land taxation.

I would be happy to see land tax rates increased to 5 per cent on properties valued in excess of $100,000, of which there are many. An analysis of the number of taxpayers for the year ended 31st December, 1972, indicates that 748 landholders have property worth between $100,000 and $150,000; 161 between $150,000 and $170,000; 188 between $170,000 and $200,000; 286 between $200,000 and $300,000; 145 between $300,000 and $400,000; 247 between $400,000 and $1 million; and, for the information of honorable members opposite who are so terribly concerned, I point out that the number whose assets are worth more than $1 million is a miserable 130-odd. There is certainly argument for substantially increasing land tax, and 5 per cent would be a modest levy on such properties.

I now wish to deal with one or two minor points relating to the Budget. Last night, on the motion for the adjournment of the sitting, I referred to honorary probation officers, but it occurred to me, in retrospect, that in some ways what had happened to the honorary probation officers was symbolic of the miserable and short-sighted approach which the Government often adopts, particularly in social welfare matters.

Honorary probation officers do a tremendous job for the State and the total cost of running the probation system is only $4,000. This was the amount allocated in 1972 by the then Minister for Social Welfare, the present Minister of Agriculture, for running the Honorary Probation Officers Association. Subsequently the probation officers were promised the services of a full-time officer to co-ordinate their work. Mr. Hal Law was actually appointed to the position but he transferred to the Citizens Advice Bureau which concentrates on referral and not counselling. The Honorary Probation Officers Association has no office, and members of the association have to rely on their honorary office-holders to provide accommodation and support.

Unfortunately, the "life expectancy" of an honorary probation officer in probation work is now only about two years whereas a few years ago the average length was three years. Dismayingly, a large number drop out because they are frustrated at their inability to receive adequate training; this is again a characteristic of the Government in providing services on the cheap. The honorary probation officers complain that the Training Division of the Social Welfare Department seems to be uninterested. Following many representations, courses were set up at the Social Welfare Department's training centre at Lisson Grove, Hawthorn, but for 1975 even improvizations of the past two years have been dropped.

No provision is made for emergency services when an honorary probation officer has a difficult case. If a problem arises after 5.6 p.m. there is no one to ring or to get in touch with. The same situation applies on Saturdays and Sundays; the officer is on his own.

The officers do not receive the cost of telephone calls, which may amount to $100 a year, and there are 800 active probation officers. They do not receive travelling expenses or taxation deductions on telephone rental, motor vehicle costs, petrol, or other incidental expenses because they do not receive an income. Tax claims ought to be considered by the Commonwealth Government but the basic responsibility rests with the State Government, which ought to be prepared to grant these officers some form of assistance.

There is a strong case for the payment of an honorarium of some sort. In Sweden, an honorary probation officer receives 50 Kronor a month and an additional 50 Kronor for each client under his supervision. Each officer has a maximum of two clients a year so that, theoretically, one could receive 150 Kronor a month, or 1,800 Kronor per annum, which is equivalent to about $360 Australian. But think of the saving to the State. What would it cost the State to provide enough full-time professionally trained probation officers to take up the slack of the 800 on the active list? In October, 1973, the Government seemed to agree in principle that it would grant some kind of economic concession, but nothing has happened. One of the problems is that about 250 have been added to the roll of honorary probation officers this year and it is estimated that there is another 100 to come. The association claims that some people have been accepted without being interviewed let alone being trained. Some honorary probation officers never do any casework; many drop out without having engaged in cases.

Many probation officers become involved in family situations. For example, they often have to provide counselling for members of the family

other than the member to which they are directly referred. A young man might be referred to a probation officer by the court and the officer finds that the client has a father who is an alcoholic or unemployed. Often the probation officer will become involved in that situation as well.

The association informed me that some officers have as many as 19 or 20 cases and the average number is about 6. One of the economic problems about the high cost of being a honorary probation officer is that it becomes a disincentive to poorer people. It is striking that the great bulk of honorary probation officers come from the eastern and south-eastern suburbs. Very few come from the northern and western suburbs where one would have thought they would be close to the local scene and be able to provide the most effective help. I suggest that it is an economic disincentive, and the Government ought to look at the social implications of this very seriously.

Without being able to meet the costs, and lacking confidence, it is no wonder many people are discouraged in doing honorary probation work. To add insult to injury, when the Social Welfare Department provided an interim training course, the women committee members of the Honorary Probationary Officers Association were called upon to provide cups of tea.

The honorary probation officers are not even provided with a copy of the Act they are supposed to administer, although it costs only 60 cents to buy. It is a pathetic example of the parsimonious attitude of the Government. Worst of all, the Social Welfare Department will not accept reverse charge calls from the country. Surely it could provide a silent line, the number of which would be known only to the probation officers on the basis of reverse charge calls from the country in cases of emergency.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS: Do you want $80,000 or $8,000?

Mr. JONES: I concede that I am always anxious to be quite right with the Leader of the Country Party, because he is obsessional on points of detail. Yes, even Homer can nod. I made a mistake last night. I should have said $80,000 instead of $8,000. I was reading rapidly. I thank the Leader of the Country Party for his indulgent interest. It is quite interesting—one of those litmus tests to see how serious the Government is on questions of social welfare. It has the opportunity to reshape this State. Many people in the electorate must have hoped for more from the Hamer Government. I certainly intend to vote against the Budget.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East): One of the significant points about this Budget debate is that most speakers have taken the full extent of their time, and indeed extensions of time have been granted, which seems to be quite an unusual situation. Perhaps it reflects the concern of honorable members at the economic situation which faces the country at present. Although I do not intend to take up the full hour at my disposal, it certainly cannot be taken as any indication that I do not share as much as anybody else great concern at the financial state of the country. However, the debate has been fairly indicative that one of the greatest problems confronting Australia is that the Government in charge of the financial affairs of Australia seems to be lacking in real knowledge of the situation with which the country is beset, or the cause of it.

The honorable member for Melbourne made it clear early in his remarks that he did not have a clue as to what was causing the troubles, and had little idea of how they could be remedied. One of the greatest causes of our problems today is that those in the hierarchy of the Labor Party have never got out of the rarified atmosphere of political theory. The

House had a good serve of that political theory from the honorable member for Melbourne this afternoon. Many people who purport to represent the working classes of this country have never lost a bead of sweat in their life in earning money for a day's work. They are the people who are allegedly the representatives of the working class, and I do not think they have ever had a callus on their hands.

Far too many people who are academic adherents to Labor philosophies have conned the hard-working down-to-earth Labor voters into supporting them as prophets of the new order in this country. But many of them, while playing on the Capitalists system, are sharing the fruits of that system to no small order. It would do the down-to-earth Labor voters much benefit if the background of a lot of those people who claim to be Labor working-class representatives was known and what their share is in the wealth of this country.

Although I share with other honorable members the great concern for the tremendous level of unemployment which exists in the country at the present time, one of the factors which has been fairly significant is the influence of the present economic circumstances on primary industries. Practically no mention has been made of this during the debate. This is indicative of the fact that neither Government nor Opposition spokesmen have any concept of what is happening to primary industries. It is all very well to say that it is bad for people to lose a day's pay, a week's pay or a month's pay but many primary producers are losing a lifetime's work and even a generation's work. The assets that have been built up by generations of work, in many instances on family farms, are threatened by economic conditions today and this should be well and truly understood.

I believe that when the rural community fully understands what the Federal Government proposes to do by way of capital gains tax, for example, there will be near to revolt in country areas.

One of the first mistakes that the Federal Government made was in judging the economic situation on a day-to-day basis. It has not looked at the long-term effects. One of the first actions taken by that Government which set this whole sorry business in train was the revaluation of the dollar. That was done by a two-man Government within weeks of the Australian Labor Party being elected to office. Revaluation immediately placed producers of exportable items at a disadvantage. For a short period the Australian balance of overseas payments was running high and everything in the garden looked rosy. However, the Federal Government overlooked the effect that revaluation would have on export industry and compounded the problem by its overall blanket unreasoned reduction in tariffs.

I am not opposed to logical and well-thought out tariff reductions in particular areas, but to make a blanket reduction regardless of the consequences to any industry was ridiculous. Obviously the action was taken by people who did not know what they were doing. The honorable member for Melbourne clearly indicated that he had no idea what the effect of these actions would be, yet the effects were clear to people employed in the textile, footwear and electronic industries.

These are factors that were well known to the coalition Governments of times gone by. They were aware of the sensitivity of the Australian financial structure and did not make arbitrary decisions on the spur of the moment—as these two men did—to revalue the dollar across the board without justification.

One of the causes of today's problems is that too many people are being paid too well for producing nothing, or in some cases, for doing nothing. It is obvious that inflation

must occur if money is paid out in the community without goods being produced for purchase, because too much money begins to chase too few goods. The policy of the Federal Government has been virtually to kick the people who are producing the goods which the community needs. Basic essentials for a well-organized and viable society are being ignored. Farming industries are described as "primary"—the word "primary" means "of first importance". The Australian Government seems to think that primary industries are expendable and that there is no need to maintain or support them.

I know I will be considered almost blasphemous for making the statement which I am about to make, but I cannot understand the reasoning behind the argument that, of all the things in the community which man requires, education alone should be free. Why should it be considered that the ordinary man in the street should receive education, above all other things, free of charge? This seems to be the philosophy of the Labor Party and, to a large extent, of the Liberal Party. In my view, man's first requirement is food. He cannot live without that; he can live without medication and shelter, but not without food. Many things should have a higher priority than education. Surely a time must come in any person's educational life when it ceases to be a right he should expect. Everybody is entitled to an education up to a particular level.

Mr. DOUBE: What level is that?

Mr. B. J. EVANS: If a level has to be chosen, I should set it probably at the end of the secondary level, but there must be a point when a man's education becomes an investment in his future.

Can anyone explain the difference between an eighteen-year-old person borrowing $50,000 to set himself up on a farm for the rest of his life, and borrowing a similar amount to educate himself to become a doctor so that he can practise medicine for the rest of his life? In either case it is an investment in his future. Why should he receive one free but have to provide every cent himself for the other?

It is time the Government investigated a scheme to introduce loans for people who want to undertake tertiary education. Such a plan would lead to more responsibility in people undertaking university degree courses, because they would be obliged to return to the community the cost of their education. In addition, it would weed out many people who go to university, obtain a degree such as that of Bachelor of Arts, and then sit on the beaches at Portsea or Lorne because they cannot find suitable employment. They then become eligible for compensation.

The Federal Government pays unemployment benefits to these people, yet at the same time thousands of acres of the people's land are overgrown by blackberries, scrub and rubbish, and money cannot be obtained to do something about it. The Government will not provide jobs for people to clear the land. It is the Government's responsibility; it is the people's land, and it is going to waste. Money cannot be found to cure erosion, to finance all sorts of Government ventures, or to repair the roads where people are being killed because of the tremendous potholes in them. A truck driver recently said that he sounded his horn when he came to a pothole on the Hume Highway in case there was a car in it.

This situation is developing because the Government is putting money into the hands of people who are doing nothing and is not providing jobs for people who are prepared to do this type of work. According to this Government's priorities, they are the last in line.

The Budget is fairly large. As the Leader of my party said—I do not recall the exact term he used, but

it was a harmless one—everyone expected a few shocks, but the best that can be said for it is that it is holding the fort without unduly increasing charges on the community. Admittedly, some additional charges have been imposed, but by and large they are tolerable in the present economic situation. Nevertheless, I do not believe the Budget puts into effect a number of the Government's declared policies.

In particular, reference is made to Government policy on decentralization. At one stage honorable members hoped something dramatic would come forward in this Budget following an article which appeared in the *Age* some months ago. Unfortunately I do not have the date but the article is headed, "Tax Plan on Melbourne City. Proceeds will aid Rural Industry" and states—

> The State Government plans to impose a new tax on industry within the next eighteen months to slow Melbourne's growth. Taxes or charges could be applied to factory building expansion and a type of head tax put on the basis of more than a specific number of employees.

Like the honorable member for Geelong, I think that one also has gone out of the pipeline. That is an illustration of another case of window dressing by the Government and of its pretence that it is doing something worth while about decentralization.

I wish to provide the House with an illustration of the Government's performance in the field of decentralization. I have done this on a number of occasions, but I refer honorable members to a question I asked on 23rd April, 1974, about the expenditure of Country Roads Board funds as between different sections of the State. The answer to the question appears on page 4711 of *Hansard* of 23rd April, 1974. The figures are fairly dramatic. They are even more dramatic when put in the form of a graph and I shall indicate to honorable members in graphic form just what those figures show.

This is a graph compiled from the figures contained in the answer.

Mr. MACLELLAN: I cannot see.

Mr. B. J. EVANS: I have had prepared copies of the graph which can be handed to those honorable members who are interested—as I presume two or three will be. On the right-hand side of the graph, commencing from the bottom, there is indicated the expenditure in the divisions of Ballarat, Bairnsdale, Horsham, Warrnambool, Traralgon, Benalla, Geelong and Bendigo. The line in the centre of the graph indicates the expenditure in the metropolitan division and the line on the left-hand side indicates the expenditure in the Dandenong division. The graph commences from the year 1953-54 and extends to 1973-74.

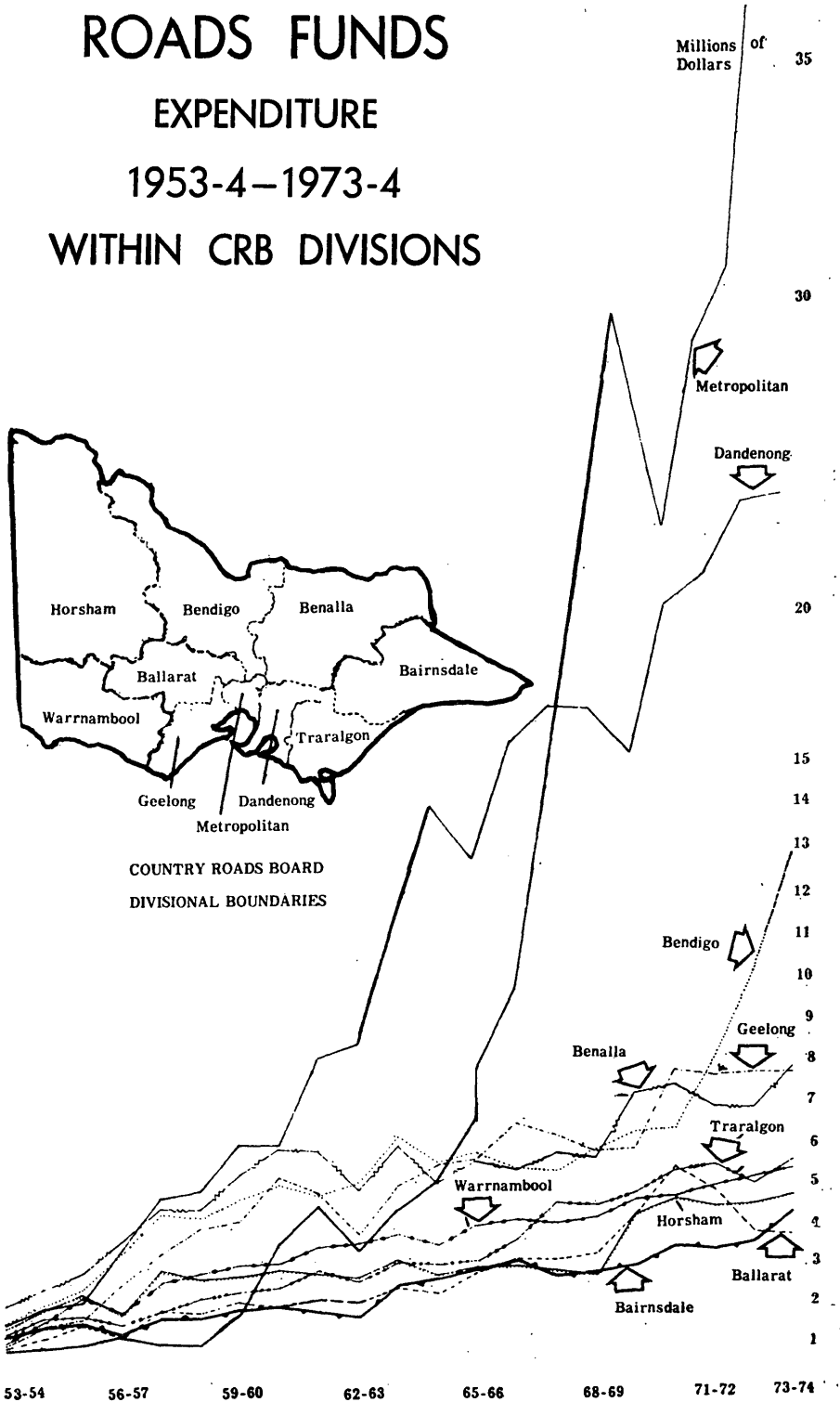
If honorable members examine the graph they will see a clear picture of the Government's tendency to favour the metropolitan and Dandenong divisions in the area of road expenditure. I have shown graphically, that since 1964-65 the expenditure in the metropolitan area has literally sky-rocketed while expenditure in country regions has remained at a level which is little more than keeping up with the general rate of inflation.

Mr. MACLELLAN: Dandenong did very well.

Mr. B. J. EVANS: If the honorable member for Gippsland West says that Dandenong did well, he should examine the small map included on my reproduction of the graph and he will see that the Dandenong division encompasses little more than the south-eastern suburbs of the metropolitan area.

I seek leave for the graph to be incorporated in *Hansard*. I have made inquiries and I understand that it is quite practicable for it to be included in *Hansard*. The incorporation would include the small map showing the boundaries of the divisions.

Leave was granted, and the graph was as follows—



Mr. B. J. EVANS: I thank the House for the opportunity of having the graph incorporated in *Hansard.* However, there are one or two points which I should make for the purpose of clarification. Firstly, any honorable member who checks the figures in the graph will see that the figure of expenditure attributed to the metropolitan division does not seem to tie in with the answer to the question I asked on 23rd April, 1974. The explanation for that is that the figure for the metropolitan division includes road funds spent by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works and which were raised from exactly the same sources as those spent by the Country Roads Board—in other words, special provision funds from 1965-1966 and Commonwealth aid road funds from 1971-72, when those funds were first made available to the Board of Works. The source of the funds made available for both the Country Roads Board and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works does not include any portion of local government funds.

The important fact that this illustrates is that it is not a true comparison between one division and another because it is not possible, on a year-to-year basis, to compare individual Country Roads Board divisions. That is because there may be a major project in one area which it is not sensible to leave unfinished after one, two or three years in order to balance out the expenditure in other divisions.

However, I believe by taking it over a period of twenty years, the graph clearly shows that over the past ten years the State Government has placed tremendous emphasis on the growth of expenditure on roads in the metropolitan area.

In addition to that, honorable members should take into account the amount of money that has been lost in the metropolitan area by the railways operations which, I understand, is somewhere in the region of $30 million to $40 million.

Mr. MITCHELL: What!

Mr. B. J. EVANS: On railway operations in the metropolitan area, out of a total State-wide loss of $80 million, at least $40 million was sustained in the metropolitan area. On top of that there is to be added the $12 million lost by the tramway operations. Then there must be added the projected expenditure on public transport to facilitate the movement of people within the metropolitan area.

I believe the graph really begins to show just how futile and wrong it was for the Minister of Labour and Industry to produce figures in the course of this Budget debate. His table was headed, "Funds available for expenditure in country areas which are not available to city areas". I challenge the honorable gentleman to draw up a balance sheet to show the expenditure by various Government departments in the city for which there is no equivalent in country areas. In fact, in trying to check out the honorable gentleman's balance sheet, if one can call it that, I found it difficult to locate the figures which he claims appear in the Budget papers.

I wish to illustrate what the honorable gentleman has done in producing his document. He has indicated the expenditure but has completely failed to make any reference to the equivalent revenue obtained by the Government. The first item quoted by the Minister of Labour and Industry is an amount of $407,331 for the Rural Finance and Settlement Commission interest subsidy in respect of liability for interim leases, purchase leases and so forth. The Minister completely overlooked the fact that $4,000,046 has been repaid by people who have received loans and entered into leases. He mentioned country art galleries but overlooked the tremendous expenditure on the National Museum, the National Library and other cultural activities in the metropolitan area. Those facilities may be available to country people, but country art

galleries are also available to city people who have only to make a trip to enjoy them.

Mr. DUNSTAN: There are some excellent art galleries in the country.

Mr. B. J. EVANS: I do not deny that, but I deny the Minister of Labour and Industry the right to prepare and obtain official recognition of a statement that $343,000 which is made available to the country is not available to the city. It is an absurd proposition for the Minister to advance.

The honorable gentleman referred to $453,000 being made available to the Mines Department for expenditure. He overlooked the fact that the Government collects $34 million from oil development royalties in Victoria. If the Minister claims these costs in development as charges against the country, the $34 million royalty can be mentioned in the balance-sheet as an advantage to the city.

Although I support the point of view expressed by the Labor Party in this matter, I believe it is one area in which the State Government has lost much revenue when one considers the profits that must be being made from this tremendous development. The metropolitan area, which is the main beneficiary of natural gas, is getting this gas too cheaply. A higher charge to residents in the metropolitan area for natural gas would produce more revenue which could be spent on the entire State. At present the metropolitan area is receiving an advantage from the undervalued resources. The interjection of the honorable member for Gippsland West appeals to me. There ought to be a scheme for the equalization of liquid petroleum gas prices so that gas is offered to everybody in the State at the same price. After all, the resources are supposed to belong to the people and I do not know why one section of the State should be advantaged and another section, because of its location, denied the advantage.

If one considers the $34 million revenue from royalties on the basis that it represents 11 per cent of the wellhead price, one finds that the oil and gas companies must have a wellhead value on oil and gas in excess of $300 million a year. According to the information I have been able to obtain, the total amount of money spent by these companies in development, exploration, processing and distribution of gas is about $500 million. I suggest that a return of $300 million a year on a $500 million investment is a good return indeed. In conjunction with an upgrading of the price of natural gas to the metropolitan area, the Government could obtain much more revenue to carry out the policies it desires to put into effect and to give the country people of Victoria a much fairer deal than they have received in recent years.

In this document the Minister of Labour and Industry details the Forests Commission's capital programme and annual loss, whatever that might be, and completely overlooks the royalties received by the Forests Commission which more than balance the amount quoted. In the water supply programme, again the honorable gentleman completely ignores the revenue obtained by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission from repayments of various kinds. It points up the policy of the Government when a Minister is prepared to go to so much trouble to prepare a scurrilous document such as the one produced the other night by the Minister of Labour and Industry.

Reference was made in the Budget to housing. The Treasurer has pointed out that the Housing Commission will concentrate its building programme in country areas with contracts being let for about 54 per cent of its planned dwelling units in 1974–75 in country areas. Figures can be used in many ways and one must consider what 54 per cent of the dwellings represents in the cost involved.

In an effort to obtain information in this regard I recently asked the Minister of Housing for some comparative costs on home construction in various areas of the State. As reported at page 803 of *Hansard*, I asked what was the total cost, including land acquisition and provision of services, of providing a dwelling unit in each zone in each of the years 1972, 1973 and 1974. The answer I received was not helpful because the figures were as follows—Zone A, which is basically the metropolitan area, $16,293—that is in relation to land acquired on 28th April, 1951; zone B, $15,655 for land acquired on 17th March, 1970—zone B represents largely the outer and inner-metropolitan areas; zone C, $14,597 for land acquired on 1st July, 1964.

It is difficult to make a comparison between homes constructed on land acquired in 1961 and homes built on land acquired in 1964 or 1970. However, even using the figures produced by the department and the distribution of home constructions as contained in the same reply—that is, that during the year ended 30th June, 1974, 878 homes were constructed in zone A, 85 in zone B and 478 in zone C—as the cost of constructing each individual unit, although 84 per cent of the home units may be constructed, the cost indicates that about 36 per cent of the revenue available to the Housing Commission is being spent on that area. This is simply because of the difference in the cost of a construction, land acquisition, and the like. It may sound nice that 54 per cent of homes are being built in the country, but the expenditure involved represents no more than a fair share of the revenue which is available to the Housing Commission.

A somewhat different picture emerges when one examines the total homes under construction, according to statistics put out by the Austrailan Bureau of Statistics in July, 1974. During the year 1971-72, only 19·7 per cent of total housing, both Government and private, was constructed outside the metropolitan area. In 1972-73, the figure was 21·3 per cent, and in 1973-74, 28·5 per cent. The performance in 1973-74 merely retains the *status quo* between the country and the metropolitan area. In other words, the population of the remainder of the State is approximately 28 per cent, and about 28 per cent of the new homes constructed in that period were located in the country. That is the extent of the Government's success in decentralization to date. It is simply maintaining the *status quo* between country and city. It has not been shown that significant progress has been made in decentralization in recent years. There has been literally a disastrous trend of growth in the city, and a slowing down of growth in the country to the point where it is no longer occurring. The balance between country and city is barely being maintained. Nothing worth while is being achieved in decentralization and more should be done in this sphere.

Recently I read in an American magazine an article on the development of small towns. The author of the article emphasized that it is useless erecting a shell of a building in a country town and then looking around for someone to put into it. He rightly points out that many features which will attract people to country towns are intangible; that it is not a matter of having a few buildings, vacant houses, and so on. It depends on the quality of life in the area and whether people can obtain an adequate education for their children. In the United States of America education is largely the responsibility of the local community. The local community can deliberately set out to provide high-standard educational facilities and various amenities for the purpose of attracting people into the area. In some respects it is unfortunate that this course of action is not taken in this country where education is the responsibility of the State.

Earlier today I referred to the needs for improved educational facilities. A new approach to education has been adopted in East Gippsland, and in particular in Bairnsdale. I believe this is a wonderful opportunity to do something positive to encourage people into the country. I say this with good reason, because most honorable members who have listened to my previous comments on this subject will realize that I have an interest in electoral statistics and how the various areas of the State are faring. Changes in electoral enrolments are a fair gauge of the population trends in a State.

I do not believe the establishment of a new town at Sunbury or Melton is decentralization. There is no point in developing areas of this type in the interest of decentralization, because Melbourne will extend to these areas anyway. If one excludes four electorates, three of which are on the outskirts of the metropolitan area and one on the outskirts of Geelong, the electorate with the next largest increase in population in the State is Gippsland East. I have excluded Dromana, which is obviously becoming part of the outer-metropolitan area. Gisborne is in the same category, and to a lesser degree Evelyn, which is developing simply because of its proximity to the metropolitan area. The electorate of Bellarine, with a population increase of 6·6 per cent, is the only country electorate I have excluded. If the population increase for Bellarine is averaged with the population figures of the two Geelong electorates, it brings it into line with other country electorates. I emphasize that if those four electorates are excluded, the electorate with the next largest increase in population is Gippsland East, which recorded an increase of 4·42 per cent. I should explain that I am using the figures as a percentage increase from 28th September, 1973, to September, 1974. The figures are as recent as it is possible to obtain from any source.

Mr. HAYES: What was the population figure at 28th September?

Mr. B. J. EVANS: The question of the honorable member for Scoresby indicates that he has not understood what I am saying. I am referring to percentage increases. It does not matter what the base figure is; the percentage is taken on the population change which has occurred over that time. The figure in all cases is relative. It is a percentage based on the increase which has taken place on the figure which existed twelve months ago.

Mr. HAYES: Four per cent of 21,000 is different from 4 per cent of 45,000.

Mr. B. J. EVANS: No. On a percentage basis, 4 per cent of 21,000 is no different from 4 per cent of 45,000. It is certainly different on a total basis. If the honorable member wants to take the figure on a total basis, my contention still holds that apart from the four electorates to which I have referred, Gippsland East has the biggest total enrolment increase of 952. I am happy to take it whichever way the honorable member wishes. It is interesting to note that included in the centres which East Gippsland has beaten in electoral enrolments is every centre which the Government chose for accelerated development seven years ago.

When the Victorian Eastern Development Association appointed a full-time promotions officer several years ago I commented that it would be interesting to compare, over the years, the effectiveness of a privately sponsored, voluntary and spontaneous organization with a Government sponsored, arranged and dominated organization such as the various promotions committees which have been set up for the centres chosen for accelerated development. Now, some proof of the effectiveness of a voluntary organization, as compared with a Government organization, is available.

In a number of country electorates the increase in enrolments exceeds the average State increase of 1·61

per cent. That percentage was determined by taking the enrolments for September, 1974, and comparing them with those for September, 1973.

Mr. DIXON: That seems small for the State.

Mr. B. J. EVANS: No, it is in line with increases over the years. The increase in enrolments was in the region of 36,000 for the year and the increase in the population of the State is usually about 40,000 or 45,000. I point out that this includes eighteen-year-olds. The percentage may be a little lower than that applicable to previous years.

In some electorates, the increase in enrolments is below the State average. At the bottom of the list is an area which has recently been chosen as a growth area. The electorate of Geelong had a negative result. It lost 0·53 of its electors. The smallest increase in enrolments was in an electorate which had grown very slowly over the years. In Lowan, the enrolment increased by 0·61 per cent. In the Portland electorate, another area selected for accelerated development, the increase was 0·80 per cent. Hampden had an increase of 1·41 per cent and Warrnambool an increase of 1·39 per cent.

It is significant that every electorate represented by a member of the Country Party has an increase in enrolment in excess of the average State increase and that electorates represented by members of the Liberal Party are in the doldrums.

Mr. HAYES: What is the position in Rodney?

Mr. B. J. EVANS: The number of electors increased by 1·79 per cent; that is in excess of the State average.

Mr. CURNOW: What is the position in Kara Kara?

Mr. B. J. EVANS: I shall not read the complete list but, for the benefit of the honorable member for Kara Kara, I point out that the increase in enrolment in his electorate was 0·65 per cent. In another debate I may tabulate this information in proper order for the edification of honorable members who have displayed an unexpected degree of interest in the figures. Perhaps the fact that a redistribution is in the offering has attracted an interest which was not evident previously.

Mr. GINIFER: How far is Gippsland East off the quota of 30,000?

Mr. B. J. EVANS: With the way things are going it will not be long. If more Government interest were displayed, the time would be shorter and the area would be better off.

I direct the attention of the House to the degree of Government interest in the Gippsland East area. On a number of occasions I have endeavoured to let the Parliament know of the importance of the tourist industry to the district. Recently, I received a letter from the Minister for Tourism in which he enclosed a letter he had written to the Federal Minister for Tourism to substantiate his claim that he had supported tourist programmes in the region I represent.

I was delighted to read the Minister's letter but my delight turned sour on reading the letter he had written to his Federal colleague. Not one of the projects mentioned was within 50 miles of the electorate. I can understand the confusion of the honorable gentleman. Although over the period I have tried, I have not been able to attract him to the area during the eighteen months of his Ministry. One would expect a Minister who had been granted a portfolio to familiarize himself with what was covered by it, as one would expect the Minister of Health to inspect hospitals and so on. I expected the Minister for Tourism to see the tourist attractions throughout the State. But, despite all sorts of promises over the period of eighteen months, when I have tried to pin the Minister for Tourism down to a date on which he will visit my electorate, I cannot do so.

I am reminded that the Minister of Agriculture made a flying visit to my electorate. I raised this matter

recently and I now find that I must apologize to the honorable gentleman. I misunderstood the position. I thought the Minister had made a visit subsequent to one he made some months ago. But it was that visit of some time ago which resulted in the incident I mentioned. The Minister had informed me that he would visit the electorate, and I apologize to him.

The Budget is as good as can be expected from the Government. In some ways, it is a little better than most honorable members did expect. A number of measures providing assistance to municipalities will be welcomed although, to a large extent, they will merely help municipalities to retrieve the ground which they have lost as a result of inflation increasing the cost of the services they provide. But I am pleased that the Government understands the plight of the municipalities in providing those services.

However, the Government has not yet begun to understand the problem of decentralization and the cures available to it and what it can do to prevent more and more growth in the cities. I presume the Premier and Treasurer was quoted correctly when he was reported to have said that there was a prospect in the years to come of developing underground in the metropolitan area. The average person who has been associated with the country for many years knows that country people spent a fortune in destroying animals which dug holes in the ground. It is a paradox that the honorable gentleman should suggest that we, ourselves, should live in that way in the future.

Because the Government does not understand the problem of decentralization the Country Party will keep hammering away at it. It must also persuade country people that the only way they can ensure that anything will be done for them is to elect to Parliament people who express their viewpoint instead of sitting dumb.

Mr. B. J. Evans.

On the motion of Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North), the debate was adjourned.

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

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from October 10) on the motion of Mr. Borthwick (Minister for Conservation) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park): This small Bill proposes four amendments to the Zoological Gardens Act to correct a number of situations which need correcting because of rising costs.

Section 11 of the principal Act provides that the Zoological Board of Victoria shall not appoint any officer or employee at a salary or remuneration exceeding $4,000 a year without first obtaining the approval of the Governor in Council. In 1967 or 1968, that might have been a reasonable figure but, as the Minister pointed out, very few employees today would earn less than $4,000. It is now proposed to alter the provision so that Governor in Council approval will not be required for the employment of a person at a salary of $4,000 a year. Following the amendment, the board will be able to appoint any person that it sees fit subject to the general directions of the Minister. The only appointment subject to Governor in Council approval will be that of the director of the gardens.

The second matter dealt with by the Bill relates to the undertaking of certain works. Currently, the board must obtain Governor in Council approval before undertaking any work which is estimated to cost more than $10,000. Again, in 1967 it may have been a reasonable amount, but obviously that is not the case now. The Minister pointed out, and all honorable members will be aware, that little construction work can be done today for less than $10,000. The Bill will increase the amount from $10,000

to $100,000 so that the board will be able to undertake works of that magnitude without obtaining Governor in Council approval.

The Minister explained that the present Act contains no provision for the board to obtain an overdraft. Anybody who has an overdraft will understand the difficulties that must face the board because most people seem to need an overdraft. The Minister said that at times the board more or less runs out of money, particularly during the winter when attendances are low. The lack of revenue embarrasses the board in that it has insufficient funds to meet its outgoings. The Bill will empower the board to obtain a short-term overdraft secured on the revenue of the board.

In reading the annual report of the board for the year 1971-72, I was surprised to find that no financial report was included. The report does not have to be presented to Parliament, although the board must submit to the Minister a statement of accounts audited by the Auditor-General, including full accounts of income and expenditure, and it must also present to the Minister a report of its activities up to the preceding 30th June.

An honorable member can obtain a copy of the annual report from the Papers Room but there seems to be some difficulty in obtaining the financial report. I can see no reason why the two reports should not be incorporated in the one document. The annual report refers to the financial position of the board. When honorable members are being asked to approve amendments to the principal Act, it would be helpful if they could have copies of the financial statement. The Minister should suggest to the board that the financial statement be included in the annual report.

The Zoological Gardens continue to attract people and many improvements have been effected in the area. The annual report for 1971-72 indicates that 723,418 persons visited the zoo during that financial year—17,211 more than for the previous year. As further improvements are made, attendances will increase and probably exceed one million a year. Indeed they might be that high now.

In 1972 admission charges were increased to $1 for adults and 30 cents for children. With the present inflation, it would be regrettable if the admission fees were increased to cover the board's costs. The board should not be expected to pay its own way. If a mother, father and two children wish to spend an afternoon at the zoo it costs $2.60 in admission charges. There is some danger of the fees being increased to meet the board's costs.

The Government should bear in mind the importance of the zoo as an educational venue and not just an entertainment centre. At least one visit to the zoo is essential for every child in Victoria as part of the educational process. When considering further increases in admission charges, the Government should remember the educational aspects of visits to the zoo and, if necessary, subsidize the board so that the admission charges will not become prohibitive. The Opposition does not oppose the Bill.

Mr. MITCHELL (Benambra): Members of the Country Party can understand why the Government has agreed to rush through this proposed legislation; it should not hold up the Budget deliberations for the wider issues of the State, such as consideration of the koalas and the other inhabitants at the zoo, because this is a city matter! Country people truthfully say that this is a Liberal-city Government. In addition to consideration of the Zoological Gardens, I have a letter from a Mrs. Beverly Scholes in Wodonga, and I want honorable members to consider this when they hear about the comfort of all the snakes and tigers at Parkville. Mrs. Scholes writes—

> I have tried all over Albury and Wodonga trying to get accommodation for myself and two children.

What is more important, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, than a homeless woman with tho children——

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! This has nothing to do with the Bill before the House. The House is debating the Zoological Gardens (Amendment) Bill.

Mr. MITCHELL: I appreciate your point, Mr. Speaker, but I was going to contrast the needs of people and the needs of baboons in the zoo. It is realized the zoo has these problems—amorous and otherwise—and I know with a city Government, this must be considered as urgent. There are one or two vagaries about the remarks made by the allegedly responsible and cultured Minister of the Crown. In his second-reading speech, the honorable gentleman said—

> This approval cannot be back-dated to the date of the agreement and this obviously creates problems.

Why cannot the House be told these things? Why does the Minister spare us and not take us into his confidence? Anything will do. I suppose the office boy wrote this speech for him and he was happy. The honorable gentleman then continues—

> It is intended that in future Governor in Council approval be required for the appointment of the director only, and the board may employ such other persons as it sees fit subject to the general directions of the Minister.

I cannot make head nor tail of that; I cannot understand what is meant and if the Minister did not write the speech, he would not know what it was about anyhow. I agree that $10,000 does not go far with new works these days, and the figure should be raised. However, it raises the question indicated by the honorable member for Albert Park of what are the boundaries; what is the whole set-up? This is again a contemptuous reference to the liquidity problem. What is the liquidity problem? The Minister then said—

> Especially during the winter-time period when attendances are low because of adverse weather.

Why does not the Minister take us into his confidence and say that the receipts during the summer months are so much, and that during the wintertime attendances dropped to so much less? That is something that makes a clear and cogent impression in the minds of the honorable members.

Reference is made to a short-term overdraft. What does the Minister mean by " short term "? Is he referring to hours, days, weeks, months or years? I did not think that a Minister with the cultural attributes of the honorable gentleman would have used a howling split infinitive in his second-reading notes. Perhaps he did not write them. The office boy's spelling is notoriously bad and we will have to take it up with him.

The honorable member for Albert Park was right. It is about time a considered report was presented to Parliament each year. I know staff are pushed for time. It is like the consideration of forestry. For some time the production of a report on forestry tended to be forgotten. As the honorable member for Albert Park said, the House should expect something more than the Minister having a talk to the people at the zoo while they are feeding the lizards. The Minister should foreshadow an amendment. If a Bill relating to the zoo is to be introduced, it should be done properly. An annual report should be submitted by a certain date each year.

The honorable member for Albert Park posed the question that suddenly the family party is being " hit to leg " by the price being bumped up for the children and adults. These days there are many more things a family can do, but once a trip to the zoo was a great family institution with mum and dad, and old granny tagging along. The kids had peanuts for the monkeys, while mum was hoping that they did not look at the wrong time.

Apart from the entertainment and family considerations of the zoological gardens, the educational aspect must

be considered. The theory evolved from Aristotle's day was that life—presumptuously called the human race—was considered to be the last phylum, the last leaf on the tree of life—*phylum l. amoeba proteus.* At least there is this need in modern times to consider modern problems in space and to study exactly how life evolved from uni-cellular units of protoplasm in the backwaters of primaeval seas. Now man is emerging in freedom, consciousness, and unprecedented power.

We must have our zoos for education and we know, as my colleague the honorable member for Gippsland East said, that this Government is talking a lot; it is most loquacious, but is very ineffective when it comes to implementing those sentiments with regard to decentralization. Why cannot there be a decentralization of the Zoological Gardens? There has been decentralization of art galleries. Previously, the House considered who had the rights to Aboriginal artefacts, the local museums or the museum located in Melbourne. Why can there not be a decentralization of zoos with zoological study centres in various parts of Victoria? With those regretful remarks, the Country Party supports the Bill.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time, and passed through its remaining stages.

HARBORS AND NAVIGABLE WATERS CONTROL BILL.

The debate (adjourned from September 18) on the motion of Mr. Dunstan (Minister of Public Works) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. STIRLING (Williamstown): The purpose of this Bill is to amend the five Acts relating to control of Victorian seas and ports and to meet current requirements. Apart from the customary citation and operational provisions, the Bill contains 19 clauses, the majority of which deal with the conversion to metric units of certain measurements referred to in each Act.

The other clauses grant additional powers to authorities to determine the collection of port charges by port authorities and to make provision for the larger types of ships. A further provision relates to the measurement of ship tonnage for the purpose of collecting port charges.

One amendment in the Bill repeals section 49 of the Geelong Harbor Trust Act. Previously the Geelong Harbor Trust was required to keep dredged the Cunningham Pier at Geelong, which was then a coal port. As the pier is no longer used for that purpose, the coal facilities in Geelong were transferred to Corio Quay North in 1958.

The other amendment refers to the exemptions that were given to certain vessels concerning the payment of pilotage fees. This provision has been repealed and the amendment is just, because where a ship uses a pilot it should be required to pay the fee. The Opposition does not oppose the Bill, but, although the measure amends the five Acts controlling the ports and seas, the Opposition is concerned that no provision is made to control the disposal of ships' waste.

Mr. DUNSTAN: That will be dealt with in another Bill to be introduced.

Mr. STIRLING: It has been reported by various bodies concerned with the maritime industry that on many occasions ships have left port with rubbish stacked on board because the holds have not been cleaned out before the ships left port. The rubbish has then been dumped at sea, sometimes in the bay. The Opposition does not oppose the Bill, other than to direct attention to that provision.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura): The Country Party also supports the Bill. One would have thought that, as the Minister pointed out in his second-reading speech, uniformity is desirable wherever possible, but other areas—the honorable member for Williamstown mentioned one—could

have been included in the Bill. However, it is desirable for the metrication provisions to be inserted as they become necessary for various purposes.

The other provisions in the measure, including the repeal of the redundant section concerning the Geelong Harbor Trust and the exemption of some vessels from the requirement to use licensed pilots, are matters which should improve the general management of ports and harbors in Victoria. One could refer to Portland and indicate that the Government should be taking greater measures to develop it as an alternative port to Melbourne, Geelong and Westernport. The Government has said that Portland requires further development, but little has been done to assist the Portland Harbor Trust to increase traffic through that area. The whole of western Victoria is available to supply goods and services through that port, but Portland has to "go it alone" in developing the area. One hopes that in future the Government will improve the facilities at the port of Portland.

The only other matter that could be commented on concerns the charge to vessels which have been required to use a pilot but which under the present Act were not required to pay a pilotage charge. Obviously, because of the costs involved, it is only proper that such vessels should pay for the service of pilots, and a provision to that effect is included in the Bill.

The various amendments relating to the five Harbor Trust Acts are uniform provisions. It is prudent that legislation is being enacted concerning the Harbor Boards Act to keep it up to date, because at some unforeseeable time in the future the need may arise for a harbor board to be established. The Country Party cannot see that it will be necessary, but perhaps one would be required at Lakes Entrance or some other port in the future, and the avenue is being kept open to be used by the Government if the necessity arises. The Country Party has no objection to that provision.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time, and passed through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT.

DANDENONG HIGH SCHOOL—PLEASANT VIEW ASSESSMENT CENTRE—ABSENCE OF MINISTERS—WERRIBEE TECHNICAL SCHOOL—CONTAMINATED FOODSTUFFS—WATER TRUSTS AND SEWERAGE AUTHORITIES—FREEWAY F2.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. LIND (Dandenong): I draw to the attention of the Minister of Education the library facilities at Dandenong High School. Dandenong High School has among the largest Higher School Certificate and leaving certificate classes in the State. There are some 256 students in those classes. The library is located in a converted room and part of another room and only 45 chairs can be used. In the school ground there is an old dilapidated Bristol building that should have been removed many years ago. If that building were removed, there would be space in which a new library could be built. Some time ago the school council was led to believe that Dandenong High School was No. 21 on the waiting list. The school council has been informed that schools much further down the list have already received libraries. In fact, on the last occasion the secretary of the school council contacted me, he had information that a school which had been No. 31 on the waiting list was having its library attended to.

Mr. BILLING: I attended Dandenong High School.

Mr. LIND: I thank the honorable member for his interjection because Dandenong High School was established more than 50 years ago and it is time it had decent library facilities, particularly as a large number of

senior students attend it. The school council considers that this matter warrants the urgent attention of the Minister of Education, and I ask the honorable gentleman to give consideration to this high school.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote): I wish to draw to the attention of the Minister of Health a complaint about the new, modern Pleasant View Assessment Centre for the treatment of alcoholic and drug-dependent persons, which is situated in the electorate of the honorable member for Preston and was opened recently by the Premier. No telephone facilities are available for the use of patients. Honorable members should be mindful of the fact that the patients are there on a voluntary basis; they come from all walks of life, and from time to time occasions arise when they need to contact certain people in the community.

I ask the Minister of Health to give consideration to having telephones installed in wards 1 and 2 at the reception centre. That would be a wonderful convenience and of advantage to voluntary patients at the centre.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party): I bring to the attention of the Premier the absence from the House today of a number of Ministers. I appreciate that the Minister of Agriculture is ill but other Ministers were also absent. It could be understood if this was the first or second week of the session, but the House has been sitting for some weeks now and it could reasonably be expected that the House would be meeting on a Thursday by this time.

It is a dangerous precedent for Ministers to be absent, because Thursday is likely to deteriorate into a second-class sitting day, particularly with grievances and private members' Bills being debated. If Ministers cease to take an interest in the House it will be difficult for the Leader of the Opposition and me to explain to the members of our parties that they must remain in the House, especially when Ministers are wandering around electorates. We would have to advise our members to accompany the Ministers to see what is happening.

Perhaps there may be a set of circumstances today which explains the situation but I ask the Premier to discuss the matter with his Ministers to ensure that when the House is sitting the Ministers are in attendance.

Mr. GUY (Gisborne): I bring to the attention of the Minister of Education the prevailing circumstances at the Werribee Technical School. This school was committed in 1972 and it was hoped that the first stage would be fully operative by the beginning of this year. However, for the whole of this year portable class-rooms have been used to house the 123 students currently attending the school.

I pay tribute to the teachers at the school who, in this year, have carried out their tasks in catering for the needs of the students with a degree of flexibility. They deserve our full commendation for the efforts they have made. The principal has played no mean part in this approach to teaching at the school, regardless of the facilities available, especially having to use portable class-rooms when it had been hoped that permanent class-room accommodation would be available.

Without going into a debate on why the permanent accommodation was not available at the commencement of this year, I point out that the main concern of the principal, Mr. Arundel, is that stage 2 of the building programme will not be complete for the full intake to be accommodated at the start of 1976. This gives the Government a full year to review the priorities of this technical school and the needs that will arise at that time.

There is still no indication from the Education Department that this will be the case. In fact, on 10th May, 1974, Mr. Baker the officer-in-charge of the post-primary branch of the

Education Department, suggested that every endeavour would be made to finish the project to cope with the expected intake, but that at present finances were strained. All honorable members appreciate the restraint on finance but because of the examples set by the teachers at the Werribee Technical School, the Government should make an effort to see that stage 2 is available for the students at the commencement of 1976. The enrolment will be about 400 students.

The teachers at the school and the principal have stated to me that during 1975, with an enrolment of approximately 260, they will be able to cope, provided that stage 1 is completed. It looks as if stage 1 will be finished. Excellent facilities are provided in stage 1 of the permanent construction of the school. There appears to be no worry about 1975 but there is about 1976. I request the Minister of Education to give this school his urgent consideration so that the spirit which has been shown by the principal and the teachers at the school will ensure that it has full accommodation for all students by 1976.

Mr. FOGARTY (Sunshine): I wish to raise a matter with the Minister of Health. I have before me a copy of the *Age* dated Tuesday, 27th August, not Wednesday, 23rd October. In an article titled "We're acting on food laws: Scanlan" the following appears—

> Municipal health inspectors have called on the Government to tighten health laws following a survey by the Australian College of Health Surveyors which showed that 30 per cent of take-away food samples were unfit for human consumption.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> He said Victorian regulations met most of the standards and action would be taken to incorporate those that were not.
>
> Mr. Scanlan said the Public Health Commission favoured the abolition of the "reasonable precautions" clause from the Act.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The Chairman of the Health Surveyors College, (Mr. Brian Hicks) said yesterday he believed powerful food industry interests were lobbying Mr. Scanlan to water down the enforcement of health laws.

During recent weeks a number of questions have been asked relating to the mercury content in certain foodstuffs. I believe those questions were proper. Indeed, we find, according to the article and according to the survey taken by the Australian College of Health Surveyors, that more than 30 per cent of take-away foods are unfit for human consumption.

I should like to know what the Minister of Health is doing about this matter.

Mr. BAXTER (Murray Valley): I raise a matter with the Treasurer. In a number of country towns throughout Victoria where water trusts and sewerage authorities exist, although those bodies are quite separate legal entities, they are often composed of the same personnel and have the same executive officer. From time to time one authority lends funds to the other; usually the water trust advances funds available in its depreciation account to the sewerage authority which is a newer body in the town, to enable it to proceed with its works.

Mr. DUNSTAN: At what interest rate?

Mr. BAXTER: Various interest rates apply. This has been an adequate arrangement in the past. Funds belonging to a particular local community have been used to continue the quality of life in the area. However, recently a direction was given that this procedure will no longer be permitted.

In 1973, the Shire of Numurkah loaned a large amount of money from the water trust depreciation account to the sewerage authority. In its depreciation reserve the trust has $130,000 and it is accumulating funds at the rate of $15,000 a year. The loan was subsequently approved but, on 4th April, 1973, the secretary of the trust was advised in a circular from the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission that by direction of the Treasury similar procedures would not be approved in the future. Perhaps some control or check is needed in specific instances but I

cannot see any reason why a blanket refusal should be given to this procedure. I ask the Treasurer to investigate the matter with a view to revoking the regulation in question.

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West): I draw a matter to the attention of the Minister of Transport. It arises out of an answer which the Minister gave to me today concerning the F2 freeway. I asked the honorable gentleman a number of questions about the freeway and whether environmental and social impact studies were being carried out. The Minister replied, "No". He added that socio-economic and other studies were certainly being carried out, the terms of reference had still not been finalized, and that it would be eighteen months before any report was likely to be made public.

The Minister's answer and other answers that have been supplied in the House over the past few months give the impression that the F2 freeway is at present in a state of limbo, and this reassures people in the Brunswick, Coburg and Northcote areas who are worried about the impact of the freeway. However, in the same answer, the Minister made the point that $6·7 million had been spent on property acquisitions and that a further $160,000 had been spent on other work by the Country Roads Board.

Either the F2 freeway is proceeding or it is not. If it is not, money should not have been spent on property acquisitions. An amount of $7 million has been spent on something that the Government says may well be a non-starter. The residents of the areas concerned would like information on the future of the freeway and whether they are under threat from it.

Mr. DIXON (Assistant Minister of Education): I can appreciate the concern of the honorable member for Dandenong about the provision of a library at Dandenong High School. He was kind enough to inform me that a new municipal library in Dandenong has been built only 1,200 metres from the high school. I believe it is desirable for high schools, technical schools, primary schools and municipalities to have a library service which can be integrated. It is desirable for every school, of course, to have a library, but sometimes schools have libraries which only the students use. Frequently, the school children do not really use the municipal library.

It is desirable that co-ordination should take place. I shall draw the matter to the attention of the Minister and I am certain that he will have it investigated with the utmost expedition. At the same time we will try to make certain that the new library to be constructed at Dandenong High School will be dovetailed in with the service provided by the municipality.

Mr. GINIFER: I hope the Minister can convince the civic fathers.

Mr. DIXON: Yes; it is in their own interest to have co-operation between the schools and the municipal libraries. I am sure that Opposition members support me in this contention.

Mr. GINIFER: I support the Minister, but some municipalities do not.

Mr. DIXON: We would like to see all municipalities co-operating. In reply to the honorable member for Gisborne, I shall again draw the matter of Werribee Technical School, stage 2, to the attention of the Minister of Education. I am certain he will look into the matter and inform the honorable member of the position and do his best to make certain that the school is ready for occupation in 1976.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The honorable member for Northcote, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, raised the question of a public telephone at the Pleasant View Assessment Centre. I shall be happy to examine that matter. It seems to be a most reasonable request. I know there is a

great number of telephones there but I am not certain about the existence of a public telephone.

The honorable member for Sunshine referred to a number of questions involved with the complex area of regulation and control over food in Victoria. The latest Health Ministers' conference at Canberra in August made a positive step forward in producing uniformity in regulations and standards for food generally. I would insist, however, that any action taken by the Department of Health, the Commission of Public Health and myself will be action not on behalf of business interests or any individual interests, but action taken for the public good.

The honorable member quoted from the newspaper article that 30 per cent of take-away foods were not fit for human consumption. I have had those figures researched. I am aware of a difference of opinion in regard to the estimate of 30 per cent, mainly because of the type of research which produced the estimate. However, it is a matter of concern generally.

The honorable member also referred specifically to the standard of take-away foods. This is a different question from the general food one. We are looking closely at the question of controlling the way in which take-away foods are tampered with or removed from retail stores or from self-service stores that are supplying food. A number of technical problems arise in this regard and these are being examined. One of them relates to the way in which a cheap, hygienic but practical seal can be provided so that when food is tampered with the seal is broken, thus alerting the customer to what has occurred. It will be some months before this seal is available. However I am hopeful that the regulations controlling general food standards will be presented to me for final approval within the next few weeks.

Mr. Scanlan.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer): The Leader of the Country Party referred to the attendance of Ministers in the House at question time. I agree with him. I believe he will also agree that by and large there is a very good attendance in the House. Today one Minister was ill, and two were interstate at a conference. These matters are difficult to arrange, because sometimes conferences are appointed to suit everybody else and the Minister concerned is in a quandary. It is unfortunate that the two conferences were held on the same day. One of the Ministers who was away is now present in the House. I shall endeavour to ensure that all Ministers are present at question time, except those who are unavoidably detained on business elsewhere.

The honorable member for Murray Valley mentioned loans from water trusts, particularly those in country districts where the municipal council tends to be the water trust, and the sewerage authority. I shall be happy to attend to this matter. There is no reason why we should not use the maximum amounts available, especially for sewerage in country districts. There will always be a shortage of funds, and the sooner these centres are fully sewered the better. However, the depreciation account from which most of the money will come, needs to be available for its primary purposes, the replacement of plant and equipment, and so on. It appears to be mainly a matter of approval and proportion. I shall be happy to examine the matter and inform the honorable member of the result.

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The honorable member for Brunswick West asked a series of questions about the F2 freeway. The F2 freeway was placed on the master plan by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee in its report in 1969. Since that time there have been great changes in the information and the situation on which the report was

based. It is apparent that the data which led to the provision of the plans presented by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee if taken today would be different. Accordingly, I have already in train a process of updating the basic data so that the plan can be revised *in toto*. Simultaneously, the Country Roads Board is examining the situation which has arisen following the Government's decision to cut down on freeway building in the inner-city areas, with a view to finding a solution which will properly tie together all road systems in the light of the information which is coming forward on the basic data.

In my reply to the question which the honorable member asked on the F2 freeway, I pointed out that although the studies to which he referred had not yet commenced, it is proposed to commence such studies as a further step in the updating of the plan. The consultants will be appointed as soon as I am satisfied with the terms of reference which will be referred to them.

This leads me to the next proposition, that it is impossible to say what the result of these inquiries will have on the F2 or other freeways on the plan. It would be absurd to go to the town planning authorities and ask for revisions of the plan on the offchance that what we are seeking is the ultimate solution. For this reason, I was cautious enough to say that it might be eighteen months before these matters are resolved. To suggest a shorter period might lead people to believe that the matter will be resolved before it actually is, and therefore disappoint them. Regarding the $7 million which has already been spent, I point out that it is impossible in these forward planning ideas to avoid considerable expenditure in the process. The other amounts to which the honorable member referred were spent as part of the planning and investigating process.

Mr. WILKES: Will there be any further acquisitions?

Mr. MEAGHER: Acquisition commenced several years ago in anticipation of the freeway being built. My present policy is that no acquisitions will take place, unless there is a case of hardship in which a person owning a property is disadvantaged by the fact that the plan exists and he wants to sell his property. I then permit acquisition by negotiation, certainly not compulsory acquisition. I believe this is only justice to the person who may be disadvantaged by the fact that he cannot sell his house. I cannot provide the honorable member with any more information, except to say that recently I received a deputation from the F2 freeway action group to discuss these problems. I explained the situation to them and I believe they went away somewhat reassured.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. K. H. Wheeler): Order! The honorable member for Brunswick West asked a series of questions. I believe question time is an opportunity for honorable members to seek information by way of question. On the motion for the adjournment of the debate the situation is reversed. Honorable members can give information that something is happening within their electorates to which they require attention from the relevant Government department. I appeal to honorable members not to allow the adjournment debate to become a second question time.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4.56 *p.m. until Tuesday, October* 29.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

The following answers to questions on notice were circulated—

FREEWAY F2.

(Question No. 252)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Minister of Transport—

In respect of the F2 freeway—

1. Whether environmental and social impact studies are being carried out on all stages of the freeway south of Craigieburn

if so—(*a*) what are the terms of reference of such studies and who formulated these terms; (*b*) who is carrying out such studies and when they will be completed; and (c) whether such studies will be made public prior to the final decision on whether the freeway is to proceed?

2. How many properties have been purchased for freeway purposes and at what cost?

3. What other costs have been incurred in the freeway project, specifying the respective items and costs?

4. Whether studies have been carried out on alternative means of distributing traffic intended to use the freeway, including cost benefit studies and whether the results of these studies will be made public?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

1. No. However a detailed investigation into socio-economic and other factors will shortly be conducted by consultants and Country Roads Board engineers for the section from St. Georges Road to the Eastern Freeway.

(*a*) The terms of reference are being formulated by the Country Roads Board.

(*b*) A particular consultant has not yet been engaged by the Country Roads Board but this will be done shortly. It is expected that the investigation will progress over a period of eighteen months.

(c) Yes.

2. One hundred and forty-one (141) properties have been purchased between Craigieburn and the Eastern Freeway for a total cost of $6,702,892.

3. Other costs incurred are:

Establishment and maintenance of the project office in Newlands Road, Coburg	$74,500
Investigation survey and engineering survey	$75,700
Minor maintenance and tree planting	$9,000

4. The route shown in the metropolitan transportation plan was regarded by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee as being a necessary part of the network of arterial roads.

As the honorable member is aware the entire road network is presently being studied in the light of the changes in community needs and attitudes which have occurred since completion of the plan.

LEARNER-DRIVER PERMITS.

(Question No. 377)

Mr. RAMSAY (Balwyn) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. What expenditure the Government has incurred in publicizing the necessity of and procedures for obtaining a learner-driver's permit, indicating the costs of—(*a*) printing and distributing literature; and (*b*) advertising in the daily press, and on radio and television, respectively?

2. Over what period of time these amounts have been spent in respect of each category?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The answer is—

1. (*a*) An amount of $8,553.25 has been incurred for the printing of 200,000 copies of the booklet *Before You Drive.*

(*b*) A sum of $1,000 has been committed for radio advertising and $1,000 for advertising in the daily press.

2. The booklet "*Before You Drive*" has been circulated since mid-September, and the press and radio advertising programmes commenced on 23rd October, 1974.

INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATING SERVICES.

(Question No. 401)

Mr. ROPER (Brunswick West) asked the Attorney-General—

1. How many interpreters or translators are employed in the Law Department on a full-time or part-time basis, specifying the location of such officers and the languages spoken?

2. When interpreting or translating services are required by any sections of the department, how they are obtained, by whom, and at whose expense?

Mr. WILCOX (Attorney-General): The answer is—

1. The Law Department does not employ interpreters or translators.

2. The engagement of an interpreter or translator is arranged, when necessary, by direct approach to an interpreter or to an agency specializing in providing interpreting and translating services. The services are obtained by the branch of the department which requires the services.

The cost of such services is borne by the Government, except where a court makes an order for payment by another party or where it is appropriate that the cost be borne by an estate administered by the Public Trustee.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS.

(Question No. 416)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Labour and Industry—

1. Whether the Department of Labour and Industry has investigated industrial accidents to four female employees of Wattie Pict Ltd., Notting Hill, in which the loss of part of a finger was suffered on each occasion; if so, when and with what result?

2. Whether the company was permitted to continue using the machine involved?

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry): The answer is—

1. Officers of the Department of Labour and Industry investigated four accidents where female employees were injured whilst working at Wattie Pict Ltd., Notting Hill, at machines used for removing the tops from carrots.

The accidents were investigated on 29th May, 1974, as a result of which modifications were made to the guarding of the cutters on these machines.

These guards were further modified following further inspections at the factory on 1st July, 1974.

2. No instructions were given in relation to those machines other than the provision for modification of the guarding of the cutters.

FREEWAY F2.

(Question No. 433)

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston) asked the Minister of Transport—

Whether Preston City Council has informed the Country Roads Board of its views regarding construction of Freeway F2 between Mahoneys Road and Bell Street, Preston?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

Yes. Preston City Council advised the Country Roads Board on 22nd September, 1971, that the council agreed with the proposals and supported any move for early construction of the freeway.

(Question No. 467)

Mr. JONES (Melbourne) asked the Minister of Transport—

If he will lay on the table of the Library the layouts of preliminary route plans for Freeway F2 and all other current freeway plans?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

I refer the honorable member to the Metropolitan Transportation Committee's master plan and to the Premier's statement regarding the Melbourne freeway network of 28th March, 1973.

As the honorable member is aware the entire roads system is currently under review. The review is well advanced and I hope to have the results in the near future.

YARRA JUNCTION RURAL FIRE BRIGADE.

(Question No. 473)

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. What additional funds will be made available to the Country Fire Authority this financial year?

2. Whether funds will be made available to the Yarra Junction Rural Fire Brigade to enable it to purchase an urgently needed back-up vehicle to support other authority units in the region?

3. Whether he is aware that the equipment now being used by the brigade is basically second-class equipment?

Mr. ROSSITER (Chief Secretary): The answer is—

1. An additional amount of $2,345,623 will be made available to the Country Fire Authority this financial year.

2. No. New fire-fighting vehicles are purchased by the Country Fire Authority and funds are not made available to brigades for this purpose.

3. The vehicle used by the Yarra Junction Rural Fire Brigade is presently undergoing conversion and repair. In the normal course of events, the vehicle will be replaced in the next financial year or the year after.

HYDE STREET, FOOTSCRAY.

(Question No. 475)

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Minister of Transport—

When it is expected that Hyde Street, Footscray, will be reconstructed between Somerville Road and Francis Street?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

Hyde Street is a main road declared under the provisions of the Country Roads Act and is under the care and management of the Footscray City Council.

The Country Roads Board has no proposals at present for the reconstruction of this section of Hyde Street.

SUNRAYSIA HIGHWAY.

(Question No. 477)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Transport—

1. When the Country Roads Board proposes to reconstruct the Sunraysia Highway between Cope Cope and Donald?

2. What is the estimated cost of reconstruction?

3. What is the reason for the delay in the reconstruction of this badly damaged section of highway?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer is—

1. The board expects to commence reconstruction of 2·4 kilometres immediately north of Cope Cope in January, 1975.

2. $70,000.

3. The area is too wet to carry out the required reconstruction and drainage economically at the present time.

BOARD OF WORKS SALARY DEDUCTION FACILITIES.

(Question No. 494)

Mr. AMOS (Morwell) asked the Minister of Public Works, for the Minister of Water Supply—

Whether the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works offers salary and wage deduction facilities to its employees; if so—(*a*) what are the organizations for which the board makes deductions from employees' salaries or wages; and (*b*) whether the board will provide the same facilities to its employees who are members of the Municipal Officers Association Credit Society and, if not, why?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works: The answer supplied by the Minister of Water Supply is—

(*a*) The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works makes deductions from employees' salaries and wages for the following—Income tax, Metropolitan Farm Provident Fund, M.M.B.W. Sick Fund, M.M.B.W. Superannuation Fund, A.W.U. union dues, S.S.B. National Savings Group, Hospital Benefits Association, A.M.P. Society, A.P.A. Insurance Society, Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Society, Equitable Life and General Assurance Society, Mutual Life and Citizens Assurance Society, National Mutual Life Assurance Society, Prudential Insurance Society, Australasian T. & G. Mutual Life Assurance Society and City Mutual Life Assurance Society.

(*b*) Present board wages accounting machines are unable to provide for any further deductions on behalf of any group and will be unable to do so until all payrolls are computerized in approximately two years. When computerization is completed the board will consider applications from Municipal Officers Association Credit Society and other groups to have deductions made from employees salaries and wages.

KLEBER TYRES.

(Question No. 495)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Consumer Affairs—

Whether the Consumer Protection Bureau received a complaint regarding the performance of Kleber tyres being advertised by Bob Jane Tyre Service Pty. Ltd. as one price tyres: if so—(*a*) when this complaint was lodged; and (*b*) whether the complaint was investigated and, in that event, with what result?

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Consumer Affairs): The answer is—

No.

REGISTRATION OF CHIROPODISTS.

(Question No. 500)

Mr. LIND (Dandenong) asked the Minister of Health—

Further to the answer to question No. 368 asked on 22nd October, 1974, if he will lay on the table of the Library a list of the names of those persons practising chiropody prior to 2nd February, 1970, who applied for registration between—(*a*) 2nd February, 1972, and 30th June, 1973; and (*b*) 1st July, 1973, and 20th March, 1974?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister of Health): The answer is—

The lists of names have been laid on the table as requested.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS.

(Question No. 515)

Mr. JONES (Melbourne) asked the Minister of Transport, for the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs—

Whether he will provide honorable members with copies of the arrangements made between the Commonwealth Government and the Government of Victoria pursuant to section 5 (1) of the Commonwealth Aboriginal Affairs (Arrangements with the States) Act 1973?

Mr. MEAGHER (Minister of Transport): The answer supplied by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is—

As stated in the second-reading speech relating to the Aboriginal Affairs (Transfer of Functions) Bill 1974 on 9 October, 1974, copies of the arrangement between the Commonwealth and the State will be made available as soon as they have been completed.