

Tuesday, 6 October 1987

The **SPEAKER** (the Hon. C. T. Edmunds) took the chair at 2.5 p.m. and read the prayer.

DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Mr **KENNETT** (Leader of the Opposition)—I wish to inform the Parliament that, at a meeting of the Parliamentary Liberal Party this morning, the honourable member for Gippsland West, Mr Alan Brown, was elected Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party.

TELEVISIONING OF PROCEEDINGS

The **SPEAKER**—Order! I should advise the House that I have given permission for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation media unit to televise the proceedings of questions without notice on a shared media basis.

ABSENCE OF MINISTERS

The **SPEAKER**—Order! Due to the bereavement and funeral of the father of the Deputy Premier, the Deputy Premier will be absent from the sittings of the House today, as will the Minister for Labour. I advise the House that the Acting Leader of the House will be the Minister for Housing.

SERVICE TO PARLIAMENT BY MINISTER FOR HOUSING

The **SPEAKER**—Order! I congratulate the Minister for Housing on having on 21 September 1987 completed 30 years of service in the Legislative Assembly.

Mr **CAIN** (Premier) (*By leave*)—I join the Speaker in extending congratulations from government members to the Minister for Housing on what is a considerable achievement. For approximately 70 years the seat of Northcote has been represented by only two people, my late father and the Minister for Housing. I pay my respects to the Minister for his record of achievement, which is a very long one.

He was first elected in 1957 and has occupied a whole range of positions in this House. He has held the positions of Minister for Local Government and Minister for Housing. He was Party Whip in the 1960s. He was the Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party from 1967 to 1977 and Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party from June 1977 to September 1981. He has been a member of a range of Parliamentary committees.

It is unlikely that an honourable member in this House, in future, will complete 30 years' service. It was commonplace 30 or 40 years ago, but the pace of things has changed and it is the exception rather than the rule for an honourable member to be here for more than twenty years.

The Minister for Housing has notched up a remarkable record of achievement of service and members on this side of the House and I congratulate him.

Mr **KENNETT** (Leader of the Opposition) (*By leave*)—On behalf of the Parliamentary Liberal Party I also congratulate the Minister for Housing on his service to this Parliament and to the community at large. It is often not remembered that the Minister for Housing continued to serve his own area as a councillor for many years after he was first elected to this House.

There is no doubt that Frank Wilkes is held in high esteem by honourable members on both sides of the House and he probably has a greater respect for and understanding of the workings of Parliament than any other honourable member currently in this Chamber. Thirty years is a long time and it is appropriate that the House has the opportunity of recognising the service of an individual who has served his community over that period

while he is still here, rather than is tragically the tradition after they have gone to a place of higher calling.

The Premier indicated that it is rare for someone to stay in Parliament for 30 years; that is correct, but the Liberal Party has two members of Parliament who are approaching that milestone: the Honourable Alan Hunt in another place; and the honourable member for Ballarat North, and the way he is going he will be here for another 30 years!

On behalf of members of the Opposition, I congratulate Frank Wilkes. As I said, members of the Opposition hold him in high esteem for the way in which he performs his duties as a Parliamentarian in the real traditions of the Westminster system.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party) (*By leave*)—On behalf of members of the National Party, I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in congratulating the Minister for Housing, the Honourable Frank Wilkes, on 30 years of outstanding service. As the Premier said, it is a unique period. I shall concentrate briefly on the quality of those 30 years. There is no more respected member in the Victorian Parliament than Frank Wilkes; he is respected by members on all sides of the House. He is a man of integrity who is respected not only by members in this place, but also by the people of Victoria.

I can pay no greater compliment than to say that Frank Wilkes is a friend of mine and I am privileged to have him as a friend.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

WORKCARE

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—Does the Treasurer stand by his statement in volume 1, "Costing WorkCare", that the cost of the WorkCare system can be met on a ten-year fully funded basis by a constant average levy of 2.4 per cent of wages and salaries?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—As the Leader of the Opposition would be aware if he had read the document in detail—and I assume he has—the government clearly has a target over a ten-year period that the average WorkCare premium should be 2.4 per cent.

As the Leader of the Opposition would also be aware, that represents an average reduction in premium payments for employers of around 50 per cent. Obviously that is a significant achievement. That is one of the reasons why Victoria has such an outstanding employment performance. The Leader of the National Party, who seeks to interject, as well as the Leader of the Opposition, would appreciate that Victoria has had the lowest unemployment rate for 51 months in a row. One of the major factors in achieving that has been that the WorkCare premium has been struck at an average of 2.4 per cent.

The government also clearly pointed out that WorkCare was a comprehensive and complex reform and that its operation would be reviewed and necessary changes made to achieve the target set out.

I have already announced the WorkCare review package, which has been a matter for public consideration. I have directed the Accident Compensation Commission to make sure that it administers the system as efficiently as possible and to ensure that inefficient claims administration agents no longer operate within the system. It is a matter of record that three claims administration agents have had their services terminated.

I also pointed out that one of the most important issues in the WorkCare review package is to ensure that old insurance organisations—that is, insurance organisations which were operating under the former workers compensation system—pay their fair share of costs to injured workers. The facts of life are these: evidence has been brought to my attention

suggesting that well in excess of \$100 million has, in a sense, been misallocated. In other words, old insurers should be paying under the old system rather than under the new system. A deliberate attempt has been made—like tax avoidance—to push the cost on to the new WorkCare system.

I should also point out that, to achieve the 2·4 per cent average premium, we are having a much sharper focus on the return to work aspect of the scheme. The whole emphasis of the review proposals, which I hope will receive the support of all parties, is to have a much sharper focus on return to work. That aspect requires better administration and it will mean that one of the major objectives of the Victorian Accident Rehabilitation Council will be to facilitate return to work as rapidly as possible. It will mean that an employer will be required to keep a job open for an injured worker for six months.

In my view the WorkCare reform package that is being put into place, with the assistance of amendments to the legislation, will ensure that the government will keep on target with the 2·4 per cent premium over a ten-year period. The Leader of the Opposition should be aware that the government has given a legal commitment to that 2·4 per cent premium applying for a five-year period.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—Can the Treasurer advise the House whether the unfunded liability of WorkCare is at present approximately \$2·4 billion and, if that is not correct, will he advise what the unfunded liability is?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—Obviously there is a range of estimates associated with the unfunded liability of WorkCare. The Leader of the National Party would have recognised that the estimates of the Department of Management and Budget set out in the WorkCare review document gave an approximate figure of \$1·7 billion, but there are obviously various actuarial estimates.

The Accident Compensation Commission is concerned about the matter and the Leader of the National Party will have to await the tabling of its annual report.

STATE BUDGETS

Mr CULPIN (Broadmeadows)—Can the Treasurer advise the House whether the Department of Management and Budget has completed a study of the effects of all State Budgets throughout Australia; and, if so, can he advise the House of the results of that study in relation to the Victorian Budget?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—Not only has Victoria had an outstanding economic performance with private investment growth and economic growth, but also it is performing exceptionally well with its Budget.

The Department of Management and Budget has undertaken a survey of recurrent expenditure in State Budgets throughout Australia since the introduction of those Budgets and the Victorian record in expenditure restraint is outstanding.

Although the Victorian government provides comprehensive and meaningful Budget documents, the same cannot be said of other States, particularly Queensland. On the basis of information that has been provided to me by the Department of Management and Budget, the estimated recurrent expenditure in Victoria for 1987–88 reflects an increase of 7 per cent. That compares with the average increase in recurrent expenditure for all States in Australia of 8·1 per cent. It is clear that Victoria is doing very well with departmental costs and expenditure associated with public sector interest payments within the Budget sector.

In comparing Victoria's performance with the Commonwealth's performance, one needs to compare the total expenditure in Victoria with the total expenditure by the Commonwealth government for its own purposes, because the Commonwealth government does not separate recurrent expenditure. On that basis Victoria's total expenditure growth was estimated to be 6·3 per cent compared with the Commonwealth government total

increase in expenditure for its own purposes of 7·1 per cent. Victoria's total Budget expenditure also shows greater restraint than that of the Federal Budget.

An analysis has been undertaken of the 1987-88 taxation receipts for the various State governments. We are not talking about a matter of time but about the year 1987-88. In Victoria the increase in taxation receipts is estimated to be 7 per cent, which compares with the 8·8 per cent average for all Australian States. That is an outstanding performance by Victoria.

I emphasise that this is in the context of Victoria exhibiting stronger economic growth. Again that is an outstanding performance, and it is about time the Opposition acknowledged that performance.

PRODUCTIVITY INCREASES IN TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—I ask the Premier what productivity increases have been sought by the government in the transport system in exchange for a 4 per cent second-tier wage increase. Will the government stand firm on its productivity requirement?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for his question and, in doing so, congratulate him on his election to that position. I am still pleased to see the familiar face opposite—the Leader of the Opposition. I suppose the old saying “third time lucky” still applies! Almost annually, every October, there is a Jeff Kennett challenge!

Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I direct your attention to Standing Order No. 127. What the Premier is saying has nothing to do with the question, and I ask you, Sir, to bring him back to order.

The SPEAKER—Order! I uphold the point of order. The Premier has exercised the patience of the Chair, and I ask him to come back to the question.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—Mr Speaker, the point I was making was that if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition had spent more time examining what the Government is doing rather than involving himself in the internecine warfares of the Opposition, he would not have had to ask the question.

Mr Kennett interjected.

Mr CAIN—The challenge has become an annual event; three years in a row the present Leader of the Opposition has had to survive the hunting season! No wonder he is concerned about the gun laws.

Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I again direct your attention to Standing Order No. 127. The Premier should be brought back to order.

The SPEAKER—Order! I do not intend to uphold the point of order. The Leader of the Opposition interjected out of order and, I believe, this led the Premier to take the course that he did. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to cease interjecting, and the Premier to come back to the question.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The government has made it clear that it supports the decision of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission in the national wage case to work toward a two-tiered system. It also has the support of major employer and union groups, and other governments. I welcome that support.

The new system is well placed to deliver the necessary wage restraint required by the Victorian economy. Not only will the two-tiered system contain wage growth, but also it will offer the opportunity of improving productivity through changed work and management practices. The government has endeavoured to do that for some time.

I know that members of the Opposition are unhappy because they wish to change their Leader. The Victorian Opposition is like the Federal Opposition: it does not know what

to do. It has no policies and it does not want its Leader. Members of the Opposition cannot make up their minds about a successor. It is pathetic!

Consistent with the national wage case requirement, the government is insisting that any wage increase in the Victorian public sector be cost neutral. All government agencies and instrumentalities are in the process of examining rigorously any work practice that can be identified by the work force or unions as offering the offsets for the 4 per cent. They are being examined thoroughly. They are to be approved by the Industrial Relations Commission before any decision is made or any approval is given. The government is determined to ensure that the second-tier application is strictly enforced.

In the transport area agreement has been reached with the unions in respect of bus and tram operations and with two of the unions involved in the rail area. Negotiations with the balance of the railway unions are continuing. It is not easy to change old work practices in the rail area; the Liberal Party had 27 years to deal with work practices that have been followed for 90 years but it failed to do so.

The former Minister of Transport, now the Minister for Labour, and the present Minister for Transport have tackled those issues. The Liberal Party did not do that when it had the opportunity.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—So far as the Liberal Party is concerned the rail area is just like everything else. I repeat: the Opposition has no policies, it has no leadership. Like its Federal colleagues, it has tried three times but it cannot make up its mind who the Leader should be. The Opposition is a rabble, divided! Look at them—total rabble! We are asked to take them seriously as an Opposition. What I am saying about everything is true.

The Opposition is totally without policies, it is totally without ideas and totally without anything else. All its members know is how to fight among themselves, yet they have the cheek to suggest the Opposition as an alternative government. The Liberal Party is not an alternative anything—except as a rabble, nothing else.

If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition remains the transport spokesman he will know that the transport area, like every other area in the public sector, will be required to make savings commensurate with the 4 per cent second tier.

WORKCARE

Mr HANN (Rodney)—Is it a fact that the WorkCare administration is withholding payment of \$35 million in supplementation funds arising from claims not in dispute, owing to participating insurance companies since mid-July? If so, will the Treasurer inform the House when these payments will be forthcoming to the insurance companies?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I am not aware of the particular amount to which the honourable member for Rodney has referred. Certainly, the Accident Compensation Tribunal has required certain conditions to be met before payments are made. It believes that is the appropriate approach to adopt and that approach will continue to be taken until it is satisfied the conditions have been met.

ELECTRONIC SUPERMARKET CHECKOUTS

Mr POPE (Monbulk)—Can the Minister for Consumer Affairs inform the House whether the government plans to act further to protect consumers from possible inaccuracies in the prices charged at electronic checkouts in supermarkets?

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—I thank the honourable member for Monbulk for his question. He is to be congratulated for the work he has done in this area, particularly with the Knox Prices Action Group. There is clear proof that supermarket prices are lowest in the Knox area.

The government has been concerned for some time about reported inaccuracies between shelf prices and checkout prices. Of course, we are aware that an increasing portion of the family budget is spent at supermarkets and hypermarkets and price awareness is critical in making comparisons.

The Ministry has received a large number of complaints from shoppers about inaccuracies and it is interested to see support from the Liberal Party and the National Party, which also supported itemised prices. Honourable members would also be aware that the government introduced legislation in 1983 which was defeated by the Liberal Party and the National Party in the Upper House.

I have decided to conduct a survey in supermarkets where scanning takes place to compare the accuracy of shelf prices with checkout prices. If it is shown that the public is being misled, I assure the House that I shall have no hesitation in reintroducing legislation and I shall look for support from the Liberal Party and the National Party in the Upper House.

CONTINENTAL AIRLINES INC.

Mr JOHN (Bendigo East)—I refer the Premier to statements by the State Solicitor-General that there was more to the dismissal of the former Governor than cheap airline tickets, and I ask: does the Premier stand by the statement of the Solicitor-General?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I am not aware of the statement to which the honourable member refers. I made a statement to this House on the issue approximately two years ago. I also made a statement in the House approximately two weeks ago in response to matters raised by the Leader of the National Party. I believe those statements explain the issue clearly in terms of what occurred and I have nothing further to add to those statements.

I suppose it is some measure of the depth of the concern that the Opposition displays about current issues that it should seek to use question time to raise this matter. Important issues that affect the people of this State are occurring in the community, and yet the honourable member for Bendigo East asks a question on this subject. It merely emphasises the Opposition's sense of values and priorities.

FIRE IN BENDIGO RETAIL PREMISES

Mr KENNEDY (Bendigo West)—I ask the Minister for Property and Services whether he will outline to the House the actions taken by the government to assist Bendigo businesses affected by the fire in the retail premises in Killian's Walk recently.

Mr McCUTCHEON (Minister for Property and Services)—I thank the honourable member for Bendigo West for his concern. The efforts he made at the time of the fire should be placed on record. The scene of the fire was visited soon after the event by the Treasurer, and Mr Walker, the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs, also went to Bendigo and had discussions with the people affected.

I am pleased to be able to report to the House that officers of the Department of Property and Services have had discussions with traders affected by the fire, and arrangements have been made for three of the businesses displaced as a result of the fire to occupy the ground floor of a recently purchased building, the former State Electricity Commission building, in Hargreaves Street. They will be able to occupy those premises for approximately nine months while the burnt-out premises are restored. A number of people were interviewed to see whether they required accommodation and assistance from the government, and three of the business proprietors concerned—a jeweller, a menswear shop proprietor and a public accountant—will be able to recommence business by the end of this week, which means there will be a relatively short disruption to their businesses.

The work performed by the Department of Property and Services in making those arrangements has been efficient and effective. I should add that the honourable member

for Bendigo West arranged for officers of the Small Business Development Corporation and the Victorian Economic Development Corporation to visit Bendigo, and counselling and assistance have been given to members of the business community affected by the fire.

Once again, I should like to stress the efforts made by the honourable member for Bendigo West in facilitating steps taken to help these people.

An Honourable Member—What about the member for Bendigo East?

Mr McCUTCHEON—Practically nothing was done by the honourable member for Bendigo East, and the honourable member for Bendigo West should be commended for his efforts.

WORKCARE

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn)—Given the now publicly evident disastrous financial state of WorkCare, will the Treasurer immediately table all actuarial reports on WorkCare's financial performance as at 30 June 1987, and, if not, why not?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—There would not be much point in doing that because the honourable member for Hawthorn is obviously no good with numbers, as has been illustrated by his performance this morning and in previous weeks.

Mr Kennett interjected.

Mr JOLLY—The Leader of the Opposition says, by interjection, that he has not lost three elections—I heard the number three mentioned. Obviously the Leader of the Opposition has managed to survive again; he is a great survivor and I congratulate him on that fact.

I congratulate the honourable member for Hawthorn on his question because he has rarely asked questions on WorkCare since he has had responsibility for it. I understand that he will still have responsibility for WorkCare.

Mr Kennett interjected.

Mr JOLLY—The mouth is going off again! It should be the Leader of the Opposition from Burwood and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition from Malvern because they compete on mouths every day. They both have foot and mouth disease.

Mr Leigh interjected.

Mr JOLLY—There he goes! They take it in turns. They are really Tandberg specialists, although the honourable member for Malvern has not yet reached the great heights of the Leader of the Opposition.

In the WorkCare review statement on the costings put forward by the Department of Management and Budget, I made it clear that the decisions of the Accident Compensation Commission on actuarial estimates will be provided in the annual report. I have already indicated that to the House.

HUME FREEWAY

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—Is the Minister for Transport aware of the concern of the Road Construction Authority and contractors in north-eastern Victoria at the possibility that a shortfall in funding will affect the construction of the Hume Freeway? If the Minister is aware of that concern, what action has he taken to ensure that funds will immediately be made available so that tenders can be called in this financial year to enable construction of the freeway to continue in north-eastern Victoria?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—Senator Barney Cooney and I recently opened the Barnawartha bypass. The Honourable David Evans, a member of the National Party

in the other place, also attended the opening. I discussed the situation with a number of local shire representatives and contractors in the area who are extremely concerned about their future and the future of their work forces if Federal funding does not continue.

As I indicated at the opening of the bypass, the government has had discussions with the Federal Minister for Land Transport and Infrastructure Support, the Honourable Peter Duncan, as approximately \$50 million of unallocated national road funds is available at the moment. The government has put a case for three major roads in Victoria to continue receiving funds under the Federal Budget, namely, the Hume Freeway, the Ballarat bypass and Princes Highway east.

I hope the Commonwealth government will agree to the funding of those three major works. The government believes it is important that the major progress made in recent years on the Hume Freeway is continued. There are dangerous sections of the Hume Highway at Euroa, where the highway is not yet duplicated. There was considerable local debate about the bypass and the issue was finally resolved, with considerable wisdom. The government hopes work will be able to proceed, particularly around Glenrowan, which is another dangerous area because of the hilly terrain.

We are keeping in close contact with both the Federal Minister for Land Transport and Infrastructure Support and the responsible officers to further Victoria's case. I understand that shire councils and city councils along the Hume Freeway, and contractors, are also contacting the Federal government.

RACING APPEALS TRIBUNAL

Mrs WILSON (Dandenong North)—Will the Minister for Sport and Recreation inform the House of the impact of the establishment of the Racing Appeals Tribunal on Victorian racing?

Mr TREZISE (Minister for Sport and Recreation)—Since 1982 the government has taken numerous initiatives in Victoria for the benefit of the State, including the one raised by the honourable member for Dandenong North, namely, the establishment of the independent Racing Appeals Tribunal. While some people, including some involved in the racing world, queried the establishment of the tribunal, it is now, I believe, unanimously agreed that it has been a success.

For perhaps 100 years prior to 1982, the format in Victoria, as it presently is in other States, was for racing appeals to be heard by the principal club. In Victoria that club was, of course, the Victoria Racing Club. There was a feeling among licensed persons who obtained their livelihoods from the racing industry that a more independent avenue of appeal was required, especially with the increase in recent years of legal actions. Therefore, the government established the appeals tribunal with an independent chairman and two advisers.

Between January 1984 and 30 June 1987, the tribunal heard 26 appeals, of which 16 were from the galloping code, 7 were from the harness racing code and 3 were from the greyhound racing code. Of those 26 appeals, 9 were upheld.

The government's move to establish the tribunal has been successful. All of those who doubted the success of the move now agree that it was the correct decision. I understand that other States are considering following Victoria's lead.

ELECTIONS FOR CITY OF RICHMOND

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—I ask the Minister for Local Government to explain why he will not allow the City of Richmond to hold local government elections which would allow the city to once again be governed democratically.

Mr SIMMONDS (Minister for Local Government)—The Richmond City Council was dismissed after a public inquiry. The previous Minister for Local Government, the present

Minister for Housing, appointed an administrator who has organised the finances of the city so well that they are the envy of most municipalities in Victoria. If and when a council is to be restored in the City of Richmond, the government will make the decision, and no such decision has been made at this stage.

STAFFING OF POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Dr VAUGHAN (Clayton)—Will the Minister for Education inform the House of the action the government is taking to ensure that Victorian post-primary schools are adequately staffed in 1988?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—I thank the honourable member for Clayton for the question because it gives me the chance to explain the facts, which have been misrepresented by members of the Opposition. They are misinformed and, in turn, have misinformed the public about the facts.

Contrary to the claims made by the Opposition, approval has been granted to make up to 400 advance offers to those students who will graduate from teacher training institutions this year. That is not a new initiative of the government: the practice was implemented last year as part of an overall plan to increase the number of teachers in certain areas, particularly where there are critical shortages, for example, mathematics and science teachers.

Last year, the government made 221 advance offers. The initiative has been designed to overcome the shortages that have dogged education over a long period. Selected graduates who are prepared to teach anywhere in the State, especially in the areas that are traditionally hard to staff in the more isolated regions of the State, will be offered an incentive of \$2000. Other graduates will be guaranteed jobs and efforts will be made to place them in areas of their own choosing or at least in areas close to them.

Students receiving advance offers will be those who receive a highly recommended report as a result of an interview process. In addition, approximately 50 qualified secondary teachers not currently in the work force will be offered up to \$4000 a year to retrain in the areas of shortage—mathematics and science. Up to 40 mathematics or science studentships worth \$7000 a year will be offered to students who complete a Diploma of Education in 1988.

In considering the efforts of the government, especially during the past two years, one can see that staffing in post-primary schools is better than it has been before; was better at the beginning of this year than it has been before; and will be better at the beginning of next year than it has been before. That staffing shortage has been notable in the areas of mathematics and science, which are not shortages that affect Victoria alone but are worldwide shortages.

As with most issues, by the time the Opposition stumbles on to what it thinks might be a problem, the government is well on the way to fixing it.

PRISON OVERCROWDING

Mr CROZIER (Portland)—Can the Minister for Police and Emergency Services advise the legal protection available to police in the event of illness or injury to prisoners in police lockups when, because of prison overcrowding, prisoners are incarcerated beyond the time limits gazetted for police cells?

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—I am surprised that the honourable member for Portland should raise the subject of prison accommodation in Victoria because the government is currently involved in the largest expansion of prison accommodation ever undertaken in this State's history.

Not only is the government constructing a completely new remand centre in the city area but also it has a new major prison under construction at Lara, as well as other prisons in country Victoria.

The large-scale prison construction program and the necessity for prisoners to be held in police cells longer than they should be reflects directly on the failure of the previous conservative government of this State to build any new prisons in the period when it was clear that such additional accommodation would be required. It is against that background that the difficulties to which the honourable member refers have arisen.

Clearly, the same protection applies to the police in the course of their prison cell duties as applies during their normal duties as officers sworn to uphold the law.

LAND TAX ASSESSMENTS

Mr WALLACE (Gippsland South)—Can the Treasurer inform the House whether land tax assessments forwarded by the office of the Commissioner of Land Tax to landowners are true and correct or whether some incompetency in that office has led to miscalculations in the amounts owed by individual landowners?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—As a general principle, land tax assessments are accurate. Should the honourable member have any specific case he wishes to direct to my attention, I shall certainly have it examined.

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL PROJECTS

Mr STIRLING (Williamstown)—Can the Minister for Local Government advise the House of the action being taken by the government to oversee the development of business ventures and commercial enterprises undertaken by municipal councils?

Mr SIMMONDS (Minister for Local Government)—The government has a deep commitment to the concept of strong and viable local government within the State.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr SIMMONDS—The Leader of the National Party has a different view of the matter, of course, and the Leader of the Opposition is on record as saying that there should be only two tiers of government. No-one needs to guess which tiers of government would survive with that proposition.

With the application of the government's economic strategy to local government and entrepreneurial activities, the Local Government Department has developed a concept of establishing business enterprises. The municipality of the City of Melbourne, for instance, established the City of Melbourne Employment Institute Ltd to manage the sale of assets at the Newmarket saleyards site and to utilise some of the profits to foster employment opportunities.

Similarly, the Shire of Tullaroop is to act as an agent for a local building society, and the Shire of Cobram has put forward a proposal for the purchase of land for residential subdivision and development.

All of these types of enterprises are subject to financial, economic and planning assessment. The labour market implications are canvassed and preliminary work is undertaken to ensure that the projects are sound and viable, with particular stress being laid upon the protection of the municipality and its ratepayers from future financial liabilities in the event of enterprises failing to live up to expectations.

Officers of my department have established a set of guidelines and are available for consultations with municipalities in developing enterprises in conformity with this concept.

Honourable members would be aware of what occurred in the City of Sale, which is an indication of the type of situation that can develop if care is not taken.

The legislation that this House has passed will ensure that the projects to which I have referred are subject to approval by both the Treasurer and me. The capacity of this government successfully to manage the relationship between local government, the community and the business sector is strongly evidenced by that proposition.

The new Municipal Enterprises Division within my department will facilitate the further development of local and community ventures and marks a new stage in the government's continued encouragement of a strong, innovative and effective system of local government. I hope and trust all honourable members will support the government's proposition.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Ms SIBREE (Kew)—Why has the Minister for Education now announced new regulations to give school councils power to enforce the wearing or otherwise of school uniforms when he previously told deputations from school councils that he could do nothing without legislation?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—I am delighted to receive a question from the honourable member for Kew and to note that at least there appears to be support from the Opposition for the proposal by the government to ensure that school councils have the necessary powers to enforce the policies that they adopt.

The issue of school uniforms has had a very long history. It began as a result of an appeal by an individual from Hamilton to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman formally questioned whether school councils had the power to enforce the wearing of school uniforms. The matter was referred to the Victorian Government Solicitor and, by working with and receiving advice from the Victorian Government Solicitor, we are currently involved in the process of amending the school regulations to ensure that a school council that wishes to have an official school uniform policy will have the disciplinary power to enforce it.

ROADWORKS IN SOUTH-EASTERN SUBURBS

Mr MICALLEF (Springvale)—Can the Minister for Transport indicate to the House the progress being made in developing road capacity in the south-eastern suburbs and, in particular, the progress being made in the arrangements for the completion of the C3 link road?

The SPEAKER—Order! Did the Minister hear the question?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—Mr Speaker, it was difficult to hear the question over the rabble, but, nonetheless, I did hear it. The government has embarked on a major program to improve roadworks throughout metropolitan Melbourne and surrounding areas and a large part of that activity is occurring in the south-eastern suburbs.

It is important that Parliament, and particularly the people of the south-eastern suburbs, should be aware of the significant work that is currently being undertaken by the Road Construction Authority and the somewhat smaller road safety works being carried out by the Road Traffic Authority.

Two major works currently moving towards completion will significantly affect the southern and south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The first is the West Gate Freeway, which will link the West Gate Bridge with Kings Way and will be of enormous advantage to traffic travelling through to Dandenong Road and the Nepean Highway. That state of the art piece of engineering, costing more than \$100 million, is proceeding ahead of schedule.

The government expects that the first carriageway to take traffic from Geelong and the western suburbs to the south-eastern suburbs will be open for traffic within a few months.

The whole job, including the southern carriageway, which will take traffic from the opposite direction, should be completed before the end of next year.

In respect of the C3 arterial road, which will link the Mulgrave Freeway with the South-Eastern Freeway, I am delighted to report that work is proceeding to schedule and the government expects to open that arterial road link to Burke Road in the first half of next year.

The government is currently discussing with the Malvern and Camberwell city councils whether to wait for the whole job to be completed before the road is opened. On balance, I believe such a valuable piece of roadwork should be open to traffic as soon as possible, but discussions will continue with local municipalities.

The remainder of the works are scheduled to be completed by the end of next year. That will be of enormous benefit to the travelling public in the south-eastern suburbs and will improve the amenity of the Malvern area, particularly for those people who have been significantly inconvenienced by excessive traffic problems for a long period.

In the next twelve months the government intends to commence the R7 Westall Road bypass which will be of advantage to the road capacity in the Springvale area. I will visit that area within the next few weeks and, with the honourable member for Springvale, I will formally release the government's proposals for the next generation of major road works.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr JOHN (Bendigo East)—In question time today the Minister for Property and Services made a statement to the effect that I, as member for Bendigo East, had done little to assist the victims of the recent fire in Bendigo.

I, together with members of the Liberal Party, the National Party and the Labor Party representing the area, am concerned about the damage that occurred to property and the resulting loss of money and jobs.

I advise the House that, contrary to the remarks of the Minister, I was at the site on the morning of the fire. If the Premier were up to date with his correspondence, he would know that I have written to him, just as I have written to the Minister for Property and Services and to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources.

I have had discussions with many people who have been affected by the fire in the Bendigo arcade. I have personally written to every affected shop owner, shopkeeper and lessee, offering them my assistance in any joint approach they may wish to make to the government for financial or other assistance.

The SPEAKER—Order! I should advise the honourable member for Bendigo East that I gave him the call because he claimed to have been misrepresented. The honourable member has now straightened the record and, if he concludes his remarks, he will be in order.

Mr JOHN—Mr Speaker, I thank you and the House for listening to my personal explanation. I also point out that it was the Opposition that suggested the use of the State Electricity Commission building in Bendigo for the benefit of dislocated victims of the fire. I am glad the government has taken up that suggestion.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER—Order! I advise the honourable member for Mornington that I shall not tolerate his interjecting while he is out of his place.

PETITIONS

The Clerk—I have received the following petitions for presentation to Parliament:

Firearms licensing laws

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the State of Victoria sheweth:

We are concerned about the Victorian government's proposed legislative changes to Victorian gun laws and are opposed to:

1. the reintroduction of a permit to purchase a gun;
2. the present right of appeal to the consultative committee being replaced by a right of appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal;
3. any proposal to fingerprint and—or photograph applicants for gun licences.

We support proposals:

1. to require that every shooter should be a member of a responsible shooting organisation and should have a firearms safety handling certificate;
2. to require that shooters may not shoot without a licence except when undertaking formally recognised training.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the Legislative Assembly will call upon the Victorian government to accommodate our concerns in the final wording of the relevant Act or Acts of Parliament.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

By Dr Wells (201 signatures)

Blackburn Road bus service

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the State of Victoria calls on the Minister for Transport, T. Roper, to expand the timetable on the Blackburn Road—route 703—bus route to provide a 15-minute peak service on weekdays, a full 30-minute service on Saturdays and the introduction of a 30-minute service on Sundays, comparable with that now operating on route 733.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

By Mr Coleman (9 signatures)

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

PAPERS

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

Annual Reporting Act 1983—Notice of Direction to submit an Annual Report to the relevant Minister within five months from 30 June 1987 to the following superannuation bodies:

Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Superannuation Scheme Trustees

Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Provident Fund Committee

Gas and Fuel Corporation Superannuation Board

City of Melbourne Superannuation Trustees

State Superannuation Board

Hospitals Superannuation Board

Metropolitan Fire Brigades Superannuation Board

State Employees Retirement Benefits Board

Emergency Services Superannuation Board

Education Act 1958—Resumption of Land at Rowville—Certificate of the Minister for Education.

Industrial Relations Commission—Report of the Acting President for the year ended 31 October, 1986.

Members of Parliament (Register of Interests) Act 1978—Cumulative Summary of Returns, September 1987—Ordered to be printed.

National Tennis Centre Trust—Report for the year 1986–87.

Parliamentary Committees Act 1968—Report of the Treasurer on the action taken with respect to the recommendations by the Economic and Budget Review Committee's report on Commonwealth–State Financial Arrangements.

State Board of Education—Report on Transport Policy in relation to integration of students with impairments, disabilities or problems in schooling.

Statutory Rules under the following Acts:

Accident Compensation Act 1985—Nos 237, 250.

Annual Reporting Act 1983—Nos 248, 249.

Construction Industry Long Service Leave Act 1983—No. 247.

Consumer Affairs Act 1972—No. 246 together with the following documents required by Section 32 of the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984 to accompany the Statutory Rule—

AS 1249–1983 Children's Nightclothes Having Reduced Fire Hazard

AS 1182–1980 Size Coding Scheme for Infants' and Children's Clothing (Underwear and Outerwear.)

Friendly Societies Act 1986—No. 242.

Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act 1986—No. 243.

Nurses Act 1958—No. 244.

Port of Portland Authority Act 1958—No. 227.

Retail Tenancies Act 1986—No. 245.

Town and Country Planning Act 1961:

Flinders—Shire of Flinders Planning Scheme 1962, Amendments Nos 214, 1986; 221.

Geelong Regional Planning Scheme, Amendments Nos 159 Part 2 1986, 167 1986, 184 Part 2 1987, 189 1987.

Knox—City of Knox Planning Scheme 1965, Amendments Nos 273, 290, 291, 1986.

Lorne Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 14.

Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme, Amendments Nos 383, Part 3, 406 Part 3, 455, 488.

Mildura—City of Mildura Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 73 1986 (Part 1).

Tambo—Shire of Tambo (Lakes Entrance) Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 71.

Traralgon—City of Traralgon Planning Scheme 1957, Amendment No. 78.

Shepparton—Shire of Shepparton Planning Scheme 1983, Amendments Nos 12, 14 1986.

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Act 1986—Notification of extension of time for submission of Board's 1986–87 Report until 12 February 1988 granted by Minister for Education together with reasons for delay.

Youth Parole Board—Report for the year 1985–86—Ordered to be printed.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Presentation of Address-in-Reply

The SPEAKER—Order! I wish to advise honourable members that the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech on the opening of Parliament will be presented at Government House tomorrow at 10.30 a.m. Transport will leave the front steps of Parliament House at 10 a.m. It is requested that as many members and Ministers as possible accompany me to the presentation.

APPROPRIATION (1987-88, No. 1) BILL AND WORKS AND SERVICES (ANCILLARY PROVISIONS No. 2) BILL

The Orders of the Day for the resumption of the debates on the motions for the second reading of these Bills were read.

Mr WILKES (Minister for Housing)—I declare these Bills to be urgent, and I move:

That these Bills be considered urgent Bills.

Approval of the motion being put was indicated by the required number of members rising in their places, as specified in Standing Order No. 105 (a).

The motion was agreed to.

Mr WILKES (Minister for Housing)—I move:

That the time allotted in connection with the remaining stages of the Bills be until 10.30 p.m. this day.

The motion was agreed to.

The debates (adjourned from September 16) on the motions of Mr Jolly (Treasurer) for the second reading of these Bills were resumed.

Mr TANNER (Caulfield)—The presentation of the Budget has been nothing less than the adoption of a Goebbels-like technique: make the lie big enough and repeat it often enough and the public will believe it.

I refer honourable members to the first two sentences of the Treasurer's speech in presenting the Budget to Parliament when he stated:

The 1987 Budget represents a watershed in the development of financial management in Victoria.

It is the culmination of a five year effort to rein in the running costs of government.

Those are fine sounding words, until one reads the figures to which the Treasurer refers. The government proposes to spend \$11 138 246 600 in the 1987-88 Budget. When the last Liberal government presented its Budget in 1981-82 it proposed to spend a total of \$5 401 315 487. In just over five years the government is proposing to spend twice as much as the last Liberal government, yet the Treasurer claimed, in presenting the Budget, that the Budget is the culmination of five years' effort by the government to rein in the running costs of government. What the Treasurer said is not reasonable or correct; it is nothing less than a fraud upon the public and Parliament.

I also alert honourable members to the taxation receipts that are proposed to be collected by the State government this year. It is estimated to receive \$3 639 900 000 compared with the taxation receipts of \$1 893 550 000 received by the last State Liberal government. The latter figure is virtually only half of what the government is proposing to raise in State taxation this financial year.

The Treasurer's words are nothing more than a fraud upon Parliament and the public of Victoria. The Treasurer has made quite an art of the tactic of making claims that fly in the face of the facts, believing that if he makes the claim big enough, proclaims it loudly enough and stands behind it, no-one will examine the claim too closely. He believes people will be gullible enough to accept what he has said.

I refer honourable members to a further claim in the Treasurer's Budget speech. He stated:

... it is essential for the Budget to give attention to important social priorities in areas such as health, law and order and community services.

It is important for the government to give attention to those areas but, as honourable members are aware, health services in Victoria are nothing less than a disaster area. The waiting lists for operations in public hospitals have blown out to more than 27 000 people.

Honourable members should jolt their memories by thinking back to 1982 when the government came to office. The waiting lists for operations totalled only 8000. The Minister for Transport, who was the Minister of Health at the time, had enough gall to go on television, with taxpayers' money, to make the claim that Victoria had the best health system in Australia. That was certainly true but the Minister for Transport, who was then the Minister of Health, implied that his government was responsible for the state of health services at that time, and that was, of course, totally untrue.

Liberal governments during the preceding 27 years had built up those health services to make them the best health services available in Australia. What happened? The waiting list for operations has increased from 8000 to more than 27 000. It is hypocritical of the Treasurer to use high-sounding words in the Budget speech claiming the government will give attention to the health field when one can see only too plainly what has been the result of the government's efforts in the past five years.

The Treasurer was attempting also to pull the wool over the eyes of the Victorian public in his statements about police services in the speech. I refer honourable members to 1987-88 Budget Paper No. 5, page 239, which states under the heading "Ministry Services: Program 581":

The objectives of the Ministry services program are to provide policy advice, to undertake strategic and financial planning, and to ensure that the main thrust of the programs within the Ministry portfolio are coordinated in accordance with government policy.

That is an ominous sounding paragraph because it is clear that the intention of the government is to control the Police Force.

I refer honourable members to page 234 of the same Budget Paper, which shows in table C.19.1, Program No. 581, that the allocation for Ministry services has been increased by 18.6 per cent. Compare that with Program No. 582, under which the allocation for police corporate services, is increased by 3.8 per cent; Program No. 583, covering police community safety and security shows an increase of 0.7 per cent; Program No. 584, which increases the allocation for police crime investigation by only 2.1 per cent; and Program No. 585, under which the allocation for police road traffic control, safety and enforcement is increased by 3.1 per cent.

The main thrust of Program No. 581 is to ensure that programs within the Ministry portfolio are coordinated in accordance with government policy. Not only is the Treasurer now giving effect to that policy thrust of increasing government control over police services, but also the campaign has started in other areas with the attack on the Police Force from personnel connected with the Police Complaints Authority and elsewhere who say that the authority needs greater powers to control police personnel. Comments have been made from other quarters claiming that the news media unit operated by the Police Force should come under the direct control of the government.

In future the Police Force will be totally muzzled and only those comments that agree with the views of the mandarins in the socialist government will be allowed to be broadcast to the Victorian public. Victorians should be worried and should pay close attention to this matter. One of the bulwarks of democracy is a police force that is free and independent of political patronage and influence.

The Treasurer would be aware that, in opening the second session of the 50th Parliament of Victoria on 24 February this year, His Excellency, the Governor in a speech on behalf of the government, made no mention of policing in this State, its needs and priorities over the remainder of this Parliament.

The Treasurer said in his Budget speech that the government will increase the number of police in Victoria over the next three years by 900. The government has made many promises about policing over the past five years and honourable members will recall that in 1982, during the run-up to the State election, the government promised to increase police numbers by 1000 by 1985.

That year came and went, yet police numbers increased by only 500. The Police Force was only marginally increased at a time when crime escalated to the highest rate in the history of Victoria.

The Victorian government then made another promise to increase the number of police by 900 during the following four years. Two-and-a-half years into that time it is clear that that promise has not been kept with approximately 250 extra police joining the force. In the current Budget, the government again promised to increase the Police Force by a further 900 during the next three years. Another promise that was easily made by the government and will be easier to break. Can the promise be accepted in good faith?

I was alarmed by the following message from the President of the Police Association, which was published in the 1 August 1987 issue of the *Victorian Police Association Journal*:

Readers are advised that the president's message in this August issue of the journal, was prepared approximately mid-July, prior to your association successfully negotiating an increase in manpower of 900 over the next three years.

One condition of this agreement was that the association would refrain from any media campaign attacking the government on lack of manpower.

Unfortunately, by the time negotiations regarding the abovementioned 900 additional police were completed, the journal had already gone to press.

I now wish to acknowledge the government's undertaking to provide those 900 extra police during the next three years, and for the abovementioned reasons, point out that the article is not to be seen as a failure to honour our agreement with the government.

The name of the president of the association, Mr P. N. Edge, appears at the end of the message.

This matter should be of grave concern to the community because the message implies that the government has gagged members of the Police Force.

Mr Ross-Edwards—Of course it has!

Mr TANNER—The government has gagged members of the Police Force from bringing any future shortcoming in police manpower to the attention of the public. Why did the government deem it necessary to impose a gag? Obviously, the government wished to stifle public criticism of its performance and public scrutiny of its efforts in this area.

More alarming is the assumption that if the Police Association did not agree to the imposition of the gag on its members, the public of Victoria would have been denied the extra 900 police that have now been promised by the government. The government stands condemned for its action. The public should be alarmed by the implication that if, during the year, the association should criticise the government for the lack of police manpower, the deal will be off and Victoria will be denied the extra 900 police necessary to reduce the crime rate in our community.

I again remind honourable members of the statement that I read out earlier from the Budget summary of program expenditure in which the government stated its intention to take control of police services and to ensure that in future the thrust of the programs contained in the police and emergency services portfolio are coordinated in accordance with government policy. Through this government, Big Brother reigns supreme!

No doubt, if one were a socialist, one would applaud what the government is doing, but in reality we live in a democratic society, and one of its bulwarks is that Victoria has a free and independent Police Force that serves any quarter of the community with neither fear nor favour—especially any political quarter. What criticism has the government been worried about? What does it wish to stifle about policing in Victoria?

No doubt it is not just criticism that comes from the Police Association, although it has been very sensitive in relation to such criticism. I have only to refer honourable members to the particular issue of the *Victoria Police Association Journal*, that loose-leaf extract

that I have just read into the Parliamentary record, to illustrate my point. At page 4 of the journal the message from the association's president, Mr P. N. Edge, is interesting. He recalls that the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Mr Trezise, in his capacity as acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services, stated that the Police Association was naive if it expected the government to give it another 2000 police officers. Mr Edge went on to state:

Mr Cain responded with, "the Police Association are just like any other union with the usual cry, 'we want more'".

The police Minister himself got into the act and stated:

There is obviously no satisfying the union's voracious appetite.

In actual fact, the association was different from other unions because it was not trying to obtain more benefits for itself and its members, but rather it was seeking more benefits for the Victorian community. The government has denied these benefits to the Victorian community over the past five years, and the government, through the Budget documents and through the attempt to guillotine the debate, is now trying to stifle discussion of this promised figure of 900 extra police.

I have already recited previous promises of the government that it has disregarded in relation to increased police numbers, and there is no reason to believe it will not go back on its word in this case also. In fact, I predict that two years down the track this will be merely another promise by the government that has been thrown out the window.

The reality is that once again, the government and the Treasurer, through the Budget and through the example I have just given, have attempted to perpetrate a fraud on Parliament and on the people of Victoria. The community needs to be alerted to this fact; otherwise one of the bastions of our democratic society will be placed in peril in years to come.

It is not merely increased police numbers or political interference that is worrying the public of Victoria; it is also actual lack of police powers. I refer honourable members to an article by Mr S. I. Miller, Chief Commissioner of Police, in the *Police Life* magazine dated June 1985. In that article Mr Miller stated that the powers sought by the Victoria Police were:

- the power to require a person suspected of the commission of a criminal offence to state his name and address;
- the power to search a person suspected of the commission of a criminal offence;
- the power to detain a person, suspected of the commission of a criminal offence, beyond the current six hours permitted by law;
- the power to require a person suspected of the commission of a criminal offence to take part in an identification parade;
- the power to require a person suspected of the commission of a criminal offence to provide biological specimens, such as blood or hair;
- the power to require a person suspected of the commission of a criminal offence to be fingerprinted; and
- the power to require a person suspected of the commission of a criminal offence to be photographed.

I am pleased to be able to provide the House and the public with the recently released law and order policy of the State Liberal Party in Victoria. With the appropriate safeguards, all of these powers that the Victoria Police are seeking would be provided under a Liberal government.

The law and order policy is one that I support wholeheartedly because not only does it provide the police with the powers it needs but it also provides the safeguards to ensure that our civil liberties are protected. This is one matter that needs to be given considerable attention, because the government is always good at talking about civil liberties and humanitarian causes, yet in every instance of crime one can nominate, it is on the side of the unsocial element of the community. The government always takes the side of the criminal rather than that of the person on whom the crime has been perpetrated.

A Liberal government would totally reverse this trend and ensure that in future the Victorian public would be totally protected against and properly compensated for any effects that the perpetration of a crime may have upon an individual.

It is not simply in the area of policing that the government has failed in its duties and responsibilities to the Victorian public. A public transport strike is occurring today and, earlier today during question time, honourable members heard of the government's woeful performance with WorkCare.

Honourable members will recall that when the WorkCare system, through the Parliament, was imposed on the Victorian public, the Treasurer made one of his Goebbels-like claims that the WorkCare system would be self-funding. It was pointed out at the time that actuarial advice from the community was that, after ten years, in present day values the system could have an \$8 billion deficit.

One can say that it is only paper money and it will never need to be repaid. However, the reality is that at some stage in Australia's history, some form of national rehabilitation and compensation scheme will be introduced. When that happens, individual State schemes, such as Victoria's WorkCare scheme, will need to be paid out.

WorkCare has already built up a debt of almost \$2.5 billion. It will possibly escalate to a larger amount than the \$8 billion that was estimated when the scheme was originally introduced. One wonders about the effect on the Victorian taxpayer not only in relation to taxation but also in the reduction of services if ever the scheme has to be paid out. The full folly of the government following its blind socialist ideology will then be brought home to the public. That will be one day that not only our children but also we will rue.

An area about which the government and the Treasurer make fine sounding and flowery speeches is public housing. It must be stressed again and again so that the government does not get away with it that, when the Labor Party came into office, 14 000 people were registered on the public housing waiting list, whereas today more than 32 000 people are registered on that list. That is a deplorable record for which the government should be ashamed.

The government can be accused of the greatest hypocrisy because, both when in opposition and in office, it has claimed to have concern for people in need of public housing. However, what has the government done? Because of its policy, it has allowed more than 18 000 extra people to be registered on the public housing waiting list. The government should give much more than lip-service to its concern; but more than increased public expenditure is needed—initiatives in government policy are needed to alleviate the problem.

Thankfully, the Federal Treasurer, Mr Keating, has at long last recognised the disastrous effects of the abolition of negative gearing in the housing area. He has now backtracked. That does not excuse the State government for not bringing home to the Federal government the absolutely disastrous effects of the Federal government's abolition of negative gearing. In fact, it was not until the Premier of New South Wales, Mr Unsworth, took action in this matter that Mr Keating at long last reacted.

The Victorian government had no influence on the Federal Treasurer's decision. It sat back on its hands and allowed thousands of people to be registered on the public housing waiting list.

Despite its protestations about its achievements in education, the government has fallen down badly in this area. Since the Labor government came to office, there are approximately 10 per cent fewer students at government schools and 10 per cent more enrolled at non-government schools. The community is voting with its feet and is clearly indicating that it is dissatisfied with government schooling in this State.

Today in question time the Minister for Education was clearly flat-footed in his attempt to avoid answering a question on school councils and their ability to require students to

wear school uniforms. Previously the Minister had told school council deputations that he could not act unless an Act of Parliament covering this matter was in place. However, out of the blue, like a conjuror pulling a rabbit out of a hat, the Minister has now produced regulations that will enable school councils to take the appropriate action.

It is clear that education in Victoria is out of control. On numerous occasions the Minister has been completely bewildered in this House when attempting to answer questions from honourable members. He either has not known the answer or has been left flat-footed because his support of various proposals has not been shared by his colleagues, as evidenced by the statements of the Premier at a recent public gathering.

The Minister has certainly found managing his portfolio hard going. There is no doubt that his mismanagement is part of the reason why Victorians are voting with their feet. More than 30 per cent of Victorian school children are now attending non-government schools. It is my understanding that the proportion is much higher in secondary schools.

The government has let down not only its own supporters—those who follow its socialist ideology—but also the general public, on police matters and the provision of government schooling, housing and public health facilities.

I direct the attention of the House to the reorganisation of Ministries and departments that has occurred over the past few years. I refer honourable members to the reorganisation of the public transport agencies, the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands, the various departments responsible for labour, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Housing and other government services. The reorganisations have all been abysmal failures.

Public Service morale is now at its lowest. The genuine public servant knows he will not get on unless he becomes a member of the Labor Party. The government must recognise the demoralising effect that is having on Victoria's public servants. The government cannot force them to join the Labor Party, but its actions have encouraged many fine officers to leave the Public Service. Many of the public servants who remain are so demoralised that they no longer have their hearts in their work and do not provide the service that they would otherwise provide.

Over the past five years, and again in this Budget, the government has blindly followed ideology at any cost, irrespective of the practical consequences of its policies. One can hope only that at the next State election the government will be removed from office and a Liberal government will be elected.

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—In analysing this Budget, one must consider two aspects. The first is the government's financial management, or mismanagement, of the economy. The second is the effect of the government's administration on Victorians, particularly in basic services to the general community.

I shall deal with both aspects and, firstly, refer honourable members to the economic position of this State.

The Budget handed down by the Treasurer some weeks ago is an illusion which does not represent the true economic position of Victoria. The government's mismanagement has been hidden from the public to some degree by a public relations exercise. If all the spending that the government is covering up in its economic mismanagement of the State could be extracted in detail, it would be seen that millions of dollars have been spent by the government in trying to create an impression which is not borne out by the facts.

The Budget is not a responsible document in its economic approach. The best way of illustrating that is to consider the government's accumulated debt, particularly under the current Treasurer. When the change of government took place in 1982, the debt of the State approximated \$11.4 billion—\$11 400 million. Since Labor has been in office, and incorporating the provisions and documentation of this Budget, the State debt has blown out to \$22 000 million. In other words, the State's debt has doubled in the last five years.

The debt has been increasing at approximately 20 per cent each year, whereas the inflation rate has been substantially lower.

If this Budget were responsible, the first thing one would expect to find within the Budget documents would be some attempt by the government to not only pull in its own expenditure in terms of public expenditure restraint but also to consider what the government is doing and proposes to do about reducing the State debt. That debt for every man, woman, and child in Victoria—who now number approximately 4 million—is \$5500 a head. The debt hangs over every citizen, whether a senior citizen living on the pension, or a one-day-old child. When one considers that that debt equals approximately \$22 000 a household and adds that to a personal mortgage and the costs met by citizens in providing education and paying taxes and charges, it is a substantial debt. Yet nowhere in the Budget or its supporting documents is there any attempt by the government to address the problem of the State debt and, more importantly, to reduce it.

We need a government that is prepared not only to exercise restraint in its expenditure programs but also to deal with the debt. The Budget contains absolutely no restraint in public expenditure. It reveals a Budget deficit of more than \$1 billion. The debt last year was approximately \$21 000 million. If we are to believe the Treasurer, this year we have a responsible Budget which improves our economic position, yet the debt is increasing by in excess of \$1000 million in this financial year. The current debt stands at \$22.7 billion.

Public sector net borrowings, including the Victorian Equity Trust, for 1987–88 are \$1.8 billion. There is not only an increase in debt but also increased borrowings under the present government.

The global limit borrowings allocation for Victoria was reduced at the Loan Council meeting in May by \$336 million. This substantive cut in global borrowings should have resulted in a real decrease by at least this figure in the total borrowings by the public sector. Instead, the fall in public sector borrowings to \$1.8 billion is not even \$100 million less than the 1986–87 borrowings. The restraint in spending and borrowings requested by the Federal government has not been followed by the State government. The government has merely pursued other methods of borrowing. While in the short term the government is having trouble with the Victorian Equity Trust, I understand that later this year the government will attempt to reintroduce a similar possibility in such a way as to be able to gain access to the \$300 million that it has sought.

Another aspect that must be considered in debts and borrowings is interest charges. Charges related to Victorian government borrowings amounted to \$1.137 million in 1986–87, of which a massive \$1.036 million, or 91 per cent, related to interest charges. To make these interest payments, the government has been forced to borrow more money and now the State is in a totally unacceptable financial position. It is not just the Parliament but also the people of Victoria who are in this position. The cost of servicing the huge debts and borrowings is growing at an alarming rate. The interest payments and other charges were 16 per cent higher than for 1985–86, at a time when the inflation rate has been running at less than 10 per cent. Even though the Treasurer claims to be exercising restraint, the borrowings in real terms are increasing at an alarming rate because the State of Victoria is not discharging this huge debt of \$22.7 billion. The interest repayments are growing and the repayments must be met either with further borrowings or by increased taxation on the citizens of Victoria.

The payments of the interest on borrowings will continue to grow so long as the present government ignores all warning signals and the pleas from the business community and the Opposition to make real cuts in public sector borrowings.

In 1981–82, interest payments as a proportion of revenue from State sources were 17 per cent; they have increased to 24 per cent in each of the last two Budgets. This clearly highlights the massive growth in interest charges, ever increasing due to the high borrowings and high and wasteful spending policies of the present Victorian government. The restrictions on global borrowings by the States were imposed so as to reduce the massive

borrowings, debts, and debt charges encumbrances of the past few years. Rather than acting responsibly and accepting the cut imposed by the Federal government and reducing borrowings, the Premier and the Treasurer and their colleagues have attempted to sidestep the restrictions by raising \$300 million in equity from and through the Victorian Equity Trust.

Obviously there was no consultation with the Federal government on this issue, nor has there been much liaising within the State government. Certainly some of the heads of State authorities were not consulted. They were told only two days before the Treasurer made his public announcement. Reports that have been uncovered indicate that the setting up of the Victorian Equity Trust was announced to the public only days after the public authorities concerned were informed of the float. The authorities were asked to comment on the trust within 24 hours of receiving information on the proposal. One can assume only that the haste with which the trust was prepared and announced is an indication of the increasing concern over the debts of the authorities involved, particularly the State Electricity Commission of Victoria.

Panic on the part of the government as to how this continual gross mismanagement of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria and other public authorities could be funded resulted in the establishment of the Victorian Equity Trust. It was introduced with limited fuss as the Treasurer realised that that money would have been classified as borrowings and that the 1987-88 State Budget would show a revenue shortfall of around \$300 million. Given that it was not discussed with the Federal Labor Party or with the Federal government, and given that it was widely publicised as equity, no one except the Opposition recognised that it was another form of borrowings.

To the credit of Mr Hawke and Mr Keating—I do not often give them credit—they were not impressed by the funny tricky deals that the Cain government attempted to make to cover its economic mismanagement. The Cain government's strategy to wind back the States' claims on national savings was seen to be under attack and the Federal government showed concern that the trust was simply a means of evading the global limits on borrowings. If other States were to follow Victoria's lead, the fiscal restraint so necessary for both Federal and State Budgets would be totally undermined. Now this alternative type of borrowings must rightly come under the global limits.

The Victorian government is obviously in a major fix. How is it to maintain its high level of wasteful spending and high borrowings for yet another year? The ideal solution would have been the line it should have taken in the 1987-88 Budget; that is, to reduce spending and reduce borrowings in line with the recommendation of the Federal government, the business community, the Victorian Opposition and every financial and economic interest. Instead, the government intends to maintain its chronically high level of spending and finance it through other questionable means. To finance the \$300 million borrowings blow-out, the government proposes to sell the World Trade Centre and exempt the Portland Smelter Unit Trust from the borrowings limit. However, no spending cuts were suggested and no spending cuts actually took place.

That presents Parliament and the Liberal Party, as the incoming government, with a huge problem. The debt of the Victorian community because of the waste and the mismanagement of the Cain government is growing at an alarming rate. It is not as though the sale of assets that the government is embarking upon at present will result in those funds being properly used.

The Opposition is not opposed to the sale of assets. If the public is to benefit from the sale of the assets, or if the assets are no longer genuinely required, they should be sold. The Opposition has said time and again that if the government sells assets that have been paid for by the people of Victoria it is essential that the funds generated from those sales be returned to the consolidated revenue and earmarked for the purpose of reducing the State debt. If the State debt can be reduced by a reasonable amount, it will substantially reduce the interest payments that have to be made.

The government has made no commitment that the proceeds from the assets it sells, which have been paid for by the community, will be spent in reducing the debt. During the past five years the Labor government has not made any commitment to reduce spending. We have seen no real commitment by the Labor government to reduce borrowings or reduce the State debt. Whether one likes it or not, this spells economic doom for Victoria.

That is one side of the coin in respect of the Budget. One must also take into account some of the government's other areas of administration. The railways are a prime example. The work practices put into place by the former Minister of Transport, now the Minister for Labour, have resulted in continual industrial unrest and the removal from the community at large of what was previously a reliable, efficient and effective rail system. It is not as though the system is making losses and is still reliable; the system is making huge losses and it is unreliable!

Victorians, like any other group of citizens in the world, can adjust to certainty. However, no-one can adjust to the continual holding of the community to ransom by some people who pursue courses of action for their personal betterment.

The public transport system is estimated to be losing \$1000 million a year. Where is the overall economic position of the State because of the basic economic philosophy put forward by this government? One of its major areas of mismanagement—the railways—is not only failing to provide an adequate service; it is also becoming an increasing debt to the people who, in return, have to pay for the provision of that service.

The soft approach towards industrial relations by this government, as well as its approach to work practices, will compound the economic problems of the State even if one ignores for one moment the real inconvenience suffered by the people who have to pay for the service.

I turn now to WorkCare. According to the Premier, Victoria has the greatest of the State Treasurers. The Treasurer has been in this place for more than five years. Prior to that he was an industrial advocate. In that role his whole mentality was directed towards getting as much as he could out of the system for those he worked for. I am not arguing that that is not understandable, since he was an employee of the trade union movement.

However, when the Treasurer became a member of Parliament and, more importantly, Treasurer, he failed to recognise that he had a greater responsibility to the electorate at large to say when people asked for more, "No, you cannot have any more".

The root of the evil at the base of WorkCare is the mentality of an individual who has a special relationship with the trade union movement and who has always bent over backwards to assist that movement in the claims it has made. When putting together the WorkCare package the Treasurer consistently gave in to the pressures of the trade union movement to ensure that the legislation did not contain any real safeguards against fraud and misuse. The system was to be free care rather than WorkCare.

Members from all sides of the Chamber will have heard many examples during the past six to twelve months of how WorkCare has been abused. It is estimated that the accumulated losses of WorkCare today amount to approximately \$2.8 billion. In almost two years of operation this one aspect of the government's maladministration has lost almost \$3000 million. If anyone in the private sector had built up losses of that order, they would be in gaol. There is no way any private firms that I can think of—ranging from BHP Co. Pty Ltd to little advertising agencies—could afford that sort of loss.

The Treasurer now comes into this place with all the audacity in the world and says the huge losses are the fault of the insurance companies. I accept that in any system some slackness will occur and a few claims that should not have been paid have been paid. However, the blame for those claims having been paid can be attributed more to the legislation—the new social welfare benefit, in this case—than to any one company or individual.

If the government can prove that any insurance company has fraudulently paid claims, those companies should be brought to account. The Opposition will certainly not allow the government to get off the hook with this gross maladministration.

The Treasurer intends to introduce a new Bill to tidy up the failings of the current legislation. However, it is too late with respect to the work practices and the way the system is administered. The legislation needs a complete overhaul, and this can be done only by a Liberal government. Only then will there be any chance of protecting the community from what will turn out to be an \$8 billion loss by year 5 of its operation.

This morning during question time the Treasurer was asked about his undertakings that the scheme would be self-funding over a ten-year period. The Treasurer weaved, ducked and ignored the question altogether. WorkCare is potentially the greatest economic disaster confronting the State at present. I do not say that lightly. I further estimate that that aspect of the government's administration more than anything else will put it out of office.

The losses with the railways, the losses in WorkCare, and a Budget that does not reduce public expenditure, borrowings or public sector interest payments will drag the State down the gurgler.

I now address the social implications of the Budget. Eighteen months ago, as a result of a press statement by the Premier, the government made a commitment to a social justice policy. That policy was to be delivered in six months, then nine months, then a year, and, finally, eighteen months. It was to be a major plank of the government's campaign leading up to the next election. What has happened to the social justice policy of the government in 1987? Did the Labor government show compassion or concern for the disadvantaged, for the senior citizens of the State, or for those who are disadvantaged by a lack of education or health services?

Education is a classic example. The government has paid no attention to detail or to the quality of education for five years. There has been review after review—which is a common practice of Labor Ministers within their own areas of responsibility and again once their responsibilities have changed. The changes and reorganisations have demoralised the teachers and have been ineffective and, ultimately, it is the public, who pay for the services, who have been disadvantaged.

There has been a massive drift away of children attending State schools to the private system, not only because of the lack of discipline but also because of the lack of quality of education.

Housing is another example. The Minister for Public Works understands the crying need of people on low incomes to obtain adequate shelter. When I was the Minister for Housing the then honourable member for Albert Park came to me consistently asking for more housing to be provided in his electorate and the then Housing Commission provided some excellent units. In the past five years the number of destitute people waiting for government assistance has more than doubled. Where is the social justice in that?

Health is a further example of the government's inadequate policies. After the change of government in 1982, the then Minister of Health, now the Minister for Transport, described Victoria's health system as one of the finest health services in the country. Today it is in shambles. Today the waiting list for people requiring urgent medical attention has blown out dramatically. It is not you and me who have trouble getting our ailments treated, it is the defenceless, the young, the homeless and the old. Again I ask the question: where is the social justice in that?

The social justice and the compassion of the government is best illustrated by the fact that it walked away from putting out its social justice policy as a major policy independent of all other actions. The government buried its policy as part of the Budget. There is no social justice or compassion in this government. The Labor government is exactly the same as the Federal Labor government. It finds it easier to associate with the 200 wealthiest people in Australia than it does with the 4 million people listed in the telephone book

because it no longer relates to the average citizen, let alone relates to the tens of thousands of Victorians who are not even listed in the telephone book because they cannot afford shelter or telephones.

The final injustice of the social justice policy is that it is headed by a public servant who was recommended for prosecution because he and his government and party had been involved in fraud. They abused the democratic processes of the State by trying to buy electoral success through foul means. The process following the Nunawading Province by-election was delayed for a period to ensure that the statute of limitations applied so no-one could be prosecuted. But the person who compiled the social justice policy, the person who was recommended to be charged with fraudulent activity, the person who has been protected by the government, now heads the social justice unit. In other words a person who has attempted to mislead the community in a fraudulent way has been rewarded, under the Cain Labor government, with continual employment at the public expense. Where is the social justice in that? Where is the social justice in supporting financially an individual who has so blatantly and clearly acted contrary to the standards that exist in this country, and who has conducted himself in such a way that people with more legal knowledge than I have recommended that he be prosecuted?

The Cain government's record in social justice is abysmal. The government no longer cares; it has no compassion and, as I have said, it is more at home with those who are listed as the 200 wealthiest people in the country than it is with those who are listed in the telephone book.

In conclusion, I point out to the House and the people of Victoria that in the months left before the next State election, the Opposition will be concentrating heavily on the level of taxes and charges that we, as citizens, pay to have the State's economy managed in a prudent way and to have services returned to us, given that it is the community's taxes and charges that employ people to provide their services.

The economic management of the State is nothing short of disastrous. The social implications of that failure to administer the economic affairs of the State wisely are having an enormous effect. There are substantially more disadvantaged people than ever before. That is not on my say-so, but is proved by the government's own figures. Any Budget that fails to address the State's debts, borrowings, interest repayments, and expenditure ensures greater poverty and is totally unacceptable.

The Budget is unacceptable because those who have less in our society—not always through their own fault and not always because they are unemployed, but because the task of keeping one's head above water is becoming more and more difficult—are increasing in number. The people of Victoria will make a clear distinction at the next election. There will be a change of government because the government has failed with its WorkCare program, it has increased poverty and it is a stark example of how, even with the best publicity in the world—produced by the government but paid for by the people—the truth will ultimately prevail.

Mr WHITING (Mildura)—I agree with the Leader of the Opposition, who spoke about the problems that have been created with the introduction of WorkCare. The key to that program was that the rehabilitation of injured workers would be greatly improved. It is a fact that there are now six times more people on rehabilitation programs following work accidents or illnesses than there were under the old workers compensation scheme. While that situation continues and all those people are taking advantage of support services and receiving payments, the blow-out in the amount required by the Accident Compensation Commission to meet those commitments will be huge.

The Treasurer must be worried about being able to find an answer to that problem without exceeding the 2.4 per cent levy average that was agreed upon. Drastic measures will need to be taken in future on that point.

I should like to comment also on the education allocation to the State. A change has taken place with regard to nursing training in Victoria. Under the Victorian Post-Secondary

Education Commission the allocation for 1986-87 was \$6.38 million, and the estimate for this year has increased 100 per cent to \$12.36 million. The change in nursing education did receive some support, but not total support throughout the State.

It is possible that, in the long-term, we may see a swing away from the academic style of nursing education back to hospital-based nursing training, particularly in country areas. It is necessary for country base hospitals to continue to provide nursing training for the young people in those areas interested in pursuing a nursing career, and it is particularly important for those young people who would not be able to do so if they had to provide their own accommodation.

The Royal Australian Nursing Federation and other groups are interested in increased academic status being given to the nursing profession, and I do not blame them for that because it is obvious that the kudos nurses receive probably helps prevent them from being considered second-rate or third-rate members of the medical team. Nursing is an honourable profession, and I am sure nursing representative groups are keen for the change to take place. However, it has had a drastic effect on people in remote country areas who have difficulty in travelling to reach the colleges of advanced education at Bendigo, Ballarat or other places around the State.

Maintenance allowances made available by the government to families of State school children are a good idea in theory but again, in practice, problems will arise. It is all very well giving parents \$60 a year for educational purposes, but some families would consider that they have far more pressing needs than their children's education, and when the money is given to them with no strings attached they will be tempted to use it for other purposes. The total figure for that allocation has increased from \$4.5 million in 1986-87 to \$15.35 million in 1987-88 and, as I said, that is a worthwhile contribution to all parents of the State who have children at State schools. In many instances it will be of considerable value and will be used appropriately, but in other cases that will not occur.

I was interested in the school education program. The works and services expenditure under the item dealing with school education works for 1986-87 was \$150.2 million, and this year the amount allocated is \$138.7 million. That is a large decrease and it is indicative of the fact that the government is hard-pressed to maintain the school buildings that it has at present.

Obviously these works will be curtailed significantly and we will see a gradual running down of the maintenance of school buildings and properties. We will finish up with a big catch-up figure in the future in order to cope with that situation. I wonder about the wisdom of that program in the light of a long-term commitment by any government. It is possible that a government will undertake that kind of reduction in maintenance costs in the short term to save money at present and to make the Budget look a lot better, but if it is not in office after the next election, it will not worry the government that the maintenance of those buildings has been allowed to deteriorate.

I hope that is not the case so far as the government is concerned because in many instances it has taken on the task of improving a situation considerably, and I had hoped that this plan would continue, but I become nervous when I see such figures appearing in the Budget because we may be a mere twelve months away from the next State election.

My next concern in the Budget is the maintenance of roads in Victoria. Honourable members will be aware of the difficulties of local councils and the Road Construction Authority when it comes to upgrading roads around the State, whether they are highways, arterial roads or local roads. I am concerned that, once again, this Budget will allow the roads to deteriorate further.

The allocation for rural arterial roads management in both recurrent and works and services expenditure in the last financial year was \$112.8 million and the estimate for this year is \$115.8 million. Therefore, there is a \$3 million increase in that amount.

The total recurrent and works and services expenditure for local roads management has decreased from \$78.5 million in 1986-87 to \$73 million this year—a drop of \$5.5 million. As any honourable member living in a country area would know, local road funding problems are immense. The roads are deteriorating rapidly and will soon need a large input of funding to reach a standard that would be, perhaps, relative to a period ten years ago when the sealed roads were of a reasonable standard and sufficient funding was available.

Recently, the roads have become so badly decayed and damaged that in some cases the local councils have allowed them to revert to being gravel-surfaced roads. That, in itself, is an indication of how serious the situation has become, and it has not improved to any large extent since the Cain government came to office. A large increase in funding is required to maintain the standard.

I refer particularly to the Millewa railway line, which has been the subject of consideration by a number of reports. It was referred to in the Canac report and in a number of other investigations made into the transport of grain by road.

Those reports indicated that the Millewa railway line should not be upgraded and that it should be closed when the track deteriorates to the extent that derailments are imminent. That is extremely unsatisfactory because it will cause difficulties for the Shire of Mildura. During the season, more than 100 000 tonnes of grain will be carted the 70 to 80 kilometres from Meringur to Carwarp, which is the silo town on the main Melbourne to Mildura railway line.

It is estimated in the Budget that the sum of \$400 million will be spent this financial year on upgrading the Carwarp storage facility to cope with the grain transported by road. The total cost of the facility is estimated at \$820 million, and it is vital that the situation be reviewed.

It has been shown that the costs originally used in the survey regarding the restructure of the Manangatang to Robinvale railway line were too high. The sandhill problems encountered on that railway line do not need to be considered in relation to the Millewa railway line because it runs east to west along the line of sandridges in that district. In addition, suitable ballast material has been found in the Meringur district, and that is presently being used on some railway lines in the north-west of the State. It is cheaper than the blue metal ballast that is carted from areas around Castlemaine and other areas in Victoria.

Despite the fact that the cost of upgrading the railway line is less than originally estimated, the Budget does not allocate moneys for road construction in that area of the State. The only allocation that has been made for new works within the Shire of Mildura is \$120 million for the duplication of the carriageways of the Calder Highway between Irymple and Mildura. The problems of the Red Cliffs to Meringur railway line will worsen.

Recently, a small load of barley from the Mildura area was carted by road. The local branch of the Victorian Farmers Federation was extremely concerned that the load was carted by road without the shire council being notified. It cost an extra \$2 a tonne on top of the railway freight charge for the barley to be transported by road. The savings that would be made if the railway line were upgraded to a standard suitable for use by the 50-tonne hopper wagons currently used by V/Line should be considered. Those savings would be worthwhile to the graingrowers and the local municipalities, which must foot the bill if roads in the area are damaged as they have been in the southern Mallee and Wimmera areas.

A light rail line currently exists in the area and it will not cost too much to upgrade that line. It may cost \$2 million, but it will provide a suitable track for the next 40 years, and that will produce savings in the long term. If the Minister for Transport wishes to be considered as a statesman of any kind, he should reconsider the decision regarding the Millewa railway line on the basis of savings that have been made through the upgrading

of the Manangatang to Robinvale railway line and the other matters to which I have referred, such as the lower cost of reconstruction through the use of local limestone ballast.

Another important issue to the State is the allocation for salinity works, salinity mitigation and river improvement along the Victorian side of the River Murray as well as the small rivers throughout the State which provide some of the saline input into the River Murray and eventually into the irrigation systems in South Australia and around the lower end of the River Murray in Victoria. The allocation should be increased because a scheme will have to be implemented with all the vigour the Minister for Water Resources can muster if the quality of the water used for irrigation purposes and for town supplies is to be improved.

I shall take the opportunity at a later stage of commenting on other issues that are vital to the State. Because of the actions of the government, that opportunity will be brief, but it will enable those honourable members who wish to make a contribution at a later stage to do so.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I thank all honourable members who have participated in the 1987–88 Budget debate. As honourable members will be aware, the Budget was framed under extremely difficult circumstances: all States were required to meet the cutback in recurrent revenue from the Federal government. Victoria began planning the Budget on the basis of a 2 per cent real increase in recurrent financing from the Commonwealth government.

Following the Premiers Conference and the Australian Loan Council meeting, the financial assistance grants or general revenue grants increased only in line with the consumer price index. That meant that Victoria had to face up to an effective revenue shortfall of the order of \$70 million.

Given those circumstances, it was obvious that the 1987–88 Budget had to be one of very tight expenditure restraint. As is shown by the conventional measures of recurrent expenditure, it is estimated that in 1987–88 recurrent expenditure in Victoria will increase by only 6.8 per cent. That is well below the average for all other States, which stands at 8.6 per cent.

There is no doubt that the government has adhered to its commitment to ensure tight expenditure restraint, which follows on from previous Budgets that have also been very tight.

On the other side of the Budget, the government made it clear that it would adhere to its commitment that taxation receipts in this State should not increase by more than the estimated consumer price index increase and the economic growth rate. The taxation receipts in the Budget clearly show that the State government has adhered to this commitment. In fact, the taxation receipts for 1987–88 are estimated to increase by only 7 per cent. Again, this is significantly below the estimated increase for other States in Australia, which stands at 8.8 per cent.

The Budget also contains significant taxation relief. Not only was the government concerned to ensure a more equitable tax structure in Victoria but also it wanted to continue the policy of encouraging economic growth in this State and an increase in exports. The taxation relief proposed in the Budget clearly shows that the government is achieving both objectives.

In terms of the equity of the taxation system, the government has recognised that wage and salary households have had to bear a significant burden over the past two or three years because of the national drop in income. It has been well documented now that this has been brought about by changing international factors. It was in that context that the government decided on a substantial drop in motor registration fees of the order of some \$25.

I also point out that, although it is not taxation relief per se, the government has decided on a \$60 education grant, which is a new scheme that will significantly benefit households with children of school age.

The benefit will apply to both primary and secondary students from households where the combined income level is less than \$50 000 per annum.

Therefore, although that is not a taxation reduction as such, it is money in the pockets of Victorian families that will certainly be of assistance in meeting costs associated with education. Honourable members will be aware that the new scheme will operate from 1 January 1988.

In terms of encouraging economic growth in Victoria, the most important change announced in the Budget is the payroll tax relief for firms that expand exports. Given the balance of payments position in Australia, it is incumbent on all governments to do what they can to increase exports from Australia. In this respect it is important to note that the Portland aluminium smelter is making a significant contribution.

It is conservatively estimated that when the two potlines are in operation, some \$600 million of export income will be produced for Australia. There is every indication that it could be a much higher figure because world aluminium prices have increased dramatically over the past twelve months or so. In fact, on 5 October aluminium prices were of the order of \$US2000 a tonne, which is obviously a long way from the position that existed when aluminium prices reached the bottom, at some \$US900.

It is evident from the dramatic increase in world aluminium prices expressed in US dollars that there is tremendous potential for Australia to earn well in excess of that \$600 million that I have mentioned. Obviously, \$600 million is also significant in improving the balance of payments position.

As a result of new technology becoming available during the construction of the Portland aluminium smelter, there will now be an even more productive set of potlines than was originally anticipated. In terms of export growth, therefore, there is a marked improvement in the aluminium price worldwide, as well as a substantial increase in volume, as a result of the Portland aluminium smelter using the latest technology available in the world.

In addition, the government is providing significant payroll tax relief to firms increasing their exports. Basically, the government is providing taxation relief for all wage and salary costs associated with an increase in exports as a share of total sales of the corporation. Many employers in Victoria have already contacted my office about this incentive; they recognise that it will be one of the most significant factors in generating further growth in this State and, in particular, in exports from Victoria.

The government has also moved to increase the payroll tax exemption, which will be of tremendous benefit to small businesses in Victoria. The payroll tax exemption level has been increased from \$250 000 to \$300 000.

The payroll tax scale has also been rationalised so that those high marginal tax rates that were caused by the phase-in arrangements associated with payroll tax have been dramatically reduced. This will act as a further boost to employment in Victoria.

I point out to honourable members that the forecasts contained in the Budget speech about the gross non-farm domestic product have been borne out by the Estimates of the Federal Budget. They clearly illustrate that non-farm product is anticipated to grow in the order of 3 per cent nationally in 1987-88. The growth rate is expected to be higher than that in Victoria; a growth rate of some 3.5 per cent is expected in 1987-88.

The government was also concerned to ensure that the Budget assisted Victoria in maintaining its position as the State with the lowest unemployment rate in Australia. I am quite confident that the direction of the Budget will ensure that that remains the case. It is a fact that Victoria has had the lowest unemployment rate of any State for 51 months in a

row, and that was clearly not the position when the previous Liberal government was in office.

If one examines the Liberal Party's performance, one will find that there were only a few occasions when the State had the lowest unemployment rate during the past three years of Liberal government in Victoria.

That is clearly one of the reasons why the Cain government has maintained the strong support of the Victorian community, why the Liberal Party is in disarray and why the honourable member for Bennettswood could only get No. 3 on the ballot held in the Liberal Party room today. He laughs at that because obviously he hopes to improve at least one at the next Liberal Party ballot.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr JOLLY—I know the honourable member for Doncaster was not one of the contenders for leadership or deputy leadership positions, but I would certainly recommend that he throws his hat in the ring because I understand there were seven contenders last time, and eight would not make much difference.

The economic position in Victoria has been well documented and Victoria's economic performance has been better than the rest of Australia as is clearly shown in employment growth, the low level of unemployment and the government having 51 consecutive months with the lowest unemployment rate. The government has put in place a set of policies to ensure that our employment and unemployment record will be second to none in Australia. The Budget, which was important, marked significant steps in implementing the government's social justice strategy. I am sure that is not only widely supported in the community but also will be supported by all honourable members.

Another significant feature of this year's Budget in which the State broke new ground was that the government introduced the Budget earlier than has been the case in the past. I understand it is the first time that the State Budget of Victoria has preceded the Federal Budget. Victoria has done this to ensure that people are given earlier notification of Budget decisions with respect to new initiatives, both on the expenditure and taxation sides, and that the benefits flow at a much earlier time.

It is significant that a number of the government's major taxation initiatives regarding taxation relief come into operation on 1 November 1987.

In summary, this has been my sixth Budget and it certainly has been the most rewarding, despite the fact that it has been extremely difficult. The Budget will stand any scrutiny in terms of reasonable social and economic objectives and will ensure that Victoria stays at the economic forefront in Australia.

The motions were agreed to.

The Bills were read a second time and committed.

APPROPRIATION (1987-88, No. 1) BILL

The House went into Committee for the consideration of this Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3 were agreed to.

Clause 4

PARLIAMENT

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—I rise with some indignation over the appropriation to Parliament both in the current Parliamentary support services and in the Budget. This institution, next to the sun, the earth, the air and water which sustain our life, is the most precious institution in this State, outside the Federal Parliament.

Parliament, including the expenditure that is not in the Bill, costs the community 15 cents a week for every Victorian. There is not much that one can get today for 15 cents. Most children would spend far more than that in a day, let alone in a week. I remind those on the left who reject Parliament as a bourgeois anachronism, of the immortal words of Victor Hugo: "I will speak for the dumb, I will speak for the small to the great, and the feeble to the strong, I will speak for all the despairing silent ones". That is what Parliament is all about and that is why I would add to the wants list for the people of Victoria that more money be spent on Parliament.

I say to the miserable accountants who coach Ministers of the government that my expenditure bill is such that the government should not talk back to us because we represent the greatest privilege that the people of Victoria have, the right of free speech.

There are those on the right side of politics who constantly speak disrespectfully of Parliament, particularly the elected members of Parliament. I am fed up with the way our salaries have been denigrated and ridiculed recently. There is considerable expenditure incurred by each of us in representing our electorates and if one calculates the net take-home pay, after deducting superannuation and other expenditure, it is less than what an average tradesman would receive, particularly a skilled tradesman such as the one who is currently renovating my home. On an hourly basis he is earning two to three times what I receive.

I remind those extremely wealthy businessmen who seem keen on denigrating members of Parliament, if not controlling them through party organisations, that it would be difficult for them to make their millions without the decisions made by Parliament to fund the roads that carry their trucks and to provide the police to break their picket lines. It is an indictment on the Labor government that the police are still breaking picket lines in Victoria.

What about the funds spent on schools and other services that are paid for by the taxpayer—funds that provide the skilled and educated work forces for the businessmen who make large fortunes in Australia, and who shift their funds overseas and thereby pay little taxation on the profits? I am sure all would agree that members of Parliament work under appalling conditions; any industrial union worth its salt would call a strike if its members were required to tolerate the uncomfortable and unsafe conditions in this place.

The area where I work on the third floor is called death row. The lift breaks down practically every day. In the event of a fire honourable members would be lucky to be able to climb down a fireman's ladder. I understand that on such an occasion honourable members would be expected to walk over a makeshift arrangement across the dome on top of the library. I remind the House that a serious fire occurred on the third floor about six years ago. Fire experts are appalled at the firetrap in Parliament House. According to an expert report commissioned some years ago by the Public Works Department, fire protection measures in this building are seriously deficient and would not be tolerated elsewhere.

Recently I witnessed a small fire of some papers in the storage area below the south wing of the library; a fire in this place could cause millions of dollars worth of damage by destroying irreplaceable books and records, to say nothing of the priceless decorations, particularly in the other place.

The electrical wiring in sections of this building is past its effective life and the proliferation of small electric heaters during winter is a definite fire hazard. Even more dangerous is the absence of fire extinguishers in potentially hazardous areas. The fire brigade has said that any fire could choke the upper floors with smoke, because of the open staircases. Large sections of this building are not covered by smoke and heat detectors, and alarm systems. One can see that there are no exit signs or emergency lighting; some escape routes apparently are permanently partitioned or locked.

According to another expert, the lighting in this Chamber is bad, with obvious dark corners, and is completely against the original intention of the architects who designed

this building. Apparently skylights have been covered and, as honourable members can see, the indirect lighting destroys the effect of space, visual perception and grandeur of this Chamber, a poor situation compared with the magnificence of the other place.

The repainting of Queen's Hall was well meant but purists have said that it was a sacrilege because the walls should have been washed down to their original colour, so that they could have been inspected. I understand it was intended that the outside walls of this place would have been lavishly decorated in the final building.

Some years ago, the poet laureate, Sir John Betjeman, when visiting this Parliament, affirmed that the other place is the finest piece of Corinthian architecture in the world. More than \$1000 million is being spent on the new Parliament House in Canberra while Victoria has the world's greatest piece of Corinthian architecture in the other place! Some renovations have occurred but more could and should be done in this Chamber—a poor, plain Chamber compared with what it could be.

Recently, a Youth Parliament was held in the other place and I am sure the young people must have been impressed with the cherubim and the scantily-clad women, apparently an acceptable form in that era, provided they were used to decorate Parliament.

I have previously spoken about the spectacular mosaic which was meant to complement the dome that has never been completed. It is tragic that the government is not prepared to spend more than the sum provided in the estimates, probably less than 0.1 per cent of the total capital Budget that Parliament is approving. We are approving peanuts for our own building!

This is one of the greatest buildings in the world but, by our inattention to it, we have poured mud on our great heritage which has come from the Westminster Parliament in England, started by Edward I. So many of the emblems and motifs adorning this Parliament were taken from the Westminster Parliament and are precious to us. They should be preserved.

Mr Wilkes—Hear, hear!

Mr WILLIAMS—I am pleased to hear the interjection from the father of the House. I am proud to have served in this Parliament with the father of the Parliament, the Minister for Housing, the honourable member for Northcote, because I spent the best years of my young, single life as a Northcote constituent and knew well the father of the Premier, John Cain.

As the honourable member for Northcote knows, many of my relatives were great Labor men, pillars of the Rechabite Lodge in Westbourne Grove and pillars of the Prince of Wales Park Methodist Church in Northcote. That is the era that I think will disappear when he retires. I am very proud to have served in this Parliament with you, Mr Chairman, and with the Minister for Housing; you represent the old traditions of the Labor Party. I have tried to represent the humble traditions of the old-time Liberals. A former honourable member, Mr J. G. Membry, member for Jika Jika was a great Liberal and Northcote Rechabite.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Fogarty)—Order! I think the honourable member is straying a little too wide.

Mr WILLIAMS—I thought you would pull me up, Mr Chairman. I appeal to you to allow debate in this Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The debate is too wide; it must be specific.

Mr WILLIAMS—I will sit down after I have said everything that should be said in debate about this document, the Appropriation Bill, which could take hours, considering all the 761 programs of significance, while we are not prepared to pay our just dues to this Parliament.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—I take this opportunity of expressing my concern at the failure of the government to provide financial support for the proposed redevelopment of Parliament House. The redevelopment has been mooted for many years based on designs presented when Parliament House was built. A proposal was later put forward to complete the north and south wings, and in more recent years a former Liberal government, under the then Premier Hamer, established the temporary annexe building in the gardens of Parliament House.

Work was carried out to erect the temporary offices with the intention of completing a section of the north wing. That proposal was abandoned and the temporary offices have become more permanent each year. Recently the Cain Labor government expressed interest in providing capital funding to partially complete the building and to provide better accommodation and facilities for honourable members. The intention was to generally upgrade Parliament House. No funding has been provided for that project.

Originally it was put to the House Committee that the project be included in the bicentennial celebrations funding, but nothing has been done about that. The project could also have been included in Victoria's 150th anniversary celebrations funding.

The temporary accommodation at present occupied by many honourable members, and House Committee staff, would not be tolerated in any other sector of the Public Service. The conditions are totally unsatisfactory. Regrettably the government did not grasp the nettle on this occasion and did not commence funding of the next stage of the redevelopment of Parliament House.

I hope eventually a government will be prepared to allocate some funds—it will not need to be a large amount in comparison to the new Federal Parliament House, which will ultimately cost \$1000 million—for extending the north and south wings. If less than 10 per cent of the money being spent on the Federal Parliament House had been provided to Victoria, drastic improvements could have been made to this building. No funds have been forthcoming.

I am also concerned about the facade of Parliament House, which is in a very untidy condition and has not been cleaned for many years. The facade could have been cleaned for Victoria's 150th anniversary celebrations or again as part of the nation's bicentennial celebrations. Most of the interior of Parliament House has been renovated in an excellent and competent manner by skilled craftsmen from the Public Works Department. This was evident in the National Party room, which was completely renovated and refurbished. The craftsmen are professional and dedicated.

Most of the interior of Parliament House has been renovated or refurbished but the exterior needs to be upgraded urgently. The staff tolerate poor working conditions. There is an urgent need for drastic improvements.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Mr AUSTIN (Ripon)—I refer to Program No. 133. It is difficult to compare some of the allocations for this year with the previous year. Therefore, I have several questions that I wish to ask. I am sure the Minister for Sport and Recreation, who is at the table, would not know the answers, but I hope the constructive questions that I shall ask will be conveyed to the Treasurer and that the answers will be provided at a later date.

Item 3850, Research and Experimental Programs—Expenses, itemises the appropriation for 1986-87 as \$6 696 857, and for 1987-88 as \$7 569 200. I should like the Treasurer to indicate the specific allocations contained in that item. The Opposition has no way of ascertaining how that total allocation will be directed. The Opposition would like to know how much money will be allocated to each principal research or experimental institute in 1987-88.

For instance, how much will be allocated to the State agricultural college at Burnley; to the Victorian Crops Research Institute at Horsham; to the Gilbert Chandler Institute of

Dairy Technology; to the Hamilton Pastoral Research Institute; to the Institute for Irrigation and Salinity Research at Tatura; to the Animal Research Institute at Werribee; and to the Regional Veterinary Laboratory at Bendigo? The figures provided in Program No. 133, item 3850, mean little to me.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—I support the comments made by the honourable member for Ripon because in previous years it has been possible to break down the allocations to each research station. That information is helpful to individual members who may represent a research station or institute in his or her electorate. That information also helps one to identify whether the government intends to fund research into a particular area of activity or whether it intends to reduce any allocation.

In the electorate I represent is the Institute for Irrigation and Salinity Research at Tatura and the Animal and Irrigated Pastures Research Institute at Kyabram. In the past, it has been possible to identify the allocations made to those institutes.

Under this program salinity control expenses of \$1.28 million are being provided this year and there is an allocation for works and services expenditure of \$1.368 million. The National Party welcomes this continuing input to dealing with the salinity problem. Item 2571 allocates \$225 000 for salinity control expenses in the Goulburn Valley.

I know you, Mr Chairman, in your former capacity as Chairman of the Salinity Committee, would also be supportive of these contributions because salinity is still the most serious problem facing many country areas, particularly across the northern irrigation areas. It is an insidious and seeping problem, particularly with the rising water table, which is the result, in some instances, of the clearance of many of the timbered areas in this State over 100 years ago.

The Salinity Committee was concerned that it would take a minimum of 50 years in some areas to redress the problem and to reduce the water table. The government has committed itself, and I acknowledge that commitment, to salinity control programs.

In the Barr Creek area in my electorate in the Rochester west area in the Goulburn Valley the salinity project advisory council is actively pursuing the need for salinity measures across the Shepparton region. The Vegter project is situated at Girgarre, where a property that was formerly owned by Henry Vegter was purchased by the Rural Water Commission. A large evaporation basin is being established on that site and the pumps are being installed around the basin, which is already having a significant impact on the lowering of that water table.

When one considers the areas where the water table is close to the surface, there is no doubt that there is a serious problem and, if that is not tackled now, the next generation will find that much of our good farming land in Victoria could become the sort of arid desert that is seen in overseas countries. I welcome the government's contribution and hope that it will continue in the future.

Mr AUSTIN (Ripon)—Item 2772 deals with economic strategy initiative expenses. In 1986-87 no payments were made and the estimate for 1987-88 is \$1.2 million. Here again it is not possible to make a comparison and, therefore, there is no way of knowing what the allocation means. It appears that this is a new line in the Appropriation Bill and I ask the Minister for Sport and Recreation, who is at the table, to ask the Treasurer just what the initiatives under this item are.

Program No. 135 refers to several matters that are important. Item 3981, headed "Lost Dogs Home"—I believe that is the North Melbourne Lost Dogs Home—provides a subsidy towards injections for unwanted animals.

The Committee is well aware that this is an ever-increasing problem because thousands of dogs and cats are put down every year; unfortunately, the number is growing month by month. It is a blot on this State and the city of Melbourne that this situation has been

allowed to develop. The problem today is so horrific that something must be done in the near future.

I note that the allocation for 1986-87 was \$21 400 and for 1987-88 it is estimated at \$21 000, \$400 less. That figure appears to be moving in the wrong direction. I want an explanation from the Treasurer, through the Minister for Sport and Recreation, who is at the table, of why there is a decrease in the allocation when the problem is expanding.

Item 3987 refers to the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria and provides a grant for the purposes of the Victorian Young Farmers Incorporated. On behalf of the young farmers of this State, I express concern that the grant has been reduced in real terms. The payment for 1986-87 was \$200 000 and the estimate for 1987-88 is the same. Obviously, that is a reduction, and it will mean that the services that have been provided over recent times—in particular the appointment of field officers to assist the Victorian Young Farmers organisation in the valuable work that it does on behalf of the young community—will be reduced.

The Victorian Young Farmers Incorporated is not, as some people believe, made up entirely of the sons of farmers or young people engaged in farming activities—I believe its motto is “You don’t have to be one to be one”—and it provides a good service for young people throughout the whole of the rural community. It is a backward step to reduce in real terms the allocation made to this organisation.

Item 3988 for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals shows an allocation in 1986-87 of \$220 000 and again in 1987-88 the allocation is exactly the same. Once more, that is a reduction in real terms. It shows the lack of government concern for animal welfare.

I am sure that the Committee agrees that the RSPCA does an excellent job on behalf of animals generally throughout Victoria—although it may be overzealous from time to time. It is made up of a team of professionals who understand animal welfare. If the RSPCA did not exist, I am sure Victorians generally, the animals and the farming community would find that the groups who took over that responsibility would not do the job in the professional way that the society carries out its duties.

I plead on behalf of the Opposition that this matter be considered because it is wrong that such an important organisation should have had its allocation for 1987-88 reduced in real terms.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—There are two specific areas under this program on which I want to comment. Firstly, the government has maintained the level of funding for the Victorian Young Farmers Incorporated, which grant is made through the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria, in order to assist, particularly, the young farmer movement.

The allocation this year is \$200 000. Last year the government reduced that figure by approximately \$29 600. Previously the young farmers organisation obtained \$229 600 but that figure was reduced in 1986-87. I expressed my grave concern at that stage. The Victorian Young Farmers Incorporated was also disappointed with the lack of government support. Its members campaigned strongly and sought support throughout the State, especially from municipal councils and community leaders. I express my gratitude to the Minister for maintaining funding to at least the \$200 000 level. Of course, that does not take into account inflation and increased costs of administration.

Investment in the Victorian Young Farmers organisation is an investment in the future farmers of this State. Some honourable members, like myself, have had an active involvement with the Victorian Young Farmers organisation and are members of the Victorian Farmers Federation. These organisations have members who are leaders in the community. They have gained much of their background and experience in those organisations, which not only provide a leadership training area but also provide recreational, cultural support and social activities for young people. In fact, in many communities the movements are the focal point of their social activities. The Victorian

Young Farmers movement is an organisation that the government and Parliament should strongly support in the future.

Item 2588 covers overseas agricultural aid. This year the government is proposing to increase the allocation from \$63 099 to \$540 000. I welcome that initiative. Australia's contribution to overseas aid has dropped significantly at the Federal level to the extent that the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese of Melbourne this week set up its own fund to provide additional financial support for overseas aid because of its genuine concern about the selfish attitude adopted in this country, especially by the Federal government, in restricting and reducing overseas aid for the lesser of the underdeveloped countries.

Nations like Australia are extremely rich in resources. Australia is especially rich in agricultural resources and it has the potential and the wealth to provide aid to many overseas countries, especially its near neighbours in the south Pacific and South-East Asian regions that are underdeveloped.

It is a matter of concern to me that Australia is reducing that funding. It is being done largely for selfish reasons, although the argument is that the Australian economy is facing difficult times and, therefore, its contribution to overseas should be reduced.

Australia cannot afford to reduce its contribution because it is blessed with resources that it should be sharing with less developed countries. It can make a vital, practical contribution with agricultural aid by sending experts into underdeveloped countries to assist in the development of their own agricultural industries.

Victoria, especially in the past, has done that successfully with the assistance of the Rural Water Commission and has been actively involved in projects in a number of overseas countries. I hope those programs are increased in the future because Victoria should be actively involved in this area; that involvement should not be committed only to the Federal government.

Mr AUSTIN (Ripon)—It is difficult to work out the various figures that are shown in Program No. 136 and it is impossible to compare the allocation for rural finance for 1987-88 with the previous year. What is shown is a conglomeration of figures without any explanation. I hope information can be provided by the Treasurer, through the Minister at the table, the Minister for Sport and Recreation, that will explain these figures.

Item 5306, relating to rural adjustment, shows a huge increase from \$9 920 280 in 1986-87 to \$17.5 million in 1987-88. That increase deserves some explanation. I understand that it is a Federal allocation. However, as I said during the second-reading debate, that figure seems to be contorted.

The claim made by the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs is that there was an increase in the allocation in this Appropriation Bill of some 11.8 per cent. That increase is all Federal money. The claim should not be 11.8 per cent; it should be approximately 7 per cent. That means that increased allocation to agriculture is less than inflation and less than the increase in the consumer price index. Therefore, the claim made by government is misleading. People in the rural community who thought they were a lot better off under this Budget will find that they have been seriously misled.

It is regrettable that the method of presenting the figures under all the items for agriculture are hard to interpret. What is needed is a return to the old system whereby like can be compared with like from one year to the next. I ask the Minister at the table, the Minister for Sport and Recreation, to take up this matter with the Treasurer. Not only does the Opposition deserve an answer to these questions but also the farming community of this State needs an explanation.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—I also share the concern expressed by the honourable member for Ripon, although I have the benefit of having access to Budget Paper No. 5 which spells

out that the \$17.5 million is a contribution by the Commonwealth government and that what the honourable member for Ripon has outlined to the Committee is in fact correct.

I understand that the \$18 million represents an increase by the Commonwealth government and effectively reduces the total Budget allocation for agriculture and rural affairs.

The total amount allocated to agriculture this year is an overall net reduction compared with the contribution made last year. On that basis, there has certainly not been an 11 per cent increase in funding for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and it is a matter of concern, especially for honourable members representing rural areas, that the government is effectively reducing its financial contribution to agriculture in this State at a time when rural industries are under enormous stress because of low commodity prices, increasing inflation and high cost factors, especially the cost of fuel.

In discussing the question of rural finance, I acknowledge and express the appreciation of the National Party to the positive role of the Rural Finance Commission in assisting people in rural communities, especially those in the Mallee area who have been through a serious economic crisis because of the downturn in the returns for wheat, dry seasonal conditions and high interest rates. These factors have added to the problems. In some instances, people have been paying interest rates of well above 20 per cent. That has virtually eliminated the equity on a number of farms and has placed people in intolerable situations.

The Rural Finance Commission has adopted a compassionate and sympathetic attitude towards these people and has assisted them in various ways to leave the industry with some dignity or assisted those who have not been able to leave the industry to remain on their farms.

I acknowledge the vitally important role that the Rural Finance Commission plays in this State in lending to the rural community. It is an excellent organisation and its personnel are dedicated to their tasks. The commissioners, led by Mr Ian Morton, Mr Malcolm Smith and Mr John Fox, give careful consideration to the needs of rural people who approach the Rural Finance Commission for assistance.

In recent months the Rural Finance Commission has been adopting a more aggressive attitude in advertising and in promoting its lending capacities on television and in the newspapers. There has been some misunderstanding of that promotion by one or two farmers who have had their loan applications rejected in the past, but from my experience the commission gives sympathetic consideration to all applicants and, if possible, provides them with the assistance requested.

ARTS

Mr HANN (Rodney)—I direct the attention of the Committee to Program No. 143, item 3910, library services. In 1986-87 some \$14 835 454 was spent on library services and it has been estimated that \$18 579 000 will be spent in 1987-88. At first glance, that appears to be a significant increase, but, in fact, a portion of this year's allocation is a carryover of the funding that was required for the fourth quarter of 1986-87. There has been a reduction of some \$2 million in funding this year, and the Minister for the Arts stated that that reduction might have been even greater.

Additional pressure has been placed on regional libraries in Victoria. The Minister has argued that the government is spending significant funds on the new State Library, particularly on the management of its collections and improvements in client services. However, this has caused concern to people using the services of regional libraries.

A lady recently expressed her concern to me about the future of her regional library because of local concern that the government is giving lower priority to regional libraries. That lady was aware that in 1982 and 1985 the Cain Labor government promised that it would fund library services on a 50-50 basis with local government.

However, the government has gradually reduced its contributions. The Minister for the Arts, in a debate in this Chamber several weeks ago, was critical of some municipalities for not contributing sufficient funds to library services. It is not easy for many municipalities to do that, especially when the State government is reducing its contribution.

I express concern on behalf of regional libraries about the government's reduced funding for local library services. The government has a responsibility to ensure that in future it maintains its library funding at a realistic level.

I am aware that a significant increase in the cost of books has occurred, especially with the drop in value of the Australian dollar and the increased cost of imported books. Inflation continually makes it more difficult for libraries to purchase books, but it is vital for them to improve their stock.

The National Party supports regional libraries and believes the government has a responsibility to maintain funding to ensure that libraries can provide the excellent service that they previously provided.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—I specifically direct the attention of the Committee to Program No. 163, item 2612, which makes an allocation to the National Companies and Securities Commission which the Budget describes as a contribution towards expenses. Last year the commission received the princely sum of \$750 357 and this year the estimate is for a miserable \$800 000. What a disgrace!

Over the past decade or two, men known to both you, Mr Chairman, and me have made hundreds and thousands of millions of dollars, mainly on the stock exchange, using insider information, access to offshore funds, funny money and every means that one can think of that is regarded by some sections of the financial press as smart footwork.

I am afraid I regard it as the greedy, powerful and well-informed taking down the mug share punters, just as they do at the race tracks. These people take down all the hundreds of thousands of little people or workers who invest their life savings in superannuation funds, life assurance policies and so on.

That money is made available in thousands of millions of dollars to smart takeover merchants. Anybody reading the *Times on Sunday* or the *Australian Financial Review* over the past fortnight would be aware of what has occurred in Western Australia where pension funds and credit union moneys were used to prop up devious schemes by stock exchange operators. Now all the little people who contributed to what they thought were absolutely safe investments—safe as houses—have discovered that their money has gone down the drain because of the activities of these racketeers.

What can be done about it? Precious little, I am afraid. What can the National Companies and Securities Commission do with a contribution of \$800 000 from Victoria and \$200 000 or \$300 000 from Western Australia?

Mr Trezise—Semi-con men!

Mr WILLIAMS—They are not semi-con men; they are worse than any of the crooks at the races that the Minister knows about. These people take the little people down for thousands of millions of dollars. The same characters who make the big killings at the races are responsible for making \$100 million killings in some takeover deals.

The unsung hero of this country is Henry Bosch. I hope the Leader of the National Party has heard of the Chairman of the National Companies and Securities Commission. Henry Bosch does not mess around; within the laws of libel he speaks his mind on television time after time. I wish only that Henry Bosch were in this Chamber and were able to stand where I am standing now. If he were, many multimillionaires who have made their fortunes over the past twenty years would hang their heads in shame. If Henry Bosch

could speak under privilege in this Chamber, he could tell honourable members and the community what some sections of the financial market have done over the years.

A number of these operators lack integrity. They use questionable means to initiate takeovers and engage in all sorts of insider trading, again at the expense of the mug punter.

Any unfettered free market, of course, gives rise to sharp practices. I am a great believer in free enterprise but I have no illusions: free enterprise means what it says; it must be free and fair, and it can be free and fair only if there is strong government. That is why my hackles rise every time one of these leading company directors belabours and berates members of Parliament by saying what nitwits we are—these people just want to put their stooges into this place so that they can stop characters like me getting up on my feet and saying that they are so close to being crooks it is not funny.

I agree with Henry Bosch. We must threaten the crooks with publicity and prosecutions. They will not like their names appearing in newspapers. We need to get a few prosecutions sheeted home to these crooks, but what hope is there with the miserable amount of money that is allocated to the National Companies and Securities Commission? We have to treat these people as they are and brand them as vagabonds. If we are to look after the good workers you represent, Mr Acting Chairman, in the electorate of Williamstown and in other electorates in the western suburbs where people want jobs with multinational companies, where investments are made of approximately \$100 000 or \$200 000 a worker, that money must come from the world stock markets. If Australia is branded as a nation of crooks there is no way that the Japanese and other international investors will put their money into Australia.

At present the leader of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Federal Treasurer and other people are trying to persuade the financial markets of New York and the financial investors of the United States of America that Australia is a country worth investing in. Australia is worth investing in only if the game is honest and clean. No-one likes to be taken down and it is utterly deplorable if those in charge of pension funds and the funds of small investors are taken down by shady practices. America has its own troubles with insider trading and bucket bond selling and all sorts of other shady activities that are featured on our Sunday morning business programs. I am very pleased indeed that there is freedom still on those programs despite the people who may own the television or radio stations producing the programs.

Dr John Braithwaite, a senior research fellow at the Australian National University, says that one has to be a pretty incompetent corporate criminal to be prosecuted in Australia and it is virtually impossible to be convicted. One might be prosecuted but with smart lawyers one is usually let off because the corporate affairs people do not have the wherewithal, the resources, or the staff to pin down these crooks.

The State corporate affairs officers do not have the resources to deal with the high volume of corporate crime that goes on in all State jurisdictions. State corporate affairs offices, including the Victorian office, still use nineteenth century investigation techniques. They do not have adequate computer systems. I am informed that the Victorian Corporate Affairs Office and the New South Wales office blatantly write off large numbers of cases year after year, running to hundreds at a time, just to keep up with the paperwork that they cannot cope with.

Hundreds of companies are breaching Acts of Parliaments and we have to take it on the chin because the corporate affairs offices do not have the staff to do anything about it. The offices are swamped with the massive backlog of companies under investigation. There is little or no time to keep abreast of the living, breathing crooks still in our midst who are taking people down to their socks.

I remind the Committee that Mr Braithwaite is a top man with the Australian National University and I regret to say that, according to Mr Braithwaite, political influence in corporate affairs is a big problem in this country. That is shocking. I should like to know

who is responsible for the political interference. I shall not point the finger at anyone in this State. I have confidence that the colleagues under whom I have served in this place would not allow that, and, whatever my political differences with the Premier, when he was Attorney-General he would not, and I am sure the present Attorney-General would not, tolerate such a system. But I regret that they are caught in the vice of balanced Budgets, and so on, and have not been able to get the money from the Treasurer that is certainly required in this State to pay for the flying squads of highly competent, multidisciplined investigators that are needed.

If Henry Bosch had the team of sharpshooters that he needs, men who can pounce every time they smelt blood, the corporate crooks in our community would receive a very rude awakening. These crooks are being aided and abetted by weak corporate affairs offices in the States and by the existence of tax havens.

I am pleased that the great country of Switzerland is sick of the roguery that is being covered up through the diversion of funds to Switzerland. The Swiss have now proclaimed legislation to allow our National Companies and Securities Commission to obtain information to catch these corporate criminals who have been making hundreds of millions of dollars by using secret bank accounts in Switzerland.

I understand that the Federal Attorney-General's Department has been discussing the potential of the new legislation with the National Companies and Securities Commission—but what is the use of it? We can get this information from Switzerland about all these crooks, some of them knights of the realm, who are in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth and who are probably in Adelaide and probably in Hobart; it is all in the Swiss bank accounts and the Swiss will make the records available. However, here we are allocating a miserable few hundred thousand dollars towards Victoria's Corporate Affairs Office investigations and we have neither the staff nor the facilities in either the corporate affairs offices in the States or the National Companies and Securities Commission to get all the benefits we need from the material that the Swiss will provide about insider trading, fraud, and other activities.

Swiss police and other regulatory officers are prepared to gather information, interview witnesses, seize documents, and do all the things wanted by people in Australia and other countries who have been carrying on about the secrecy of the Swiss banking system. I am very pleased to note that details of a number of Swiss bank accounts containing millions of dollars operated by one drug runner in this country have already been disclosed. I shall name him: he is Bruce Cornwall. He is only a petty little drug runner, a petty little criminal.

I want to get at the big fish who aided and abetted him and in the early days helped finance Bruce Cornwall. If we only gave the National Companies and Securities Commission a fair go and gave it the money and the staff it needs, even members of the Labor Party would be shocked at the big fish that could be caught.

Mr E. R. SMITH (Glen Waverley)—In the debate this afternoon I refer to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. This office has come under a great deal of criticism in the past few months—in fact, since it was established. It was set up to be independent of government, and to reduce the backlog of cases. On both of these counts, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has failed.

I stress at the outset that I do not criticise in any way the current incumbent of the position of Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr John Coldrey, QC. I am criticising the expenditure outlayed for his office since it was established in 1983. That office, on the available figures, has cost \$20 million since it was established.

As for the office being independent of government, we have heard, particularly in the past few weeks, from the Leader of the National Party and from the honourable member for Berwick, how this office has not been independent of government. We have seen how it has failed miserably in regard to the Nunawading Province by-election and Continental Airlines Inc. scandals. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has been brought

into contention because it has been wrongly used by the government. In fact, it would have been far better to have continued with the system which operated before. There was a system of prosecutions by Prosecutors for the Queen. That system worked very well. When the Premier was acting as Attorney-General, he tried to say there had been many cases during the time of the previous Liberal government in which prosecutions had been interfered with. Since the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has been set up this office has done more to interfere with the criminal justice system in this State than any other office that could have been imagined—and at a cost of \$20 million.

It was said that by creating the office the backlog of cases would be reduced. Currently more than 700 cases are waiting to be prosecuted. Is this an indication of the efficiency of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions? Of course, it is not. The numbers of outstanding cases have not been reduced. I understand from very reliable sources that the figure is climbing. One of the reasons is because the professional salaried prosecutors are not being used. The government through the Attorney-General has preferred to use outside barristers to prosecute. The cost of prosecutions has risen from the 1984 figure of \$1.6 million to double that: \$3.2 million in 1986. This has been to pay for giving briefs to outside barristers.

Why is this happening? Because the Attorney-General is trying to big-note himself with members of the criminal bar by giving them briefs that should by rights be going to the salaried government prosecutors.

The number of salaried government prosecutors has been reduced. I understand there is an establishment figure of 20 Prosecutors for the Queen and in fact only 13 positions have been filled. I am quite sure the government would like to get rid of the rest in order that briefs could be given to their own mates at the criminal bar.

I reiterate that the burden on the taxpayer has increased by \$20 million since this office was established. It is not an efficient office. The morale in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is very low. I am told reliably that more than one-third of the legally-qualified staff have departed since the office was set up. One of the reasons for their departure is the bad supervision employed. Who is supervising them? Senior public servants who have no legal training at all are telling professional lawyers how they should be performing their particular duties. It is an outrage that this office, which was set up to be independent and to be efficient, has failed on both counts.

I am sure that honourable members would have read with great interest the article in the *Australian* newspaper of Thursday, 1 October relating to the scandal of cheap air tickets. I shall not repeat the reasons why the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has failed in that respect. Undoubtedly honourable members have had the opportunity of reading the article and are all waiting with bated breath for the result of the freedom of information case which has been brought by the Herald group to try to ferret out what really happened with the Continental Airlines Inc. scandal. It is a very slow process to try to discover the real story behind the facts.

I am sure that if the decision is favourable to the Herald group, the government—again trying to cover up—will take the case to the High Court and we shall be waiting until probably after the next State election to find out what is really there. Honourable members all know what is involved in that scandal. The reason I mention this is because the person who has been put in the invidious position of having to carry the can for the government throughout the Continental Airlines Inc. scandal has been the Director of Public Prosecutions—the director of an office that should never have been established. It is an office, as I said, which was set up so as to make it appear that it was at arm's length from the government of the day, from the political party in power.

The office has not been independent in any way. There has been continual interference in its operations by the government through the Attorney-General. The government is wasting money to an incredible degree—some \$20 million—to try to put up a smoke-

screen. This \$20 million has not been wasted by the incumbent, Mr John Coldrey, QC, who is merely the person carrying out the wishes of the government.

If the Director of Public Prosecutions were independent, his opinion would have been accepted in the Nunawading case. The senior Labor Party officials who were named in his report would have been charged. Why were they not charged? Why was the opinion of the Director of Public Prosecutions ignored by the government? I have received a number of letters from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions trying to absolve him technically on each of those occasions. The crux of the matter is that the Director of Public Prosecutions is not independent and his office is not an independent office.

Neither is it an efficient office. The office is low in morale, high in salaries, and particularly costly for the taxpayer. Instead of the money being expended on salaried legal officers who are members of the staff of the Director of Public Prosecutions or the office of the Prosecutor for the Queen, the government is handing briefs to its own friends at the criminal bar. It is an obvious ploy which honourable members can continue to complain about but it does not seem to get through. I am anxious that my contribution appear in *Hansard*. Eventually, in the not too distant future, we shall be able to say—and I see that the Leader of the National Party is present—that we told you so. We believe and have some evidence—but not enough to prove it—that the Premier has been involved personally in the Nunawading scandal and has been involved in the cover-up over the Continental Airlines Inc. scandal.

I am making the point during the Committee stage of the Appropriation Bill because I want to record the fact that the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has been tainted, not by the incumbent, but by the interference of the government. In the not-too-distant future those claims will be justified.

I am well aware that the claims are serious, but the time will come when they will be proved to be right. The government had no right to set up the office and, even after it was established, the government had no right to interfere in the way in which it has.

I submit that the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is a waste of money at present. It is not carrying out the task it was set up to carry out and the director is not carrying out the task he was appointed to carry out. The office is not independent of the government, and it has not acted as an efficient arm of government.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr HANN (Rodney)—I refer to item 3130 which deals with subsidies to municipalities towards the costs of infant welfare services. Considerable concern has been expressed to me recently about the low morale in infant welfare services as a result of the transfer of those services to Community Services Victoria. Previously infant welfare services were funded by Health Department Victoria and formed part of the health program.

When the transfer was first mooted, a number of infant welfare sisters in northern Victoria, especially within the Goulburn Valley, expressed concern to both the National Party and to me about the change. They were worried about the special relationship that existed between infant welfare sisters and nursing mothers, and how this related to the health of the infants.

With the transfer of the service into Community Services Victoria, there is a feeling that the service is now included in the welfare area. There is a suspicion among mothers—especially those in the lower socioeconomic groups—of welfare agencies. Concern was expressed about the loss of the important relationship between infant welfare sisters and young mothers. I had hoped the matter would settle down, but concern was expressed only recently that a lowering of morale has occurred among many infant welfare sisters.

The concern relates also to the loss of leadership in the division itself. In the past, there was effective leadership when the service was a separate department. That has been lost with the transfer, and many infant welfare sisters consider that they are not receiving the departmental support they previously received from Health Department Victoria.

Perhaps the Minister could review the future of infant welfare services. The program is vital to young mothers at a time in their lives when they need support. I know from personal family experience that the services provided are excellent. It is important to encourage the people in the service and ensure that they have a high morale. The transfer of responsibilities has not necessarily allowed that to happen.

I am concerned about the net reduction in subsidies for kindergartens which may preclude some children from active participation in kindergarten groups, especially where a second kindergarten for younger children has been in operation.

I am also concerned about preschool medical services. In recent months the number of visiting doctors has been reduced partly because of lack of available personnel and also because of a reduction in financial support for preschool medical services. This has meant that many children have not received the benefit of medical examinations which were a vitally important part of the program in the past. The government should give a high priority to that program in the future.

I refer now to intellectual disability services, where a consultant's report recommended a ten-year program which would significantly change the present arrangements for those services. The proposal contained a number of recommendations, and concern has been expressed that the special day training centres that currently operate may ultimately be closed down.

The government's philosophy is that the children should be integrated into the existing education system and that many intellectually disabled should be transferred out of institutions and into community residential units. In other words, there will be a complete devolution of the present support services for the intellectually disabled.

In the electorate that I represent grave concern has been expressed about the impact that may have on Tehan House and the people who attend that centre, many of whom could not cope in the ordinary State schools for a number of reasons, including the nature of their disabilities and the disruptive effect the children would have on the schools.

Teachers are not trained to cope with intellectually disabled children within the ordinary school structure. Some of the physical disabilities of the young children in particular would make it difficult for them to be integrated into the ordinary classroom. In the electorate I represent I know of parents with a child at the Children's Cottages, Kew.

The parents of the child were forced to make a decision to put the child into the institution but it was not a decision they took lightly. They are concerned and upset at the suggestion of relocating intellectually disabled persons out in the community. My understanding is that many of the disabled are very happy in their present environment. They are being given the support they vitally need in special institutions and it is impractical to relocate them in the broader community.

It is similar to the relocating of the intellectually disabled from special schools. The Janefield Training Centre in the metropolitan area and a number of other special schools have been built up over a number of years and funded by local communities, often through voluntary contributions. It is a matter of grave concern to the National Party that the government may propose to close down these centres and force those people out into the broader community. The National Party is concerned about the transfer of resources and the fact that the government is saying that it does not want to continue providing resources for day training centres and institutions for the intellectually disabled and will push that financial responsibility onto local communities and parents. The proposal needs to be thought out very carefully.

The *Good Weekend* magazine in the *Age* of last Friday contained an effective article about the difficulties experienced with the problems of pushing intellectually disabled people out of institutions into the broader community. It said that they cannot cope in the broader community unless they are provided with extensive resources and services. The reality is that the resources are not there to provide one-for-one support. The government

is putting the intellectually disabled into a situation, in some instances, where they are living in virtual squalor compared with the comfortable surroundings in which they were living in institutional care.

My real concern is that, in appointing a consultant to prepare a report of this nature, the government will get the report it wants because, through the terms of reference, the government is recommending the relocation of these people out in the general community. I do not believe it is realistic and I express the grave concern of many of the people in my electorate.

The sitting was suspended at 6.14 p.m. until 8.4 p.m.

EDUCATION

Mr HANN (Rodney)—I wish to comment on Program No. 281 relating to education services because education is causing some concern throughout the State, especially with the recent further restructuring of the Ministry of Education and the recent appointment of a number of new general managers in various divisions of the Ministry. A number of other positions have not yet been filled.

The National Party is concerned about what has happened with education in recent years because a state of confusion exists beyond the school level. Schools have been operating effectively despite their confusion. However, constant changes are being made to regions, subregions, school positions and the status of positions.

Mr Cathie interjected.

Mr HANN—One change to the region is sufficient to make an impact on the regional structure. Because of the constant change, the morale within the Ministry of Education beyond the school level is at an extremely low point, especially the morale of the senior administrative staff at the Rialto Building because of the transfer of the Ministry to that building. There really has been a loss of structure in education beyond the school.

Prior to 1977, a former government introduced its Green Paper and White Paper on education. At that time the three separate divisions of education were primary, secondary and technical. The government in its wisdom determined that the three separate divisions should not exist and it introduced a White Paper on educational restructure. A pre-management report followed and then there was a change of government and it introduced Ministerial papers.

The government has now introduced a corporate services structure within the Ministry of Education. This has had a significant impact upon the whole area of education. It has had a damaging effect and that is probably highlighted by the fact that both the Minister and the Premier were recently highly critical of one of the reports issued by the State Board of Education relating to curriculum.

Obviously, many hundreds of man-hours were involved in the preparation of this elaborate document on curriculum services which was supposed to be the blueprint for curriculum for the Ministry of Education in Victoria.

A fascinating situation arose when the Minister for Education, who was to have launched the report, invited the Premier to join him. A news flash was sent out across the State that the Premier was joining in the launching of the report. The Minister praised the document in his opening address at the launching and that was followed by a fairly scathing attack by the Premier on what was actually the government's own report.

Mr Cathie interjected.

Mr HANN—The report was issued by the State Board of Education, which was established by the government. That was an initiative of the Labor government; no State Board of Education existed prior to the Labor government coming into office in 1982. The personnel of the board were appointed by the Minister and there is no way that the

Minister can escape the fact that the board was basically established by the government and is responsible to the government.

The criticism made by the Premier of this report, *Directions in Curriculum*, was that it was vague, difficult to read, difficult to understand—he could not understand the sentences. If the members of the State Board of Education had any real feeling about what the Premier said, one would have expected them to have resigned because what he said was an indictment of their capability.

Mr Cathie interjected.

Mr HANN—It highlights the fact——

Mr Cathie—You might be wrong.

Mr HANN—Somebody is wrong. It must be the Minister who endorsed the report, the Premier who made a scathing attack on the report, or the State Board of Education. Somebody is certainly wrong. It is not possible for everyone to be correct if the Premier must make such a scathing comment on a government report. That was a fascinating exercise, and I doubt whether the Premier was wrong.

There is now confusion about the direction of education in Victoria. That is highlighted by community concern about educational standards in Victorian schools.

I have been corresponding with the Minister for Education on behalf of my constituents about some of the books used at the higher school certificate level. In the opinion of my constituents a number of those books should not be issued as compulsory reading for higher school certificate students.

Mr Cain—You are not going to ban books, are you?

Mr HANN—I am delighted to hear the response from the Premier because it tends to conflict with his reported comments. The Premier should examine the standard of some of this material.

Mr Cain—I have read them all.

Mr HANN—The Premier may well be proud of the fact that there is an increase in crime by young people.

Mr Cain interjected.

Mr HANN—It has a lot to do with what the government is doing in its schools and the lack of general discipline in the community.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Fogarty)—Order! I advise the Premier and, to a lesser degree, the Minister for Education, to cease interjecting. I ask the Deputy Leader of the National Party to address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr HANN—The Premier's response highlights the malaise in the Victorian education system. There is a lack of general direction and a lack of concern about what is happening in our State schools. That is one reason why a significant number of parents are sending their children to private schools.

I thought the Premier was genuine in criticism he made about the document *Directions in Curriculum*.

Mr Cain—You are suggesting banning books?

Mr HANN—I did not say that. The government has said that those books should be compulsory reading for higher school certificate students. The Minister for Education and the government have made it compulsory for students to read these books. That is the real issue; there is no suggestion of banning books at all. The government has encouraged the compulsory reading of these books as part of the higher school certificate course.

Mr Cathie interjected.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! I ask the Minister to cease interjecting; he will have every right to reply later.

Mr HANN—I have been informed that some students have been marked down because of their responses to the literature that they have been forced to read by the government. I should have thought that the Minister for Education, who is a family man who takes an interest in these issues, and someone for whom I have a great regard, would take a stronger interest in these matters.

Many good books are available in the community. Why must the government encourage students to read this material, some of which is garbage?

Mr McDonald interjected.

Mr HANN—I was elected to Parliament to make decisions and judgments. My judgment on this issue is that, if the mind is fed garbage, the outcome will be garbage. If the mind is fed quality, the outcome will be quality. That point highlights one of the weaknesses in Victoria's education system today. The government is failing to come to grips with that important issue.

I refer the committee to item 2807 and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board. The National Party is concerned about the lack of influence of the private enterprise sector on that board. It would like to have more involvement of people from the private enterprise sector in the many decisions to be made about the introduction of the Victorian certificate of education. The certificate will be an integral part of the future vocations of Victorian students, so it is important that employers be involved on that board.

I am disappointed that employers did not take up the invitation to be represented on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board. They are now beginning to voice their concern about many aspects of educational standards and training.

When the Bill to establish the board was introduced into Parliament and discussions with employers took place, no interest was expressed in being represented on the board. If our education system is to be improved, all standards of that system must be assessed. We must improve the quality of many aspects of the education system and set high standards. I urge the government to take that action.

I also direct the attention of the Committee to item 2801 and the Victorian Teaching Service Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. In 1986-87 \$400 702 was allocated for salaries and expenses; this year the allocation is for \$401 500. The commission has cost the government some \$2 million to \$3 million since it was established, but it has made only two major determinations; both determinations have been challenged in the courts because they were considered contrary to the will of Parliament when it passed the legislation.

Mr Cathie—Contrary to legislation passed by Parliament?

Mr HANN—Yes, Parliament passed legislation which specifically stated there should be four units and agents. The Victorian Teaching Service Conciliation and Arbitration Commission decided there should be only one unit and only one agent, and that was contrary to the will and intention of Parliament. It was also contrary to statements made in the House by the then Minister of Education, the now Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources, and contrary to the will of the National and Liberal parties.

However, the commission gave in to teacher unions and made that determination. The organisation representing principals challenged that decision and the Supreme Court upheld the challenge.

The commission then made a further determination that principals would be represented by the Victorian Branch of the Australian Teachers Federation but that deputy principals would be represented by their own unions. That was not logical and did not make sense.

A significant amount has been spent on members of the commission over the past three years. Much of that \$2 million to \$3 million has been wasted.

Mr Cathie—They have been redeployed.

Mr HANN—I am aware that some of them have been redeployed to other sections of the Ministry and to other departments, but they have held many meetings with only a few decisions being made. The Victorian Teaching Service Conciliation and Arbitration Commission held more than 200 meetings, but what did its members do at those meetings when only two determinations were made? Apparently for much of that time commission members were reporting on the current state of play in the court battle.

Fortunately proposed legislation has been introduced into Parliament to abolish the commission and to transfer its functions to the Industrial Relations Commission of Victoria. Therefore, there will be no need for this item in future Budgets. The government should learn from this exercise and be more precise in any future measure it introduces.

Mr LEA (Sandringham)—I direct the attention of the Committee to three items of Program No. 281. The first relates to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board and its functions. Honourable members would be aware that the introduction of the Victorian certificate of education, with which the board is concerned, has been postponed until 1992.

The Minister for Education will agree that the deferral of the introduction of the Victorian certificate of education reflects the inadequate preparation given to its implementation, which this Minister has presided over. The VCE was founded on the recommendations of the Blackburn report but it was hastily conceived and the planning and implementation stages of curricula for the fields of studies were way behind target.

The Victorian public will be amazed to learn that the government has hurried so quickly into such an extensive change in certification to replace the higher school certificate because the higher school certificate is used as the entrance examination for universities and colleges of advanced education. The government has been derelict in its duty in the selection of Year 12 students for higher education. The future aspirations of Victorian students hang very heavily on the successful deliberations of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board on the proposed new Victorian certificate of education.

I remind the House that under the government's proposals for the VCE there were to be four semesters of six months; six subjects would be completed each half year; and a minimum of eighteen subjects would be completed to finalise the Victorian certificate of education at the completion of the two-year period covering Years 11 and 12. The disaster is that the Minister for Education and the government have been telling the public that they are not ready to implement the new certificate; their plans were ill-conceived and the fields of studies for students have not been finalised.

The government needs to go back to the drawing board. I declare my interest. My son is in Year 9 and he would have been affected, as would student children of other honourable members, by the Year 12 certification of the proposed VCE. I am very relieved that my son will not be party to the Victorian certificate of education in 1990.

I am concerned to ensure that adequate preparation and moderation of results for the proposed certificate should occur prior to the 1992 deadline for its implementation. There should be external examinations for at least a major part of the course—say, 50 per cent. There can be no proper accreditation without an external moderation for students throughout Victoria.

Unless the government and the Minister get it right, universities will ignore the VCE, as will employers. Universities will set their own entrance examinations and employers will set their own entrance tests. The Minister for Education will be well aware that Telecom, the Victorian Chamber of Manufactures, the automotive industry—including Holden's Motor Co. and the Ford Motor Co. of Australia Ltd—the State Electricity Commission of

Victoria, the Myer group, and other large companies—I could name many—at present set their own entrance tests for employment.

One might ask why. The school accreditation system is not good enough. It is not fairly measured below Year 12. Schools, while endeavouring to do their best, have only internal assessments for Year 11. Secondary schools at higher levels, technical schools and employers cannot rely on these tests. I am concerned to ensure that the Minister and the government, working on the proposed VCE through the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board, get it right for the 1992 implementation, because it affects the destinies of young people of this State.

I refer now to the Teaching Service Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. In 1983, when the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources was Minister of Education, the government established the commission and for four years people have been trying to work out who in fact can present cases to the commission for determination of wages and consideration of other awards. In four years the commission has not been able to decide who is able to present cases for determination.

The Minister for Education is well aware why. Union pressure has prevented school principals from presenting their cases because conditions applicable to school principal salaries and wages are entirely different from conditions for teachers. The Victorian Teachers Union, the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association and the Technical Teachers Union of Victoria will not allow the commission to hear cases presented by school principals or a conservative teacher union like the Victorian Affiliated Teachers Federation because of their differing points of view from those of the three left-wing teacher unions.

Shortly the Minister for Education will introduce a Bill to mop up the mess created by the Teaching Service Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The commission has not had an official meeting yet, and I wonder why the people employed for four years have been paid salaries for doing absolutely nothing. It is a complete disgrace. Because of union intervention the Minister for Education and his predecessor have not had the stomach to stand up against certain teacher unions to allow principals and a conservative teachers union to present cases to the commission.

This Minister and the previous Minister of Education have been puppets of the left-wing teacher unions. The Minister for Education may well laugh but in the case of the commission this is true. If the commission had actually received applications and had made decisions, the Minister would have had some credibility on this issue. I am sure the teachers and the public share my cynicism about the Minister for Education's lack of intervention on this issue.

The Bill that will shortly be introduced will demonstrate how the Minister has attempted to overcome the situation and how he has assumed absolute, autocratic powers. The anticipated debate will highlight the loophole that has allowed the Minister to do so. I add that this industrial relations Bill does not rate a mention in the 37 Bills listed today on the Notice Paper. I am sure that is because the Minister is well aware of the difficulties in introducing the Bill—otherwise he would have had the Bill placed high on the list rather than having it off the list altogether.

I refer to the State Board of Education and its expenses. The members of the board are very heavily representative of teacher unions, parent organisations and are the left-wing organisations. I challenge the Minister for Education to categorise what each person on the board stands for and explain their links with teacher unions and I challenge him to state which side of the political fence those people are on.

This is a stacked State Board of Education; it is a political State Board of Education; it is a Labor State Board of Education. While it has worked hard in many areas, it has a very biased point of view. I challenge the Minister for Education to go through individually every member of the State Board of Education and talk about the union link and the parent link so that honourable members will know how many members there are of the

State Board of Education from the Victorian Affiliated Teachers Federation. I will tell the committee tonight: absolutely zero!

If one were making a Ministerial statement in *Yes, Minister* of ABC fame, one might say: "In balance, Sir Humphrey, give or take two or three, in fact, if you consider in short and in length and if you consider how many conservative teacher representatives there are from the Victorian Affiliated Teachers Federation and if you consider that there are 4000 members in that area and if you consider how many there are on the State Board of Education, and whether you think there are one or two or three or four, and give or take a few more, that in total the Minister has to say there is absolutely zero representation from the Victorian Affiliated Teachers Federation." This is an unrepresentative State Board of Education because it is not representative of the total teacher, public, and parent point of view.

I suggest also that in the area of curriculum this government is in disarray. Mention has been made of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board and about school-based involvement in technical schools. Technical schools have in fact been delivering their own curricula for twenty years. The Minister also presides over curriculum frameworks, which comprises P to 12.

Mr Cathie—It is P to 10!

Mr LEA—The Minister is at least up to date with the development of the Victorian certificate of education and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board because he has recognised that he has changed the job description of framework from P to 12 to P to 10. Full marks for that observation!

So we have school-based curricula and we have curricula framework—as the Minister says so correctly—from P to 10; we have the Victorian certificate of education for Years 11 and 12; and we have the failing there, as I remarked earlier, of this Minister and this government presiding over a massive decline in teacher numbers and student enrolments in the State system—a sell-out of the State system, as I said in my response during the second-reading debate.

I do not know how the Minister can preside over this farce and the massive decline in student enrolments over the past five years. One can examine the decisions regarding the alteration of discipline programs and their effect on the morale of teachers who have done so well and tried so hard in the State system. The Minister only has to talk to teachers around the State, as I do, and he will find that this is the case. I have examined curricula and uncertainty exists there.

The government has presided over the most massive sell-out of school properties. I take the Minister's mind down to Parkdale High School where the Minister intended to sell off adjacent land. What a sell-out! And not only a sell-out of resources!

Can the Minister tonight state proudly: I have developed State education; I have seen a massive increase in student numbers; there has been a decline in the independent schools? There has been a massive increase in independent school numbers. Why are parents taking their children out of the State system? They have done so because they are not confident of the future for their children with the Victorian certificate of education and in the operation of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board. I challenge the Minister to prove statistically that, in fact, independent schools are not doing better than State schools; that there is not a massive decline in State school enrolments; that, in spite of that, from March 1986 to March 1987 there has been an increase in teacher numbers.

What a sham is demonstrated with massive mismanagement and financial waste, which is proved by the decline in student enrolments and the decrease in teacher staffing. This is proved by the massive decline in enrolments in State schools and the major fleeing of students to the independent schools.

Sadly, no one could be a greater defender of the State school system than I am. I went to a State school—Melbourne High School—and the Minister went to Wesley College. I am a defender of the State school system; he is not. There has been a massive sell-out of the State school system. In fact, let us stand up and be counted. Let us look at the Ministers around the table. Let us look at the Premier—Scotch College; let us look at the Minister for Police and Emergency Services—Melbourne Church of England Grammar School. Let us look at where they put their support—with their children. What a damning condemnation! How can the Minister tonight say that he supports the system, because the statistics and the financial mismanagement and the incompetency prove that this is a lie.

I shall show why this is so. With a massive budget of near enough to \$3 billion, if this government can persuade more students to leave the State system, it will cost the government less to run the State system. As an educator with 30 years' experience and eleven years as a principal of technical schools and colleges, my hypothesis is that there has been a deliberate rundown of resources and staffing in State schools. The Minister is presiding over the greatest sham of all time. I do not believe the government can face the public of Victoria any more with confidence and credibility in education because, sadly, despite the great efforts of parents, teachers, and supporters of State schools, there has been the biggest sell-out of education in this State's history.

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—I want to respond to some of the more idiotic remarks of the honourable member for Sandringham. He began with an attack and it is significant that the Liberal Party should be attacking the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board and the new Victorian certificate of education because that has been one of the most progressive and successful reforms the government has initiated. It has the support of all the major players in the education community and I include in that the universities.

It is complete nonsense for the honourable member for Sandringham to suggest that the universities have rejected the new Victorian certificate of education and will be introducing their own entrance examination. That will not happen because a consensus has been achieved.

I have met regularly with the vice-chancellors' committee and the Presidents of the Colleges of Advanced Education to ensure that the work that the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board is undertaking is acceptable to the people who will be making selections for entrance to institutions of higher education.

The honourable member for Sandringham said that the commissioners of the Victorian Teaching Service Conciliation and Arbitration Commission had been paid salaries for doing nothing. He knows that is not true. I have given answers in the Chamber to those allegations on many occasions. I do not know whether the honourable member is deaf, whether he does not want to listen or whether he cannot accept the facts. Those commissioners were redeployed and worked to ensure the resolution of industrial disputes in other areas around the State including the nurses' dispute and industrial disputes in the Latrobe Valley. I assure the Committee that those commissioners gave loyal and dedicated service to the people of this State.

The honourable member for Sandringham spoke of a massive decline in student numbers. It is true that demographic changes have taken place, and that they particularly affected enrolments in State schools. We are still in the middle of that demographic change. Significantly, those changes began in 1980 when the former Liberal government was in power. The only change to have emerged since is that the impact has moved from primary schools and is now affecting secondary school enrolments.

The quality of education is a matter that Opposition members have not referred to at any stage. A significant comparison can be made by examining retention rates now and when the Liberal Party was in government. At that time the retention rate through to the end of secondary school—Year 12—was only 39 per cent. Currently the retention rate is

58 per cent. That shows that schools are having a strong and attractive power to the students beyond the compulsory years of education.

The whole of the case presented by the honourable member for Sandringham has been a complete myth. The matters he raised have simply been images in his mind. Many members of the Liberal Party believe in myths. They believe in fairy stories. They do not believe in reality and they are not prepared to listen to the facts.

It is a myth to say that there is a continuing trend away from government schools to non-government schools. I have put forward evidence of that in this Chamber and elsewhere. The statistics division within the Ministry of Education has made comparisons between 1984 and 1987 which demonstrate that there has been almost no change in pupil movements between government and non-government schools. The pupil movements happen both ways—from government schools to non-government schools and from non-government schools to government schools.

Mr Lea interjected.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Fogarty)—Order! The Committee listened to the honourable member for Sandringham for 20 minutes in a certain degree of silence. I ask that he ease up on the interjections.

Mr CATHIE—Those comments demonstrate that the honourable member for Sandringham has no substance whatsoever when it comes to education comments.

I refer now to the comments of the Deputy Leader of the National Party, who appears to be equally muddled. He said that education did not have a clear direction. The only evidence he provided for that statement was that there had been changes in the regional boundaries. In terms of the country regions, there have been no changes at all. The five regions in the country have remained on the current boundaries.

Education has a clear direction and, once again, I shall emphasise that fact. The Blackburn report stressed the importance of post-primary education in particular. In Australia we have difficulty in relating employment, training and education and establishing the right sorts of connections between them to ensure Australia will have the best skilled population and work force it has ever had to enable it to compete more successfully on international markets, particularly in the Pacific-Asian region. That report led to the establishment of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board and the development of the new Victorian certificate of education.

Although the Deputy Leader of the National Party said the business community had some concern, I have met regularly with representatives of the business community, as well as with the Business Council of Australia. Together we have worked on major issues concerning curriculum and the new Victorian certificate of education about which they have genuine concerns that go to such issues as educational standards.

The business community has a representative on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board. The decisions of the board, which this government accepted, were unanimous and were agreed to by the business representative on that board.

Concerns exist about the shape, nature and specific details, particularly of the new study of work in Australian society. The Business Council of Australia, in particular, has made a major submission concerning the shape of that compulsory unit within the Victorian certificate of education. The writing group that is developing that field of study is responding to the submission at present.

Education has a clear direction; it is concerned with giving breadth and depth to the curriculum. I strongly reject the criticisms of the Opposition about the curriculum. The only issue about which honourable members have heard tonight is the desire of the Deputy Leader of the National Party to ban the books that are currently set for the higher school certificate subject of English literature.

The higher school certificate prescribes a range of books from which schools select the books that they believe to be the most appropriate. If the Deputy Leader of the National Party is concerned about the particular choices of individual schools he ought to take up the matter with the schools involved.

The direction of education is equally clear in higher education. There has been a massive, but very successful program, involving the transfer of nurse education from the hospitals into the colleges of advanced education.

Equally, in the technical and further education field, when the Labor government came to office, apprenticeships were running at one of the lowest levels ever in this community. Now we have record levels of apprenticeships in Victoria.

The government is developing programs in technical and further education which will be at the cutting edge of the development of new technology and at the forefront of the economic recovery of this State. I make it clear that the confusion that exists is only confusion in the minds of the Opposition. The opposition parties do not have any facts to put forward and they do not seem to be able to put forward any policies.

It is all right for the opposition parties to criticise the Victorian certificate of education, but surely it is reasonable for the government to ask the opposition parties where they stand. Does the Opposition stand for basic standards in education? Does the Opposition stand for basic skills in literacy and numeracy? Do the opposition parties support government initiatives in introducing reading recovery in schools or developing BLIPS—Basic Literacy in Primary Schools?

There have been no policy statements from the Opposition. The Liberal Party has been in opposition for five years and it does not stand for anything in education.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—On a point of order, I point out that the reading recovery program is dealt with under Program No. 285.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Fogarty)—Order! The Minister has concluded his remarks.

Ms SIBREE (Kew)—I wish to add to the comments made by the honourable member for Sandringham and particularly his concerns about primary and secondary education covered by Program No. 281.

There is no doubt that there is a perception in the community that concern exists about the delivery of education in government-run schools. I find that to be an extremely sad and disheartening perception. It is a perception that no-one on this side of the Committee would wish to have, considering that the education budget is such a huge slice of the State's total expenditure.

The Minister for Education should be particularly concerned that there is this perception in the community, among parents of both primary and secondary school children, that the government's education system is not providing some of the options that people desire for their children. The education Ministry services are responsible for overseeing much of the quality control of education in Victoria. The quality controls and the outcomes are major concerns and I share the concern of the honourable member for Sandringham.

I have a child in Year 9 who, herself, has grave concerns about what the Victorian certificate of education means. I have sat through numerous parent-teacher meetings where we have tried to scramble through a maze of misinformation about what the VCE will or will not mean to our children. Children have discussed with me their concern at the lack of knowledge and clear directions about the VCE. I have had parents and children come to me and say, "Are we going to have an all or nothing approach or a phasing in?", which is what the Minister is now aiming for. I find the phasing in of the certificate unsatisfactory and I do not believe in it. If the new certificate has been developed and is to be implemented, it should start immediately. There should not be a phasing in experimental period with my children and other children. I do not care for that at all.

I want to know what my daughter will do in Years 11 and 12 and in one year's time. I want to know what the outcomes are. My daughter wants to know what she will achieve and what she has to sit for. She is making her choice of subjects this year and we are very uncertain about where those subjects are heading. She is one among thousands of young women and men who are in Year 9 and who are trying to make decisions about their future lives and education opportunities, both in government schools and non-government schools.

On behalf of those parents who are grappling with that problem I place on record my criticism of the Minister for not sorting this out and for not allowing sufficient time for the certificate to be implemented as a complete entity. It is not good enough to have it phased in bit by bit regardless of which school a child is in. The quality should be the same in both government schools and non-government schools.

I take up the point made by the Minister regarding the Victorian Teaching Service Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The Minister makes great play of his claim that the nearly \$2 million it has cost taxpayers over the past four to five years has not been a waste of money, because the commission has used its resources to assist the Department of Labour. That is not a satisfactory explanation when we have schools waiting for integration aides. Schools are waiting to help disabled children take their right and proper place in education, but the Minister says that the members of the commission have been given jobs assisting in the nursing dispute and so on. The education budget is for education. It is not for the Minister to throw around and help out one of his colleagues because he or she may have a problem. That Budget allocation belongs to education and the Minister should be responsible for every cent he spends, including the \$2 million that has been spent on the commission.

I am sorry on behalf of the parents with disabled children who are finding enormous difficulties in having their children integrated because the Minister does not and cannot supply the integration aides that they need. They are the sorts of things that get people angry and make people ask what the Minister and the government are all about. The government is wasting a significant amount in an area where money should never have been spent.

I ask the Minister what is happening in post-secondary education. The Minister referred, in the Budget Papers, to a series of reviews of technical and further education, adult education, secondary and post-secondary education, the Anderson review, the Edgar review, the now ditched Morrow review of technical and further education and the newly resurrected Cullen review. That review is the overview of all reviews, because Mr Cullen appears to be the saviour of all of us. When will the Minister make some decisions and announcements in these areas?

The Minister is imposing on technical and further education colleges right now, through the agreement with the TAFE Teaching Service that has to be carried out in 1988. Many colleges are objecting to the agreement because it will not bring about the productivity that the Minister talks about. They cannot see how it will allow technical and further education to operate more efficiently.

Many colleges of technical and further education are being asked to operate more courses and take in more students on less money with an agreement that does not allow them to expand staff. There are obviously real problems with colleges operating according to the Minister's agreement with the TAFE Teaching Service that the Minister has imposed on colleges for 1988. I have been advised of that by numerous TAFE colleges. In the interim, there is a hiatus because a Cabinet subcommittee is working out where technical and further education is heading in the future.

I should like to know on behalf of those people who are interested in post-secondary compulsory education when the Minister will make up his mind on these matters, which do not seem to be reflected in Budget items.

The recent statement by the Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training, the Honourable John Dawkins, on the post-compulsory education sector is very important. Many of the comments made by the Federal Minister signal real problems for the Minister for Education in what he can provide and deliver, particularly in the technical and further education sector where the State is providing the largest slice of the education expenditure.

I should like to hear the Minister's reaction to the Dawkins statement on tertiary education. It is important that the community has some idea of the direction in which the Minister believes we ought to be going. Does the Minister believe permanent tenure is a problem that is holding back the development of new places and new courses, particularly in adult education and universities? What attitude does the Minister have on these issues? The Minister criticises the Opposition for apparently—I do not agree with him—not having policies in this area. The Opposition has strong and clear policies. I ask the Minister what he believes should be the reaction to the Dawkins statement. It is a significant statement on tertiary education. Will the Minister refer it to the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission or will he seek wider consultation?

It is a timely matter to be referred to an all-party Parliamentary committee. Some of the issues are of such major importance to the economic wellbeing of the State and nation that an all-party contribution would be significant and helpful in resolving some of the conflict and setting out aspirations and establishing policy directions that we ought to be taking.

The Dawkins statement signals some significant changes to which Victoria will have to react. I should like to know what measures the Minister is taking to react to it, and I should also like to know when the Minister will make some official announcements about the future of post-secondary education and its coordination, and whether TAFE will become part of the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission or end up with the Department of Labour as seems to be the case.

The other area about which I should like further information concerns the newly established Victorian Education Foundation. This body slipped into the economic statement recently released by the government entitled *Victoria The Next Decade*. Within this program dealing with education Ministry services is a major expenditure item of \$5 million allocated to the Victorian Education Foundation. It may well have a significant impact on a number of entrepreneurial areas in education.

I was privileged to spend some time earlier this week at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology where I learned from Miss Smith, the director, and Mr Baker, the assistant director, that major areas of international education are being examined through that institution. We have major and significant educational interests in Malaysia and in Singapore through private colleges supported by teachers from the institute.

These are significant, worthwhile and supportable directions, but I find the statements so far made by the Minister for Education on the Victorian Education Foundation to be fairly hazy. I see no clear direction in them. I should like to know who is contributing to the foundation and what sort of accountability it will have for moneys contributed both by Parliament and from outside private sources. I should also like to know where the moneys will go and how they will be accounted for.

Honourable members have witnessed the apparition of the Victorian Equity Trust with \$300 million coming and going. Will we now be issuing a prospectus for this foundation? Will it be audited? Will it require some legislation? We seem to be very much in the dark about that. The government has not elucidated on the foundation apart from referring to it in other Budget items where it talks about offsetting payroll tax on contributions to the foundation.

Of course, that will affect only certain larger scale operations and will preclude small businesses from contributing to the foundation. They will not be able to receive, at the same time, government benefit by way of foregone revenue because, according to the

government, a small business not paying payroll tax would see no point in donating to the education foundation. Many small businesses may want to contribute to such a foundation because they are not in a position to play a big role in the apprenticeship area, as the Minister would know, unless they are involved in a group apprenticeship scheme. They have a limited involvement in training, and it may well be that some other means could be found of involving smaller businesses in the foundation if it is to be a worthwhile thing.

The Minister should be making a Ministerial statement on the education foundation. The Minister says, by interjection, that he is "going to make an announcement shortly". The establishment of the foundation was announced by the government many months ago and it should certainly now be in a position to make a full announcement about what is going on and what it will do, who will be controlling it and so forth, but I am particularly interested to ensure that it be fully accountable because too many slabs of public money are floating around in this State, completely unaccounted for. I do not say that the education budget is necessarily one of them, but certainly many areas involving industry, training and resources make it impossible for one to find out what has happened to taxpayers' money. There is no audit of any of the moneys given to a number of the projects, and I am concerned about that. I want to ensure that this new education foundation does not fall into this trap.

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—This program manifests three central failures of the government in education, in particular, but is illustrative of the whole approach of the Cain government to public administration in Victoria. The failures are, first of all, the hand-out mentality—the idea that right through the Budget the people of Victoria will be conned into ignoring and overlooking the waste and mismanagement the government has inflicted on Victorian taxpayers by political bribery, by the hand-outs to be paid shortly before the next State election. I am referring, in particular, to item 2869—the education expense allowances.

The second major area is the enormous waste and mismanagement and inappropriate priorities of the government in giving priority to bureaucracy over the delivery of services to the Victorian people.

The third is the other side of that coin, which is the declining standard, quality and even quantity of services provided to the Victorian people. The mere expenditure figures in this program illustrate the point I am making. There is an allocation of \$48.2 million for the education expense allowance. If we exclude that amount from the allocation for Program No. 281, we see that total expenditure under this program has increased by 29.8 per cent under this appropriation measure. That is in stark contrast to other programs within the education portfolio.

If one examines the summary table, the figures show, in crude overall terms, that expenditure under Program No. 281 increases by 106.4 per cent, and that comes down to 29.8 per cent when we remove the education allowance. It is interesting to look at that program because it does not even include all of the sheer bureaucracy of the Ministry of Education; it is only the Ministry services section of the administrative expenditure of this Minister. In addition to that, Program No. 282, dealing with corporate services, provides for \$86.5 million of expenditure, again of an administrative nature.

This can be compared with the programs involving the actual delivery of services to the Victorian community, the most important of which is school education. There one actually sees that even in nominal terms there is a reduction in expenditure of 0.2 per cent, which is a fall of more than 7 per cent in real terms.

Program No. 285, dealing with school development and resource services, has an increased expenditure of only 1.8 per cent. Equal educational opportunities, covered by Program No. 286, again experiences a drop in expenditure of 3.6 per cent. The expenditure in the technical and further education area increases by only 2.8 per cent and non-government school grants increases by 5.9 per cent; so in every case of actual delivery of

services to the Victorian community, the Budget involves a reduction in expenditure in real terms.

Only when one turns to the Ministry of Education services allocation does one find an increase in outlay, and a massive increase at that, in real terms, and this reflects the priorities of the Minister and the government. They are concerned with public administration as an end in itself.

Dr Lois Bryson worked for the government for a period. One would have thought that Dr Bryson, an acknowledged left-wing academic, would have been full of praise for the public administration techniques of the government. One would have expected that with all the propaganda and euphoria generated by the media unit on the government's excellent economic management expertise and its bold new visions for public administration in this State, Dr Bryson would have reluctantly left her service and concluded that here was a thriving vibrant public sector. That is far from the truth.

What Dr Bryson wrote and what has now been published in a public administration journal is that the government and the political hacks that it has brought into the Victorian public sector are obsessed with administration for their own ends. Far from being concerned about the quantity and quality of services delivered to the community of Victoria, the Cain government and its political lackeys in the Victorian bureaucracy are obsessed with sheer administration, with waste, and with writing endless reports which have no reference to the quality of education or, in the case of Dr Bryson, community services delivered to the Victorian people.

The obsession of the government is with bureaucracy, and that sad priority is reflected in the Budget allocations. It is reflected in the fact that expenditure on bureaucracy increases substantially in real terms, while, in every instance, the expenditure on actual service delivery decreases. That can be found in the proliferation of boards and authorities endlessly contemplating their navels and doing nothing to advance the standard of education in this State. Indeed, as I shall show later, they are doing quite the reverse.

There has been a massive growth in the central bureaucracy of the Ministry of Education. Regionalisation, the bold new administrative technique of this government, has become a sorry blot on the education landscape. When I and my colleagues from the Parliamentary Liberal Party visit schools in our electorates and discuss the significance of regionalisation and the new administrative procedures imposed on schools, almost without exception we are told that regional offices have not generated greater efficiencies or greater accountability and they have not eased the burden of those in the schools delivering the services.

Regionalisation has simply put in another tier of bureaucracy, with sheer administrative overheads and workloads that are not productive in delivering services. In fact, it is a further impediment in the way of principals and school administrators getting done what they must do to educate the children of this State and to provide all our children not only with a good education but also with the basic dignity that comes from the enhancement of their ability to use their capacities through effective and efficient education. We are not getting that; we are getting a bureaucratic system that is choking and stifling the initiative, enterprise and drive of the people who have charge of the children in our schools. This government has delivered that system; it did not come about by accident; it has come about by the deliberate design of this government.

The system substantially accounts for the disenchantment among teachers, which is reflected in the seminal work done by the honourable member for Essendon on the incidence of WorkCare claims by teachers. That was a good, honest and forthright report which showed that the incidence of WorkCare claims by government school teachers is not just one or two times but up to ten times higher than the rate of claims by teachers employed in private schools.

Many people said that that information represents evidence of abuse of WorkCare. That is true not only in the education system but also generally throughout the Victorian work

force; WorkCare is not only open to abuse but also is being widely abused. That, however, is only the first of the questions that should be asked about that manifestation. What does it really represent? The question should not be how people are abusing WorkCare; the important question is why are they abusing it.

Every personnel or industrial relations manager in this country will say that where there is a high incidence of absenteeism, WorkCare claims, resignations and early retirements, a morale crisis is involved. It is a classic example of low morale, poor motivation and poor performance. It is inevitably correlated with low efficiency and unsatisfactory work environments. That is what is happening in Victoria's schools.

It is scarcely surprising that, despite the sophistry of the Minister for Education, during the past ten years, and particularly during the past five years, there has been a rapid and growing exodus from the government school system. The simple fact is that the Victorian community has lost confidence in the government school system since the Cain government came to office. The flight has increased, and it represents the basic dissatisfaction of the Australian community, the Victorian community and even the teachers with the system.

What has the government done? In any system, especially where large numbers of people are employed, when fundamental change is undertaken, it is a basic necessity that a period of consolidation and reassessment is provided. This government, typical of socialist governments, is obsessed with change for the sake of change. It has heaped revolutionary change upon revolutionary change with no period for consolidation, adjustment or acclimatisation for people even to know what is expected of them, what resources are available and how their performance is to be measured.

Teachers are telling members of the Opposition again and again that they are unhappy with their work environment and, as the Premier said in a recent public speech, they simply do not understand the documents that are prepared under this program. The teachers simply do not know what is expected of them. It is scarcely surprising that we have all the manifestations of a crisis in morale in the work environment.

I shall refer to the Minister's boast about retention rates. There is no question that it is desirable that retention rates in Victorian and Australian schools increase. The duration and quality of education in Australia must be improved. However, a number of factors have combined to create an apparent increase in retention rates. The Minister is correct in saying that there is an increasing appreciation among parents and their children of, and an increasing emphasis by schools on, the desirability of higher retention rates in our secondary school system in particular and even in the number of people involved in tertiary education, if the technological side of the education system is included. However, high levels of unemployment under Labor governments have played a part. Furthermore, the great uncertainty many people in the community feel has also played a part.

Many people are afraid for their children to leave school and to run the risk of a life on the dole or struggling to find work in a contracting work force. What has the government decided to do? I put it to the Committee that the government has deliberately, consciously and singly decided that it will reduce educational standards in Victoria to make it possible for a greater number of people to stay within the education system. Faced with a choice of maintaining standards and struggling to improve retention rates or deliberately and consciously lowering standards to increase retention rates, the government chose the latter. Nothing could more clearly demonstrate that than the continuing state of revolution the government has imposed on schools; the absolute chaos generated by the rank consultative processes used in some of the reform procedures the government has imposed.

For a short time I was a member of and for a time an observer of local planning committee No. 7 in the South Central Region. That planning committee was deliberately manipulated by union representatives trying to frustrate the plans of the Ministry of Education and the Minister and to frustrate improvements to the secondary education system.

Its simple objective was to maximise the opportunity for the teacher unions to achieve their objectives within Victoria's school system. This government and this Minister inflicted that on Victoria. The Minister grins wryly, because he knows that what I say is true and even he and the lackeys and hacks in his Ministry could not have foreseen the extent to which those procedures would frustrate their plans. They have simply handed over the system to left-wing activists and unions.

The curriculum development that is taking place is a farce. It is no small measure of the lack of success and the simple chaos that has been generated by the government that the university vice-chancellors are quaking in their boots about the effect of the government's changes in curriculum for secondary education. Nothing could more clearly illustrate the failure of the work being done under this program than the fact that the university vice-chancellors are opposed to the form of curriculum development that the Minister and the government are seeking to impose on the community.

A series of soft option subjects are being created with no credible intellectual content, created for no other purpose than to enable students to remain in the system taking soft option subjects that do not meet any of the normal intellectual rigours that our educational system should meet. We are seeing the prostitution of great and important disciplines, such as the history of this country being corrupted by diversions and left-wing fantasies undermining the opportunity for Victorian students to be given even the dignity of a proper, reasonable and well-founded appreciation of the history and development of their own country and its traditions.

Lastly, I refer to the abject failure of this government in industrial relations, manifested during the past year by industrial action. Not even the so-called special relationship between the government and the teacher unions could prevent the growth of disillusionment, to the point where a teacher strike was faced even when students were struggling to complete the final part of their school year and, in some cases, vital parts of assessment procedures were still to be undertaken.

The government's inefficiency, neglect, waste and mismanagement disrupted the education of those students. That occurred as a result of what the government did when it came to office. The government is now struggling with industrial relations dissatisfaction inflicted on the government, the teachers and the community by some outside force; it is paying the price now for what it did when it came to office.

The government negotiated agreements that are simply unworkable, under which the education system cannot face the economic rigours that the whole public sector in Australia is now facing as a result of the failures of the economic policies of this government.

Mr Cathie interjected.

Mr STOCKDALE—As the Minister says, there certainly have to be changes in work practices, but many of the work practices that are now the subject of heated dispute have grown up simply because the government gave the teacher unions too much power. Why did it do that? It was the pay-off for the contributions the teacher unions made to the Labor Party's coffers before the 1982 elections. The teacher unions bought power; they were given the power; and they used that power to destroy the Victorian education system. The Minister is now inflicting industrial discontent on Victorian students and their parents as the price he has to pay to try to claw back some of the things he stupidly gave away.

The priorities in this Budget are simply wrong. It is time the government stopped wasting money on bureaucracy and started spending it on improving the basic education available to Victorian students.

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—The Committee is dealing with Program No. 281, which relates to Ministry of Education services. I wish to reject some of the misstatements that the shadow Treasurer, the honourable member for Brighton, has made. Australian history is, always has been and, so far as I am concerned, always will be an important part of the school curriculum. I do not believe for one moment that the

honourable member for Brighton can give the Committee any evidence that that is not the case.

The honourable member for Brighton made another misstatement, which is even more significant. The item that he found to attack most vigorously under this program is a new item that has not previously appeared in the government's Budgets or its policies. The amount of \$38.2 million relates to a new education expense allowance that the government is making available to the parents of this State to assist them and their families.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CATHIE—The honourable members for Sandringham and Brighton are opposed to providing funds in the Budget to assist the parents and families of this State with the ever increasing costs of education: the costs of school books and text books, school uniforms, clothing and shoes. They do not want to help the families and people of this State, and they even join with some of the more idiotic comments that some other people are making in the community that, somehow, such assistance to families does not have anything to do with education. Of course it does! It is real and meaningful assistance to many parents in the community who are facing, as we all are, a decline in living standards as a result of the economic circumstances that Australia has faced.

Instead of praising the government for taking this initiative and providing real help and benefit to the people of this State, the shadow Treasurer criticises the government for having a handout mentality. Is it a handout mentality to make specific provision for assistance to the people of this State in the increasing costs of education? It is no wonder that those honourable members are in opposition! They will remain in opposition for as long as they are so irresponsible.

The honourable member for Brighton should have examined the specific items under Program No. 281 before criticising increases in individual items. He referred to the education expense allowance. There are three other major increases in the education budget under Program No. 281. I shall go through each of them and reject the view that this is because of some bloated bureaucracy that the government has to increasing the bureaucracy.

The first increase to which I refer is in item 2828, which relates to the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission and nurse education. The allocation for that item has doubled, because we are moving steadily ahead with a program which, by agreement with the Commonwealth government, will remove the training of nurses from hospitals and place the responsibility for nurse training within colleges of advanced education.

That is a new and increasing responsibility to provide additional nursing training places within colleges of advanced education and, I might add, also within Deakin University. That has nothing to do with an increased or bloated bureaucracy, as the shadow Treasurer would have honourable members believe.

The second major increase occurs in item 2831.

Mr Stockdale—What about item 1100?

Mr CATHIE—I shall return to item 1100. Item 2831 relates to higher education, links with technology and grants and expenses. Again, it deals with specific assistance that is being provided in fostering links between higher education and technology in developing new organisational arrangements for the delivery of mathematics, scientific and technological education and establishing research links on a \$1 for \$1 basis with industry for colleges of advanced education.

Given the position that Victoria has led the economic recovery and given the position of the manufacturing industry in this State, I should have thought that the Opposition would support these increases in the Budget. Instead, it criticises them.

The shadow Treasurer suggested that I should examine item 1100. That relates to overtime and penalty rates. It is true that that allocation is increased but the increase includes the full-year effect of the first tier of the March 1987 national wage award.

It includes also the provision that would have been found under the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission in last year's Budget and that particular responsibility has moved from there to the Resources Coordination Division of the Ministry for the SCOPE project. SCOPE simply means the student's choice of occupation and pass in education projects, again a great project.

For the first time we are using modern technology and computerisation to provide all students in the State with up-to-date information about courses and career paths that they may have to follow. It indicates what standard they need to achieve and what course prerequisites there might be, whether it be an apprenticeship or whether they may have to go to some form of higher education. Those are the increases in Program No. 281 and are increases that should be supported and applauded by the Opposition. It shows the poverty of their thinking tonight and they should not criticise this particular item of the education Budget.

The only other major increase that I can find is listed under Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission—Works. The second part of the works and services expenditure indicates a major increase and that increase is for the new Western Institute, a joint Commonwealth-State development. It is a new form of higher education which is neither a separate TAFE college nor a separate college of advanced education but a development in post-secondary education. We will track the individual student right through the whole of the education process, beginning with pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, going on to certificate course, diploma and degree courses and even post-graduate work at a university.

Is this to be supported by the Opposition? Apparently not! I wonder at times what the Opposition stands for when it comes to education.

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—Let me answer the Minister for Education's question about work standards, equality and equal opportunity for all. The Minister is highly selective in his argument. His argument is that salaries, wages, allowances, overtime and penalty rates have increased a little. When we actually make a calculation it is 49.7 per cent; in other words, the principal allocation measuring the direct cost of bureaucracy under the control of the Minister for Education, which he has created in the central administration of his department, increased 50 per cent this year and the Minister's explanation for that is the first-tier wage increase under the national wage principles—which was a 1.5 per cent increase. The Minister is highly selective and dishonest in the description he gives of that expense and the reason for that increase.

The increase is 50 per cent, but that is not the end of the matter; there are two other items which represent the direct cost of the bureaucratic monster that the Minister and other Ministers in the government have created.

The second item is subsidiary expenses associated with the employment of personnel. The Minister said that he could not find any more significant increases, but he did not mention this one.

That item increased from \$269 000 last year to \$488 000 this year; not an increase of 7 per cent, the inflation rate; not an increase of less than 7 per cent, like the service delivery programs which represent a real relationship in outlays, but an 81 per cent increase in the expenses associated with the employment of labour.

Then there are the operating expenses. The Minister did a little better here. There was some restraint shown compared with item 1150. The operating expenses indicate a 54 per cent increase. The Minister, in response to the central point I made about the emphasis and priorities given to the bureaucracy at the expense of service delivery, is proven beyond doubt to be wrong by a proper analysis of those first three items.

That unfortunately is not something confined to this program or to this Ministry; it marks the whole of the six Budgets that the government has brought down; it marks the whole of the portfolio programs that Ministers have inflicted on the Victorian community. Without exception, they are marked by bureaucracy growing at the expense of services. Even if we take out the items to which the Minister has referred, the fact remains that these central administrative costs are the only area of educational expenditure increasing in real terms.

It would be interesting to have the Minister answer some of the questions put to him by the Estimates Committee about where productivity savings are made. One can tell in looking at the figures that these central administrative costs were not included in the base figure. The Minister did not have to turn to his cronies at the Rialto Building to get productivity savings out of them; on the contrary, the productivity savings he has inflicted on the schools three years in a row are in spending on maintaining the physical structures that are falling down around the ears of students, particularly in my electorate. Those structures are not being maintained and expenditure has been reduced in real terms in every one of the past three years in that allocation, but that does not worry the Minister. He can increase spending on bureaucrats in his head office by 50 per cent, by 55 per cent or even by 81 per cent. The government shows its priorities—bureaucrats at the expense of education, at the expense of students and at the expense of families.

The Minister was pious in criticising what I said earlier about the education allowance, but the Liberal Party is pleased that the government has done something to rescue Victorian families from the massive damage the government's tax policies have inflicted on them over the past five years.

The point I was making, and I made it quite clearly, was not that we oppose the education allowance per se, but that it represents the ultimate cynicism of the government that believes it will con the people of Victoria by giving them bread and circuses, by giving them welfare measures to divert their attention away from the waste and mismanagement, but above all, away from the crashing impact of falling education standards.

A child who completes Year 12 of his or her education this year will not be as well educated as when I attended school, or even when the Minister taught in schools. The government has destroyed the standard of education in Victoria partly through neglect, partly through incompetence, but also, most sadly of all, partly as a deliberate strategy to increase retention rates.

Mr LEA (Sandringham)—The first item to which I wish to speak is item 1100, salaries, wages, allowances, overtime and penalty rates for corporate services. I direct to the attention of the Committee that there has been for the third time a massive reorganisation in central and regional personnel.

The previous Director-General of Education, Dr Norman Curry, was replaced in recent times by Mr Allen. Dr Curry has been transferred and is now head of the Library Council of Victoria. There has been a massive politicisation in this area of senior appointments at the central and regional level.

Without wanting to detract from the confidentiality of the Committee, one could argue why the former Minister for Education's brother-in-law is director of the Western Region? One could go on about that. I am referring to Mr Betson, if the Minister does not know; one could discuss central and regional appointments at length. Mr I. Wyke, private secretary to the former Minister of Education, the now Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources, was challenged by the Minister when he was concerned about Mr Wyke's alleged political affiliation. He was asked where he stood; Mr Wyke said, "I am an apolitical servant and I do the best I can". The former Minister of Education said, "You have three months to adjust to your new position". I challenge the Minister for Education to check those facts with the former Minister.

There is massive politicisation in senior levels of the Ministry of Education, which works throughout the bureaucracy and the State Board of Education. The government has

been certain about where it is heading in education by wanting to commit future Victorian students to a political affiliation with the Labor Party. When it binds senior public servants it can achieve that end. I ask the public of Victoria to be aware of and concerned about what is occurring.

I direct the Minister's attention to the recent appointment of six assistant general managers' schools. The Minister participated in those appointments but was overruled by the Premier in Cabinet because the Premier was not happy with the appointments made. I suggest that the Premier and the Minister for Education know that to be the case. Not only have those six senior positions been in the balance, as it were, but every other position in the bureaucracy of education, centrally and regionally, has been held in the balance.

Sadly, my consultations with people in the regions and centrally have led me to believe there is a massive morale problem in administration, a gross uncertainty in the discharge of duties and considerable concern about the future of people in this regard.

I refer to the Minister's decision to abolish senior education officer and education officer positions, both of which have been established for more than ten years. It has caused much instability; every position below assistant general manager, schools, is in dispute. There is massive unrest. I was speaking today to a former regional education officer who attests to the concern that people hold about the administration, centrally and regionally. The government and the Minister must be held accountable for this shattering morale decline in central and regional offices.

The honourable member for Brighton has already commented, quite correctly, that the regions impose another layer between the schools and the central office. There is no place for regions under the present educational structure; existing services could be provided centrally, for finance, staffing, buildings and curriculum. As the honourable member for Brighton has said, schools could operate directly from the centre. I am not advocating that that should necessarily be the case, but from present operations one could draw that conclusion because of the government's ineptitude in working out an educational strategy throughout Victoria.

On a more pleasant note I refer to the State schools horticultural establishment at Hughesdale, which has deployed plants and flowers to various Victorian schools; I strongly support that work.

I shall now comment on the Association of Councils of Post Primary Institutions of Victoria—ACPPIV. That organisation has struggled for a long time to obtain financial support from the government because it was in direct conflict with the Victorian Council of School Organisations—VICCSO. The government has been slow to establish a relationship with ACPPIV, particularly under the previous Minister, and the Minister for Education cannot deny that. The association represents approximately 200 post-primary schools but should represent all 400 post-primary schools in Victoria. The political intervention of the government has led to its backing VICCSO, which supports the government's point of view, against ACPPIV, which is generally regarded as a conservative organisation.

Nothing short of scandal exists in the operation of WorkCare in central and regional education. As a former school principal, I have seen the operations of WorkCare badly mismanaged and misused by teachers trying to make capital of a system that is lenient towards people who are pretending to be sick. Many teachers deserve to be concerned about obtaining assistance from WorkCare. The Minister for Education would be aware of the WorkCare statistics for teachers in New South Wales—another Labor government—compared with the Victorian statistics. Why is there a 1000 per cent difference in the number of cases reported to the respective governments? The Minister might elucidate on that discrepancy.

WorkCare provisions for teachers need to be tightened and that need is demonstrated by definite cases of teacher stress, caused by the government's inability to provide a proper,

disciplined program. The Minister should visit secondary, technical and high schools, to talk to teachers and learn how they are coping with their discipline programs in the classrooms.

I declare an interest; not only am I a former principal of technical schools but also my wife teaches in technical schools. She tells me stories about the bad behaviour of students and the inability of principals and teachers to cope—no wonder there are many WorkCare claims!

The Minister should seriously examine this problem. A review of discipline programs has been in train for some time. At present these programs are inadequate. There need to be tougher controls for principals and teachers so that the well-behaved student can be protected from the government's concern for the badly-behaved.

To draw an analogy, the government is more concerned about the criminally-inclined people than the well-behaved people in society. This appears to be a flaw in the government's make-up.

I shall deal now with subsidiary expenses associated with the employment of personnel. I direct the attention of the Committee to the sum of \$26 million. I ask the Minister to give a detailed analysis of the subsidiary expenses—a wonderful general term—with a category breakdown. I seek a blow-by-blow description of what is meant by that term.

This point highlights the program lines in the Budget. If one were to check the program lines in last year's Budget, one would find that they do not match up. The government does its best to hide what is being spent not only from the Parliament of Victoria but also from the public at large. I spent 30 years in the education system and I do not know what "subsidiary expenses" means.

I shall deal now with the involvement of the central and regional offices in the reorganisation of schools. As a former educator, I am concerned about proper allocation of resources, staffing, and the provision of proper courses for students. I was chairman of local planning committee No. 10 in the Southern Central Region and I have supported the Minister's decision to reorganise schools.

We must do all we can to achieve what is best for students. The honourable member for Brighton was a member of the Brighton Technical School Council, and, no doubt, he would have acted as I did, impartially and fairly, in discharging his duties in that capacity. As chairman of the local planning committee No. 10, I was concerned about the strategies promoted by the Minister for Education. I remind the Committee that I was elected to that position by the community; it was not a government appointment.

Through the regional director the Minister made decisions that created massive friction in the local community and caused feuding between schools. This was either because of the Minister's inability or the lack of proper advice. The Minister for Education would not face up to the problems and would not make a decision about the schools.

The Minister allowed open-ended discussion. One may ask what is wrong with open-ended discussion in a community but in this case more than 40 people from local planning committee No. 10 were included in the discussion but almost 50 primary school parents were not included in the discussion. That was the result of the Minister's suggestion. An attempt was made to devise a democratic decision-making process.

If the Minister wishes to achieve rationalisation in schools, he should examine what he is doing and consider the process being used currently. I do not criticise the Minister for attempting to rationalise schools, resources and students; I criticise the process being undertaken. The Minister would not be confident if he knew the ill-feeling between parents, teachers and schools that has been generated by this process.

For example, I invite the Committee to imagine six people lost at sea trying to get into a lifeboat that has only four places. I can imagine how the six people would behave! Would the Minister allow me to take his place? Would I allow the Minister to take my place? The

answer is, "No". We would both be trying to save our lives. Given that there are six schools in the area covered by local planning committee No. 10 and that two schools must close down, one cannot expect one school to step aside gracefully for another.

The Minister for Education has extensively criticised the Liberal Party about its lack of policy and programs. That is easy to do. The Minister is well aware that if the Liberal Party were to launch its policy on education too early, the Labor Party would capitalise on any good point. If the Liberal Party does not reveal its policy until too late, the Labor Party will say that it does not have a policy. The Minister cannot use that argument.

The Minister should have shown more initiative during the consultation stage instead of sending the recommendations back to the local planning committee until it got them right. How much of the planning process was preconceived before the schools got it right? Sending the recommendations back and forth to local planning committee No. 10 has led everyone to the assumption that that was the case.

In conclusion, Victoria has an education system that is beset with problems. There are more than 1900 central and regional personnel without permanent positions. Great stuff! Teachers are leaving the service due to sickness and taking early retirement. It is suffering a terrible morale problem. I do not have to bore the Minister—who is not very good at statistics—with these facts because he understands the drift away from State schools to private schools during the past five years. The Minister would well know that 60 000 students have been lost from the State school system since Labor took office.

The present situation is catastrophic and the Committee condemns the Minister for Education and the government for their inability to solve Victoria's educational problems. This has resulted from incompetence and a lack of concern for the State system. The Liberal Party supports the State education system and would certainly do a better job than the present government and the Minister.

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—During the discussion on Program No. 282, I shall briefly refute the serious allegation made by the honourable member for Sandringham who said that there was serious politicisation of senior appointments within the Ministry of Education. That allegation is totally without foundation.

The honourable member for Sandringham may be prepared to examine some evidence instead of making irresponsible accusations. The Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education, Dr Graham Allen, was first appointed to a senior position by the former Liberal government. The same is true of the person who holds the No. 2 position in the education hierarchy, the General Manager of the Schools Division, Mr Kevin Collins. In making his allegations, I presume the honourable member for Sandringham is not referring to those two gentlemen! If so, he must be totally ignorant of the processes within government and the Westminster system.

I want to make it quite clear that it is not the Minister or the Premier who is involved in these processes.

Mr Hann—It is the members of the committee!

Mr CATHIE—If I, as Minister, involved myself in a committee concerning interviews and appointments to senior positions within the Schools Division, the Opposition would be right—there would be a danger of serious politicisation of any area of government administration, and that is why it does not happen under the Westminster system.

The responsibility for those appointments is vested legally and by Parliament in the Public Service Board. Those appointments will be made only with the approval of the board and, in fact, it has rejected some of the nominations that the Ministry of Education and the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education have put forward.

That process will continue and I will be satisfied, and I am sure the Public Service Board will be satisfied with the result of that process being the best possible appointments to senior management positions within the Schools Division.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—I should like to comment on the Minister's remarks because he spoke about the fact that the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education was not on the selection panel and the General Manager of the Schools Division, Mr Collins, also was not on the panel but he failed to mention that other members were appointed to that selection panel as well, including——

Mr Cathie—By the chief executive, not by me!

Mr HANN—We are talking about the chief executive appointed by the Labor government and his major claim to fame in the press, when appointed, was that he voted Labor many years ago. I have some respect for Graham Allen, but the Minister put out a press release at the time when I criticised the proposed selection and, more particularly, the fact that the government sacked a number of senior officials within the Ministry of Education——

Mr Cathie—We did not sack them.

Mr HANN—The government may not have sacked them but it moved them sideways and in all sorts of directions because it was obviously not happy with the fact that they were holding those positions.

The reason why the government was not happy with those people was that they were not, perhaps, card-carrying members of the Labor Party; they did not fit its philosophy. Why, then, did the government move these senior officials, these capable and able senior administrators?

Mr Cathie—To get through the process of appointment.

Mr HANN—Why did we even have a process of appointment? We need to go a little further back in this whole area. The government says it is because it did not get through the process. Why did the whole system have to be changed? It was changed because the government was not happy with the personnel that were holding office in these positions, and its technique, since coming to office in 1982, has been to change or redesignate positions within the whole of the public sector. Virtually every department has been restructured or renamed so that the government then has the ability to appoint its own personnel to the senior positions.

If one changes the name, it is a whole new ball game and all of the positions are up for grabs. There is no doubt in my mind that the reason for the changing of the names—from directors to what was to be assistant general managers but then became general managers—was so that the government could put its imprimatur and seal upon those appointments.

This was for the simple reason that if the government is ultimately responsible for the appointment, likewise the government can dismiss these people if they do not do what the government wants. At least six of these senior personnel have lost their positions. They are in limbo; they are presumably in the executive consultancy area that the government is good at establishing. These people have skills and talents built up over the years. They have given dedicated service to the Ministry of Education but they have been removed from these positions so that the government can appoint its own people to replace them.

It is absolute nonsense for the Minister to suggest that there is no political interference or involvement in the appointments, particularly when the government was responsible directly for appointing the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education. The Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education may well have appointed the members of the selection panel, but within the selection panel there is a strong Labor bias.

It is interesting to note that when this information was first rumoured, the National Party issued a press release expressing concern. The government had to head for cover rapidly, and the appointment of at least four or five of the people to take up those positions has not been proceeded with.

At the time the Minister put out a press release claiming that I was ignorant. It had a headline stating, "The Deputy Leader of the National Party is ignorant" which is his prerogative, but the reality is that what we said was true: we flushed out the government and exposed its sinister activities in seeking to replace these competent and able senior administrators with the government's own people who obviously have an allegiance to the Labor Party.

This matter has been raised by my colleague, the honourable member for Sandringham. He has expressed his concern about the politicisation of the Ministry of Education, and not just at the senior level; it has been happening throughout the system. It is a tragedy when a government seeks to change the system for the sake of change rather than acknowledging the capable and able input that has been given for so many years by these senior administrators within the Ministry.

This has certainly affected morale in the Ministry. I indicate my concern, along with the honourable member for Sandringham, at what has happened to senior education officers because these people were performing important and useful tasks at the local level. They were the liaison between the schools and the Ministry and they have now been withdrawn from that situation. Prior to that, they were operating as school inspectors and their positions were then changed to senior education officers. They are now looking for a range of other positions that they can take up in the administrative area within the Ministry of Education.

We are witnessing a gradual removal of the support services and support structure—the link between the Ministry and the schools—and it is certainly a matter of grave concern to the National Party.

Earlier I mentioned the lowering of morale throughout the Ministry of Education. It is probably at the lowest point in history in our education system, and that is highlighted by the fact that even the teaching unions are establishing a capital fund to fight the government because of their concern that the government is no longer acting in the best interests of our State education system.

The wheel has really turned full circle from a situation where the unions were anxious to have Labor in power. They now realise that the government is running down the whole State education system and much of that has occurred in this corporate services area, the management area.

One of my other major concerns in this exercise is that we are proceeding towards this management process rather than an educational model. We are ignoring the educational talents of the people we have had in the past and looking for this so-called management structure, which is based very much on a financial concept rather than on what is best for education.

The other dilemma faced within the education system is an inability now for teachers to work their way up through the system. In the past, teachers have been able to aspire to Ministry positions beyond the school level. It has been a career path with a number of advantages, enabling them to utilise the expertise they built up within the schools in a broader sphere in the general administration of education. The government has now destroyed that career path.

Mr Cathie interjected.

Mr HANN—The only reason that the government is negotiating these positions now is because the concept has been destroyed and thrown out. These people are seeking positions in other areas of the Public Service because of their sheer frustration with what has happened in the education area.

The bulk of expenditure included in Program No. 283 is paid directly to schools. Salaries alone amount to \$1.351 billion. The amount of \$138 million for capital works shows a

fairly significant reduction of \$12 million from 1986-87. That is reflected in the downturn in the capital works program throughout the State.

Mr Cathie—It was cutback by the Commonwealth.

Mr HANN—It may well have been cutback by the Commonwealth but that is of little consolation to the schools which have been waiting for many years for improvements, for upgrades and for additional facilities. For instance, the Echuca Technical School has been relocating for thirteen or fourteen years and it is only now up to stage 3 of its development—the planning stage. At this stage, it has five different campuses.

I recently visited the Castlemaine Technical School and found that a similar situation exists there. It has been relocating for a longer period than has the Echuca Technical School and is still operating on separate campuses. In the electorate I represent, the Rochester High School had a major upgrade of its classrooms and library facilities. That project received an acceptable tender in June 1986 but that has since been abandoned by the government. The project has been scaled down dramatically and only a remote chance remains that a small part of that project will be included in the current financial year.

The Rochester Primary School comprises an old red brick main building and the Ministry had given priority to its upgrading earlier this year. Part of that upgrade program was to be the provision of two 5-cell modular classrooms. However, in its wisdom, the Ministry decided to relocate the existing one 5-cell modular classroom that the school already had to Echuca, with no guarantee that the upgrade program would be completed in the current Budget. That would have left the school in a disadvantaged situation.

Fortunately, the parents and the school council objected to that course of action—and rightly so, as it has turned out because, with the cutback in funding, there is literally no way that project will proceed during the current financial year. That school will be able to retain its one 5-cell modular classroom.

There has been a general downturn in classrooms in the State. Many schools were constructed 30 or 40 years ago in what was known as LTC—light timber construction—and those schools need replacement today. I fear to think what the total capital cost of the replacement of our existing schools would be.

However, unless the Ministry provides significant capital input into school buildings within the next three to four years to replace some of the LTC schools, those schools will literally fall down around the students. The maintenance costs on these buildings is enormous. In fact, the education system is facing a serious crisis in its capital works area.

Another point I wish to make is that some excellent things are happening within the State education system. I have a high regard for the dedication of our teachers, not only in the primary schools but also in the secondary and technical schools.

I have witnessed the dedication of individual teachers in our State schools who are producing students with the necessary skills to go on to tertiary education or into the work force. One tends at times to downgrade the State education system. That may be because of the difficulties experienced within the broader concept of the structure of education. The public perception is that perhaps the State schools are not as good as their counterparts in the private area. Part of that perception relates to a lack of public relations.

I have told schools in the electorate I represent that they need to improve their public relations; to make known the good things that are happening at their schools and to highlight the students that are succeeding.

One of the most innovative examples I have witnessed recently has been at the Castlemaine North Primary School which has a program that enables students to complete their own report cards. The junior primary students have a separate report card from the senior students. They work their way through that report card on a self-assessment basis. That school has received requests from other schools around the State for information about that report program. It has certainly proved to be an excellent innovation.

I am involved with the Lockington Consolidated Primary School because of my son's attendance at that school and I have been impressed by the dedication of the teachers and the interest they take in their students. That is not an easy task for them because one of the realities of our education system is that secondary teachers were extremely militant in the 1960s and, as a result, received the bulk of resources. Class sizes in the secondary area have been reduced significantly whereas class sizes in the primary area are quite large. For instance, some prep classes have up to 30 students.

I recognise that that is a difficult situation with which a teacher has to cope and attempt to give all students sufficient individual attention. However, I have found the teachers with whom I have had contact to be dedicated in their work and interested in individual students.

I place on record the National Party's support for the State school education system and its admiration for the many teachers who are extremely dedicated. I have also visited a number of smaller schools in recent times and it is a delight to see the dedication and support of teachers for students in single-teacher or two-teacher schools.

Program No. 283 also deals with funds for student transport and allows \$63 million for school bus services throughout Victoria. I place on record the strong support of the National Party for student transport. It is vitally important in country areas to ensure that all students have ready access to school buses to transport them to their schools.

In many instances, in the past, smaller schools were closed down on the basis of rationalisation—or consolidation, as it was known in the early years. I think "reorganisation" is the current term.

The National Party believes parents should have the right of free bus travel for their children to the nearest school.

I express concern about a trend in the area I represent to restrict the rights of parents to send their children to technical schools as opposed to high schools in Years 7, 8 and 9. For many years, in the Tongala, Kyabram, Cohuna and Rochester districts, parents have had the right to send their children to technical schools if they so wished for Years 7, 8 and 9. However, I understand that largely because of a cost cutting measure on the part of the government—and it has tried it now for a number of years—the rights of parents to send their children to technical schools are to be restricted and those children will be forced to attend the nearest high schools.

The parents and school councils of smaller primary schools are opposed to this measure. I express my opposition to the government adopting this as a policy because resources are not available to bring facilities in secondary schools into line with those in technical schools. Until such time as identical facilities are provided, parents should have a clear choice. They have had that over a long period and it should be retained. I voice that concern and my desire to see that it continues.

Maintenance allowances have been increased significantly, along with the introduction of the education allowance. The maintenance allowance allocation has been increased from \$4.5 million in 1986-87 to \$15.3 million in 1987-88. A significant number of students, approximately 12 000, are likely to benefit from that decision. The National Party welcomes the increased allocation because the maintenance allowance has not been increased significantly in recent years, and the cost of raising a family is increasing all the time.

The allocation for the reinstatement program has been increased from \$5.9 million in 1986-87 to \$9.7 million in the current financial year. That raises an important question about fire damage to schools in Victoria. It is tragic that the government must spend \$9.7 million on the reinstatement of schools that have been destroyed, in many instances, by vandals who have little care for the assets of others. That \$9.7 million could be used for other capital works, especially for the replacement and upgrading of schools which so urgently require it. The government must address the question of school security to try to

eliminate the risk of schools being burnt down and the millions of dollars worth of damage that results.

Mr LEA (Sandringham)—I shall make a few comments and praise the efforts of the teachers in the Schools Division of the Ministry for Education for the work they are doing under difficult circumstances. I do not wish to bore the Committee by repeating comments I have made on previous occasions about the difficulties that have resulted under this government. In the time allocated to me, I shall refer to some of the items in Program No. 283 and the difficulties in understanding the precise allocations.

Item 2862 refers to grants to schools and allocates \$141 million for that purpose. That is a large amount, and it is not described. It is a pity the Minister for Education is not here to provide me with a detailed breakdown of that allocation. Having worked in technical schools for a long time, I have some knowledge of the matter. The allocation refers to library payments and maintenance of school grounds. However, it would be helpful for honourable members to know precisely in what areas the grants are made.

The amount of \$104 million is allocated for subsidiary expenses associated with the employment of personnel. "Subsidiary expenses" is a grandiose term, but I wonder what those expenses are, to whom they are paid and by whom they are paid. I am sure honourable members would like to know a little more about that extremely imprecise and vague item.

Item 2861 refers to rents and allowances. I am not sure to whom they are paid, but the allocation is \$1.5 million. The Committee has the right to more detail from the Budget Papers, not only with regard to education but also with regard to all areas. As a Parliamentarian who has some inside knowledge of the Budget, I have difficulty in understanding the Budget Papers from year to year, and I am sure members of the public understand it far less than do my colleagues or I.

Item 2868 deals with maintenance allowances. I have already indicated that maintenance allowances to students whose parents are on a low income have remained unchanged since the middle of the 1970s. The allowance was \$208 a year, which meant that each child received \$104 for each half year. After five years in office, the government has increased the allowance from \$208 to \$240. An increase of approximately 16 per cent over twelve years is absolutely ludicrous. The government is not concerned about the needy and the people who deserve attention, and that is clearly shown in that item.

I shall now refer the Committee to some of the shortcomings of the staffing in the Schools Division of the Ministry of Education. To his credit, the Minister has tried to transfer staff members in primary, secondary and technical schools. Aspendale Technical School, which is in the electorate the Minister represents, is nine teachers over target for next year. In an earlier comment, I recounted to honourable members the fact that, after two years as the Minister for Education and many years as the honourable member for Carrum, the Minister visited Aspendale Technical School for the first time. The Minister gave the school 20 minutes of his time. What a fantastic effort!

The school was concerned about the coeducational facilities, and I wonder whether the Minister has had the courtesy to reply to the requests of that school. I wonder whether he can give more than 20 minutes of his time to a major post-primary school in the electorate he represents.

The figures I have received from the Ministry of Education show an increase in staff from 1 March 1986 to 1 March 1987. I do not want to bore the Minister about heavily declining enrolments, but staff numbers have increased while student numbers have decreased. The Minister cannot balance the scheme.

The Minister has presided over a massive and callous cutback in the allocation for special needs education, such as special services for compensatory education, guidance counselling and careers education. Those programs service a great need for those students who need discipline or careers advice. I challenge the Minister to review the funding in that area and give more attention to special needs education.

Education in post-primary schools and primary schools is not just about classroom contact. The Minister was an English teacher at one stage and taught for some time at Mordialloc Chelsea High School. He knows of the needs of those special areas. I suggest that he reconsider the allocation for special needs education in post-primary schools, because that is where education is floundering. Staff levels are up, student levels are down and the special needs allocation is down.

Mr Cathie—That is not right.

Mr LEA—I have the figures from the Ministry which substantiate my statement, and the Minister can acknowledge them when he replies.

The Schools Division is doing a tremendous job. I commend the work of teachers in the State education system for the work they are doing under extreme difficulties.

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

It was ordered that the Bill be reported to the House without amendment.

WORKS AND SERVICES (ANCILLARY PROVISIONS No. 2) BILL

The House went into Committee for the consideration of this Bill.

The clauses were agreed to.

It was ordered that the Bill be reported to the House without amendment.

APPROPRIATION (1987-88, No. 1) BILL AND WORKS AND SERVICES (ANCILLARY PROVISIONS No. 2) BILL

The Bills were reported to the House without amendment, and passed through their remaining stages.

SISTERS OF MERCY (WODONGA LAND) BILL

This Bill was received from the Council and, on the motion of Mr MATHEWS (Minister for the Arts), was read a first time.

LODDON-CAMPASPE REGIONAL PLANNING AUTHORITY BILL

This Bill was returned from the Council with a message relating to amendments.

It was ordered that the message be taken into consideration next day.

THE CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT (ELECTORAL PROCEDURES) BILL

This Bill was returned from the Council with a message relating to an amendment.

It was ordered that the message be taken into consideration next day.

STATE TRUST CORPORATION OF VICTORIA BILL

This Bill was returned from the Council with a message relating to amendments.

It was ordered that the message be taken into consideration next day.

ADJOURNMENT

Prison cells at Frankston police station—Bridge at Wunghnu—Upgrading of Calder Highway—Grain transport by road—Cement dumping—Computer installations at Road Traffic Authority and Ministry for Police and Emergency Services—Sale of alcohol on country passenger trains—Election for Richmond City Council

Mr WILKES (Minister for Housing)—I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston South)—I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, but in his absence I direct it to the attention of the Minister for Consumer Affairs.

In answer to a question without notice earlier today, the Minister referred to the problem of prisoners being held in small cells at local police stations for longer periods than those specified. I understand that the cells at Frankston have been specified as fourteen-day cells and that the cells at Hastings have been specified as three-day cells.

The Minister said that this was a long-term problem and that the government had done a wonderful job in building new prison facilities. I accept what the Minister says, but I do not understand what action the government has taken in this case. Frankston police station was built 50 to 60 years ago. Hastings has a brand new police station and cell facilities which have been classified as a three-day lockup.

Frankston has three small cells, two for males and one for females, a 14 square metre exercise area and one shower. Insufficient blankets are available for prisoners to use on the sleeping benches. No clean underclothes are provided for prisoners.

The family of a male prisoner who is to serve four months at the Frankston cells has told me that every fourteen days that man is transferred to the Cranbourne or Hastings cells and then returned to Frankston. No visitation facilities are available to that family.

Honourable members who read the article in the *Sun* newspaper a few days ago would be aware of the terrible conditions observed by a young lady who visited her father at the Heidelberg police station cells. She described the conditions at Heidelberg as inhumane and left those dirty cells in tears.

The Heidelberg cells must be a paradise compared with the Frankston cells. The Frankston cells are being called Port Arthur without leg irons. The cells have severe lice and other health problems. The cells have been deloused and the walls have been washed with insecticide, but no additional facilities have been provided.

Although new facilities have been provided at Prahran and Hastings, Frankston suffers from a 60-year-old building that is clearly inadequate for the purposes for which it is used. It is easy to blame other people, but this appears to be the result of bureaucratic bungling and mismanagement at its worst.

In 1981 the then shadow Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Honourable Tom Edmunds, said the Frankston cells were a disgrace and that a Labor government in 1982 would build a new police station at Frankston. The community accepted that, but in February 1985 the Minister for Police and Emergency Services again visited Frankston and said that within two years a new police station would be provided. However, nothing has been done.

After many letters to newspapers and representations from local members of Parliament, the Minister said there had been a reallocation of priorities in police matters. He also said that, because certain facilities had been moved from Frankston to other stations along the Nepean Highway, there was no need for new facilities at Frankston. The Minister said the existing facilities were reasonable.

The major problem at Frankston is that there are only three small cells. Prisoners cannot shower in private. Recently there were six male prisoners in the cells and police officers wanted to imprison a woman on the Mornington Peninsula. There was no room at the Frankston police station so motel accommodation was sought.

I ask the Minister to urgently examine this matter. The situation at Heidelberg police station has been raised but I believe the facilities at the Frankston police station are ten times worse than those at Heidelberg. I ask the Minister to take immediate action to overcome the gross negligence and inhumane conditions existing at Frankston police station.

Anyone who has been to Port Arthur would understand what I am talking about. The situation at Frankston is an absolute disgrace.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—The matter I raise for the attention of the Minister for Transport relates to an application from the Shire of Numurkah for funding to enable the construction of a small bicycle bridge and footbridge over the Nine Mile Creek in the small settlement of Wunghnu, some 5 to 6 miles out of Numurkah on the Goulburn Valley Highway.

Students attending the school at Numurkah have to travel along the highway, and concern has been expressed to me for their safety.

The Shire of Numurkah has applied to the Minister for Transport for funding under the Traffic Facilities Program for the construction of a bridge over Nine Mile Creek, including a walkway on either side that could be used by students wishing to walk to school or ride their bicycles.

I raise with the Minister the urgent need for approval of the funding of approximately \$20 000 so that the bridge can be built as quickly as possible. I am concerned that a fatality will occur along the Goulburn Valley Highway, which carries a large amount of traffic, if this bridge is not provided.

I have been informed, as a result of inquiries made of the Road Construction Authority and the Road Traffic Authority, that an allocation has been made to the Traffic Facilities Program for 1987–88. However, most of the funds to date, as I understand it, will be allocated to the metropolitan area. I have been informed that an application has been made for supplementary funding for the program to include country Victoria.

The difficulty at this stage is that the funding is being allocated to metropolitan areas, and no funding is being provided for country areas. I seek an urgent investigation of this matter by the Minister. I ask the Minister for assistance in ensuring that funding is available for the Traffic Facilities Program to cater for country areas, and particularly for approval of the application by the Shire of Numurkah for funding for the bicycle bridge and footbridge over Nine Mile Creek.

Mr REYNOLDS (Gisborne)—The matter I raise for the attention of the Minister for Transport concerns the continued upgrading of the Calder Highway.

I shall provide a thumbnail sketch of some of the history. Following the much needed upgrading of the Black Forest area on the Calder Highway, which included the placement of four lanes through that area, a problem was created in the centre of Gisborne, which again caused problems with the back-up of traffic further along that highway.

Therefore, the \$12 million Gisborne bypass construction program was elevated in priority. When the bypass opens later this year, a 6.5 kilometre bypass road for the Gisborne township will mean that there will be some 15 kilometres of four-lane highway from Woodend to the south side of the Gisborne township.

This will create a problem at a very dangerous part of the highway in the Watsons Gully area, where Dalrymple Road, Couangalt Road and Weigall Road meet 1.5 kilometres from the end of the present bypass road.

It has poor alignment, both vertically and horizontally. There is a large dip at Watsons Gully and there is a very uneven surface. Cars will come to that area of bad road at very high speeds and, although there are already accident problems in that very area—in fact, there have been several accidents in the past couple of weeks—more accidents will occur than ever before.

This problem is foreseen, and I ask the Minister, not for more money—that would be nice, if it were possible, but I do not think it is—but for a reassessment of the priorities. I ask that some of the money that might be spent on upgrading the next portion of the Calder Highway from Keilor to Diggers Rest be diverted to upgrade the highway in the Watsons Gully area.

If that does not occur, there will be deaths on the highway, just as occurred at Black Forest. That section of the highway has been resealed with scoria topping near the 64 or 65-kilometre post. I have also raised that matter with the Minister; the problem has been fixed temporarily, and I hope it will be fixed permanently.

Planning is needed now, before death and injury occur. I ask the Minister to examine the matter so that, if the Road Construction Authority and the Minister consider it as imperative as I do, the priority given this work will be advanced and we will not have to attend funerals of people who have been killed on a potentially dangerous section of road. Let us fix the problem before it occurs, not after we have deaths on our hands.

Mr WHITING (Mildura)—The matter I raise with the Minister for Transport relates to the transport of grain by road. In the case to which I refer a quantity of 342 tonnes of barley was transferred from the Werrimull silo to Carwarp—admittedly, at very short notice—on 14 September.

This is the first time that road transport has been used along that route in preference to rail. In view of the very strong case being put by the Shire of Mildura and the Victorian Farmers Federation district council in the area to have the railway line upgraded, it is incumbent upon the Minister to conduct a further inquiry into the matter because of changed circumstances.

It is possible that the 342 tonnes is only the beginning of a much larger transfer of grain by road at some future time. Some 10 000 tonnes of wheat are still to be transferred from Meringur to Geelong or Portland. In a reasonable year, some 100 000 tonnes of grain are produced in that district.

It has been found that, as a result of the use of local limestone ballast and the upgrading of the Manangatang to Robinvale line, it is much cheaper to upgrade that line than the original estimate had shown.

I was particularly concerned—and I expressed my concern to the local media—that, although V/Line went ahead and transferred this grain to road transport, it did not have the courtesy to notify the local shire council, as it should have done, particularly because a 20-tonne load limit applies on a certain section of the road. The vehicles being used to transport the grain were obviously carrying 40 tonnes, which is the normal weight for a loaded semitrailer.

I have been assured by the contractor who carried out that work that the grain was taken some 12 kilometres north of Werrimull to the Sturt Highway then around, which meant that the grain was carted an extra 24 or 25 kilometres at an additional cost of about \$2 a tonne for the cartage of grain over and above the rail cost.

I should be very concerned if the Minister for Transport and V/Line were considering carting the rest of the grain by road, and I seek an undertaking from the Minister that a full investigation will be made into the upgrading of that rail line in the immediate future so that the 1988–89 harvest can be carted over an upgraded rail line from Red Cliffs to Meringur. I hope the Minister for Transport has listened to what I have said, because this issue is important to that part of the State and I should like his response on this matter.

Mr SHELL (Geelong)—I direct a matter to the attention of the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources and, in his absence, the Premier. I am particularly concerned about the dumping of cement in Victoria. It has been mooted that cement from Korea or Indonesia may be dumped in Victoria at the expense of the Victorian industry. I refer particularly to the Portland cement works in Geelong and to the Blue Circle cement group works at Waurin Ponds. These companies employ almost 500 people in Geelong and any significant impact on those companies will affect their viability. At present cement in Victoria sells at \$123 a tonne and it is suggested that the imported cement would range from \$90 a tonne.

I understand that International Cement and Lime Pty Ltd has bought No. 750 Lorimer Street, Port Melbourne, to establish a warehouse and that the company is making arrangements for a lease or some sort of use of 25–26 South Wharf with a view to providing access to its storehouse through a tunnel to the Lorimer Street warehouse.

I understand also that Indonesia has sufficient capacity to provide all Australian needs. It has a plant that will provide 7.5 million tonnes a year and the plant is operating at only 25 per cent of its capacity.

I understand that the Federal government can take some action. The two companies in Geelong, the Portland cement works and the Blue Circle group at Waurin Ponds, have approached Senator Button on the issue. The Federal government is able to make a complaint on dumping against the offending country or it can take action on tariffs. It is very difficult for a complaint on dumping to be effective. It is difficult to get the information required. The Koreans, particularly, are expert in world politics and do not have to go further than the farmers and graziers of Victoria to work up steam against any complaint. The Koreans can say that if Australia does not drop its complaint it will drop the country's beef exports, or something similar.

Mr Reynolds—What rubbish!

Mr SHELL—This is not rubbish. It will affect the workers in Victoria. It is important to them, it is important to Geelong, and it is important to both Victoria and the country. If these companies go down the chute the Victorian government will lose \$20 million or thereabouts in payroll tax revenue and other taxes and charges. It is important for the Victorian government to do something about the anticipated dumping of cement from Korea or Indonesia.

Mr CROZIER (Portland)—I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, but as he is not in the Chamber I direct my remarks to the Minister for Transport. The matter concerns the government's administration and policing of the purchasing practices of two government agencies, one of which, the Road Traffic Authority, is under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Transport and the other, the Victoria Police, is under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

If the Minister for Police and Emergency Services were in the Chamber he would no doubt recall that on 17 September, with considerable fanfare, he launched the new police computer system described as a \$7 million IBM mainframe computer system. I understand that this system comprises two IBM 4381 units. There is nothing remarkable about that and it is entirely acceptable, of course, and rational that the police have this facility, particularly as the previous one which was installed in 1974 is no longer equal to the task, but it so happened that in the very week that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services was launching the new so-called "Patrol" system that the Road Traffic Authority had taken delivery of its new mainframe computer, a \$5 million Amdahl 5890 200E.

Again, there is nothing remarkable about that except that—and the Minister for Transport may know this—the computers replaced by the \$5 million Amdahl were none other than two IBM 4381s, exactly the same units that were being purchased and installed at the Police Force. The Premier, who is interjecting, is in a jocular mood and is having a happy time. The phrase, "efficiency and effectiveness" is a favourite of the Premier and his

Cabinet, degraded almost into cliché status by its repetitive use. I do not know how the Premier and the Minister for Transport can disagree that what happened in those two transactions demonstrated neither efficiency nor effectiveness.

How is it that one department that obviously has close links with another agency—or ought to—as recently as last month installed a new computer and discarded two units of a type which another agency of government has just purchased—in other words, purchased two identical models at a price of \$7 million?

One can only assume, and it is a rational conclusion, that there was no communication between these two agencies. The heads of those agencies apparently were unaware of what was happening in the other and, clearly, the Ministers concerned were unaware of what was being done. They were acting in isolation. Consequently, the Victorian government and, of course, the Victorian taxpayers have to foot the bill for what can only be described as a monumental foul-up simply as a result of a basic lack of communication between two departments.

The Minister for Transport should explain whether he knew about this. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services has returned to the Chamber and I shall redirect my remarks to him. He can give some background to these extraordinary transactions and inform the House whether there was any communication between him and his colleague, the Minister for Transport, and, if not, why not.

Mr McGRATH (Lowan)—Has the Minister for Transport considered making an assessment or a review of the sale of alcohol on country passenger trains?

For a number of years I have been concerned at the amount of representation I have received relating to this matter. It is a completely different scenario for interstate passenger trains, such as the *Overlander* and the *Southern Aurora* that travel during the night and have a buffet car in which passengers can consume alcoholic beverages; and that is quite in order.

I wonder whether country passenger trains that leave Melbourne or the country, with an average trip time of between 4 and 5 hours, should be allowed to sell alcoholic beverages on those journeys.

Country trains have a food beverage bar where people can buy their supplies. Country trains have areas designated for smoking and non-smoking, but they do not have areas reserved for drinkers or non-drinkers. There is a discrepancy in that area.

Although country passenger trains are comfortable, the concern I have is with the one unisex toilet facility. Males who have had a few beers do not leave the toilets in a proper and clean state and women feel uncomfortable about using that facility.

I ask the Minister for Transport to consider whether there is a need to continue the sale of alcoholic beverages on passenger trains that service country Victoria.

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—This afternoon at question time I asked the Minister for Local Government a question relating to what was happening in the City of Richmond and when democratic elections would be held. It is true that democratic elections have not existed in the City of Richmond long before 1982 while this corrupt government and its corrupt mates in government had control of the City of Richmond council.

What should be stated in the House and what I demand of the Minister for Local Government is to allow the City of Richmond to hold democratic elections, and I call on the Labor Party and the Minister for Local Government, who has the power to ensure that the City of Richmond has a democratic election conducted by the people of Richmond, to allow that election to take place.

The reason there are no elections in the City of Richmond is not because we now have a good administrative government, it is because the ALP factions are still playing their crooked games. They have not found the last ballot-box they lost in 1982.

The Premier of the government is corrupt; his crooked mates in local government and his mates in the government have allowed it to go on. The Premier is responsible; it is his government, his party.

The Minister for Local Government has a responsibility to ensure that the people of Richmond have elections and that those elections are conducted fairly and openly. They can only be conducted fairly and openly if the Labor Party decides to opt out of local government. They tried it at their weekend conference, and it did not work. I am sure the Minister for Local Government is as dismayed as much as the Premier.

I ask the Minister for Local Government whether he is genuinely interested in local government, as was the former Minister for Local Government, because if he were I am sure he would allow the people of Richmond to have elections.

The government members laugh, but they are laughing at a botched operation that has been carried out in the City of Richmond, botched by the Premier's crooked mates. The Premier with his dirty hands is not prepared to allow the people to make a decision, nor is the Minister for Local Government.

If the former Minister for Local Government had been the Minister he would have ensured that those elections took place.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The Government does not have ballots like the Liberal Party. We can use our voices in the party not just our pens. Is the Liberal Party to have a ballot every week?

The honourable member for Geelong West raised the question of the dumping of cement. I understand his concern about it because he is one of those members on this side of the House who has expressed concern about jobs for a long time.

I can recall going to Geelong in late 1981, early 1982, before that election campaign and Geelong was going out the back door under the previous government; it was almost a ghost town. Unemployment was sky high, businesses were closing down and the whole place was falling apart. Over the past five years Geelong has been revived.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr CAIN—The honourable member for Portland lost his seat and he also lost the ballot today; two of them—two runs, two losses. The honourable member for Hawthorn did not do very much at Geelong either. I shall take up the matter with the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources about the cement problem.

I commend the honourable member for Geelong West and all those members in Geelong who have communicated with the government over the past five years and indicated the concerns of Geelong. The result is that the people of Geelong now have a place that is booming.

I have been to Geelong many times and I am not voted out like the honourable member for Hawthorn. The people of Geelong know what the government has done for them and they know that if the government had not been returned in 1982 they would have all been on the dole—not just 18 per cent of them.

I recognise the concerns of the honourable member for Geelong West and I shall take up that matter with the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources.

The honourable member for Malvern interjects by saying that I am saying it again. I will say it again; the government is concerned about jobs, but all the Liberal Party is concerned about is challenging the Leader of the Opposition every week. It is an annual challenge; it is an October perpetual trophy. They do not want this Leader and they cannot make up their minds who it should be. The Opposition has a problem. What a terrible predicament—no policies, no leadership and the Opposition cannot decide who the Leader should be.

The honourable member for Evelyn interjects. He was a candidate, but failed also.

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The honourable member for Frankston South expressed concern over the conditions experienced by prisoners who are being held in police cells in circumstances where ideally they should be accommodated within the normal prison system.

I share the concern which the honourable member has expressed about that matter, but, as he will appreciate, those prisoners have to be confined on this highly unsatisfactory basis that reflects the massive neglect of the prison system over a lengthy period. It is simply not possible to put right the result of that massive neglect overnight, even given the herculean efforts and massive building program the government has initiated.

I recognise the need for measures to alleviate the conditions that prisoners are experiencing. I have for that reason chaired meetings between the police and the Office of Corrections, with a view to ensuring that the appropriate action is taken. I understand that that action is now in train and I expect that the conditions the honourable member has described will improve.

The honourable member for Portland raised what he had been led to believe was a breakdown in the coordination of purchasing arrangements for computers within two government departments, my own police department within the Ministry for Police and Emergency Services, and the Ministry of Transport. I believe I can reassure the honourable member that the article which I have also read was inaccurately based and that the breakdown he describes did not in reality occur.

Coordination arrangements for the purchase of these very expensive capital items are in place within the Department of Management and Budget and all purchasing decisions involving computers throughout the government have to be processed through that central agency.

In the particular instance he mentions, I understand that the orders had been placed and the contracts entered into for the equipment required by the police at a point when the question of equipment in the transport area becoming redundant had simply not arisen. There was in fact no way in which the simple transfer which he envisages could have been effected. Indeed, the possibility of any such contingency arising at a future date is precluded by the arrangements now in place in the Department of Management and Budget.

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—The honourable member for Murray Valley raised the question of bicycle paths in his electorate. As honourable members would be aware, there is now record expenditure on the development of recreational and commuter bike activity in this State. I will take up the particular issue he raised and respond to him.

The honourable member for Gisborne raised the question of the Calder Highway which, as he is aware, is one of those country highways receiving priority so far as government expenditure is concerned, with the Gisborne bypass well under way and the Keilor-Diggers Rest development being planned to follow that. He suggested that funds be diverted to another part of the highway. I will have that matter examined and respond to him.

The honourable member for Mildura raised the question of the Millewa railway line and its impending closure. Honourable members would be aware that this is one of the light lines that over the years was allowed to deteriorate without capital being spent on it. It had reached such a stage that it became part of the review of light lines. It simply did not pass the plimsoll line test of being a profitable line ever again. As the honourable member would be aware, lines including the Robinvale-Manangatang line, and the line from Horsham to East Natimuk, and other lines in that area were judged to be able to be redeveloped because it was virtually a rebuild rather than simply a repair.

The line that the honourable member mentioned was not financially justifiable. The government has recently looked at that again. It is as unjustifiable now as it was twelve

months ago. Indeed, the effect of spending significant capital funds on that line would be to increase the price that a whole range of farmers would be paying for taking their grain to the port. The government does not believe that would be a justifiable increase.

The honourable member mentioned in particular a shipment of barley. My understanding is that it was a special shipment requested by the Australian Barley Board and indeed some of the complainants on that matter were aware of that even before they complained. It was a special arrangement made as a gesture by V/Line to assist its customers. The government would take that kind of action whenever valued customers are concerned and will continue to do so.

The basic problem with that line is that it is not a financial goer for replacement. For that reason, it will not be replaced. I have said that and I have visited that part of the State and said so. That will continue to be the situation. There is just not enough tonnage on the line to justify the capital expenditure that would be required.

The honourable member for Lowan raised the question of the sale of alcohol on intrastate trains. The government has been monitoring the situation of alcohol abuse on trains. In the case of the trains to Mildura, there was a significant problem, particularly with fruit pickers. That had to be dealt with a couple of years ago. The government continues to monitor very carefully any alcohol abuse on the trains.

Mr Richardson—Why do you not fix up the food on the trains?

Mr ROPER—The honourable member for Forest Hill has always been interested in a free feed or free travel. I am pleased to see he is using his gold pass for that purpose. After this morning's events, he would be happy for a free pass to almost anywhere.

The question of alcohol and its abuse on trains is under constant review. The government is currently developing the concept I discussed with people on the *Overland* some time ago, of having alcohol-free carriages. There is about to be a further expansion which might also involve some of our longer distance trains.

I should point out, however, that on some of the longer journeys the prospect of having a beer or some such beverage is in fact an attraction for travelling on the train—not the abuse of that drinking of alcohol but the fact that one can have a couple of drinks and is not likely to offend against any road laws. Indeed, I think the last time I went on the train to Swan Hill I had the odd beer with the honourable member for Swan Hill, who was also on the train. A most pleasant journey it was, and the train got in early as well!

Those matters are kept under review. I shall refer the remarks of the honourable member for Lowan to the passenger marketing people of V/Line.

Mr SIMMONDS (Minister for Local Government)—The honourable member for Malvern has refreshingly referred to the return of the council to Richmond. The honourable member for Malvern has consistently advocated the dismissal of municipal councils in Victoria.

The City of Richmond was the subject of a public inquiry and it was decided to appoint an administrator. The present administrator has the finances of the City of Richmond in such a healthy state that a number of people are concerned to restore the council to the municipality. There has been equally strong recommendation from people who are quite satisfied with the present situation.

The restoration of the council to the City of Richmond is a government decision and accordingly will be dealt with that way.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.20 p.m.

Wednesday, 7 October 1987

The SPEAKER (the Hon. C. T. Edmunds) took the chair at 2.5 p.m. and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PRODUCTIVITY INCREASES IN TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—In view of the statement yesterday by the Director-General of Transport, Mr Ingersoll, that he hoped the offsets for the 4 per cent second-tier wage increase for all railway workers would be achieved in the long term, will the Premier assure the House and the community that the government, in its negotiations with railway unions, will stand by Mr Ingersoll's undertaking that the offsets for any wage increase will be in line with the national wage guidelines and, therefore, be full and immediate, and cost neutral?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I am not sure whether the Leader of the Opposition was so distracted yesterday that he did not listen to the answers given at question time when I indicated that, consistent with the national wage case decision, the government is insisting that wage increases in the public sector must be met by genuine cost savings and offsets. I also indicated that such agreements had to be approved by the Industrial Relations Commission. The government is not going through the pain of the exercise—pain that should have been borne by the previous administration years ago—without ensuring that the desired work practices operate across the public sector.

Mr Perrin—Do you swear by that?

Mr CAIN—I understand the sensitivities of Opposition members. I do not want to go over yesterday's painful exercise again until the Liberal Party is able to produce a Leader in this House who has its confidence—until it is able to do that the Opposition does not carry much weight anywhere. The government has been single-minded about the 4 per cent second-tier wage increase.

Mr Ross-Edwards interjected.

Mr CAIN—If the force of what I said yesterday has escaped the comprehension of the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party, I make it clear, as I said yesterday, that the government is working through the unions in the transport area, and the requirement has been made clear to them.

GIFT OF HORSE TO GOVERNMENT

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—My question to the Premier concerns the recent gift by the Victorian Sprint Horse Racing Association to the government of a ten-month old quarter horse, which was presented to the Minister for Sport and Recreation. I presume the horse will be raced by the government in government colors!

Has provision been made by the government to cover the financial losses of this new enterprise, having regard to the Minister's lack of success in days gone by with horses? When the losses incurred by the horse exceed the Budget allocation, what does the Premier intend to do with the horse?

The SPEAKER—Order! A facetious question is not in order but there was enough substance in the query to outweigh the facetious side of the question, so I shall allow it.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I understand the Minister for Sport and Recreation indicated what would happen with the horse when it was presented to him yesterday as a gift to the government. He is some expert in breeding and, on that basis, would apparently qualify

for leadership on the Opposition benches, where I understand breeding is important. Opposition members look for breeding, good looks and family. Perhaps the Minister for Sport and Recreation should seek help from some Opposition members, who seem to place so much reliance on breeding! What does breeding mean? I have some idea of what it means—there is no breeding in the Opposition!

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the Premier is talking about the breeding of persons; my question related to the breeding of horses.

The SPEAKER—Order! I uphold the point of order and ask the Premier to answer the question.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—It is a matter of breeding, good looks and family. I suggest that the Leader of the National Party takes up the matter with the Minister for Sport and Recreation, who has some expertise and knowledge in the breeding of horses. I am sure he can help the Leader of the National Party.

The Minister for Sport and Recreation clearly stated the disposition of the animal when the matter was first raised and when it was presented to him. It might help if the Leader of the National Party advised members of the Opposition on what to look for in breeding!

RELOCATION OF HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr HOCKLEY (Bentleigh)—Will the Premier inform the House of the progress being made by the government in its plans to relocate hospital beds in Melbourne?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The government is following a policy of relocating hospitals to where most people reside. The Monash Medical Centre is the best example of that relocation. That is a most impressive hospital and demonstrates the determination of the government to deal with some of the legacies left by the former Liberal government.

Under the former Liberal government hospitals were built in one place and people went to live in another. Five years ago the Labor government decided, despite the difficult economic circumstances, that it would pursue a policy of locating hospitals where the people needed them. It is doing that now. I regret that members of the Opposition do not support the government's policy.

I am concerned that the Leader of the Opposition has been recorded publicly as saying that a government led by him would build no new hospitals in Victoria. That statement demonstrates an unwillingness to adjust to the needs of people by providing essential services in the areas in which they live.

Do the honourable members for Syndal and Glen Waverley support the Monash Medical Centre? Do they agree that it should have been built in or near the electorates that they represent? Do the honourable members for Evelyn and Berwick support the extensions to the Maroondah Hospital? Is the honourable member for Frankston South in favour of the extensions to the Frankston Hospital?

Members of the Liberal Party should realise that so long as they have a spokesperson saying that there should be no new hospitals built in Victoria, they need to decide whether they agree with that policy. While the Leader of the Opposition continues to say that a Liberal government would build no new hospitals when members of the Opposition support new hospitals in the suburbs, he remains a joke!

Mr Kennett—What about Springvale?

Mr CAIN—Do you want new hospitals or not? The government is building hospitals that are able to deliver all services, required by the people in the suburbs in which they live, to replace those services that are inadequate. Do members of the Opposition support the policy of the Leader of the Opposition not to build any new hospitals in Victoria? While individual members of the Opposition pursue and support the policy of their

Leader, they remain jokes. They should make up their minds on whether they can find a Leader who expresses their views.

Mr Plowman interjected.

Mr CAIN—Is the honourable member for Evelyn in favour of new hospitals? Does he believe a new hospital should be built at Maroondah or does he support his Leader?

Mr Kennett—There's no new hospital at Maroondah!

Mr CAIN—The Leader of the Opposition has said that no new hospital should be built. Does the honourable member for Evelyn support the extensions to existing hospitals and the establishment of new hospitals? Maroondah Hospital has been substantially extended; it is a new hospital. The facilities are being improved and the number of beds has been increased. The Frankston Hospital has new facilities, yet the Leader of the Opposition says there should be no new hospitals.

What about Maroondah Hospital, Frankston Hospital, and the Monash Medical Centre? What about getting a Leader who reflects the views the Opposition wants to express? Members of the Opposition do not agree with their Leader's policy of no new hospitals.

Mr Brown—You are saying that.

Mr CAIN—No, members of the Opposition are saying that.

So long as members of the Opposition support the policy of the Leader of the Opposition they will receive no respect in the community. Do honourable members opposite want hospitals in areas where people live or do they not?

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—I ask the Minister for Transport whether it is a fact that, because of his mismanagement of public transport, it is a policy decision of the government that major statements on public transport are to be made by the Minister's minder, the Director-General of Transport, Mr Russel Ingersoll? Is the Minister, in future, prepared to face up to his Ministerial responsibilities and be publicly accountable for decisions taken about public transport?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—Unlike honourable members opposite, the government is fortunate enough to have made some excellent choices in appointing some of its senior public servants. I have a great deal of confidence in the work Russel Ingersoll has done and, more importantly, will continue to do. It is interesting that the Liberal Party, which had a Leader only by one vote yesterday and which is congenitally incapable of coming up with a transport policy or any other policies, would suggest that there is only one person in the government who should talk to the media. When transport issues arise, the Minister for Labour and I confer repeatedly and we make the appropriate statements as the time arises.

Mr Brown interjected.

Mr ROPER—It is interesting that the honourable member should say what he has just said. He was obviously doing other things on the weekend, such as obtaining the numbers. The honourable member interjects that he got them. It is a shame about the honourable member for Ripon, but the honourable member for Gippsland West spent the weekend getting the numbers.

I spent the weekend having many discussions about the problems with the railways and, although the honourable member might not have noticed, I held a press conference on Saturday. That, I suggest, makes an absolute nonsense of what he has just said.

MILDURA COLLEGE LANDS FUND

Mr WHITING (Mildura)—Has the Minister for Education yet received the report of the committee of inquiry into the distribution of moneys from the Mildura College Lands Fund; and, if so, will he make that report available to recipient schools and local Parliamentarians?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—I have been in receipt of two pieces of advice concerning the disbursement of the Chaffey brothers trust set up under the Mildura College Lands Act and the moneys derived from the leasehold of that land.

The first piece of advice was given by the regional board of education and, subsequently, because the Mildura community seemed divided about that advice—so far as I can work out, about 50–50—I asked Mr Richard Pratley, from the Ministry of Education, to undertake a further review. I have received his advice and it is more or less the same as the advice that I received from the regional board of education.

I still have some concerns about it because it is a complex issue. Although the definition of the land which the Chaffey brothers might have intended to cover by their trust is easily resolved, whether they had in mind that the money could be disbursed for both primary and secondary education is not so easily resolved.

I have asked the Schools Division of the Ministry to respond to the latter issue and, as soon as I obtain a response and make a decision about that, I shall communicate it to the local members and at the same time make available any report from either the regional board of education or Richard Pratley.

LUNA PARK ACCIDENT

Mr ANDRIANOPOULOS (St Albans)—Following the unfortunate accident on the scenic railway at Luna Park at the weekend, can the Minister for Labour advise the House of the action being taken by his department to ensure that such an occurrence does not happen again and also to ensure the future safety of people using that ride?

Mr CRABB (Minister for Labour)—That particularly disturbing accident on Saturday night occasioned some 21 people being taken to hospital—thankfully not one of them was seriously injured and all were allowed to leave.

As a consequence of the accident, the ride has been closed and cannot be opened until an engineering report on the safety of the ride is provided and inspectors of my department provide a report on safety procedures.

Carriages have stalled on previous occasions on this ride and, as a consequence, a number of operating procedures were supposed to be in place. Firstly, the ride is supposed to operate only with one carriage, but with a large number of customers a second carriage can operate at the same time.

The second carriage is not supposed to leave the base until the first carriage comes within sight so that the second carriage can be confident of the return of the first carriage. That was not done on Saturday night. The second carriage full of people was allowed to proceed while the first carriage was stalled on the other side of the ride.

Secondly, the driver of each carriage is supposed to carry a whistle that is to be blown three times if the carriage has stalled. No whistle was blown on Saturday night.

Thirdly, sets of red lights are installed around the ride and, if a carriage stalls, the red lights are supposed to operate and no other carriage is supposed to go through a red light. On Saturday night, the driver of the second carriage appeared to ignore the red light and crashed into the front of the first carriage.

It seems that not one of the safety procedures in existence was observed on Saturday night. Not only do I require a report on the engineering safety of this ride but the owners

and operators of the ride will have a hard job persuading me that the ride should operate ever again.

BUSHFIRE PROTECTION

Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn)—In view of the decision made by the Victorian Public Service Association that officers of the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands will not fight fires from 1 December, what action will the Minister for Police and Emergency Services take, in his role as *el supremo* in fire control measures, to ensure adequate fire protection in the State from that date?

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—I am pleased that the report on the front page of tonight's *Herald* has stirred the honourable member to an uncharacteristic display of industry. Faced with the prospect of being dropped from the front bench, he has actually asked a question.

The answer is that the government will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that proper standards of fire prevention are implemented before the coming fire season.

LEATHER CLOTHING FACTORY IN BENDIGO

Mr KENNEDY (Bendigo West)—Can the Premier outline to the House the steps the government has taken to facilitate the development of a new leather clothing factory in Bendigo and indicate the effects of that project on employment in Bendigo?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—On 1 October, an Australian company, Interskin Products Pty Ltd, signed a letter of intent with two European companies to establish a leather garment and tannery factory in Bendigo. When operational, it will process up to 5000 Victorian sheepskins a day, tan them, produce nappa leather, and convert that leather into high quality, well-designed garments.

For too long Victorian primary products—sheepskins are certainly one such product—have been shipped off to other parts of the world—sheepskins apparently go to Spain—forcing the Victorian industry to pay top dollars to import the completed or tanned product.

I am delighted to say that this joint venture will mean the conversion of an Australian primary product to a product with a high value-added component. The garments will then be exported to Europe and the United States of America.

The factory is a big winner for Bendigo. The joint venture partners expect to invest up to \$40 million in Bendigo, and will introduce the newest tanning technology.

In view of the sensitivities of the honourable member for Bendigo East yesterday, I hope the venture has his full support. I assure honourable members that it has the support of the honourable member for Bendigo West.

The project is a real goer, and it demonstrates the government's concern about jobs in the Bendigo region. The factory will employ approximately 350 people in the area, which again represents a very positive, specific commitment made by industry in the Bendigo area. The government has been working closely with industries that are desirous of commencing or expanding operations in country regions. The Department of Industry, Technology and Resources has done a first-class job in promoting and encouraging the employment opportunities that have been created.

The net result can be seen in the spectacular figures for this State relating to new jobs and investment; but it is best reflected in the unemployment figures, which show that for 51 consecutive months Victoria has had the lowest unemployment rate of any State, not just by a small margin but by a country mile. Victoria is way ahead of the rest of Australia. The unemployment rate in Victoria is some 6 per cent, compared with 8 per cent for the rest of Australia.

If the honourable member for Warrnambool is still concerned about "paradise", I point out that its unemployment rate is approximately 9 or 10 per cent. The Queenslanders are not interested in Leaders who have breeding, good looks, and family connections; they are interested in more important things, and that is what Victorians should be doing. If honourable members opposite believe a Leader is made by good looks, and breeding, they ought to realise that Victorians want more than that. Their interest in good looks, breeding, and family connections shows how shallow they are. I suggest to Opposition members that they should take the job seriously because it is much more important than that. They should not look just for those things.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—That is what members of the Opposition are saying; it is their advice.

Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I direct your attention to Standing Order No. 127, and also a new Standing Order, No. 256—overreacting!

The SPEAKER—Order! I presume the honourable member is referring the Chair to the Standing Order relating to a Minister debating the question. I uphold the point of order and ask the Premier to respond to the question rather than debating it.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The government has worked very closely with another organisation, British Aerospace, to set up the joint partnership. The government helped to attract the joint venture partners to Victoria and to find a suitable location. It brought the parties together. The Victorian government is pressing the Federal government to accept the project as an offset against the credit obligation of British Aerospace in Australia.

The government will continue to provide all the capacity it can for places such as Bendigo to expand and to provide jobs for Victorians.

SCHOOL EXPENDITURE

Mr LEA (Sandringham)—I refer the Minister for Education to his recent statement—

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask honourable members on the government benches to cease interjecting.

Mr Micallef interjected.

The SPEAKER—Order! That includes the honourable member for Springvale.

Mr LEA—I refer to the recent statement of the Minister for Education that the per capita spending on government school students has increased in real terms over the past two years. I ask the Minister: is it not also a fact that per capita spending in non-government schools has decreased in the same period.

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—The government has made clear its determined commitment to the government school system. It has significantly increased resources to government schools. They are now among the best resourced schools anywhere in Australia or, indeed, in the world, which means a better quality education has been provided for Victorian students.

If an index of 100 is applied to per capita expenditure in 1981–82, that is, the amount of money spent for every student enrolled in a government school, the applicable index today would be 122. There has been a real growth of 22 per cent in funds the Labor government has spent on students enrolled in government schools.

I do not have the breakdown on funding for non-government schools from the Commonwealth or State governments in front of me, nor do I have the breakdown of the

specific per capita contribution for each level of schooling. However, I can provide that information to the honourable member if he requires it.

LINCOLN INSTITUTE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Mr HANN (Rodney)—Did the Minister for Education recently advise a deputation from the Australian Physiotherapy Association (Victorian Branch) that he would establish a review panel to examine the government's decision to transfer the physiotherapy school from the Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences to La Trobe University? If so, when will the review panel be established; what are its terms of reference; and who will comprise the members of the panel?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—The issue of the best place for anatomy to be taught after the amalgamation of the Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences and the La Trobe University has been raised by the Australian Physiotherapy Association (Victorian Branch). I have asked the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission to undertake a review into that matter. Shortly I shall receive its advice on who will conduct the review, what will be the terms of reference, and the time limits involved.

I advise the House that the proposed amalgamation of the institute and the university in the near future will not have any effect on this issue. There will be plenty of time to satisfactorily work through this exercise.

HISTORIC NUMBERPLATES

Mrs HIRSH (Wantirna)—Can the Minister for Transport provide details to the House of the outcome of the government's recent decision to sell historic numberplates by public tender?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—I am certain that honourable members opposite will be pleased to learn that as a result of the government's decision, an additional \$400 000 is available this financial year for road safety activities.

Members of the opposition parties always show an appalling lack of interest in matters affecting road safety but that is certainly not the position adopted by members of the government.

As a means of ensuring that additional moneys were made available in a tight financial situation, the government decided to put to tender 61 three-digit numberplates earlier this year. Honourable members would be aware that the official numberplates of vehicles used by Ministers and judges were put to tender and that the tender process was extremely successful.

Mr Stockdale interjected.

Mr ROPER—The honourable member for Brighton, who I understand at present is a Kennett supporter, interjects that the government is desperate for money. The government has, in this situation, taken an asset of the Victorian community, for which there is community demand, and has ensured that additional money is available to be spent on something else that the community wants: improved road safety programs.

The various successful tenders ranged from \$5300 to a top price of \$17 500. I did not know that people would spend those amounts of money but some people obviously found the numberplate previously held by the Leader of the National Party extremely interesting. In fact, that numberplate topped the auction.

The money raised as a result of the sale of those numberplates will pay for the development of a special road safety package for preschools to be available throughout the State next year.

Mr Williams—Why don't you have a proper tax system?

Mr ROPER—The honourable member for Doncaster, who, I understand, has voted the right way in each of the leadership battles, suggests that we should not raise money in this way. It is a useful way to raise money for a one-off development of a special preschool package.

An advertising program will also be funded which will explain to both motorists and bicyclists that they should be more careful on the road. This is important given that there have been nineteen cyclist deaths so far this year compared with sixteen for the whole of last year.

I am pleased that the tender system worked well for the sale of these numberplates. I am sure all honourable members are pleased that the numberplates that were on government cars have now been used successfully to raise money for road safety purposes.

PETITIONS

The Clerk—I have received the following petitions for presentation to Parliament:

Ninety Mile Beach effluent

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the State of Victoria is: we are totally opposed to the dumping of industrial and sewerage effluent into the ocean at the 90 Mile Beach because the instrumentalities responsible for the construction of the pipeline and environmental protection are unable to guarantee the long-term prevention of damage to the sensitive marine environment and human life.

Your petitioners therefore pray that you will pass legislation preventing the establishment of such proposed ocean outfall.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

By **Mr Wallace** (8131 signatures)

Murray-Goulburn irrigation system

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the State of Victoria sheweth that, as a result of plans to link water from Lake Mokoan with the Murray-Goulburn irrigation system, they are gravely concerned for the future of Lake Mokoan and its wildlife.

Your petitioners therefore pray that all planning and construction of the proposed channel and diversion weir be halted until:

1. the effects upon the aquatic and bird life, the surrounding reforestation and tourism are studied and made public;
2. there is a stated and guaranteed minimum level, at which no further water will be diverted and which is decided by full consultation and negotiation with the following groups:
 - (a) the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands;
 - (b) present users of the water for irrigation and/or domestic purposes; and
 - (c) recreational users.
3. A comprehensive cost effectiveness study is undertaken and the results made public.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

By **Mr Jasper** (1034 signatures)

Duck season

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Victoria respectfully shows their opposition to the cruel and unnecessary slaughter of wildlife during duck shooting. Hunters themselves claim that up to 30 per cent of animals they shoot escape wounded. These animals are left to suffer and die alone.

Your petitioners therefore pray that duck season and the hunting and shooting of ducks in the State of Victoria be made illegal immediately.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

By Mr Sidiropoulos (12 760 signatures)

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

PAPERS

The following papers, pursuant to the direction of an Act of Parliament, were laid on the table by the Clerk:

Police Regulation Act 1958—Determinations Nos 476 to 480 of the Police Service Board.

* * * * *

The following proclamations fixing operative dates for various Acts were laid upon the table by the Clerk, pursuant to an Order of the House dated 24 February 1987:

Construction Industry Long Service Leave (Amendment) Act 1986—Section 4—1 October 1987 (*Gazette* G 36, 16 September 1987).

Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act 1986—Section 78—8 September 1987 (*Gazette* S 35, 9 September 1987); Sections 7–26, 36–44, 53–71, 77 and Schedules 3 and 4—1 October 1987 (*Gazette* G 37, 23 September 1987).

Local Government (General Amendment) Act 1986—Sections 24, 28, 29, 30, 32, 34, 40, 44 and 45—1 October 1987 (*Gazette* G 38, 30 September 1987).

Mental Health Act 1986—The whole of the remainder of the Act—1 October 1987 (*Gazette* G 38, 30 September 1987).

Racing (Further Amendment) Act 1987—23 September 1987 (*Gazette* G 37, 23 September 1987).

Retail Tenancies Act 1986—21 September 1987 (*Gazette* G 35, 9 September 1987).

APPROPRIATION MESSAGES

The **SPEAKER** announced that he had received messages from His Excellency the Governor recommending that appropriations be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the following Bills:

Liquor Control Bill (No. 2)

Constitution (Legislative Council) Bill

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH Presentation of Address-in-Reply

The **SPEAKER**—I have the honour to report that, accompanied by honourable members, I this day waited upon His Excellency the Governor and presented to him the Address of the Legislative Assembly, adopted on 18 August last, in reply to His Excellency's Speech on the opening of Parliament. His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:

MR SPEAKER AND HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

In the name and on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen I thank you for your expressions of loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign contained in the Address you have just presented to me.

I fully rely on your wisdom in deliberating upon the important measures to be brought under your consideration, and I earnestly hope that the results of your labours will be conducive to the advancement and prosperity of this State.

JOINT SITTING OF PARLIAMENT Monash University

The SPEAKER—I have received the following communication from the Minister for Education:

Dear Mr Speaker,

Section 7 (a) (1) of the Monash University Act 1985 provides for the appointment by the Governor in Council of three members of the Parliament of Victoria recommended by a joint sitting of the members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council, as members of the university's council. The term of office of the members presently appointed expires on 11 December 1987.

The members presently appointed are:

The Hon. James Guest, MLC

Dr Gerard Vaughan, MLA

Mr Edward Hann, MLA

In conjunction with the President of the Legislative Council, I would be grateful if you could arrange for a joint sitting of the Parliament at which the members may recommend three members for appointment to the council.

I have addressed a similar letter to the President of the Legislative Council.

Yours sincerely,

IAN CATHIE

Minister for Education

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—By leave, I move:

That this House meets with 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 Monash University, and proposes that the place and time of such meeting be the Legislative Assembly Chamber on Wednesday, 14 October 1987 at 6 p.m.

The motion was agreed to.

It was ordered that a message be sent to the Legislative Council acquainting them with the foregoing resolution.

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY

The SPEAKER—I have received the following communication from the Minister for Education:

Dear Mr Speaker,

Section 5 (1) (a) of the Melbourne University Act 1958 provides for the appointment by the Governor in Council of a member of the Legislative Council and two members of the Legislative Assembly as members of the university council. The term of office of the members presently appointed expires on 16 December 1987:

The Hon. Michael Arnold, MLC

Ms Prue Sibree, MLA

Mr Theo Sidiropoulos, MLA

I would be pleased to receive the names of the members of the Legislative Assembly recommended for appointment at your earliest convenience.

I have forwarded a similar letter to the President of the Legislative Council seeking the name of its nominee.

Yours sincerely,

IAN CATHIE

Minister for Education.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—By leave, I move:

That Ms Sibree and Mr Sidiropoulos be recommended to the Governor in Council for appointment to the Council of the Melbourne University.

The motion was agreed to.

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES (EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY) BILL

Mr CAIN (Premier) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to provide for equal employment opportunity programs in public authorities and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

LAND (AMENDMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS) BILL

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to revoke the permanent reservation and Crown grant of certain land, to amend the Land Act 1958, to repeal the South Melbourne (Roman Catholic Orphanage) Lands Act 1969 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

ABATTOIR AND MEAT INSPECTION (ARRANGEMENTS) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to provide for the reference of certain matters relating to meat inspection to the Parliament of the Commonwealth, to make consequential amendments to certain Acts and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

MAGISTRATES' COURT BILL

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for the Arts) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to establish The Magistrates' Court of Victoria, to provide for the constitution, jurisdiction and proceedings of that court, to repeal the Magistrates' Courts Act 1971 and the Magistrates (Summary Proceedings) Act 1975, to amend the Bail Act 1977, the Crimes Act 1958, the Evidence Act 1958, the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984 and certain other Acts and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CRIMES (CUSTODY AND INVESTIGATION) BILL

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for the Arts) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Crimes Act 1958 to reform the law governing consensual questioning of persons suspected of having committed offences and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

LAND (TRANSACTION INFORMATION) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Minister for Property and Services) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Land Tax Act 1958, the Valuation of Land Act 1960, the Geelong Waterworks and Sewerage Act 1958, the Local Government Act 1958, the Melbourne and

Metropolitan Board of Works Act 1958, the Mildura Irrigation Trusts and Sunraysia Water Board Act 1958, the Sewerage Districts Act 1958 and the Water Act 1958 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

TOBACCO BILL

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to provide for the regulation of the sale and promotion of tobacco products and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

ACCIDENT COMPENSATION (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill presents a major set of legislative changes to the WorkCare system. The package of amendments arises directly from the government's statement on the WorkCare review released on 31 July 1987.

The WorkCare scheme introduced on 1 September 1985 represented a major economic and social reform aimed at improving the welfare of Victorian workers while, at the same time, reducing the cost of workplace accident compensation to Victorian employers and to the community more generally.

The effects of the reform after two years of operation are impressive. Employers have made a huge financial gain through the low average levy on wages that funds the scheme. This gain has amounted to at least \$1 billion and must be regarded as a significant factor in the very rapid growth in Victorian jobs during the past two years.

In social terms, WorkCare has demonstrated that it is willing to treat claimants in a manner which ensures their continued dignity and financial well-being following a workplace injury.

However, in spite of the many significant achievements of the WorkCare system to date, a number of shortcomings have also emerged. This was inevitable given the complexity and fundamental nature of the reform.

In recognition of this, the government announced at the outset of the scheme that it would conduct a tripartite review of the new system after its first twelve to eighteen months of operation. The review was undertaken during the first half of 1987 and involved extensive consultation with interested parties. The results were announced in the government statement of 31 July.

The most important issue emerging from the review is the area of return to work. While measures are necessary to tighten the administration of access to WorkCare benefits, the major area of concern is the number and duration of long-term claimants in the WorkCare system. Data analysed during the review showed that about one in six of all those in receipt of benefits after five days are still on benefits after twelve months. The government considers such an outcome to be unacceptable.

Accordingly, the fundamental thrust of the government's reform package is to reorientate the system strongly towards a return-to-work emphasis and thereby to reduce significantly the proportion of claimants who become long-term compensation beneficiaries.

The reform package contained recommendations for reform at an administrative level as well as recommendations involving legislative amendment. Administrative reforms such as the introduction of a standardised medical certificate, the audit of long-term claim files and the renegotiation of performance-based contracts with the private sector claims agents are under way. However, the reform package will not successfully meet its objectives without substantial legislative change. The government is confident that, if fully implemented, the reform package will ensure that the social and economic objectives of WorkCare are achieved.

I now turn to the major areas in which the government seeks to amend the Accident Compensation Act.

RETURN TO WORK

To ensure that the return-to-work performance of WorkCare is markedly improved, measures have been designed to increase the supply of jobs for previously injured workers and to provide that, where it is within the worker's capabilities, continuing entitlement to benefits is dependent upon active participation in the return-to-work process.

The existing provisions dealing with a worker's entitlement to benefits where a suitable job offer has been made to the worker will be strengthened. The tribunal will have the power to terminate benefits where a worker unreasonably does not accept a suitable offer of employment. In limited circumstances the tribunal will have the discretion to reduce benefits where, after taking account of the nature, duration and remuneration of the job offer and the worker's degree of incapacity, termination would be unduly harsh.

The commission will be given new powers to issue notices to workers who are considered to be able to return to work of some kind and who are not already in rehabilitation programs, requiring them to provide adequate evidence to the commission that they are actively seeking employment, or requiring them to undertake a suitable training program. If, after receiving such a notice, the worker fails to take reasonable steps to actively seek suitable employment or does not undertake a suitable training program, the worker's entitlement to further benefits can be terminated or, in certain cases, suspended by the tribunal.

It is intended by the government that, in general, the evidence supplied to the commission would at least comprise details of genuine approaches to employers to obtain employment either through their own endeavours or through the Commonwealth Employment Service or other agencies. Where the Act provides for the suitability of employment to be interpreted by the tribunal, having regard to the circumstances of workers and the opportunities available, the government intends that workers should be flexible in seeking and accepting employment within their abilities and circumstances. A further provision allows benefits to be suspended where a worker takes any action that materially reduces the capacity for employment.

In clarifying and codifying the grounds on which benefits can be terminated, reduced or suspended the Bill gives the tribunal a clear power to terminate the benefits of any worker who is not incapacitated. For their part, employers will be required to keep jobs open or to make equivalent positions available for the first six months that workers are on benefits. An exemption will apply where an employer can demonstrate that this was not practicable.

To remove any disincentives to employ injured workers, the commission and not the employer will be liable for any compensation payments during the first six months of re-employment of any worker who returns to work after injury. Account will not be taken of any further incapacity during this period in the calculation of the employer's levy rate, including bonuses and penalties.

The government is also determined to ensure that its return-to-work objective is clearly conveyed to the WorkCare agencies. The objectives and functions of both the Accident Compensation Commission and the Victorian Accident Rehabilitation Council are to be amended accordingly.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

In response to the government's concerns about improving the administration of access to benefits, important amendments are being introduced to tighten requirements regarding medical certificates and certificates of incapacity. For a claim to be accepted it will have to be accompanied by a medical certificate in the prescribed form. This will ensure that more accurate information as to the workers' medical conditions and their suitability to return to work will be provided than has been the practice to date.

In addition, a certificate will be valid for only 28 days, unless exceptional circumstances apply and satisfactory reasons are given. Amendments also provide for the payment of weekly benefits to be automatically suspended if the latest certificate expires and no new certificate is provided. Any subsequent backdating of certificates will also require an explanation from the treatment provider.

The government is conscious of the need to ensure that medical and other health practitioners issuing certificates are aware of their responsibilities in the WorkCare system. Accordingly, the powers of the various registration boards covering these health professionals are to be clarified and strengthened to provide specifically for action to be taken against those who issue false or misleading certificates.

The Medical Practitioners Act 1970 will be amended to establish a certificates committee of the Medical Board of Victoria. The committee will sit to hear complaints relating to medical certificates. The powers of the board will be clarified so that the issue of false or misleading certificates will be deemed to be professional misconduct. In addition to its existing powers to impose sanctions including deregistration, the board will now have the ability to impose fines of up to \$10 000. It is intended that fines will be appropriate for minor offences only.

Amendments to the Chiropractors and Osteopaths Act 1978 and the Physiotherapists Act 1978 are included in the case of the chiropractor, osteopath and physiotherapist boards to give them the same powers and responsibilities as the Medical Board of Victoria in respect of false and misleading certificates.

GENUINE DISPUTES

To ensure that only workers properly entitled to weekly payments are able to commence on benefits, the grounds for disputing eligibility have been widened. If the commission produces evidence to the tribunal which demonstrates that the worker is not incapacitated for his or her pre-injury employment, or that the injury is of a kind or type that would not normally result in incapacity, this will now be a ground for a genuine dispute.

The government, in introducing capacity for employment as a ground for genuine disputes, does not want this provision to be used frivolously or as a basis for tactical denials of claims. Accordingly, the government considers that the presentation of differing medical evidence by the two parties should not of itself automatically constitute sufficient grounds for upholding a genuine dispute. To further ensure that this does not impede the speedy flow of benefits to the vast majority of workers claiming compensation the Treasurer will direct the commission to ensure that claims agents dispute incapacity for work only where there is clear evidence.

Circumstances in which late notification of injury or late lodgment of a claim has prejudiced the ability of the commission to dispute a claim will also be grounds for a genuine dispute. At the same time penalties will be introduced for employers who terminate a worker's employment because the worker has given notice of injury or lodged a claim.

REFORM OF THE TRIBUNAL

The Government is determined to further reduce delays and streamline the handling of disputes. Accordingly, separate divisions of the Accident Compensation Tribunal will be established to specialise in the handling of different categories of dispute.

The first, to be known as the Workers Compensation Division, will deal with matters arising under the Workers Compensation Act and will have a similar structure and operation to the existing board division of the tribunal. The second, to be known as the Accident Compensation Division, will be established to deal with compensation claims under WorkCare and will comprise a president and deputy presidents, who will be direct appointments, and who will sit alone, and arbitrators who will assume the functions of the existing conciliators.

The Contribution Assessment Division will comprise a deputy president who will hear matters relating to contributions from previous insurers in respect of compensation payable by the commission or self-insurer, and levy matters.

A tribunal executive will be established consisting of the presidents of the Accident Compensation Division and the Workers Compensation Division, together with the senior arbitrator, while a number of administrative functions of the tribunal will be transferred to the registrar.

COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATOR

Amendments provide for the WorkCare complaints investigator to be located at the tribunal. The complaints investigator will, however, be entirely independent of the tribunal and other WorkCare agencies. The complaints investigator will have the power to receive, investigate and assess complaints arising from the operation of this Act.

FRAUD

The government is also concerned that in a small number of cases there are indications of clearly fraudulent action on the part of the participants in the scheme. The fraud provision has been extended and the penalty has been increased to \$10 000 or imprisonment for two years. Compensation paid will also be recoverable.

RECOVERIES

A significant number of claims on WorkCare involve gradual process injuries or arise from previous injuries and diseases with a history stretching back into the old workers compensation system. Estimates by the commission suggest that amounts potentially recoverable as contributions from old system insurers could be well in excess of \$100 million.

At the time of introducing WorkCare, the government entered into an agreement with the Insurance Council of Australia that discussions would be held with a view to reaching a formal agreement about the sharing of costs between WorkCare and the previous workers compensation insurers for those claims which span the new and old systems. It was intended that such an agreement would be similar to the contribution and settlement agreement which existed between insurers.

The commission has been unable to reach agreement with the Insurance Council of Australia or with individual insurers, which would formalise the contribution of the previous workers compensation insurers to the cost of such claims on a just and equitable basis.

If these amounts are not recovered there will be a significant and detrimental impact on the revenue position of WorkCare. This will ultimately put pressure on WorkCare levies and result in a liability for today's employer that is either not theirs or which they have already paid for when they paid premiums to the insurers in the pre-WorkCare system.

In the absence of an agreement with the private insurance companies it is essential that the legislation provides for a fair, efficient and expeditious resolution of the disputed amounts by the Accident Compensation Tribunal.

The existing legislation has been subsequently found by legal experts to require strengthening as it does not adequately address some of the new and unforeseen legal

issues that have emerged since the introduction of WorkCare. It also did not spell out a process for expeditiously dealing with contested liabilities.

The amendments are designed to clarify the intent of the original legislation and set up a process for dealing expeditiously with any contribution between private insurers and the commission regarding their respective liabilities. I emphasise that the amendments do not create a hitherto unprecedented liability. There is nothing new or novel in the concept of, or in the requirement for, contribution by prior insurers.

The proposed legislation spells out that the contribution ought to be no more and no less than is just and equitable having regard to the particular circumstances of each case. The intended effect is that the contribution will be no more than would have been paid if the contribution and settlement agreement had continued to apply. However, it remains the government's objective to reach an agreement with the private insurers that will minimise the need for determinations by the tribunal.

I repeat that it is essential that these amendments are made in order to ensure that today's employers are not presented with a financial burden which is either not theirs or which they have already paid for, when they paid their premiums to insurers under the pre-WorkCare system.

BONUS FUND

The government's policy on WorkCare includes a strong commitment to bonuses and penalties as an integral component of the levy structure. This is an essential component of ensuring that employers take measures to improve occupational health and safety, and have a strong incentive to find suitable employment for their injured workers.

The new bonus and penalty system will commence to apply to remuneration paid during the 1988-89 financial year and will be included as a component of levy actually paid by employers from 1 July 1988. The broad structure of the scheme is set out in the amendments.

A bonus fund account is to be established and will be financed by contributions by employers. Contributions will be distributed as bonuses in the same year to ensure revenue neutrality.

The detailed operation of the scheme will be finalised following consultation with employer representatives and will be set out in regulations.

OTHER REFORMS

Other reforms contained in the Bill include the following:

- a limit will be placed on common-law settlements for non-pecuniary loss of \$140 000 less any payment made under the table of maims. This limit will apply to all common-law settlements made after the proclamation of the amending legislation;

- procedures are to be introduced whereby employers will have the ability to lodge objections with the tribunal against decisions of claims agents which involve adverse financial consequences for employers. Successful objections can result in waiver of the cost of the claim for bonus and penalty purposes, or the transfer of the employer's liability for the first five days of benefits to the commission;

- the indexation of benefits will be changed to ensure that no worker can receive benefits of more than 100 per cent of the wages he would have been receiving if he were currently employed in his pre-injury job;

- all workers entitled to receive benefits will be paid benefits until they reach the normal retiring age for their occupation, or age 65, whichever is the earlier. Workers who are injured after the relevant retiring age and up to one year prior to that date will be entitled to up to twelve months of weekly payments; and

the commission will be required to pay penalty interest to employers for late reimbursement of compensation benefits.

The government is convinced that these reforms constitute a substantial reshaping of the WorkCare system, at the same time maintaining its fundamental principles. These legislative reforms are necessary and timely in order to ensure that the original financial and social objectives of WorkCare are achieved.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr GUDE (Hawthorn), the debate was adjourned.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn)—The Treasurer circulated a draft Bill about a week ago; I know that has been distributed to a number of employers, and the Opposition has obtained copies of the Bill.

As recently as immediately prior to today's sitting I received a letter signed by the Treasurer referring to a number of changes that he has now referred to in his second-reading speech.

I shall quote briefly from the letter. It states:

The majority of these changes are minor drafting corrections, however there are some changes that are more significant and these are listed in the attached schedule.

There are some fifteen major changes listed in the attached schedule and I note that one of those relates to section 29, which is the recoupment of moneys from previous insurers provision.

The Act has already been amended once in May 1986. The Treasurer got it wrong the first time; he got it wrong the second time; he has produced an amending Bill and has now got it wrong a third time. The Opposition is concerned that there may be more than minor drafting amendments and it seeks the maximum time available. Indeed, if the Opposition is not able to consult adequately within that time with industry and the community at large, I ask the Treasurer to consider a further extension of time, if it is required. It is a major and important Bill impacting on Victorian society.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

SISTERS OF MERCY (WODONGA LAND) BILL

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for the Arts)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This is a private Bill. The Sisters of Mercy is a charitable religious order. The order runs several well-known hospitals, including the Mercy Public Maternity Hospital. Its members teach in many Catholic primary schools and several secondary schools.

In 1921, land in Wodonga was conveyed under a benefactor's will to trustees, to be held in trust for the Sisters of Mercy. The terms of the trust require the land to be used either as a pasturage or for cultivation as a garden or similar purposes. Today the order has no need for the land for any of those purposes. The charitable purposes declared in the trust have thus become impracticable. They have not, however, become impossible. Consequently, it is unlikely that a court would sanction use of the land for purposes other than those designated in the original trust instrument.

An Act of Parliament is the only means of authorising use of the land in a way most beneficial to the Sisters of Mercy. The Bill frees the land from the original trust and empowers the Sisters of Mercy Property Association to deal with the land as it sees fit.

The Bill provides that the proceeds of any dealings with the land are to be held upon trust for the charitable purposes of the Sisters of Mercy.

I am confident that all honourable members will support the Bill, and I commend it to the House.

On the motion of Mr LEIGH (Malvern), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

LIQUOR CONTROL BILL (No. 2)

The Order of the Day for the resumption of the debate on the motion for the second reading of this Bill was read.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I declare this Bill to be an urgent Bill, and I move:

That this Bill be considered an urgent Bill.

Approval of the motion being put was indicated by the required number of members rising in their places, as specified in Standing Order No. 105 (a).

The motion was agreed to.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I move:

That the time allotted in connection with the Bill be as follows:

- (a) for the remainder of the second reading stage of the Bill until 6.15 p.m. this day;
- (b) for the Committee stage until 10.30 p.m. this day; and
- (c) for the remaining stages of the Bill, until 10.45 p.m. this day.

I am sure honourable members on both sides of the House are familiar with the background to this proposed legislation. The original Bill on which this present measure was drafted was introduced last sessional period and has been held over until this sessional period.

There was a resumption of the debate earlier during the spring sessional period, with approximately fifteen speakers speaking for some 7 hours 17 minutes, so there has certainly been opportunity, taken willingly by honourable members on both sides of the House, to make a contribution to the debate on the overall matter of liquor control in this State.

Given that timetable, and given the extensive debate that has occurred to date, I am sure that the time allotted—that is, some 6 hours for the remaining consideration of the Bill—is adequate and I am sure that it is supported by all honourable members.

Mr HAYWARD (Pahran)—I understand the objectives of the Minister, and in a previous discussion the Minister said that, as an objective, we should try to have second-reading debates principally over before dinner and the Committee stage after dinner.

However, many members of this House wish to speak on this vitally important Bill and it is not proper or appropriate to guillotine the debate. I accept that the previous Bill has already been before the House and there have been some speakers on that Bill, but a number of other Opposition speakers did not have an opportunity of speaking on the first Bill and there are significant changes in the No. 2 Bill.

Therefore, although that timing may be a desirable objective for the government, it is unfair and improper to guillotine the debate and the Opposition certainly opposes the motion.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I agree with the comments made by the honourable member for Pahran and indicate that the National Party is totally opposed to the motion moved by the Minister concerning the time for debate on the Bill. It is a vital Bill for Victoria, as recognised by the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources in the

comments he made. The Bill will have far-reaching effects on the operation of the liquor industry within Victoria.

I remind the House that the revised Bill brought forward last Thursday fortnight has given honourable members just over two weeks to consult people within and outside the industry, and the National Party is still receiving representations from a number of people who have now looked at the Bill and are coming back to the National Party, as they are to the government, with comments. Flaws are still being found in the Bill, which will need to be further revised. Additional amendments need to be made to it simply because the Bill is not yet right.

Mr Cain—Why don't you stand up to it?

Mr JASPER—I have not heard the Premier speak on the Bill yet in the House—only out among the public. Why does he not come into the Chamber and argue it? We would be happy to argue the measure with him rather than to see him standing behind his Minister and pushing the Bill through when it needs to be further considered.

The National Party would be pleased to hear what the Premier has to say, but not within the time constraints set down by the Minister. A number of honourable members who want to speak on the Bill and present the views of their constituents have not yet done so, but the government is guillotining the debate and not allowing those honourable members to speak on it.

I shall be interested to hear what the Premier has to say on this vital Bill because many of the statements he has made to the media on it are wrong. He does not understand the Bill. He is merely trying to throw off the wowser image of himself that he has created, but we are concerned about the time allowed for debate on the Bill.

The Liberal Party, the National Party and the government are still receiving representations from people who have received the revised Bill that was provided to members of the Opposition a little more than two weeks ago. The proposed legislation contains 150 amendments to the original Bill, yet it is still not right; the Bill still requires major amendments in order to make it workable.

On the last day the House sat before the two-week break, the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources said that he would provide sufficient time for people to present their views on the Bill to ensure that Victoria would have the best possible legislation. The National Party is concerned to ensure that the Bill will operate effectively both for Victoria and for the industry.

Mr Cain interjected.

Mr JASPER—That is a ridiculous interjection.

Mr Cain—It is true!

Mr JASPER—When the Premier, who is supposed to be the leading politician in this State, makes inane statements like that, it demonstrates how little he understands the liquor industry and that he has not been involved in consultations with people in the industry. Why does not the Premier get out of his ivory tower and talk to interested groups?

The Bill is vital for the future of Victoria and its liquor industry. The National Party totally opposes the motion moved by the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources. More time is needed so that honourable members can consider the representations the Minister acknowledged that we would receive in response to the new Bill.

The Bill should be debated correctly so that it does not need to be rehashed after it is proclaimed because it has proved to be ineffective. I hope the Minister will consider the motion, let the second-reading debate proceed today and schedule the Committee stage for next Tuesday so that proposed amendments will be drafted appropriately.

Dr WELLS (Dromana)—As this is a redrafted Bill, some aspects of it have been debated. It is disappointing that the proposed legislation has come forward as a controversial Bill that is weak in some important areas. It is a personal Bill, and that is one reason why I ask the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources to reconsider his motion on time.

The motion does not allow enough time for the many honourable members who will wish to speak on the Bill from their personal viewpoints and those of the electorates they represent. The motion will allow only a few members from the three parties to speak in the time allowed for the second-reading debate.

I am opposed to the government guillotining the Bill because it has refused to listen to what much of the community is saying. The government has taken little notice of the message coming from the non-commercial areas of the community. Time should be permitted for honourable members to bring forward that viewpoint. It is sad that the government is not prepared to listen to what the Opposition has to say on a Bill of such monumental social importance.

Important changes were made to the Liquor Control Bill as a result of suggestions from the Opposition, and they have now been incorporated in this Bill. I am sure other suggestions of major importance should be incorporated in the Bill following the second-reading debate. It is important that time be allowed for the opposition parties, and, hopefully, for members of the government, to focus on the government's ambition to provide a better mechanism to reduce alcohol abuse. That has not been done in this Bill, as it was not done in the original Bill, and that could be brought out in debate in this place.

I join with the honourable member for Murray Valley in his suggestion that the second-reading debate take place today and that the Committee stage take place next week, thereby allowing time for proposed amendments to be drafted correctly.

Mr WHITING (Mildura)—I oppose the motion moved by the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources. I regret the uncharacteristic pigheadedness of the Minister in not withdrawing the Liquor Control Bill at an earlier stage. He was advised on a number of occasions that the Bill needed many amendments before satisfactory debate could occur. He reluctantly agreed to withdraw the Bill, and I commend him for that because it took a lot of courage under the circumstances. However, it is now time to allow Parliament to debate this Bill properly.

The Bill has wide ramifications for Victoria, and many interested groups and concerned people wish to have their views put before Parliament before a final decision is made. The Bill has many clauses and a considerable number of amendments will be proposed in the Committee stage.

I plead with the Minister to amend the motion so that the second-reading debate concludes at 10.30 p.m. tonight and the Committee stage takes place at another time, or even later this evening, if that is the Minister's wish. The period allowed in the motion for the second-reading debate is not adequate. The Minister should be reasonable about this matter because a suitable result could have been achieved by discussion between the Leaders of the three parties. If that were the case, this problem would not have arisen.

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—I cannot understand the government's attitude to this major Bill. It is ridiculous to try to rush it through Parliament and allow the Opposition only 3 hours to discuss the government's major piece of proposed legislation. The Nieuwenhuysen report was handed down at the beginning of last year and it has taken the government until this sessional period to get the Bill right.

The Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources has argued that members of the Opposition have spoken on the Liquor Control Bill, and I do not argue with that: fifteen speakers from the Opposition spoke for 7 hours on the original Bill. That Bill was withdrawn because it was badly drafted and because representations were made to the government. Some of the suggestions made in those representations have been incorporated in the Bill,

and the Opposition is happy about that. However, the government has had plenty of time to introduce this Bill and get it right, and it has no excuse for guillotining the debate on the Bill to two and three-quarter hours for the second-reading stage.

Mr Speaker, that is inexcusable. It is terribly bad management and it makes a mockery of this place and of the money and the time that the government and community groups, the Opposition and the National Party have put into the proposed legislation to ensure that it is in the public interest. The Minister now says that, so far as he is concerned, everyone can go "he" because Parliament will be given only two and three-quarter hours for this debate.

The last government to do that sort of work lost office in 1982 because it was clear that it had failed and that it did not want Parliament to debate its measures. If the government has confidence in its proposed legislation, it ought to give Parliament the opportunity of debate; if the government does not have confidence in its legislative program, it can do what the Minister now proposes doing. It is disgraceful action. It is a sign of mismanagement and it is a real sign that the government does not have confidence in its own measures.

The Minister ought to realise that towards the end of a sessional period Parliament is subjected to legislation being pushed through, but on this occasion Parliament still has four weeks of sitting. It is suggested that Parliament will rise in the second week of November so, if more time is required, there is extra time for Parliament to sit to debate proposed legislation.

I implore the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources to realise that by guillotining debate on the Bill he is not only guillotining the opportunity of his own party members to speak but also he is denying members of the Opposition and the National Party who have spent just as much time on this measure as the government to get it right the opportunity of putting their points of view on behalf of community groups and the wider community generally.

It is an absolute disgrace that the second-reading of this second version of the Bill will now be rushed through Parliament in two and three-quarter hours, which will probably allow only the lead speakers of the opposition parties the opportunity of speaking.

The Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources understands the forms of this House. He has been a member of Parliament longer than most. He should recognise that his action is an abuse of the position of the government in denying Parliament adequate time to properly consider proposed legislation.

I shall not go through the volumes of *Hansard* that are stacked in the shelves behind your chair, Mr Speaker, but they would clearly reveal the many times that the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources when Deputy Leader of the Opposition argued that Parliament should have sufficient time to debate proposed legislation. Not once, not twice but on innumerable occasions when in opposition the Minister requested more time. Now, in government, he wants to push through his government's proposed legislation and, by doing so, is highlighting his own mismanagement and that in his mind there is something wrong with the measure.

I appeal to the government. For goodness' sake, let us now, having done that work, represent those who have made representations to us. Let us give community groups and individual citizens the voice in this Parliament that they deserve. The Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources is denying not only the opposition parties but also the broader community, and this is a disgrace. I hope in the wider community and by those who report the debates in this place it will be seen as just that.

The Opposition is not suggesting that the Bill will be opposed in large degree but is saying that the representations it has received and some of the concerns it has with the Bill should be aired. It is an absolute disgrace that there will be only two and three-quarter hours to discuss a measure that has been in the making for almost two years. Parliament

is getting only two and three-quarter hours to debate it. The government ought to be ashamed of itself.

Mr HEFFERNAN (Ivanhoe)—I ask the Minister to allow Parliament to really give consideration to the Bill. It contains a tremendous number of changes. Even today members of the Opposition have been receiving further requests for amendments to it. It is the subject of Judge Campton's report, which I have read, and which itself contains a tremendous amount of work.

One cannot imagine that, if the Bill is not passed, the whole liquor industry will close down. I assure the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources that if nothing happened to the Bill this session the liquor industry would still be there this Christmas and next year. That is not at issue. Indeed, I would say that the industry would be better off if the government kept out of it altogether! It is incredible to me that a government regards an issue like this as important but wants to push the Bill through.

This is the first time that I have appealed to the Minister since I have been a member of this place, but this is an important issue and a tremendous amount is at stake. The temporary honourable member for Springvale, who is interjecting, must recognise this as he will lose his seat at the next election. I request this consideration from the Minister. Adequate time should be made available for members of the opposition parties to have some say on the Bill.

The SPEAKER—Order! The question is that the time allotted for the second-reading stage of this Bill be until 6.15 p.m.

Mr Kennett—Bloody disgraceful!

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member's language is disgraceful.

The time allotted for the Committee stage of the Bill will be until 10.30 p.m. and for the remaining stages of the Bill until 10.45 p.m.

The House divided on the motion (the Hon. C. T. Edmunds in the chair).

Ayes	..	..	..	..	..	45
Noes	..	..	..	..	..	31
Majority for the motion						14

AYES

Mr Andrianopoulos
Mr Cain
Miss Callister
Mr Cathie
Dr Coghill
Mr Crabb
Mr Culpin
Mr Cunningham
Mr Ernst
Mr Fogarty
Mr Fordham
Mr Gavin
Mr Harrowfield
Mrs Hill
Mr Hill
Mrs Hirsh
Mr Hockley
Mr Jolly
Mr Kennedy
Mr Kirkwood
Mr McCutcheon
Mr McDonald
Mr Mathews
Mr Micallef

NOES

Mr Brown
Mr Cooper
Mr Crozier
Mr Delzoppo
Mr Dickinson
Mr Gude
Mr Hann
Mr Hayward
Mr Heffernan
Mr Jasper
Mr John
Mr Kennett
Mr Lea
Mr Leigh
Mr Lieberman
Mr Perrin
Mr Pescott
Mr Ramsay
Mr Reynolds
Mr Richardson
Ms Sibree
Mr Smith
(Glen Waverley)
Mr Smith
(Polwarth)

AYES

Mr Norris
Mr Pope
Mrs Ray
Mr Remington
Mr Roper
Mr Rowe
Mr Sheehan
Mr Shell
Mr Sidiropoulos
Mr Simmonds
Mr Simpson
Mr Spyker
Mr Stirling
Mrs Toner
Mr Trezise
Dr Vaughan
Mr Walsh
Mr Wilkes
Mrs Wilson

Tellers:
Mrs Gleeson
Mr Seitz

NOES

Mr Stockdale
Mr Tanner
Mr Wallace
Mr Weideman
Mr Whiting
Mr Williams

Tellers:
Mr Steggall
Dr Wells

PAIR

Mrs Setches

Mr Ross-Edwards

The debate (adjourned from September 17) on the motion of Mr Fordham (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr HAYWARD (Prahran)—Alcohol is an important community issue. The question of alcohol regulation has been under consideration, off and on, nearly since the beginning of Victoria. There has been a chequered history, and the industry has gone through the extremes of being highly regulated and highly deregulated.

The Cain government has decided to embark on this process once again. In so doing, it has taken a big responsibility on its shoulders.

The current exercise has been going on for a number of years. It started with the Nieuwenhuysen review nearly three years ago, and this year the government has been engaged in the process of drafting legislation, which bore fruit in the first Bill and which I will call the No. 1 Bill.

Despite this length of time and the work put into it, the government's record has not been good. The government got the first Bill wrong, there being many problems and major flaws in it. The major flaw in the first Bill was the lack of protection for local neighbourhood communities.

Most of us are aware of the disturbance and nuisance which can be caused to local neighbourhood communities through extended trading hours in hotels, discotheques and so on, associated with late night entertainment. There is the noise of the actual premises and the noise of people leaving those premises. There are fights in the street, obscene language and doors slamming. The complaints one receives from these areas are countless. Those problems severely damage the amenity of the local residents and this issue was inadequately addressed in the first Bill. There is inadequate protection for local communities.

I considered the first Bill to be significantly and fatally flawed. The government has paid lip-service to the residential amenity issue in the Bill currently before the House. In this respect, it is a paper tiger; it does not give sufficient protection to local neighbourhood communities from the problems associated with extended hours permits and late night entertainment.

The Opposition will move amendments to give that tiger teeth, to ensure that there is real protection to neighbourhood communities and to assist local councils in safeguarding it.

If the government is sincere in its objective of protecting such communities, I hope the government will accept the amendments that will be proposed by the Opposition concerning those areas during the Committee stage.

In Melbourne, two districts have voted to retain the democratic right of local option, the so-called dry areas. There is a fascinating history about those dry areas which goes back over many years and, more particularly, to the 1920s. Those areas exercised their democratic right at that time to ensure that they continued to have the right of local option, whereas all other districts in Victoria voted not to retain that right. The dry areas should continue to retain that right until they vote in a poll to the contrary.

The Opposition intends to move amendments that the whole Act comes into operation on a single day.

There are two other specific areas of concern that were not met in the first Bill but which have been met by the government in the current Bill: the first area being the definition of "liquor". The government has now changed that definition in the current Bill to read:

"Liquor" means a beverage intended for human consumption with an alcoholic content greater than 0.5 per centum by volume at a temperature of 20 degrees celsius.

That is an important change and adds protection for the community.

The other change which has been made in the objects clause is an important one. Object 5 (c) states:

providing adequate controls over the sale, disposal and consumption of liquor;

However, one major retrograde step in the Bill is the requirement that restaurateurs who apply for licences to sell liquor without meals must now pay \$800 in addition to the licence fees. The government has provided various explanations for that provision but, in essence, it represents a tax on a tax, because not only must the restaurateurs pay the usual licence fees but also the additional fee of \$800. The fee is unjust and inappropriate. The Opposition calls upon the government to remove that discriminatory provision.

If one owns an hotel that has a restaurant which has a bar, one does not have to pay the \$800. This is unjust when compared with a struggling restaurant that may be situated around the corner from an hotel. The restaurateur may wish to allow his patrons to drink on part of his premises without having to order food, but if he or she does so, the \$800 fee must be paid. If the Liberal Party were in government, it would review this provision—if the Bill is passed—with a view to deleting it.

Many issues need discussion during the debate, especially the unresolved issue of whether greater availability of alcohol leads to more abuse and misuse of alcohol. A wealth of data exists on this issue; the Nieuwenhuysen inquiry reviewed this matter and it was also covered in a document prepared by the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources that was headed, "Availability and Consumption of Liquor: An Overview". After one has read all the information prepared on this subject one becomes highly confused. At best the material is inconclusive, and, at worst it is contradictory. The matter has been unresolved but it is still very important.

Alcohol presents many problems in the community. In my electoral duties I often meet people and families who are suffering from distress and hardship caused by alcoholism. Often I have the opportunity of assisting some families. Alcoholism is fast becoming a problem among young people, many of whom drink when under-age. The Bill does not significantly address this problem.

Under-age drinking in our society is a difficult subject to deal with. It is a problem faced by many families. Of course, it cannot be solved simply by legislation. It can best be solved within the family situation.

Alcohol is also a problem in industry. In the twenty years that I served as a manager in industry I saw evidence of the effects of alcohol, which is often the cause of accidents in factories and absenteeism in industry. Statistics illustrate that absenteeism due to alcoholism is increasing.

Some industry groups which represent existing liquor licence holders suggested the Bill will result in an increase in the number of licences issued. If that logic is followed through, increases in licences issued and the subsequent increased availability of alcohol will lead to an increase in alcohol abuse and misuse. The government claims the Bill will not dramatically result in an increase in licences and it presented various reasons why it believed this.

The first few are procedural reasons because an applicant must follow certain steps before he or she is considered for a licence. The most significant step is that a person must apply for and hold a valid planning permit. That process is often complex and difficult. For example, in the electorate of Prahran the problem of parking is serious. If a person wishes to apply for a planning permit for licensed premises, that person must provide adequate parking space for patrons. If the applicant cannot or does not provide that facility, that person must pay a substantial fee, which I believe is \$40 000 a car space.

Even a small restaurant needs car parking spaces and if one is attempting to establish a restaurant or other licensed premises one may have to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars. One would not embark lightly on such a path. One certainly would not consider applying for a licence unless one could be assured of an adequate return on one's investment. Therefore, one must ensure that there is a demand for the service being provided in the area it is proposed to establish such premises. If the service provided is already catered for by other premises, one must ensure one's establishment will provide a better service than that offered by existing restaurants, hotels or whatever.

In procedural terms, it is not easy to establish a licensed premises. I do not believe the number of licences will substantially increase as a result of the Bill. The logic of the government is probably soundly based.

The government claimed that clauses 71 and 78 would also restrict the number of licences to be issued. Clause 71 provides that the police may object to any application; and clause 78 provides for a preliminary hearing. The government also said that clause 76, which allows for community need and interest to be taken into consideration in any application, will restrict the number of licences granted. The Opposition believes this provision needs to be tightened.

In effect, the government has given an undertaking to the House and the community—either specifically or by implication—that the Bill will not result in a significant increase in the number of liquor licences issued and will not result in an increase in alcohol abuse and misuse.

It means that the government has put its head on the block. The Opposition will be watching the situation carefully. The government's move is courageous, as Sir Humphrey said to his Minister and Prime Minister in that famous television serial. If the government has got it wrong, it will pay the price. That is what politics is all about.

Another area that causes the Liberal Party some concern is the implementation and policing of the Act. A private and confidential report was prepared by the Victoria Police on this issue. I was fortunate enough to obtain two copies, one of which I gave to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources for his consideration. The private and confidential report related to the first Bill and set out many practical difficulties in policing the provisions of the Bill.

The report said that in some instances it would be virtually impossible effectively to police some of the new arrangements incorporated in the first Bill. This is a serious matter and I have been told that many of the problems that were set out in the report have been fixed in the Bill now before the House. I am not sure if that is the case, but it is the government's responsibility to ensure that that is the case. The government is elected to govern and if it introduces a piece of legislation it is responsible to get it right and should give an undertaking to the House and the community that the legislation can be effectively implemented and policed.

The government will be on trial and will be judged accordingly. If the government has not adequately made provision effectively to police the proposed legislation—assuming the comments in the report are valid—the government had better get its act together and ensure that it prepares amendments between the Houses. The Opposition will be examining those clauses carefully.

I now direct the attention of the Minister to the Liquor Control Commission and to His Honour Judge Campton in particular. I pay a tribute to Judge Campton. He is a fine person of outstanding integrity. His Honour has tried his hardest to ensure that the commission operated equitably and in the community's interest. His talents and ability must not be lost to the community. I have been concerned by a report that Judge Campton's status as a judge depends upon the continuation of the existing commission and that, as soon as the Liquor Control Bill (No. 2) becomes law, he will cease to be a judge. I have sought an assurance to the contrary from the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources, but have yet to receive a response. I now seek that assurance from the Minister. The talents of this fine judge should be made use of in the future. I give notice to the Minister on that point.

I now make some general remarks in conclusion, because there are a number of specific matters that I shall raise about the Bill in Committee and I do not wish to impose upon the House a repetition of the lengthy second-reading speech I made when the first Bill was debated in this Chamber.

I repeat, this is a difficult area in which to legislate. Alcohol is not a normal commodity. Throughout the history of the world, in one form or another, primitive or otherwise, alcohol has always been something that has been close to man and which man has had to deal with. In many instances alcohol has provided man with pleasure and relaxation, but in other instances has been the cause of great danger and disaster. In the area of drink-driving it has contributed significantly to many fatal accidents.

It is not possible to say that the consumption of alcohol can be totally deregulated or that there is no need for control of alcohol in the community. Clearly, there is a need for some control in the community interest and from that point of view I was pleased to see the addition of another subclause in the objects of the Bill, set out in clause 5, dealing with the provision of adequate controls over the sale, disposal and consumption of liquor.

It is important not to confuse the control of alcohol in the community interest with controls that are there to protect existing businesses from competition. I know that some existing licensees believe they have been induced by existing legislation to make an investment which, perhaps, is greater than what they would have made without that legislation. There are many examples of those expressions of concern, with which I sympathise. There is no question that these people have to work very hard, that they have a significant investment and are anxious because they believe that investment may be at risk.

The government is open to considerable criticism because the proposed changes to the liquor law have been going on for a number of years and this has resulted in great uncertainty and anxiety, not only for existing licensees but also for people planning new investments in the future. Some people have been holding up those investments because they were not sure about the nature of the proposed legislation and how their investments would be affected. Some people feel aggrieved and some have even said to me that they

consider that their past licence fees were paid as protection money. They have used that phrase specifically. I sympathise with those people. One person said to me, "You have been regulating us for years and you have taxed us. You cannot have it both ways. If you are going to deregulate, reduce our fees". I am sympathetic with that view. The liquor industry has to bear a heavy burden in taxation and fees.

Whether it is in the hospitality industry, the manufacturing industry or any other industry, the cold wind of competition is blowing strongly. It is cold, but it can also be invigorating, because it acts as an incentive for people to improve their operations. I am not saying that as a criticism of the liquor industry, because I know from my own observation both here and in other States, that the standards in the liquor industry in Victoria are extremely high, in every sense—the premises, the service and the conduct of those premises. The standards in the restaurant industry are also extremely high and provide a major tourism benefit for Victoria.

The diversity of restaurants in Victoria is appealing to visitors. One large element of their appeal is that so many of them are BYO restaurants and, as such, are totally deregulated. Victoria has a thriving hospitality industry because of its licensed premises, its hotels and its restaurants. No doubt the Minister and his department make use of that in tourism promotion or, if they are not already doing so, perhaps they will in the future.

I repeat that the cold winds of competition are blowing in both the service and the manufacturing industries. I see the effect every day in the manufacturing industry. I visit about two manufacturing firms a week. For example, I visited the Holeproof factory in Box Hill on Monday. That firm has had to face up to the fact that economic protection is being phased out for its industry. In earlier years, such a firm may have gone out of business. However, the Holeproof organisation has accepted the challenge, improved its efficiency, reduced its costs and provided innovative products for its customers. As a result, the business is flourishing.

The same winds of change that are affecting the manufacturing industry are also affecting the hospitality industry. I sympathise with those hotelkeepers who have made big investments based upon their perception of the regulatory set-up in Victoria. Maybe a case exists for government compensation but, in this day and age, economic protection cannot be a major objective of government economy.

The prime objective of this Bill must be community protection. The original Bill was highly deficient in that respect. That brings me back to the point at which I started my remarks. This is the government's Bill and it is the government's responsibility to get it right. The government's performance to date has not been good.

Despite years of review and many months of preparation and drafting, the original Bill was inadequate both in terms of community protection and also in the machinery provisions. The Minister was faced with the prospect of introducing more than 100 amendments and I agreed with the Minister that it was a far better course to draft a fresh Bill than to wind our way through so many amendments.

The government has a heavy responsibility to ensure that community needs are protected and that the policing of the provisions are effective. I have a lingering doubt that this might not be done. It would be ridiculous if the government were to bring in a Bill that could not be effectively implemented. In that respect, the confidential report of the Victoria Police is of concern.

Specifically and by implication, the government has given certain undertakings to the Victorian community. It has initiated this intervention in liquor regulation—or deregulation. It set up an inquiry that was lengthy and costly. The community now has high expectations that the government will fulfill these undertakings. Foremost among those undertakings is that abuse and misuse of alcohol will not increase because of any significant increase in the number of licences granted under the Bill. That responsibility is

now on the government and the Opposition will be watching its performance critically and closely.

The Opposition does not oppose the Bill. The Opposition will introduce amendments that I have foreshadowed during the debate. I wish to take up a number of other specific matters during the Committee stage when the Bill will be examined in detail.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I have listened with interest to the honourable member for Prahran, the lead speaker for the Opposition. The major difference between the views of the Opposition and the National Party is that the National Party believes Bills should be reviewed by all parties and their views debated in Parliament with the intention of altering Bills or withdrawing them if they do not reflect the views of those parties.

It was disappointing to hear the lead speaker for the Liberal Party state that it is not the job of the Opposition to oppose legislation in its entirety but rather it is the job of the government to bring forward a fresh Bill. If it is the Liberal Party's view that the Bill should be implemented, that is the course that should be taken by the government, with perhaps some necessary minor amendments to the Bill.

The National Party will be unequivocal in its criticism of the Bill and will show its opposition to the Bill if it is not in the best interests of the people of Victoria. The National Party believes the Bill, although containing a large number of amendments suggested by the National Party, is not in the best interests of Victoria in its current form.

I welcomed the government's decision to withdraw the original Bill earlier this session and to replace it with a Bill containing more than 120 changes, but it is disappointing that the Bill is based on a discredited report. That report was discredited by the National Party after criticism had been forthcoming from Judge Campton to which I shall make mention later and also because of a statement made earlier this year by the Deputy Premier, as the Minister responsible for the liquor industry and the Bill, that the government had accepted 167 of the 184 recommendations of the Nieuwenhuysen report. That surely is an indication that the government accepted virtually all the recommendations of what I believe to be a discredited report.

The National Party believes the Bill is vital to the State. It is vital that the liquor industry is controlled. It has been controlled in the past and it is important that it is controlled in the future. The National Party believes there is a definite correlation between the availability of alcohol and its consumption.

The Bill now before the House deals with the principles of control of the liquor industry in Victoria. One should note how it is to be implemented, particularly as it relates to the Liquor Control Commission and the all-powerful position of the chief executive officer of the commission.

The Bill also deals with specific areas of operation by the people who are involved in the industry. The measure corrects many flaws and mistakes that were evident when the original Bill was reviewed.

I congratulate the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources for withdrawing the original measure and bringing forward a new Bill; he was probably under enormous pressure from members of his own party to retain the original Bill and to ensure that it was amended in due course by the Assembly and then further amended in another place.

However, the new Bill still contains many flaws. I doubt whether honourable members will be able to correct them all, given the time constraints placed upon the debate by the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources.

Further amendments are required to the principles embodied in the measure to ensure good order and stability within the liquor industry in Victoria. I am concerned at the attitude of the Premier, as I mentioned in my contribution to the debate on the original Bill earlier in this sessional period.

The comments that the Premier made by way of interjection when I was speaking about the time constraints that had been placed on the debate by the Minister seemed to indicate his belief that the National Party was being dictated to by a particular interest. The National Party will listen to all interest groups and respond to them; it will endeavour to ensure that the best legislation is formulated for Victoria, in the interests of all people and of the industry.

There is no doubt that the organisational groups within the industry have a vital interest in the Bill and in the good order and development of their industry. To suggest that those people have purely vested interests is totally wrong.

The representations that have been made to the National Party by the interested groups, organisations and individuals ought to be taken into account. Those people understand the industry better than most members of this Parliament.

When I speak later about the Campton report, I shall indicate to the House my disappointment that the Deputy Premier, as the Minister responsible for the liquor industry, and the Labor Party in government have taken little notice of people who could have provided them with the best advice and the best overview of this industry. They are most expert in controlling the industry, and I refer also to people in the Liquor Control Commission.

It is an indictment of the government that it has swept aside the experts who have been involved in the liquor industry for many years and who understand the industry. I speak particularly of Judge Campton, who has had a long association with the industry, and also of Mr John Taylor, the Secretary of the Liquor Control Commission, who has worked within the commission for more than 30 years.

So far as I know, no-one from the government or its advisers has bothered to approach them and say, "This is the proposed legislation we want to introduce into Parliament. What do you think of it? We are interested in your views and what you think about the future of the industry in Victoria".

In my contribution to the second-reading debate on the original Bill on 19 August 1987, I covered many areas of the industry. In fact, I provided an overview of the development of the industry in Victoria. I stated that there was a need for control over the industry and mentioned the inquiries that had been undertaken over a number of years.

At that time I said there had not been a groundswell of opinion when the government initiated the inquiry into the liquor industry by Dr Nieuwenhuysen in 1984; and that he had a purely academic approach to the industry. He had no understanding of what he was embarking upon or of the consequences of the major recommendations that he made to the government in his report.

I place on record that, during that second-reading debate on 19 August, I indicated quite clearly that Dr Nieuwenhuysen's report was really flawed and was based on misconceptions and results of investigations that did not back up the recommendations that were made in it.

At that stage, honourable members did not have the benefit of Judge Campton's report, which the government has now made available—reluctantly, I might add. During that debate, I also spoke about the government's response earlier in the year, and I mentioned particularly my disappointment that the government had had little consultation with the important people within the industry—in particular, those within the Liquor Control Commission itself.

I referred to the important part that Judge Campton played in the process and the importance of recognising and speaking with a person who has a tremendous understanding of the industry.

Honourable members did not then have Judge Campton's report. The government was trying to bury the report, which it had had since July 1986. This government is supposedly

the most open government in the history of Victoria! In fact, that has not been the case, and that is proved by the fact that the government tried to deprive the Opposition and the National Party of the opportunity of reviewing the report in the light of the new Bill.

At the time, I also spoke of the major concern of the National Party about the original Bill that was being debated at the time. I highlighted various areas of concern, including major changes to the Bill that were necessary.

The National Party appreciates that the government has responded by replacing the original measure with a new Bill that incorporates a large number of amendments that were sought by the National Party and will assist in making it a better measure.

I refer now to the report that was made available by the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources. It is certainly disappointing that the government did not make the report available to honourable members, even though it had been received by the government in July 1986, and it commented on the review of the Liquor Control Act 1968 by Dr John Nieuwenhuysen.

The report needs to be read in the context of what it does and says, and not in the context of any criticism of its content. When I spoke during the second-reading debate on the original Bill, I said that Dr Nieuwenhuysen was arrogant and took a purely academic approach to the industry in his report.

Although it was extremely comprehensive, unless one read through the report and made a full analysis of it, one would believe many of the recommendations it contained were backed up by facts, figures, analyses and other information that had been provided to Dr Nieuwenhuysen.

The figures used in the Nieuwenhuysen report were more rubbery than the amount of rubber one would find in any tyre factory in Australia. The Bill is based on a report that has been totally discredited. The report produced by Judge John Campton has been critical of the Nieuwenhuysen report.

I am disappointed that the Deputy Premier, who has an understanding of the industry and for whom I have the highest regard, has not allowed the Campton report to be released to the general community. If that were done, the many interested parties and experts on liquor licensing laws in Victoria could debate the topics covered by Judge Campton.

Judge Campton is a well-recognised expert in the Victorian liquor industry. Prior to being appointed Chairman of the Liquor Control Commission in 1975, he was involved in 30 years of specialised work with the Licensing Court and the commission. Judge Campton is recognised throughout Australasia as an eminent person in the liquor licensing industry.

Mr Fordham—Hear, hear!

Mr JASPER—I am delighted that the Minister supports the reputation of Judge Campton. Honourable members should carefully examine many of the issues mentioned in the Campton report because they highlight the flaws and misconceptions contained in the report prepared by Dr John Nieuwenhuysen.

I shall refer the House to some of the significant comments of Judge Campton on the Liquor Control Act and the measures introduced by the government.

Mr Fordham—What about the Bill?

Mr JASPER—The Campton report is vital to the Bill being debated today. The government has not taken account of the criticisms made by Judge Campton in his report.

Mr Cain interjected.

Mr JASPER—It is interesting that the Premier has now come into the Chamber. I suggest that the Premier and the Deputy Premier should carefully read the Campton report

so that they recognise the many flaws in the Bill now before the House. The Campton report highlights the misconceptions and inaccuracies in the totally discredited Nieuwenhuysen report. Judge Campton states:

The Review and the report suffer from major faults of which the following, at least, are readily identifiable.

1. The failure to give adequate weight to expert research and evidence which demonstrates a significant relationship between availability and abuse . . .

3. The untrue assertion that there is "very substantial alignment between the public survey results and the Review's proposals".

The major thrusts of the proposals of the Review are that there should be an almost unlimited number of licences permitting the sale of liquor for both consumption on the premises and off the premises and that, subject to certain town planning restrictions, the hours of trading for licensed premises be unlimited.

The public opinion polls are strongly against these major thrusts of the Review and against most other recommendations made by the Review.

3.1 85% of Victorians do not desire more drinking establishments and 78% favour the status quo.

The government has taken no notice of the facts and figures supplied by Judge Campton about the Nieuwenhuysen report. According to Judge Campton, the government has taken a lot of notice of other areas such as Tasmania. He further states:

Other lesser supports upon which the Review relies are also worthless.

It is in the interest of Parliament for all honourable members to appreciate that Judge Campton, an expert in the liquor industry, saw obvious flaws in the Nieuwenhuysen report. He states:

The Review relies on certain unfair and biased questions in the public opinion survey.

He refers to detailed criticisms of the way the report was handled and states:

The main thrusts of the Review recommendations are contrary to industry opinion survey results.

Many of the questions put in the industry survey are unfair.

I have quoted only some of the comments from the Campton report. He states:

The report is not objective. It is doctrinaire.

The market place philosophy permeates the whole report and colours the Review recommendations.

There is no doubt that Judge Campton's criticism of the Nieuwenhuysen report is justified. He highlights many inconsistencies in the earlier report.

It is important that I quote a further three or four extracts from the Campton report. Honourable members should read the Campton report so that they can obtain a true understanding of the significance of Judge Campton's comments on the Nieuwenhuysen report, which is the basis on which the Bill has been prepared.

Judge Campton states:

The complete failure to produce any evidence that the Victorian public, or consumers as a whole, or any section thereof, are worse off under the present system than they would be if the main Review recommendations were adopted.

The failure to investigate the circumstances which have militated against the Phillips and Davies recommendations concerning education programs being implemented demonstrates a reluctance to proceed beyond the realm of theory.

Judge Campton continues with his general criticisms of the Nieuwenhuysen report. One of the most damning areas is on page 35 of the report where he states:

The failure to appreciate the importance of the provisions of the Act which relate to the provision of meals and substantial refreshments with liquor.

The generally unsatisfactory nature of the report in that it contains many false statements, selective quotations, exaggerations, illogicalities, use of slippery and coloured terms, textual contradictions, inconsistencies, intemperate comments and misuse of language . . .

The failure to attempt to estimate the cost to Victoria of the implementation of the recommendations. No cost benefit analysis is provided.

When referring to policing matters, Judge Campton says:

It is clear that the implementation of the recommendations will lead to much greater costs.

18.2.1 Policing of:

- (i) the considerable increase in the number of licensed premises likely to come into existence
- (ii) the much longer hours of trading proposed (24 hours a day subject to permits)
- (iii) the greatly expanded activities of restaurants and byos, which will virtually become hotels
- (iv) the greatly expanded activities of clubs which will be open to the general public
- (v) the expanded activities of rbls and other licences

—will involve very greatly increased police time and expenditure.

Judge Campton says in the last part of his report:

18.8 It is conceded that Victoria has the best hotels and restaurants in the Commonwealth and that liquor prices are as cheap as anywhere in the Commonwealth. The public does not seek any significant changes in the law. It is hard then to see what benefit will occur from most of the changes recommended, apart from windfall gains to existing restaurants and BYOs.

That is the basis on which the industry in Victoria has developed. The Liquor Control Commission has been effective in what it has been able to achieve in the control of the liquor industry in Victoria.

I have put on record some of the comments made by Judge Campton in his criticism of the Nieuwenhuysen report, which was initiated in 1984 and provided to the Minister in June 1986. At that time it was withheld from the general public who were most interested to know what this most eminent person had to say about the liquor industry because it was critical of a previous report on which the government had based its proposed legislation. That report, now totally discredited, was produced by a person who had preconceived objectives of what he wanted for Victoria. He did not care what the analysis produced; he did not care what were the results of the investigation. He wanted to produce recommendations which would change the face of the liquor industry in Victoria.

Mr Whiting interjected.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Mildura raised a good point which was directed at the Premier. It is a vital point because the Premier has become personally involved in the issue. He endeavoured to throw off his wowser's image by saying that the recommendations were the greatest change to society since the invention of the wheel and some weeks later he said that the recommendations would be implemented immediately.

I believe the Premier has pressured the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources to push the proposed legislation through at all costs and not to worry whether it would upset an industry which has worked effectively, and which has needed and will continue to need control.

The National Party believes the report by Judge Campton puts the earlier Nieuwenhuysen report on the liquor industry into true perspective. It threw into doubt the previous recommendations which earlier this year the government said it would accept.

The government has accepted 167 of the 184 recommendations of the Nieuwenhuysen report. A press release issued by the Deputy Premier, as the responsible Minister, on 14 April 1987 states:

In a position paper released today by the Deputy Premier, Mr Fordham, the government spelled out the most sweeping changes to Victoria's liquor laws since the end of the "six o'clock closing" twenty years ago.

I believe the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources is having second thoughts on what might happen and what should happen.

Many comments have been made—and there have been interjections from the Premier—that the National Party is listening to vested interests and is not as concerned with other interests as it should be. The National Party has listened to all interest groups and it has endeavoured to have a balanced view because it knows that the changes provided in the proposed legislation will have a vital bearing on the future of the liquor industry in Victoria.

The National Party should take into account not only the report which was commenced in 1984 but also the review of that report by Judge Campton, a most eminent person. It should consider all the views of interest groups. If changes to the liquor industry that will upset the status quo are to be implemented there could be a devastating effect on the industry and on people who consume alcohol.

There is a correlation between the availability of alcohol and its consumption. There is sufficient evidence available around the world to support that contention.

Most honourable members will have received—certainly the Minister has received—a press release from the Alcohol and Drug Foundation. Its comments are vital. It addresses not only the issues of vested interests in the industry but also the issues of alcohol abuse and under-age drinking in Victoria.

The press release from Mr Greg Swift, the Executive Director of the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, calls on the government to withdraw the Liquor Control Bill. I hope both the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources and the Premier have read the press release closely. For the benefit of honourable members, I emphasize that Mr Swift says:

The Bill before the Parliament is based on the alternative premise that increased availability does not lead to increased alcohol-related problems. The Bill is based on a European model where different cultural traditions exist and these are not appropriate to the Victorian environment. Even in France, Sweden, Norway, Finland and the USSR it has been found necessary to reduce both the hours of sale and the availability in general terms in an attempt to reduce alcohol-related problems.

The chairman of the Foundation's Advisory Committee pointed out: "There is a considerable body of expert advice and international evidence that increased availability leads to increased consumption and abuse. The Draft National Health Policy on Alcohol accepts World Health Organisation evidence that diverse problems associated with consumption increase as the per capita consumption increases and that further controls are necessary over availability, price, taxation, advertising and marketing. The policy identifies extension of licences for off premises sales as responsible for increased consumption by women and minors".

Furthermore, there are insufficient community safeguards in the Bill. Previous control mechanisms have been taken out of the Act and placed in the hands of the chief executive officer of a new liquor control body. There is the potential for a large increase in the number of liquor outlets as it will be easier to obtain licences and there will be additional opportunities for those holding licences to sell alcohol for consumption both on premises and for take-away.

The potential for increased availability through uncontrolled restricted sporting clubs would lead to increased consumption by groups at risk. There are no provisions for supervisors of premises and no provision for a core of informed licensing inspectors.

Increased availability of alcohol is not in the community interest particularly when there is:

great concern at Government and community levels over underage drinking.

it is contradictory to the Draft National Health Policy on Alcohol.

there will be policing problems with the increase in availability and thus it will be impossible to impose sufficient controls.

The Bill should be withdrawn until after the final report of the National Health Policy on Alcohol in Australia is released.

Surely that is something which should be taken into account by the government in the proposed legislation. No account has been taken of the extra cost to Victoria with the increased number of outlets that will need to be policed and the increased hours that the outlets will be open. That is important. The Minister for Industry, Technology and

Resources, as the Minister responsible, should talk to the police and to some people who may be responsible about this matter.

Recently I took the opportunity of speaking to the senior police officer at Castlemaine. I asked how he was handling the situation there relating to the control of the consumption of alcohol. He was critical of the 3 a.m. licences operating in the Castlemaine area. He indicated clearly that an extension from a 1 a.m. licence to a 3 a.m. licence merely extended the hour at which the problem of alcohol consumption and abuse became prevalent. He indicated there was a problem at 1 a.m. when certain licensed premises closed and then there was a problem again at 3 a.m. when those with extended permits closed.

The extra cost to the State is an important issue which must be addressed. I reiterate: those involved in the liquor industry—from the hotels to the liquor merchants, right down to the club licensees, the licensees of the restricted clubs and even the vigneron—*are* responsible people in the main, but the industry still needs to be controlled.

Another area of concern is the government's response to comments made in the media. Members of the media seem to have a vested interest in seeing that there is a change, with an extension of trading hours in Victoria. They have been in the forefront of pressuring the government to effect a change. Over the past eighteen months, the government has responded to media comments recommending that there be major changes in the liquor industry.

The government has given little weight or recognition to and made little comment on the important contribution of the report by Judge Campton. This is an indictment of the media in Victoria, that its members have taken the opportunity of attacking the government in case it did not act. They have attacked the Opposition parties because members of the Opposition have attempted to consider the legislation objectively and look at what will happen in Victoria. The liquor industry needs to be closely controlled. There must be recognition of a correlation between consumption and availability of alcohol. The proposed legislation provides an extension to the availability of alcohol for consumption.

The National Party appreciates the changes made to the proposed legislation. We appreciate the amendments moved by the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources. However, in his second-reading speech, the Minister said:

I emphasise that this Bill rejects the old notion of economic considerations in deciding licence applications.

Consideration must be given to the economic circumstances of people involved in the industry when considering new licences.

I note the amendments, which include the reducing of the definition of the level of alcohol to 0.5 per cent by volume. That brings into consideration the low alcohol beers and the coolers.

Mr Cain interjected.

Mr JASPER—I will return to the interjection by the Premier in a moment. He is one who does not understand the industry. If he bothered to speak to the people in the industry, I suggest—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! The honourable member will ignore the interjection.

Mr JASPER—It is a timely interjection because we have a Premier who does not have a true understanding of this industry. It is interesting to see the Minister shaking his head and saying that the comment is being made again. Surely it does need to be brought before the people of Victoria that we have the Premier pushing for legislation and not truly understanding this vital industry.

This vital industry has enormous implications, particularly for revenue. If the Premier just considered restricted club permits, he would understand something of the industry. I

appreciate the amendment related to restricted club permits. While the Minister has tightened the area, he has not gone far enough. Included in the Bill is a provision which allows people involved in restricted club licences to purchase their alcohol requirements from wholesalers. Supplies should be purchased from retailers. A situation will develop where the government may experience difficulty in collecting the 9 per cent charge applicable to those licences. There could be an explosion in the amount of alcohol consumed in those clubs.

The National Party strongly supports the amendment which prevents the clubs from selling packaged liquor to be taken away for consumption.

I note the changes which have been made to the definition of "vigneron". That change needed to be made to bring back into the legislation the definition as it currently stands in the Liquor Control Act.

I have been provided with proposed clause 60 as I requested. I note also that there have been changes relating to local councils. Local councils will now be able to object to licences but the final arbiter will be the Liquor Control Commission. I foreshadow a number of amendments which the National Party will be moving in the Committee stage. Further major amendments need to be made to the proposed legislation to provide effective legislation for the control of this industry. I trust there will be time within the restrictions placed by the Minister on the debate to fully discuss all of the proposed amendments so that honourable members will be able to grasp their significance. This is necessary so that the legislation passed will be the best legislation for Victoria.

Members of the National Party are concerned that the proposed legislation reflects properly appropriate control of this industry now and in the future. We are concerned that the government is giving little credit and little credence to the work undertaken by the Liquor Control Commission in the past and the effective industry we have in this State.

I put on record that the tack the government is taking could lead to major changes in the operation of the liquor industry in the State. These changes could be to the detriment of the industry—not only to the people directly concerned with the industry and the consumption of alcohol but also to the entire Victorian community. I trust the detailed amendments the National Party will be proposing will be considered and accepted by the government. We look forward to better legislation which will be effective in continuing to control the liquor industry in the future.

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—I reiterate how disappointed I am in the government, after having considered this legislative change for so long, for denying, by pushing through the proposed legislation, the opportunity for members on this side of the House to make contributions to the debate. It is obvious that the government has no further speakers. I should have thought that, given that all honourable members have been subjected to representations from a wide cross-section of the community, members should be able to speak in this place on this important piece of proposed legislation to reflect the views of those who have made representations to them. It is nothing short of disgraceful that the government has not recognised the importance and the role of members of Parliament—particularly backbenchers and the Opposition—and allowed them to use the forums and the democratic process of Parliament to represent their constituents.

Over the past few months comments have appeared in the media about the position the Liberal Party would finally adopt on the proposed legislation. The Liberal Party has always adopted the attitude that when proposed legislation is introduced, it is up to the Opposition to carefully examine it. One must take into account that the Opposition does not have the same amount of time to consult widely with the community as the government has while it puts together the proposed legislation. When one considers the changes between Bill No. 1 and Bill No. 2, and the further amendments to be introduced today, it is obvious that the Opposition needs time to prepare its response to the proposed legislation—especially such a major piece of proposed legislation as this.

The honourable members for Prahran and Caulfield, and other members of my party, have worked with some speed and a high degree of detail and professionalism to arrive at the position enunciated today by the honourable member for Prahran.

The Opposition's basic response to the proposed legislation is one of support. In other words, the Opposition does not oppose the basic thrust of the measure. It disturbs me when I read from time to time that the philosophical thrust of the Liberal Party—which in my opinion is pure—is at times misrepresented by some sections of the media when trying to foreshadow what its final response will be to any proposed legislation.

I do not think anyone in the community today is in any real doubt about what the Liberal Party stands for. People know that the Liberal Party stands for good legislation and deregulation. The Liberal Party does not stand for deregulation for the sake of deregulation, just as it does not stand for change just for the sake of change.

If proposed legislation is introduced involving deregulation, it will have to be judged on its merits. The final test of any proposed legislation from the point of view of the Liberal Party must be whether the deregulation leads to community benefit and is in the community interest. If proposed legislation such as this is put forward espousing deregulation in some shape or another, and the Opposition believes the measure contains community benefit, it should be recognised by those outside that the Opposition generally will support the thrust of the proposed legislation.

That is not to say that it will not move to amend the legislation or further enforce its philosophy. That is not to say the Opposition will go through every piece of proposed legislation and do the work of the government. While the Labor Party remains in government it must recognise that it must bear the responsibility for the legislation it introduces.

This second Bill is the final product of a great deal of work that started some years ago. The proposed legislation does not take on board all the recommendations of the Nieuwenhuysen report; it takes up some, rejects some, and alters others. Therefore, the proposed legislation is a reflection of the government's concern for this industry.

It also recognises that the existing legislation was not entirely viable in its current form. Therefore, detailed as it is, the proposed legislation is not coming to Parliament without a great deal of consideration and, I must point out, a great deal of soul-searching by a large number of people on all sides of the House.

As my colleague outlined, the Opposition does not oppose the proposed legislation. The Opposition, like the National Party, has some concern particularly about community interest and the policing of the measure. It raises the old hoary subject that when one passes legislation that on the surface seems to be a good thing at the time, it may or may not be enforceable in practice.

The onus is on the government to provide safeguards and enforce and police the proposed legislation. That is not the responsibility of the opposition parties. The opposition parties have taken on board a considerable amount of representations from individuals, businesses and associations.

Strong representations were also made by the Australian Hotels Association, which is a strong and professional lobby group. The Opposition has weighed up its submissions as it has weighed up the submissions from other sections of the community. Ultimately the decision we make in this place today comes down to the philosophy of the Liberal Party and, in this case, a further extension of the deregulation process is in the community interest because the Bill contains community benefits.

None of us know for sure how the final application of the Bill will work in the marketplace. The major concern of the Australian Hotels Association was that the passage of the Bill would cause an explosion of new licences, particularly for restaurants. The association believed this would lead to greater availability of liquor, resulting in more use and misuse.

I do not remember the association ever using that argument when hotel hours were extended from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. In my experience the most serious abuse of alcohol in the past—although not necessarily today—was associated with hotels. Hotels have been very fearful of their future in times gone by.

As one moves around Victoria today in the metropolitan, provincial and country areas, one realises that a massive reinvestment in hotels has taken place involving enormous upgrading operations. Hotels are going in for better quality restaurants and providing more entertainment for families.

The electorate that I represent is one of the few remaining dry areas in Victoria. Some of the upgraded hotels on the border of that electorate are superb. If someone had suggested to me a few years ago that I should take my family to a certain hotel on the border of the electorate I would have laughed in their face. However, because of the improved atmosphere, the quality of food and the provision of entertainment rooms for children, I have attended the hotel on a number of occasions. Hotels have adjusted to change just as other sectors of the community have adjusted to change.

The changes proposed in the Bill do not come as a bolt out of the blue; they have been spoken about now for two years. Although the hotels obviously have a position to put—and the Opposition accepts their right to put that view—I do not believe their basic claim is correct. The association spoke about the explosion of new licences. At present, basically anyone can obtain a licence to establish a restaurant and, in most cases, they are BYO restaurants.

It is not cheap to set up a restaurant today. If a massive demand for new restaurants existed, people would be rushing out to set up new restaurants right across the State. This does not happen because of the cost factor. The cost of outfitting an average-sized restaurant seating about 100 people would be of the order of \$500 000. If one borrows that money one has to pay high interest charges.

The passage of the Bill will not lead to a flood of new restaurants. They are like a lot of other small businesses; the easiest business to enter in Victoria, perhaps in any part of the world, is small business. One can attach a shingle and, in time, one will be able to discern whether the investment, the skills and talents are recognised by the community, and whether the demand for the product is sufficient support for the business. That is as it exists today.

Restaurants are in the category of small businesses that are the most frequent to close, even without the Bill being passed. Therefore, the establishment and closure of businesses in this industry will continue.

The Australian Hotels Association argued for increased availability of alcohol. The existing licensed and BYO restaurants are meeting the demand; people are either using the facility or staying at home, and having a quiet wine with a meal. An increased number of licences increases the availability of alcohol but it will need to be determined over a number of years whether the increased availability of licences leads to increased patronage, or whether it changes eating and drinking habits. The Opposition believes any increase would be marginal and unable to be measured.

People who go to restaurants invariably eat and drink. If the community wishes to make use of the facilities and entrepreneurship provided by an individual, why should it not be able to do so?

The Australian Hotels Association mentions a greater use and misuse. The association did not complain when hotel hours were extended from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., and it certainly did not argue that there was a greater availability, therefore, greater use and misuse. The government will need to review any effect over time, but I doubt whether that will happen. The economics of establishing new businesses today are such that the Opposition does not consider the legislation would lead to a rush for the establishment of these new licences.

I respect the fact that the National Party raised matters of concern to it today. It is to the credit of National Party members that they have not moved a reasoned amendment to attempt to withdraw the Bill.

Mr Jasper interjected.

Mr KENNETT—It would be a pity if they did. I understand the concern of their spokesman; we all have areas of concern. The National Party has said that we need to examine various sections of the Bill and move amendments to be considered by the government. The National Party spoke about the devastating effect on industry; the Liberal Party is concerned because the Liberal Party has more people in this Parliament representing country Victoria than does the National Party. The concern of the National Party for rural hotels is understandable; it is a concern the Liberal Party also holds.

The National Party is particularly concerned about restricted clubs being able to purchase supplies from the wholesaler; what is the reality of the situation? It is most unlikely that someone from a restricted club will drive a long distance out of the district to a wholesaler in order to buy alcohol at a slightly cheaper rate, only to incur the extra transport costs. Why else do we need local rural pubs? More often than not, they throw in accessories, such as glasses.

Mr Jasper interjected.

Mr KENNETT—I know the National Party is concerned but it is a simplification of the truth to say that the proposal will have a devastating effect on the industry. There may be a slight altering of the purchasing practices that currently exist; no doubt, the government will monitor that, as will the National Party, but I think there will be very little difference.

The decision by the government to accept the Opposition's concern that restricted clubs not be able to sell packaged beer has been included in provisions of the Liquor Control Bill (No. 2). There was never any intention that people would use that liquor to turn themselves into de facto retailers without all the government-prescribed provisions currently operating in the industry.

The National Party expressed concern about consumption but consumption per head has dropped; therefore, one must consider whether the effects of the Bill will increase consumption or whether it will remain static, or decrease. No one can yet make a categorical statement on that but my judgment is that it will not significantly alter the status quo.

The Opposition has given much thought to the proposed legislation. The National Party talks about control and justifies the argument for restricting clubs to purchase mainly from hotels by saying that controls should continue to be enforced through the legislation. The liquor industry is very controlled, but surely there can be no opposition to people exercising more choice if there is a community benefit.

The Opposition has one major concern about the Bill, as mentioned by the honourable member for Prahran, and it will closely review the issue in approaching the next election. The concern involves the decision of the government, having introduced the Bill and having decided to effect new liquor licences—particularly for restaurants—to impose a new State government tax on restaurants that wish to adopt one or other of the provisions within the Bill, particularly clause 50 (3). In other words, the government is suggesting, "If you want the benefit of this legislation, put \$800 into our pockets".

Mr Fordham interjected.

Mr KENNETT—I hope it is not in the Minister's pocket!

The provision does not apply to pubs or to bottle shops; in other words, they pay taxation in turnover tax. If the government is trying to deregulate and encourage the industry, why is it imposing additional costs on the industry; the income will be received from the licence fees. A once-only cost of \$800 to cover the administration of the approval is expensive. It is a new, quick tax; it is quick money, quickly; it is unnecessary, a rip-off!

We are prepared to go with the government but if that provision is to be inserted, the government will have to bear the odium.

I am pleased that the Premier and Deputy Premier—the responsible Minister—have supported most of the comments I have made in terms of this Bill; in their own hearts they must recognise that they are imposing a special tax on a potentially new industry. If a new hotel is established, it will not be taxed an extra \$800. The cost of establishing a restaurant is high; many of our best restaurants do not have 100 seats, but are small, with 25 or 50 seats, often with an ethnic origin. The extra cost is against the spirit of encouraging investment in what is a critical industry. It takes time to establish a business and to build a clientele in this industry. The proposal would be a new tax on an industry that is supposedly being encouraged by the government.

My colleague has again foreshadowed three areas of genuine concern; firstly, that of residential amenity; secondly, retaining historically dry areas within this State, and, thirdly, importantly, that the Act be proclaimed as a whole. The government will have to decide whether it is prepared to accept those amendments, but the Opposition stands firm on them. It is prepared to go with the government members, but the choice is theirs. It is all very well for the Premier and the Deputy Premier to laugh about this matter——

Mr Fordham—You talked about owning a hotel a few minutes ago!

Mr KENNETT—That is my choice. It is a bit like the brothel legislation. The people in part of my electorate and in a neighbouring municipality have historically made the choice—and it has often been tested—about licences within their area and they have said “No” for reasons of their own. I do not deny them that right.

Ultimately, the government is saying in the Bill that those people should lose that right. What right has the government to say that it knows better than these people? Surely ultimately the community should have the final say. It is a bit like prostitution. The government believes that the people in my electorate want brothels, so it will force one down their throats. Basically that is what the government is doing in Canterbury Road.

The government has to make the decisions. If it wants the Bill passed, it has to accept the Opposition's amendments and be prepared to proclaim the Bill as a whole. That is not a high price to pay for the Bill being passed through both Houses of Parliament.

As it stands now, the Bill will not be opposed by the Opposition. My colleague will move amendments, and I trust that the government will see fit to accept them in another place. If it does not, it will not be our fault if the legislation is not passed.

Most legislation is a matter of compromise. Some of the best legislation to pass through Parliament has occurred where parties have got together and discussed and agreed and come to a final conclusion. No legislation better illustrates that point than the Adoption Act, on which three members of the three parties worked together very hard indeed. It is not a big price to pay for this proposed legislation.

The Opposition has not objected to the Bill. In the main it has stayed true to its philosophy of deregulation not for deregulation's sake but because it believes there is community betterment to be gained from it.

I suppose one of the reasons why I think the Bill is worthy of passing through Parliament is that it once again highlights the stupidity of the government's approach to shop trading hours and the laws governing shop trading hours, because a restaurant or a hotel is able to open on Saturday afternoon, Saturday evening or Sunday, but if one happens to be another small retailer with premises next door to a pub, the government says that person is not mature enough to open.

Ultimately the Premier will have to make a decision. If he is prepared to advance this sort of Bill which gives others the opportunity of trading on Saturday and Sunday, along with brothels and TABs, he must be prepared to review his other laws, because it is totally inconsistent. I suggest that the Premier not harangue the Opposition because of the

responsible approach it has taken to the Bill unless the government is prepared to be consistent in the application of the principles of the Bill in other areas of legislation and community activity. A crying demand exists for the government to review its shop trading policy in the community interest, and there are other reasons, obviously, that could be put forward to back that argument.

The Bill will not be opposed, and I congratulate my colleagues the honourable members for Prahran and Caulfield and other members of the Liberal Party who have spent so much time responsibly consulting and arriving at a position supported by the community. The position has been arrived at only after the party has evaluated all of the facts, regardless of the pressures received from any lobby group or the predictions of any media organisation.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—Little remains to be said about the Bill, and I am delighted that that is the case because the last hour or two has demonstrated that my prediction earlier in the week that the Bill would be passed appears to have a good prospect of being borne out, and I welcome that. It is a measure of the maturity of this State that we have reached the present position.

It is also true that when one looks back at the history of the liquor laws, one sees that every ten or fifteen years a thorough examination has taken place. There was the Phillips report in the 1960s, the Davies report in the mid-1970s and now the Nieuwenhuysen report in the mid-1980s.

Listening to the honourable member for Murray Valley, I was reminded that the plea is really always the same whenever reforms are suggested. It is always, "Leave us alone". It is "The status quo always has to be protected" for reasons that are generally much the same; but I am delighted to see that we are moving away from that and there is a good prospect of a substantial change occurring with the Bill.

The change is a move towards community interest and concern about alcohol consumption and abuse and, secondly, a recognition that the provision of outlets ought to be one based on community concern and demand and not upon the existing and entrenched interests. That is the nub of what the Bill is about.

As the Leader of the Opposition said, if one wants to spend half a million dollars setting up a restaurant or anything else—so be it; one has the right to go out and expend that money and take one's chances in the marketplace. The phrase I used to hear in law was that it would be "determined by demand"; that was the popular phrase some time back.

I well remember that in the early 1960s the fashion was licensed groceries. The need for all these licensed groceries that opened up was determined by the demand, and if one wanted a licensed grocery, one had to go out and prove that there was a demand, that a whole heap of housewives out there were too embarrassed to buy their liquor at a hotel and that they wanted to buy it at a retail shop. If one could establish demand, one was able to open a licensed grocery.

The barrister for the applicant went along showing a whole list of people in the area who said they wanted a licensed grocer near them and all the hotels and others would say, "There is not enough business for two or three of us; we should not have one" and all the other licensed grocers agreed, and that was the end of the application.

We have limped along with that notion for too long. This Bill shatters that notion for all time and says, "If you want to go out and start a restaurant, if there are 25 other restaurants there and they believe the competition will destroy them, or the hotels believe it will take away their business, then so be it because there ought to be a capacity for those of you who wish to start a business to go out and do it".

I welcome, after almost two years, the persistence shown by my colleague, the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources, in formulating a Bill that enjoys that support

and the prospect of being passed. It is a bit like a whole range of other areas of social change——

Mr Kennett—Shop trading?

Mr CAIN—That have been given serious consideration in recent times, and on the issues of liquor, prostitution, equal opportunity, and on shop trading, the attitudes of the Liberal and Labor parties are different and distinct from those of the National Party.

My recollection on another social issue also is of the courage of the Hamer government, despite opposition from within its own ranks, in introducing the Crimes (Sexual Offences) Bill.

Mr Williams—And it brought us down!

Mr CAIN—That Bill was supported by almost all of the Liberal Party, but not all, as the honourable member for Doncaster is pointing out. But it was opposed by the National Party.

I am simply making the point that, over the past ten years, on those social issues there has been a closer relationship between the Liberal and Labor parties than there has been between the Liberal and National parties. That is what makes me stop and think about the suggestions by members of the Opposition of forming a coalition comprising the Liberal and National parties. What a mess that would be when the coalition was dealing with social issues! Those two parties could not live together.

The honourable member for Murray Valley places too much reliance on the views of those occupying positions in the Liquor Control Commission. The experience in both the liquor area and workers compensation——

Mr Ross-Edwards—Do not say too much about workers compensation.

Mr CAIN—The Leader of the National Party will appreciate what I am saying. The views of those who have been involved in those areas for a long period become extremely narrow. I can list a whole range of social issues where the views of those involved become far too parochial and narrow. The same lawyers, advisers and accountants are involved in the Liquor Control Commission and they are not the most objective judges of how the Act is functioning.

Mr Jasper—In your opinion!

Mr CAIN—And in the opinion of a range of other people. The honourable member for Murray Valley should not place too much reliance on the views of those who are closely associated with a discipline of this kind. On social issues of this type, a broader community perspective is required, and that is forthcoming from other areas.

I welcome the advances that have been made between the introduction of the original Bill by the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources and this Bill, and I hope it has a speedy passage through Parliament.

Mr J. F. McGRATH (Warrnambool)—I support my colleague, the honourable member for Murray Valley, and I bring to the debate some of the concerns that I have and that the electorate of Warrnambool has about the Bill, which is not significantly different from the original Bill.

The acid test for the philosophy of the Bill is whether it is necessary and whether it is right. The Bill fails to achieve those objectives; it is not necessary and it certainly is not right. I have grave difficulty in understanding the rationale of the government. The Premier said that the Bill will create the change that is necessary, but some of the things he said concern me greatly.

It worries me that the Premier, by inference, cast aspersions on Judge Campton by saying that, in his opinion, he was not the correct person to make judgments about the

Bill. In view of the excellent performance of Judge Campton, one must respect what he has to say. However, that is the reason why the report has sat on the table for so long.

Through his knowledge of the industry, Judge Campton was able to analyse the Bill as well as the Nieuwenhuysen report, which was based on a strong bias. In reading that report, and from the one meeting I had with Dr Nieuwenhuysen, it became evident that, for some reason, he dislikes hotels. I would even go so far as to suggest that he hates hotels; he seems to be paranoid about them, and that is reflected in his report and in the Bill.

The Leader of the Opposition said that he was pleased that the National Party had not moved a reasoned amendment. However, the National Party does propose to move a reasoned amendment and, with your permission, Mr Deputy Speaker, I move:

That all the words after "That" be omitted with the view of inserting in place thereof the words "this Bill be withdrawn and, after full consultation with the various interest groups within and outside the industry including the Liquor Control Commission, redrafted to—

(a) regulate the industry, taking into account the conditions and requirements historically imposed on liquor licence holders and investment in the industry;

(b) ensure effective administration of an industry which provides a substantial contribution to the Consolidated Fund; and

(c) provide conditions which will allay community concern regarding adverse social effects of increased liquor availability."

The amendment is not very different from the reasoned amendment the National Party moved during the second-reading debate on the Liquor Control Bill, but there is one significant difference, and that is the inclusion of the words, "including the Liquor Control Commission". Obviously, the Liquor Control Commission is the appropriate body to give an objective critique on the Bill. Certainly, in his voluminous report, Judge Campton put forward many views that, unfortunately, are not reflected in the Bill.

I support the honourable member for Murray Valley and I shall put forward the views not only of those involved in the liquor industry but also of those affected through the consumption of alcohol. I join the debate as a person who has had fifteen or sixteen years' experience of working with people affected by alcohol.

Much of the work in that field is motivated by the World Health Organisation and the recognised fact that alcohol plays a major part in the disease concept and that it has had an enormous impact on a broad range of people. In the past five or ten years, that impact has run down through the ages. Approximately ten years ago, older people—those of retiring age—were seen as the major group with alcohol-associated problems.

The age group affected is now considerably lower. Australia and Victoria are facing the dilemma of alcohol abuse problems of juveniles when ten or fifteen years ago that possibility would never have been considered; today it is a real and major problem. It is a major problem in the electorate of Warrnambool, in the City of Melbourne, and in all urban and country areas large and small. The impact on society is significant.

It is my view and the view of the National Party that if liquor legislation requires amendment and updating that should be done only with a total understanding of the needs of the broad community and of the impact that the proposed changes will have before those changes are imposed on society.

As I said earlier, Dr Nieuwenhuysen showed a bias against hoteliers and some of his theories were difficult to understand. He tried to convince both me and the National Party that consumption was in no way related to product availability. That goes against all concepts of marketing that I have ever learned. In the many years I have been involved in retailing in small business, availability of the product has been a most important aspect of consumption. If a product is not available, people will not buy it. It is that simple. Dr Nieuwenhuysen was not prepared to shift ground on his view. However, statistics clearly indicate that alcohol consumption is very directly related to availability.

The Leader of the Opposition said that alcohol consumption had been fairly stable over a period of years and on a per capita basis there has not been a great change in consumption and there has even been a slight fall.

My understanding of consumption, availability and servicing the needs of a community is that if there is a growth in demand for a product then, and only then, should one consider expanding outlets to service the need. It is then justified. However, to say that there is a stagnant level of consumption or a decline in the level of consumption and then to increase outlets to me is economic nonsense.

Mr Fordham—It is free enterprise.

Mr. J. F. McGRATH—It is all very well to talk of free enterprise. According to the Premier, the Bill is intended to service the demands of the community but, obviously, the community has enough access to alcohol at existing outlets and the statistics on consumption demonstrate that. My concern is that although the debate has centred on consumption, no-one has analysed why the statistics demonstrate that consumption of alcohol has remained steady or declined somewhat.

One needs to analyse the health patterns of people over the past ten years, particularly people in their 20s, late 30s or early 40s who have adopted very much a healthier style of living than previous generations. They are exercising more—jogging, riding bicycles, and so on. They have changed their drinking habits. Some are white wine drinkers of small quantity and others do not drink any alcohol. Therein lies part of the reason for the decline in consumption.

However, it does not tell the full story of consumption statistics remaining steady. This can be attributed to the vacuum that has been created by the increase in the 1980s of under-age drinkers—kids who are getting hold of alcohol through devious means but, nevertheless, getting hold of alcohol.

Some obtain alcohol from a network of outlets. The Leader of the Opposition stated today that retail liquor outlets have become very professional in the way that they approach their business. They have had to do that in order to survive, whether retail or packaged alcohol outlets, hotels or licensed restaurants. These people have become very professional and responsible in their businesses and it appears to me that the only way these young kids can get alcohol is by using older brothers, friends or other people to purchase it for them. I do not believe the hotelier or licensed bottle shop owner has not at some stage broken the law but in the electorate of Warrnambool it would be accepted generally that licensed hoteliers and licensed bottle shop owners have acted responsibly towards young drinkers. They are strict.

The fear is that by the creation of additional outlets there will be a loss of some of that professional expertise and input of training into that discipline, which is a control of some sort, on any explosion of under-age drinking. However, once we start to fragment the quality of the industry and the people who serve in that industry there will be an enormous explosion in under-age drinking. It will happen that in some of these restaurants junior waiters and waitresses will not be aware of the professional controls that ought to be exercised and, as a result, there will be a lack of attention to the problem of under-age drinking in those establishments.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation views this prospect with grave concern. The foundation has called for the withdrawal of the Bill so that problems that the foundation anticipates can be taken into account. The foundation has commented that it believes the Bill is based on European models where different cultural traditions exist and that these are not appropriate to the Victorian environment. The foundation states that even in France, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia it has been necessary to reduce both the hours of sale of liquor and its availability generally to reduce alcohol-related problems.

Although Australia seeks guidance internationally on legislation and it would appear that some international countries are leading Australia in their legislation, one must also

take note of the lessons that they have learned in that process. The availability of alcohol through additional outlets or extended hours of trading has created problems in those countries.

I recall reading a little while ago about an experience in Sweden. Sweden had an explosion in its drinking problem. Young people aged between sixteen years and twenty years had alcohol abuse problems. The Swedish authorities undertook an extensive television campaign which accurately portrayed young drinkers as slobs. The campaign had enormous impact and it changed the drinking habits and behaviour of Sweden's young people.

It is something we should not cast aside; we should think about it as we educate our young people to go out into the world to look after themselves. It is important that when they have a few drinks they should know how to handle themselves. As legislators we have a responsibility towards young people.

The Swedish experience is a valuable one, and with the use of the television media in Australia we can look at doing something on a national or State basis.

The recommendations of the national health policy on alcohol will be handed down next month. The draft proposal consistently states the need for control on the availability of liquor. It flies in the face of the Federal Parliament and the rest of the nation if we hasten with the proposed legislation and do not take account of what is said in this document. More importantly, we should wait until the final report is handed down to see whether the victim statistics are consistent with those in other States, particularly the ones relevant to the national health policy on alcohol, which is all part of the drug offensive program that has been undertaken by the Federal government. The aims and ideals of that drug offensive program are supported by both sides of the House. We have a mandate to capitalise on the recommendations, suggestions or concepts in that draft policy that will be handed down on 9 November 1987.

We need to think about what our Federal colleagues are doing. The Victorian Association of Alcohol and Drug Agencies Inc.—VAADA—which is an umbrella group of a number of service agencies, is currently funded by State and Federal governments to service the needs of the community. That organisation has indicated some grave concerns about the direction of the Bill and they indicate that there should be more consideration given to the liberalisation of availability, and if there is a mandate to do anything we must listen to the people working in the field.

Most of the organisations that are associated with VAADA throughout the State are being funded by the Victorian government. There is also Federal funding. I am a committee member of an organisation in Warrnambool, the Warrnambool Regional Association for Alcohol and Drug Dependence—WRAADD—and its growth has been largely responsible due to State and Federal government funding. That organisation plays a significant role in the community and is a little nervous about the availability aspects of the liquor in the proposed legislation.

I look forward to the Committee stage of the Bill when amendments will be introduced by the National Party and the Opposition. I hope the Minister and the government will look favourably at these amendments. I am sure the government has some amendments to introduce, also.

I wish to see legislation put in place that will adequately serve the needs of all Victorians; the National Party does not necessarily wish to serve any one pressure group, as has been charged. The Premier made reference to the many social issues on which we stand apart from the government. I do not make apologies for that, nor do I regret it. The Westminster system allows people in a democratic society to stand up and speak about what they believe in.

Some issues that come before Parliament need to have strong views expressed about them. I trust that for as long as blood runs through my veins I will continue to stand up

and be counted for what I believe, even though, at times, I will be knocked down by the numbers.

The Bill will have a significant impact on society; it is one of the most important Bills the government will pass. It deals with all aspects of society, with the liquor industry and the community generally. It will have enormous social implications, particularly in the area that the honourable member for Doncaster referred to in the debate on the first Bill, the 10 or 12 per cent who need the help of such organisations as VAADA.

I ask the House to consider the reasoned amendment put forward by the National Party, and for the government to consider the last five words, taking into account the Liquor Control Commission and its ability to make available an objective critique of the proposed legislation, and to put forward the amending concepts that need to be added to the Bill that will serve the interests of Victoria.

It is my view and the view of the National Party that all of the clauses in the Bill are not needed. Some of the clauses will be detrimental to the fabric of the Victorian community; the social impacts will be enormous. We have a mandate as legislators to see that what is put into the statute book is right for the future welfare of young Victorians. We must give young Victorians the direction and guidance they need. The proposed legislation will not do that.

I ask all honourable members to consider the reasoned amendment in the interests of the social impact on the community of Victoria.

Mr HEFFERNAN (Ivanhoe)—The Liberal Party would find it easy under normal circumstances with Bills such as this to support the government in its deregulation direction. However, we are not dealing with a normal type Bill; we are not dealing with a liquor Bill; we are dealing with a Bill concerning a drug. Throughout the debate we have moved away from the intent of the Bill in our anxiety to free up the industry, and we have overlooked the problems associated with liquor consumption within the State.

Today liquor is our biggest problem and I wonder whether the Bill comes to grips with the problem that alcohol is causing in the community.

We have an obsession with the hotel industry, and it was interesting to hear the Premier today talk about those people in the industry who believe they have a right to total control without any competition. That is a strange statement coming from a former solicitor and lawyer in the legal profession. There is no industry that has more competition than the liquor industry. It is absurd to hear the Premier say that Victoria should deregulate the liquor industry.

Deregulation of the liquor industry will not be achieved unless the labour market is also deregulated. It is all very well for the government to suggest the liquor industry needs to be freed of constraints but at the same time the government is restricting employment by adding to industry costs. The community is finding it hard to afford those costs.

Will the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources explain how the Bill will provide a service to the community at a lower cost without deregulating the labour market? All the Bill will achieve will be to expand the liquor industry and this will create problems. No doubt, the industry will be downgraded.

The House should consider the past achievements of the hotel industry. It is easy for the knockers in the government who have never been involved in private industry or the hotel industry to tell those who are involved in either what they should do. The hotel industry in Victoria has been providing an excellent service of which we should all be proud.

Judge Campton stated the same in his report:

It is conceded that Victoria has the best hotels and restaurants in the Commonwealth and that liquor prices are as cheap as anywhere in the Commonwealth. The public does not seek any significant changes in the law. It is hard then to see what benefit will occur from most of the changes recommended. . .

That was the comment of a learned judge who is well versed in the liquor industry. From the beginning he doubted whether the changes will work.

Why has the Bill been introduced? Who requested the changes? The measure is probably the result of a minor complaint. The government possibly decided to examine the existing problems and in doing so decided liquor reforms were a vote catcher. It then announced an inquiry into the liquor industry. No reason was given for the inquiry and the government did not outline its objectives or the direction in which it intended to head.

Everyone knows that if the government wants to examine any community activity it employs an academic. In this case, Dr Nieuwenhuysen was the academic selected. He had no experience in the hotel industry yet he produced a report, the recommendations of which became the basis for a Bill.

Where did Dr Nieuwenhuysen go to begin his detailed research into the liquor industry? He went to Tasmania! I accept that Tasmania is well governed by a Liberal government but I question whether it is the ideal place to research the liquor industry. The recommendations of Dr Nieuwenhuysen left him open to ridicule.

Honourable members are aware that the Liberal Party will support the Bill, with amendments. The Liberal Party accepts that the Labor Party is in government and, therefore, will not move to block the Bill, but the long-term ramifications of the proposed changes to the liquor industry have not been well considered by the government.

I look forward to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources generally summarising the major changes proposed by the Bill. No doubt he is a connoisseur of the best red wines but can he explain any problem he has confronted in obtaining liquor? I do not know anyone who has had any major difficulty with the liquor industry. Once again bureaucrats are trying to tell the people what should be done.

I agree with the National Party that the report adopts an anti-hotel approach. Probably Dr Nieuwenhuysen failed at one stage in his life to make a dollar in the liquor industry and went bankrupt because of his inexperience and lack of control! There is no justification for accepting all the recommendations in his report. The Opposition will be seeking compromises and it hopes the government will support its amendments.

The Premier said that economic considerations had been removed from the Bill. What inconsistency! Only recently I opposed amendments to allow local government to intervene in planning applications on economic grounds. During the recent debate on a planning Bill I expressed my opposition to the government becoming involved in the economic viability of planning applications. Those matters ought to be left to the private sector.

I would not support any economic consideration in the proposed legislation but the fact that those provisions have been deleted from the second Bill highlights the inconsistency of the government. Because of the inconsistencies contained in the measure the government will find itself in deep water and it will possibly need to make amendments to the Act in future.

The Bill contains some plusses; for example, the removal of the compulsory opening of hotels. I compliment the government on that move. The proposal to improve trading hours is welcomed and will allow licensees to respond to market forces. Certain aspects of the liquor industry should be allowed to flow as a natural force of the free enterprise system.

I question the role of the proposed Co-ordinating Council. The report suggested the council would have a twofold role: firstly, in research; and, secondly, in coordinating treatment services and activities designed to prevent abuse. In the Bill the role of the Co-ordinating Council is defined as purely advisory and little mention is made of its coordinating role. I hope the role of the council will be explained to honourable members at the end of the debate.

A specific role for the council needs to be defined, otherwise it is a council in name only. Of interest is that ten pages of the Bill have been devoted to the role of the Liquor Licensing Commission and only two to the role of the Co-ordinating Council. Many questions relating to the role of the Co-ordinating Council have been left unanswered. For example, are all members of the council to be paid, and are they to be employed on a full-time or part-time basis?

I also ask the Minister: where are the funds coming from to pay the Co-ordinating Council and its representatives? The Bill specifies that there shall be eighteen members of the council but does not provide for the expertise of a psychologist to assess the social factors attributed to the abuse of alcohol. What will be the role of the Co-ordinating Council? Will its role be to research, collect data and compile statistics? I ask the Minister to answer those questions.

What will be the role of the Liquor Licensing Commission? Will its role be an overseeing one to ensure implementation of the Act? Where does it fit in with the role of the Co-ordinating Council?

Compromises must be made in ascertaining the role of local government. I have had strong doubts about the right of local government to be involved in the issue of licences. I believed that process would strangle industry. The Bill has gone far enough, but at a later stage further problems may arise because the competition that will result from increased liquor outlets in the industry will force more hotels to supply night entertainment. As competition increases, hotels will seek different ways to make an additional dollar. They will expand their night entertainment. At that stage local government and the people in the area will be involved in control of such amenities.

The government has introduced the Bill with the intention of improving the tourism prospects of Victoria. The government will achieve that but constant monitoring will have to occur in some areas, particularly of distribution outlets. Additional distribution outlets will lead to increased consumption of liquor. Many reports have stated that during the past few years liquor consumption has been static.

It is beneficial to hoteliers, and especially breweries, for availability of liquor to be more widespread. I hope the government, through the Co-ordinating Council, will monitor the increased consumption of liquor to determine whether it is increasing problems among youths, whether it is affecting the responsibility of parents and whether it is bringing about a huge change in society. It is essential to monitor these factors to avoid major problems developing for society. No doubt the government is aware of these difficulties and has met with the various organisations concerned with alcohol abuse.

Advertising agencies that promote the consumption of liquor have an awesome responsibility. Advertising of liquor is out of hand and it should not be encouraged by the government. I trust the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources will examine these issues.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—It is a tragedy that members of the House, myself included, have been denied the opportunity of speaking on what I believe is the most important Bill to be introduced in Parliament this session.

The SPEAKER—Order! The time allotted for the second-reading stage of the Bill has expired.

The House divided on the question that the words proposed by Mr J. F. McGrath to be omitted stand part of the motion (the Hon. C. T. Edmunds in the chair).

Ayes	..	..	..	..	..	65
Noes	..	..	..	..	..	9
Majority against the amendment						56

AYES

Mr Andrianopoulos
Mr Brown
Miss Callister
Mr Cathie
Dr Coghill
Mr Coleman
Mr Cooper
Mr Culpin
Mr Cunningham
Mr Delzoppo

NOES

Mr Hann
Mr Jasper
Mr McGrath
(Warrnambool)
Mr McNamara
Mr Ross-Edwards
Mr Steggall
Mr Whiting

AYES

Mr Dickinson
 Mr Ernst
 Mr Fogarty
 Mr Fordham
 Mr Gavin
 Mrs Gleeson
 Mr Harrowfield
 Mr Hayward
 Mr Heffernan
 Mrs Hill
 Mr Hill
 Mr Hockley
 Mr John
 Mr Kennedy
 Mr Kennett
 Mr Kirkwood
 Mr Lea
 Mr Leigh
 Mr Lieberman
 Mr McCutcheon
 Mr Maclellan
 Mr Mathews
 Mr Micallief
 Mr Norris
 Mr Perrin
 Mr Plowman
 Mr Pope
 Mr Ramsay
 Mrs Ray
 Mr Remington
 Mr Reynolds
 Mr Richardson
 Mr Roper
 Mr Rowe
 Mr Seitz
 Mr Sheehan
 Mr Shell
 Mr Sidiropoulos
 Mr Simmonds
 Mr Simpson
 Mr Smith
 (Glen Waverley)
 Mr Smith
 (Polwarth)
 Mr Spyker
 Mr Stirling
 Mr Stockdale
 Mr Tanner
 Mrs Toner
 Mr Trezise
 Dr Vaughan
 Mr Weideman
 Mr Wilkes
 Mr Williams
 Mrs Wilson

Tellers:

Mrs Hirsh
 Mr McDonald

Mrs Setches

NOES

Tellers:

Mr McGrath
 (Lowan)
 Mr Wallace

PAIR

Mr Evans
 (Gippsland East)

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

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

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2

Mr HAYWARD (Pahran)—I move:

1. Clause 2, line 7, omit "or days".

The purpose of the amendment is to ensure that the whole Act comes into operation on a single day.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—In response to the fleeting comment from the honourable member for Pahran, the matter does have great significance. I understand the Opposition has taken a stand on principle, not just on this Bill but on all legislation, in conjunction with the National Party or influenced or directed by the National Party as it sees fit, regarding the single date of proclamation.

As I said when this matter was briefly discussed on an earlier occasion, there may well be circumstances on which there is agreement between the parties that a particular clause is not suitable for this proposition, particularly in a complex Bill such as this one; so I am suggesting that the government is not in a position to accept the amendment at this stage.

I am prepared to discuss its consequences with the honourable member for Pahran and the honourable member for Murray Valley between now and the completion of the debate in both Houses of Parliament. No doubt, if the opposition parties firm up on their view, the matter will come back for further consideration before the Legislative Assembly, so I should say that I acknowledge the honourable member's declaration of his party's position but I am not prepared to accept it at this stage except to say that it will be discussed while the Bill is between here and another place.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I recognise the reasons for the amendment and, as recognised by the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources, it is and has been the policy of the two opposition parties in recent times to amend clause 2 so that the commencement of the entire measure takes place on the one day.

The government has abused this position in other legislation when amendments have been brought before Parliament, particularly in cases where the Liberal and National parties have voted together in another place to ensure that a particular amendment is passed. In some cases the government has proceeded not to proclaim the clause in question because it does not suit the government. I understand why the government would take that attitude; however, that is the way Parliament has moved, and it is accepted by both Houses that legislation proceeds through Parliament on the basis of amendments moved in the Upper House.

The National Party is extremely concerned that when a Bill has been accepted finally by Parliament, the government then uses clause 2 to reject proclamation of the clauses that it does not believe are appropriate to the legislation.

I take the point of the Minister that this procedure can cause difficulties in clauses that are not appropriate to the Bill at the time, and it may not be appropriate that they all be proclaimed or that the Bill be proclaimed in total. The Motor Car Traders Bill is a perfect example of that. One clause, in particular, was not appropriate to be proclaimed and, in fact, that clause has still not been proclaimed; so there can be difficulties for the government in some cases if the Bill is to be proclaimed all at one time.

Perhaps it would be possible to obtain assurances from the government that the amendment will be looked at between here and another place. The Bill is a complex one and it may be that, in this case, there needs to be differences in the dates on which different clauses are proclaimed.

Mr HAYWARD (Pahran)—I should like to reply briefly. The honourable member for Murray Valley has stated the reason for the amendment in this particular case.

The Opposition is happy for the government to consider the amendment while the Bill is between here and another place. It certainly does not intend to call for a division on it. I give notice that, unless the Opposition can be persuaded to the contrary, it will insist upon this amendment in another place.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—I point out to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources that many of us have gone out on a limb to support him and his party in ensuring the passage of the Bill. I do not want the worst fears of the Australian Hotels Association about the hotel industry being taken over by the Mafia to become a reality.

The Minister has probably read the article that appeared in the *Sunday Press* of 31 May. I shall speak about that later. I do not want the Mafia taking over the hotel industry. I do not want the same thing to occur as is occurring in the brothel industry, which the Mafia is taking over because the government has not seen fit to gazette certain pieces of the brothel legislation.

If the Minister is a little peeved, I just point out that that is my concern. I accept the goodwill of the Minister, but the Opposition—and particularly people like me—is fed up with being outwitted by the unscrupulous elements of our society because legislation is not gazetted or is ineffective.

The amendment was negatived, and the clause was agreed to.

Clause 3

Mr HAYWARD (Pahran)—I move:

2. Clause 3, page 2, after line 34, insert—

“Interest of the community” in relation to an area includes the interest of the community in protection of the amenity of the area.”

I foreshadowed during my contribution to the second-reading debate the overall approach of the Opposition’s amendments. In addition to the amendment with which the Committee has already dealt, the Opposition’s approach is to ensure protection for local community amenity and to assist local councils in safeguarding it.

The amendment now before the Committee defines the “interest of the community” as specifically including protection of the amenity of the area. This is an essential first step towards protecting that amenity.

The purpose of the amendment is to insert a definition of “interest of the community” into clause 3, which is the definitions clause.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—The honourable member for Pahran said that the thrust of his comments earlier related to community interest, and I welcome and accept that attitude on behalf of the Opposition. Of course, that has been the approach that the government has taken with the entire Bill.

The Bill proposes a change from the previous model, which was essentially an economic one that saw the stability and interests of the existing licence-holders as a primary requisite—and for good reason—as compared with the emphasis on the interest of the community at large. The whole thread, the objectives and prime clauses of the Bill repeat that time and again.

The honourable member for Pahran made the point that he considered local government as the key ingredient in the protection of the amenity of an area, and I have a difference of opinion on that issue.

In my view, quite rightly, local government has a contribution to make—and in both the original measure and in the Bill now before the Committee, that is spelt out. I make

the point at this stage that there is no diminution of the role of local government in the 1987 Bill, compared with the existing 1968 legislation. That is not to say that the current Bill responds to the aspirations that local government might have for an expanded role to the extent that those authorities would wish.

The government has endeavoured to strike a balance, considering the Liquor Control Commission to be the appropriate body, as described by people in the industry, and as the appropriate umpire to make the decisions on licence and extended permit applications in the interests of the community.

Local government input is welcomed and encouraged, but the government certainly does not consider it as the final arbiter. That view is held by many other interest groups that have argued on this issue and, as I understand it, based on previous discussions, by the National Party and the honourable member for Prahran as well.

The amendment now before the Committee attempts to define "interest of the community". At a first reading, I see no difficulty with it, but I should like the opportunity of obtaining detailed legal advice on its implications. I am sympathetic to the intention of the amendment and, while the Bill is between here and another place, I shall attempt to discuss with the honourable member for Prahran whether the wording is appropriate for inclusion in clause 3, which is the definitions clause. I welcome and applaud the approach taken, and I hope we will reach accord on the final wording.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I have listened with interest to the explanation by the honourable member for Prahran of his amendment and to the Minister's response.

Like other parties, the National Party has received strong representations from the Municipal Association of Victoria expressing concern about the need for appropriate protection and appeal mechanisms for local government to be included in the measure.

The current Act provides that municipalities have the right to object to the renewal of a licence and, in fact, when they consider that is necessary, they do lodge objections with the Liquor Control Commission.

As the National Party spokesman on this matter, I have always held the view that the Liquor Control Commission should be the final arbiter in granting licences or extensions of permits. The problem now exists that a vast range of extended permits have been agreed to for various licensed outlets throughout Victoria not only until 1 a.m. but also, now, until 3 a.m.

Many communities have expressed concern that it is not appropriate to grant licences enabling certain outlets to remain open until 3 a.m. and that the amenity of the municipality is not protected. They are concerned about the behaviour of many people leaving licensed premises at that time.

As I indicated in my contribution to the second-reading debate, there is difficulty with policing, and police in certain areas have to be available to attend not only licensed premises that close at 1 a.m. but also many that close at 3 a.m. Therefore, a problem that might not have been prevalent in past years has become more and more prevalent; honourable members are receiving an increasing number of complaints from municipalities about the amenity of their areas being disturbed as a result of licensed outlets being allowed to remain open later, receiving permits to extend their time of operation until 3 a.m. and causing difficulty for the general public.

I accept the point made by the Minister that further discussions on the amendment will take place while the measure is between here and another place. There must be appropriate protection for the amenity of an area and access to an appeal mechanism by municipalities, individuals, licence-holders and the Liquor Control Commission.

The National Party will be pleased to participate in those discussions to ensure that the appropriate amendment is made to protect municipalities.

The Municipal Association of Victoria sought to take the measure a step further: in fact, it wanted to have the final say in the granting of licences and extended permits. Provided there are protections for the municipalities, I believe the final arbiter should be the Liquor Control Commission.

Mr Chairman, in dealing with this amendment to clause 3, may I also deal with other parts of the clause at this point, or does the Committee wish to deal with the amendment first?

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Fogarty)—Order! It would be appropriate for the Committee to deal first with the amendment.

Mr LEA (Sandringham)—I support the comments and the philosophy of the honourable member for Murray Valley. We in the city of Sandringham are concerned about the consequences of liquor amenity control and wish to ensure that the interests of the public are sustained.

The Bill and the clause are historic in the sense that one has to balance the needs of distributors of alcohol, be they retailers, hoteliers, restaurants or licensed clubs, against the needs of the local community. For example, the Hampton hotel for over two years has been a blot on the amenity of its local district. I have referred previously to constant visits to my office by irritated, hurt, alarmed and offended constituents whose privacy has been invaded by incessant noise, music, drunkenness and damage to their property and cars.

I commend the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources in his endeavours to balance these two diverse interests. The paradox before the Committee is that outlets for liquor sales are being increased at the same time as the government is endeavouring to stop people becoming alcoholics.

We have to consider this social problem and ensure that communities are not upset in any way. Government party members will say that we need to deregulate the liquor industry and we need to be up to date with the modern liquor outlets and licensing procedures of western Europe. However, I challenge this view and suggest that if the Premier had a hotel in the electorate which he represents which had a record as bad as that of the Hampton hotel he would share my concern, as would the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources.

Amenity controls need to reside with local councils so that any extension of normal licences is in the hands of councils. I note that clause 64 (5) provides for this and I suggest that that is one step on the way to solving the problem of amenity.

This is a key issue. When Parliament winds down for the next election this Bill will be one of the half a dozen major social Bills on prostitution, de facto relationships, in vitro fertilisation, liquor and so forth that will be important electoral issues.

Parliament must take a balanced and even-handed point of view on these problems. I would not wish a problem like the Hampton hotel on any member of Parliament. I say with pleasure that since new owners have taken over the Hampton hotel there has been a steady trade of customers for dinner and the local community's interest are being cared for. A sense of balance has been achieved.

I commend the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources for his efforts in balancing the social problem. Let us work together so that the best interests of Victorians are served.

Mr HAYWARD (Pahran)—I appreciate the constructive and positive attitude of the Minister in this matter. The Opposition looks forward to the government giving consideration to acceptance of this amendment by the government when the Bill is between here and another place.

The amendment was negatived.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I ask the Minister to take note of the definition of “permit”. It reads:

“Permit” means a BYO restaurant permit granted under this Act.

I suggest there would be a need for some differential to indicate whether a permit is for a BYO licence or another type of permit. Clause 63 (5) (b) (i) reads:

a copy of a permit issued under the relevant planning law . . .

That does not refer to a BYO permit. The definition of “permit” refers only to a BYO restaurant permit but there are other types of permits. I believe clarification is needed and an amendment should be considered while the Bill is between here and another place.

This highlights the problems I have been referring to because it indicates the difficulties that occur when a Bill is being pushed through without sufficient consultation. This matter should be clarified prior to the Bill becoming law.

By the same token, we have been able to direct the Committee’s attention to this matter and I seek a comment from the Minister and appropriate action.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I shall consider the matter raised by the honourable member for Murray Valley as I consider all matters he raises. In fact, there are only two types of permits issued under the proposed legislation, the BYO permit and an extended hours permit; all the rest are licensed categories. Where there is reference to the extended hours permit in the Bill, in each case it is made clear which permit is being referred to.

I believe the honourable member’s reference to a planning permit does not conflict with this definition but I shall seek legal advice on the valid point he has raised.

The clause was agreed to, as was clause 4.

Clause 5

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I move:

1. Clause 5, line 43, after this line insert the following new paragraph:

“(d) providing for the orderly and economic development and improvement of the supply of liquor and for a stable and ordered liquor industry; and”

The amendment seeks to extend the objects of the Bill. In the first Bill which was debated earlier in this sessional period only two objects were listed.

After extensive debate the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources decided there should be some changes to the objects to extend the areas of the Liquor Control Commission when it is determining permits and licences.

Added to that are paragraphs (b) and (c). They do not go far enough in looking at the structure of the industry at present and at the economic circumstances of those who have invested enormous amounts of money in the industry and may be detrimentally affected if new licences were awarded in a particular area. It may seem to many people that we are opposing an extension to the number of licences, whether to hotels or retail liquor outlets or other types of premises, but with any extension or granting of a new licence consideration should be given to development in a particular area and to the stable and ordered development of the industry.

My amendment No. 1 is taken from the present Liquor Control Act. It is a justifiable extension to the objects which would provide for the Liquor Control Commission to consider the total number of retail outlets in a particular area and to determine whether additional permits should be granted.

This is a relevant consideration in country areas. Many country cities and towns have a range of liquor outlets—hotels and retail merchants—and there may be enough outlets serving the area. The licensees of hotels or other retail liquor outlets have invested tens of

thousands of dollars to provide the facilities, services, and amenities required and desired by the people. Attention should be given to providing a guide to the Liquor Control Commission to apply a restriction on the number of outlets and requiring the commission to take account of the people who are already operating in the industry.

I commend the amendment to the Committee as a logical extension and a further clarification of the objects of the Bill.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—I raise the strongest objection to the amendment. I support this Bill largely for the objects set out in it. I am a strong believer in free competitive enterprise and any concept of orderly marketing is most offensive to me. I know it is in the great tradition of the National Party in circumstances associated with the exploitation of farmers, but I do not see why we have to use all the majesty of the law to support an industry which, according to information I have, is responsible for a turnover of something like \$2000 million.

Many multimillion dollar corporations and companies are engaged in the industry.

Mr Ross-Edwards—And small people!

Mr WILLIAMS—Yes, and I have some sympathy for small people, but by and large they get themselves involved in tied hotel contracts and all sorts of activities that bear no relationship to competitive free enterprise.

I regret that previous Liberal governments were associated with this wretched clause that the National Party is seeking to resurrect. The consumer should be all powerful in our society. That is what we are here about—that people get rising standards of living and have freedom of choice.

My observations of the history of the liquor industry over the past 100 years have been that it has been used mainly so that governments could get taxes and hoteliers could make profits. The consumers came last. The wives and children and everybody else associated with people who squander their money at the pubs come last.

I throw it back in the teeth of the National Party—it is about time its members advanced into the twentieth century.

Mr Jasper—You are back in the eighteenth century!

Mr WILLIAMS—If they want to be part of a coalition government, it is about time they recognised that the Liberal Party stands for free enterprise, full stop.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—The government does not accept the amendment. I understand the motivation for the amendment, as the honourable member for Murray Valley has discussed the matter with me on a number of occasions since the Bill first came before the House.

The matter was one of the key ingredients of the Nieuwenhuysen report.

Mr Jasper—That has been discredited!

Mr FORDHAM—The issue is whether in the 1980s it is the responsibility of the government and the Parliament to legislate for a protective device for existing licence holders, as distinct from a quite different thrust of considering the interests of the consumer, as the honourable member for Doncaster described the community. It is part of the philosophical approach of each of the parties in weighing up their stance.

The government and the Opposition agree that it is an appropriate time for change in the liquor industry. This Bill has been introduced to effect that change. The National Party has chosen to live in the past and continue with a model which certainly brought significant benefits to Victoria.

Mr Ross-Edwards—We have the best hotels in Australia!

Mr FORDHAM—I have conceded that point on a number of occasions. It is interesting that there is a constant reference to hotels. Obviously the objects of the Bill refer to a far broader approach to the liquor industry as a whole. The government, in the second-reading speeches on both the first and second Bills, and the comments I have made publicly, outlined the general approaches it has taken. They are embodied in the objects clause which the amendment seeks to change.

The government has a commitment to promote economic and social growth in the State. This industry has an important role to play in that economic and social growth. The government position paper which I released last May emphasised that. The honourable member for Murray Valley has repeatedly referred to that.

The industry does not need the featherbedding that is provided in an economic protection clause. The government has confidence in our hotels, our restaurants, our clubs, and other licensed premises and believes they can confront the cold breeze of competition as we face the future. It is in the interests of the community that the Liquor Control Commission and the proposed legislation should recognise that reality. I reiterate that we see the industry as being important for economic and social growth, for tourism, and the whole spectrum of activities we expect into the future.

The second of the objects of the Bill relates to diversity of licensed facilities. There has been a smattering of diversity over recent years under the existing legislation. One of the effects of the proposed legislation will be to quicken the pace of diversifying licensed premises. That will be a good thing for the customer and the community as a whole—not in the sense of providing a proliferation of outlets and encouraging additional abuse. A lot of nonsense has been talked about that. The Bill provides essential and adequate controls over the sale, disposal, and consumption of liquor.

I was touched by many of the speeches made during the second-reading debate on both the Bills. A number of members wanted a symbol and wanted the inclusion of a provision of adequate controls. It was put—quite rightly—that the government ought to be up front and the objects should be included in the Bill itself. The objects are there in clause 5 and the Bill is a guidepost. The Bill also provides for the coordination of government and non-government agencies. I shall speak on clause 6 later.

I respect the views of the honourable member for Murray Valley. I know what he is endeavouring to achieve with the amendment. However, I believe the time for requiring objects clauses, which have as their motives items such as orderly economic development and stability, has passed. It is time for a change. I welcome the fact that the Opposition agrees with the thrust of the clause, and I am sure the community will benefit from it in the years ahead.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—I support the amendment moved by the honourable member for Murray Valley and congratulate him not only for the amendment, but also for the care and effort he has taken in researching the proposed legislation.

I know the government and the Opposition have firm views on the matter. I do not want anyone to be under the misapprehension that the National Party is not in favour of free and open competition. It is a free enterprise party.

I offer a few explanations about that. I am sure the Minister will agree that Victoria has the best hotels and restaurants in Australia. I suggest that Victoria's clubs are equal to if not better than any other clubs around Australia, except those in New South Wales with the poker machine element. This has not just happened; it has evolved because tight controls have been in operation. One could argue that the control has been too tight. Controls have been imposed on the standards of buildings and facilities, as well as standards of behaviour.

Victorians owe a great deal to the Liquor Control Commission for the way it has controlled the industry. As a result of those controls, which have been in operation for

scores of years now and have been supported by governments of all political persuasions, licensees have to enter into huge financial commitments to keep buildings in repair and construct new premises. As the law stands at present, when leases are entered into, they are entered into at high costs in many cases.

If change is to come, more notice should have been given than just a few months because the people in the industry have entered into financial commitments. I wish to make it clear to the Minister that the proposed legislation will cause enormous hardship to a number of small people in the liquor industry, including licensees and lessees of licensed premises throughout Victoria.

I should have thought there would have been a lot of sense in having the amendment moved by the honourable member for Murray Valley operate in the early stages—in the first three or four years—of the introduction of the proposed legislation. If the amendment were agreed to, there would be a transition period. In the long term, so far as the objects of the Bill are concerned, it might be a wise move on the part of the government. However, in the short term the government's refusal to take the economic effects into consideration will cause enormous hardship and prove to be a financial disaster to many people who obtain their living from the liquor industry.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I thank the Leader of the National Party for his comments. I have no doubt about his sincerity. However, he is mistaken if he believes that with the change of legislation there will be a dramatic change overnight in the licensing structure with economic impacts on the existing licence-holders. I do not think that will happen.

To reassure the honourable member I make a passing reference to clause 76 which relates to the objects clause. One of the factors to be taken into account later on is the extent to which businesses carried on under licences and permits in the area to which a new application relates are already satisfying a need intended to be satisfied by the applicant. It is not as if that is not a factor. The provision is in the Bill and may in the future be considered in the judgments, operation and processes of the new commission.

I say with a significant degree of confidence that I do not expect there will be instant disaster to existing licence-holders overnight. I think the existing licence-holders are aware of that.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I have listened to the comments of the Minister and the Leader of the National Party. The Leader of the National Party put the case extremely well. The key word in the amendment I proposed to clause 5 is "orderly".

A key part of the operation of the commission is to ensure the orderly development of liquor outlets within the State not only to take into account the economic considerations of the applicants and licence-holders, but also to take into account the orderly development in a particular area.

The National Party is extremely concerned about other parts of the proposed legislation where licence-holders have the ability to expand into the restaurant area and other areas. The National Party considers that additional constraints should be provided not only in clause 76, to which the Minister referred, but also in clause 5.

The National Party takes little notice of the policy case made by the Minister in the investigations undertaken by Dr Nieuwenhuysen. It was a purely academic report and so far as the National Party is concerned its recommendations have been totally discredited.

The Minister referred to featherbedding. The Leader of the National Party dispelled those comments when he pointed out that the liquor industry involves many people who have made numerous financial commitments. Of course those businesses are profitable; they are in business to be profitable. However, they have large financial commitments and must cope with strong competition. The liquor industry is a competitive industry.

The industry needs constraints, and continued orderly development in the industry must occur. If the objects of the Act do not provide the necessary constraints, orderly development will be put to one side and people with enormous investments in certain outlets and licences will find that their investments in the liquor industry will be in jeopardy. I hope the Minister will have a change of heart because the amendments are put forward in good faith on behalf of the National Party.

Perhaps consideration should be given to reviewing the terminology of the existing four objects in the Bill to tighten up the wording. Honourable members do not know who will comprise the commission. No definition is given of the qualifications of the people who will comprise the membership of the commission. Unless proper constraints are applied, as outlined in the amendment, I foresee difficulties for people involved in the liquor industry.

Mr LIEBERMAN (Benambra)—This is obviously an important clause and, as the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources said, the amendment has been moved in good faith. It is worthy of honourable members giving consideration to its implications.

I bring forward a different perspective which is relevant to the impact of the objects and the matters the commission has to consider in granting licences in the future. Up until now, as I understand it, the industry has been required to pay a licence fee of 9 per cent on gross sales. I think that is the correct figure; I shall be corrected if I am wrong.

Part of the rationale in the raising of that revenue for the people of Victoria is that the industry is a special industry. It is required to perform and provide certain services and it is, in a way, protected because it is regulated by the fact that the commission cannot grant new licences unless it is satisfied that a need and demand exist. That is the subject of the amendment put forward by the honourable member for Murray Valley.

Therefore, the industry has become accustomed to the fact that the licence fee it has to pay is, in some way, a contribution from the industry to the people of Victoria for the unique position in which Parliament has placed the industry; that is, future licensees will have to stand up to very rigid tests and competition from current licensees before licences are granted.

The rationale and justification for Parliament approving the government of the day levying a turnover tax on the industry is that it has been the custom of the State. It is that perspective that I want to discuss now and I hope honourable members will comment on it later.

It is true that all honourable members want the Liquor Control Bill (No. 2) to be the best Bill for the community of tomorrow, despite some of us having individual concerns about aspects of the Bill. As it is obvious that the control mechanism for future applications for a liquor licence will not be part of the objects of the Bill, because the government and the Opposition will not accept that provision being written into the new Bill, I ask: is it proposed, at least for the next few years while Parliament beds down these new provisions, that the 9 per cent levy on gross turnover be reviewed?

I put forward a proposition, and I do not expect an answer tonight. Once the Bill becomes law it will remove that unique protection against future competition through control by a liquor control commission with its strict application—I have appeared on both sides and I know how difficult it is to get a licence. Therefore, it is incumbent on Parliament to ensure that the government of the day no longer arbitrarily levies on outlets, hotels, retail bottle licences and restaurants, the 9 or 10 per cent tax—or whatever percentage it is—because Parliament has taken away from the industry, from both big and small business, that particular protection.

Mr Ross-Edwards—You are optimistic.

Mr LIEBERMAN—Of course I am. I would not be in this place if I were not optimistic. As law-makers, honourable members should have the courage when changing legislation,

which is very important to the economy, both today and in the future, to examine the hard as well as the easy matters. I am excited about promoting tourism and competition, but some of the proposed changes to the legislation will cause enormous challenges to the people involved. That is good for the people of Victoria.

Parliament should make a pledge and call on the government of the day, whether it is the alternative government, not to apply the 9 per cent levy imposed on liquor outlets—for the benefit of the people of Victoria—because the rules of the game have been changed.

As the Leader of the National Party pointed out, many people in the industry have committed themselves financially with mortgages to develop resources and facilities they are proud of and which were, in part, required by the Liquor Control Commission to obtain their licence and to compete in that area. Is it not the duty of honourable members to adjust the tax that has been imposed for years and years by custom?

Part of the justification for the levy, even if not expressly stated, is that there has been a protection given through Parliament by reason of the operation of the commission. I am sincere about this and I do not say this to be mischievous. Parliament can say, whenever the Act is proclaimed, that the ground rules have changed. Operators will have to compete in a harder marketplace. Businesses will not have to cope with the months and years of delay of the past should an application for a licence go against them but ultimately is granted.

If the Minister's optimism about the proposed legislation is correct, and I hope it is, he should be happy to agree to review the 9 per cent licence fee on turnover on the basis that if the fee is reduced to 6 per cent, or whatever the amount may be, the government will reap a greater gross benefit because of the increased number and variation of the outlets.

Mr Ross-Edwards—And consumption of liquor will increase.

Mr LIEBERMAN—Of course. The last application in which I appeared was for a partnership of two small business people who applied for a retail bottle licence. Their application was superb. They had everything right—experience, character, antecedent evidence, architectural designs, capital and so on—but the application was rejected. The commission praised the applicants on their application but it was rejected because, in the commission's judgment, the area did not require the licensed premises and the applicants had not satisfied the commission of the demand for it.

The irony was that shortly afterwards a large supermarket bought one of the existing retail bottle licences in the community and proceeded to expand the outlet so that the floor space of the existing licence, that the commission felt was adequately serving the community, tripled the available liquor retail area.

It is one of the reasons why I am pleased to see the rule go. I know that in practice inequities and anomalies in trying to control the marketplace turn out to be a nonsense in themselves. I say that from hard experience. I worked for months on the application for those people because I believed they were putting forward a proper application, as the commission found, and it was disappointing that these small business people were told that they would not be allowed to risk their capital and invest their money in the State because it was felt there was not adequate demand for their enterprise.

The Committee divided on Mr Jasper's amendment (Mr Fogarty in the chair).

Ayes	..	..	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	..	..	63
Majority against the amendment						54

AYES

Mr Hann
Mr Jasper
Mr McGrath
(Lowan)

NOES

Mr Andrianopoulos
Mr Austin
Mr Brown

AYES

Mr McNamara
Mr Ross-Edwards
Mr Wallace
Mr Whiting

Tellers:

Mr McGrath
(Warrnambool)
Mr Steggall

NOES

Miss Callister
Mr Cathie
Dr Coghill
Mr Cooper
Mr Culpin
Mr Delzoppo
Mr Dickinson
Mr Ernst
Mr Fordham
Mr Gavin
Mrs Gleeson
Mr Harrowfield
Mr Hayward
Mr Heffernan
Mrs Hill
Mrs Hirsh
Mr Hockley
Mr John
Mr Kennedy
Mr Kennett
Mr Kirkwood
Mr Leigh
Mr Lieberman
Mr McCutcheon
Mr McDonald
Mr Maclellan
Mr Mathews
Mr Micallef
Mr Norris
Mr Perrin
Mr Pescott
Mr Plowman
Mr Pope
Mr Ramsay
Mrs Ray
Mr Remington
Mr Reynolds
Mr Richardson
Mr Roper
Mr Rowe
Mr Seitz
Mr Sheehan
Mr Shell
Ms Sibree
Mr Sidiropoulos
Mr Simmonds
Mr Simpson
Mr Smith
(Polwarth)
Mr Spyker
Mr Stirling
Mr Tanner
Mr Trezise
Dr Vaughan
Mr Walsh
Mr Weideman
Mr Wilkes
Mr Williams
Mrs Wilson

Tellers:

Mr Cunningham
Mr Lea

PAIR

Mr Evans
(Gippsland East)

Mrs Setches

Dr WELLS (Dromana)—Clause 5 is the key to the objects of the Bill. When I first contributed to debate on the first Bill, I referred particularly to the involvement of individuals, including some from my electorate; other honourable members spoke about the objects of this Bill but, apparently, it has had little effect upon the government.

I refer again to the objects contained in the Liquor Control Bill (No. 2); they are contradictory with the remainder of the contents of the Bill. The government refers to demand and the proper development of the liquor industry but the Bill contains minimal reference to development and community factors. It includes reference to reflecting consumer demand but dry areas like Camberwell and Box Hill are not to remain dry. The government has ignored the interests of the Camberwell and Box Hill communities, and has ridden roughshod over the top of them.

That is despite the fact that those policies are based not upon polls taken of the opinions of the people. I use that illustration because it clearly demonstrates that the government wants to override the interests of the people.

The objects of the Bill refer to providing adequate controls over the sale, disposal and consumption of liquor. However, the Bill does not do that.

A further object of the Bill is to contribute to the effective coordination of the efforts of government and non-government agencies in the prevention and control of alcohol abuse and misuse. This Bill, comprising some 95 pages, has approximately only three references to the abuse of alcohol: one is contained in the objects of the Bill and another reference is contained in the clause dealing with a Co-ordinating Council that will advise the Minister on problems of liquor abuse and any other matters referred to the council by the Minister. The third reference is in clause 76 (2) (c) which states that attention must be given to whether the granting of an application is likely to have an adverse effect on the interest of the community.

The Bill pays far too little attention to the real concern of the community. Putting aside specific items, some of which the opposition parties have persuaded the government to amend, the major thrust of the Bill relates to an increased number of outlets for the sale of liquor.

When I spoke on the original Bill, I quoted some relevant figures. At that time, the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources discounted those figures. I shall refer to one specific area to illustrate what will still be possible, even though some amendments have been included in this Bill supposedly to cater for the potential creation of extra outlets.

I shall take the case of Caulfield, which has 22 licensed outlets, including 4 hotels. It has some 450 premises registered under the Food Act. If 20 per cent of the food retailing premises obtained liquor licences, there would be an additional 90 bar-style outlets in Caulfield. That is an increase of 400 per cent on the current figure.

Earlier today the Premier laboured the point that it is not easy to build new restaurants because it is an expensive process. The point missed by the Premier and Minister is that existing businesses are already established. It will not cost those businesses very much to add a licence to their existing operations.

The commercial aspects of alcohol are not difficult to accommodate. I do not speak on the basis of any economic vested interests of any sector of the community, and I know that is a point the government wishes to get away from in the Bill. I have no argument about that; that is the judgment of the government and it must live by that in the future.

The point I raise is the deficiencies of the Bill and the government's preparations in dealing with the community interest. I say quite plainly that the government may have paid attention to various commercial sectors of the community but it has ignored the strong messages sent to it by a wide range of groups within the community.

The government has acknowledged that alcohol is a drug; that it is not a normal item of commerce and that it is not suitable for total deregulation. Despite that, the Nieuwenhuysen report—and I agree with members of the National Party that it is quite discredited in any scientific sense—recommended total deregulation. To a large degree, the government has relied on that report for evidence, or the lack of it, of a relationship between the availability and abuse of alcohol.

The Premier said that the people involved in social issues, such as alcohol consumption, are too close to the issues and their views are parochial and narrow. If the government accepts that alcohol is not suitable for total deregulation, it must surely agree that it should be treated in a conservative fashion so that we progress in a defined and demonstrably safe way.

Is the evidence as contradictory as the Nieuwenhuysen report and the government maintain? During my speech on the original Bill I did not quote the many authorities that exist. I shall now mention one or two of them because it is incumbent on me at this late stage of the debate to hammer home to the government what the situation is.

The Federal government is about to announce a national health policy on alcohol in Australia, and yet this government is pushing ahead recklessly with this Bill. The draft national health policy on alcohol states:

The Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare reporting in 1977 described alcohol problems in Australia as having reached epidemic proportions, the neglect of which would represent gross national irresponsibility. The National Health and Medical Research Council has identified problems related to alcohol as the fourth most serious health problem in Australia.

The draft policy also states:

The current level of harm associated with alcohol use in Australia represents too great a cost to be allowed to continue.

Despite that, the government is proposing a Bill that will vastly increase the number of liquor outlets.

There are many other references to this general area. Dr John Ross of Health Department Victoria wrote about the adverse effects of drugs in Victoria. He pointed out that the drugs of major concern were alcohol and tobacco and the causes of death of primary significance, other than those associated with tobacco use, are alcohol-related road traffic accidents, suicide and liver-related diseases. The Nieuwenhuysen report dismissed those subjects.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation has stated that France, Sweden, Norway, Finland and the USSR have found it necessary to reduce both the hours of sale and the availability of alcohol in general terms in an attempt to reduce alcohol-related problems.

The foundation has also pointed out that there is a considerable body of international evidence that increased availability leads to increased consumption and abuse. That is one of the major differences I have with the government over its conclusions.

A lot of evidence is available indicating that the availability and abuse of alcohol are linked. No Western society has found adequate techniques for controlling serious alcohol abuse among young people in particular, except by reducing the availability of alcohol. Despite that, on the eve of the release of a national health policy on alcohol, this government is making it possible to increase the number of liquor outlets.

In my previous speech, I referred to comments made by various senior police in Victoria. The Police Force has provided to the government a 50-page report about the Bill. I submit that the government has paid little attention to that. The government's position is well illustrated by the contents of the original Bill. The government spent two years preparing that Bill, so why was it not until the Opposition focused on such a basic factor as what constituted an alcoholic beverage that the government changed its proposal?

As the government has waged a campaign about wanting to reduce abuse of alcohol, and has wanted to incorporate such laudable aims in the objects of the Bill, why does it

want to make it possible for every restricted club to become an outlet for packaged alcohol? Why is the government so concerned about making it possible for alcohol not only to be consumed on premises but also to be packaged and taken off premises?

The evidence is that packaged alcohol causes the greatest trouble. If the government truly wished to make it more convenient for people to drink alcohol while dining in restaurants, why did it change the existing BYO system by encouraging restaurants to reserve 25 per cent of their floor space for alcohol consumption alone?

The government case rests on its claim that availability of alcohol is not related to abuse. The example of BYO restaurants alone is sufficient to demonstrate the government's reckless disregard for the likely effect of a major increase in the number of outlets. One could hardly find a vehicle better suited to increasing the number of outlets than the restaurant trade. The restaurant industry is popular, is spread throughout the community and the cost to a restaurant in having facilities available for sales is not high. For that reason, I find the comments of the Premier to be unacceptable.

The Minister for Health is recorded as having said:

A 1985 Victorian survey found more than 10 per cent of boys and nearly as many girls in Year 7 had engaged in heavy drinking sessions.

If our society is to be properly administered, it is inadequate to have significant evidence produced by the National Health and Medical Research Council and a national health policy on alcohol swept aside uncaringly by the government.

There is no reason why Victoria must gallop headlong into a revolution by increasing the number of outlets selling alcohol. It would be more acceptable for the government to seek further evidence and to provide more detail in its Bill about what controls it proposes to undertake, or what limited trials could be put in place in various areas of the State, to ascertain some evidence about its proposals.

I am not arguing about the responsibility for protecting adults from the effects of alcohol. Adults should be allowed to look after themselves. I am arguing strongly for reasonable and adequate protection for our young people. It is all right to theorise about these issues. Members of the government should travel with me through the Dromana electorate to observe what happens in all four seasons of the year. Over the summer an additional 100 000 people holiday on the Mornington Peninsula.

My main disagreement with the Bill is that its controls are inadequate. The current alcohol abuse practices in Victoria cannot easily be controlled, even with the best will in the world of the government and major attempts by the Police Force to control the abuse of alcohol by young people. That inadequacy gives the lie to the government's claim that controls will be successful. Only a few lines—not even one page—in 95 pages of the Bill refer to controls that might apply to young people. I prefer significant provisions to be included in Acts of Parliament, not in Ministerial statements or undertakings, and not in government press releases, so that everyone knows what controls apply to certain positions.

The government paid the Opposition and the National Party the courtesy of a briefing from departmental officers on the Bill. However, the people charged with the responsibility for monitoring the Bill were unable to answer questions on how the government's concern about alcohol abuse will be dealt with by the issue of licences. No guidelines have been laid down in this paramount area.

If the government had split the Bill into two, as it has done with other Bills, and introduced provisions covering the various mechanisms for the issue of licences and so on, the Opposition could have dealt with that issue. Economic problems are not the major difficulty with this Bill. The real grist to the mill is the proposal relating not to social amenity, because the government has accepted amendments by the Opposition, but to the effect on Victorians, particularly young Victorians.

Parliament does itself and the people it serves a disservice by not paying attention to that aspect of the proposition. It is not sufficient for honourable members to spend much of their time talking about commerce and the effect something will have on one sector of the commercial world against other sectors. They are relatively easy issues to deal with because they involve adults who walk in with their eyes open.

The major difficulty for Parliament, Victoria, and its people is the abuse of alcohol by young Victorians. For that reason I cannot support the government's proposals. The Bill is grossly inadequate in these important areas and I regret that it will pass into law and that Victorians will have to live with the results.

The government would be remarkable if, on what it has put forward in this Bill, it is able to deal with the abuse of alcohol by young Victorians. Despite wonderful efforts by many people in the past, governments have an abysmal record in this area, mainly due to limited resources being made available. They have failed to overcome perhaps one of the most important problems facing Victoria and Australia. I oppose the basic thrust of the Bill.

Mr NORRIS (Dandenong)—Clause 5 embodies the objects of this important measure. In listening to previous contributions, I increasingly became aware of the fact that liquor control legislation has been a bone of contention in society, probably since 1770 BC when the first known liquor control laws were introduced by the Egyptians.

As honourable members chew the fat on this Bill, they should cast their minds back 3000 years when people began cogitating over the issue of liquor control.

I address my remarks particularly to clause 5 (*d*), one of the most important objects of the Bill, which states:

The object of this Act is to respond to community interest by . . .

Contributing to the effective co-ordination of the efforts of government and non-government agencies in the prevention and control of alcohol abuse and mis-use.

I congratulate the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources on the objects of the Bill because he has tackled one of the most difficult, complex social and economic issues faced by society. That issue demands attention, and I am delighted that the Labor government has had the courage to tackle it. The government could have allowed the dog's dinner to continue but has not done so.

Alcohol abuse concerns all honourable members, as pointed out by the previous speaker. I am concerned about the emphasis in talking about alcohol abuse and misuse. The Co-ordinating Council to be established by the Bill will have a tremendous role to play in this area. Honourable members should examine carefully the way alcohol is advertised. There has been a definite switch in advertising; it is now directed at young people.

People of my generation possibly drink a little less alcohol, perhaps because of stricter legislation that has been introduced over the years. The former Liberal government brought in the '05 legislation that set the pace. The Cain Labor government followed with other measures that have made people of more mature years think again about overindulging in alcohol, particularly before placing themselves behind the wheels of motor vehicles.

The emphasis has switched to the other end of the scale. Of particular concern to all honourable members of the Committee is the advertising directed at young people. We have the beer barons, such as the Federal Treasurer of the Liberal Party, Mr Elliott, a successful businessman who has built his empire on alcohol with Carlton and United Breweries Ltd, and Mr Bond, another great entrepreneur. These two barons practically cover the world. Mr Bond has his blimp hovering in the sky, and probably is over this building at the moment. It is nothing more than a moving advertising balloon for Swan Lager. That would have an enormous effect on the young and impressionable. As the great St Ignatius said, "Get them young and you have them for the rest of their life".

This problem must be tackled properly. Like other honourable members of the Committee, I have several teenage children and advertising is an example of the way alcohol abuse and misuse is directed at the young.

Mr Acting Chairman, people of our vintage could meet members of the opposite sex in salubrious and pleasant surroundings. You, Mr Acting Chairman, would go to Leggetts or the Trocadero. Today, young people have to go to establishments where alcohol is thrust before them. I have a typical advertisement that appears in young people's magazines headed "Fishtank, better than ever!" at 535 Swanston Street, Carlton.

Friday, 25 September, was grand final eve, and from 9 p.m. until 11 p.m. I-C Coolers were 1 cent. Friday, 2 October is the limbo competition, and tequila sunrises between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. were 1 cent. Friday, 9 October is the beer swilling competition, and between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. beer will be 1 cent a glass. Friday, 16 October is Fishtank's half birthday, and a marine dream cocktail between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. will be 1 cent.

If one goes to the Fishtank, all the activity is around the bar. Who can blame the young people for going there when that establishment is practically giving away grog at 1 cent a glass between the hours of 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. This is a problem that is difficult to tackle.

Object (d) is one that the Co-ordinating Council will look at closely and give the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources ideas on how to tackle the insidious promotion and advertising.

Advertising generally has to be looked at, particularly television advertising, as it affects the young. I do not wish to sound draconian, but, eventually, a complete ban on television advertising of alcohol must be considered. If it is good enough to ban tobacco advertising, then it is even more justified to ban alcohol advertising.

Our young people love sport, but the grog purveyors are into sport and the Federal Treasurer of the Liberal Party is heavily into the promotion of healthy bodies and a healthy lifestyle.

The promotions budget for Carlton and United Breweries Ltd was \$45 million, but the entire budget for the Australian Institute of Sport was \$12.5 million.

The Uniting Church of Australia, Synod of Victoria, made an excellent suggestion: that liquor advertising be taxed and the proceeds used to fund community education programs on alcohol abuse. I should be happy to submit that excellent idea to the Co-ordinating Council.

The synod stated in its letter of 20 July—

The imposition of a tax should lead to a reduction in advertising; such a reduction is considered desirable as young people would appear to be the group most likely to be influenced by advertising.

The government would not have to find the funds for education programs from other sources, which might be difficult in a tight budgetary situation.

Such programs, if done well, should more than counteract the effect of advertising.

There has been a reduction in beer consumption, but a substantial rise in wine consumption—another area to be looked at. Much of the wine is consumed by our young, not by wine lovers. The bulk of wine sales has been in the cheap cask wines and many of our young women have turned to cask wines. Another offshoot is the cooler, which was worth \$50 million the first year and \$80 million the second year. Citrus juice is mixed with the wine.

When one drinks wine from a cask, particularly women who have a lighter body weight than males, the effect can be devastating. Cask wine is four times the normal alcoholic strength per volume than beer, and when drinking from a cask one cannot see how much one is drinking. When one drinks from a bottle, one can see how much is in the bottle.

In ten years, serious health problems may occur as a result of the massive increase in cheap wine consumption. Other countries, such as Spain, Italy and France, have massive problems because wine is a normal part of their lifestyle. Pierre or little Pedro is introduced to wine at the table as a child. Water is mixed with the wine, but those young children are being made alcoholics at a very young age.

The problem associated with alcoholic abuse in those countries is massive because the drinking of wine is part of their lifestyle.

We could be building a time bomb that could go off down the track as a result of the massive increase in wine consumption and especially the "vinegar" casks flogged off between the hours of 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. at the Fishtank.

I compliment the Minister on the splendid job he has done in handling a difficult Bill. I am happy to publicly commend him for that work.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—As a member of the Liberal Party I must support the Bill irrespective of my private views about overindulgence in alcohol. I entered Parliament as the honourable member for Box Hill, an area that is well-known to be dry; now I represent the electorate of Doncaster which is well known for the opposite—as being a high liquor consuming area.

The constituents of Doncaster would want me to allow them freedom of choice in the manner they consume liquor, no matter whether they go to several liquor barns in the electorate or to the various nightclubs, especially the Veneto Social Club in Bulleen. People are entitled to freedom of choice in the consumption of alcohol.

I applaud the intention of the Bill to promote more refined outlets for the consumption of alcohol. I see nothing wrong with people consuming alcohol in restaurants. I also believe in free competition and am sceptical of orderly marketing within the industry. Too many fortunes have been made in the past and there has been too much exploitation of labour in the liquor industry because of the tight hold big breweries have over them.

The liquor industry needs reputable purveyors of liquor. The proposed Liquor Licensing Commission and the police will have the tremendous responsibility of ensuring some of the dreadful aspects of the liquor industry are removed. I understand some are still continuing despite the controls that exist in present legislation. The commission and the police will have to clamp down on the industry.

I was distressed by an article published in the *Sunday Press* of 31 May 1987 that quoted Inspector Arch Sutton of the Liquor Control Commission. The inspector was reported to have given the journalist information that suggested "organised crime could soon have a grip on the liquor industry in Victoria". The article states:

That's the alarming claim from a policeman whose job it has been to keep the crooks out!

The inspector made the alarming statement that he believed organised crime is already in the industry. If the National Party is unhappy with the present Bill, it should be more unhappy that undesirable elements are already operating in the industry.

Inspector Arch Sutton was also reported as having said that:

Hotels, nightclubs and such are ideal targets for criminals. . . The liquor industry has a cash flow that makes it very easy for operators to launder money, whether it be drug money or proceeds of other crimes . . .

That statement is alarming. I hope the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources will give a similar categorical assurance to that given by his officers to the Liberal Party Bill committee that undesirable types will be kept out of the liquor industry.

Officers of the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources also pointed out that some clauses in the Bill allow the Australian Hotels Association to do in undesirables. I know the association has good connections at a high level in the Police Force. I would be surprised if the association did not have access to the best criminal lawyers in the country, and those criminal lawyers would be able to appear before the appropriate authorities.

With all the resources of the association I will not be surprised if it is not too long before the mob from Sydney moves in. With the assistance of the Liquor Control Commission, I hope the Australian Hotels Association will be able to keep the undesirable elements out of the industry.

I hope revenue will be raised to ensure the the Police Force is adequately manned to police the problems that unfortunately afflict the industry, such as under-age drinking and the serving of drunk people. Statistics show that approximately 80 per cent of young people under the age of eighteen years regularly drink in hotels; about 10 per cent of them are already alcoholics. That is reprehensible!

Mr Jasper—Rubbish!

Mr WILLIAMS—If members of the National Party had done their homework they would have read the files that provide this information. I invite them to visit the Parliamentary Library and to do some research.

I am very disappointed that abuses are occurring under the existing legislation. I was privileged to hear a member of the Federated Liquor and Allied Industries Employees Union outline the problems her members face, especially the bulk of the staff who serve in bars. Apparently many are untrained and work only part-time. Very often they are dependent on their part-time work to maintain their families—they may be deserted wives or people of that ilk, or students who cannot afford to lose their jobs. They would not be involved in ensuring that the patrons who may be over the blood alcohol limit use breathalysers. I am pleased the Australian Hotels Association has agreed to reverse its policy on breathalysers and to provide these machines in hotels. I applaud that action. It is a tragedy that overindulgence in alcohol is creating carnage on our roads.

The problems caused by alcohol far outweigh those caused by drugs. In 1981, 1175 Australians under the age of 35 years died from abuse of alcohol compared with 317 from drugs. I agree with the honourable member for Dandenong who said that people who use advertising of sport to induce young people to consume the vicious drug alcohol are certainly no leading lights in our community.

How can these people hold up their heads? One hat is worn to say that they are top people in the Australian community, fit to become Prime Ministers of Australia, and then another hat is worn to encourage advertising agents and salesmen to increase liquor consumption. Not enough is done to ensure that hotels, over which they have some influence, stop young people from drinking alcohol. That attitude speaks for itself.

The proportion of students aged between fifteen and seventeen years who drink alcohol concerns me. The percentage soared from 20 per cent in 1970 to more than 50 per cent today. That is a reprehensible proportion that I believe is due to sports advertising and promotion of liquor on television. A survey by a committee of concerned citizens against under-age drinking showed that 74 per cent of girls aged sixteen years and 85 per cent of boys aged seventeen years who were visiting hotels were drinking.

Yet, last year only eighteen convictions were recorded against hoteliers selling liquor to under-age persons. The previous year the figure was only seventeen. There is something rotten in the state of Denmark when there could be up to 100 000 under-age drinkers in the State and there is such a low number of prosecutions. It is a terrible indictment of our society. I want something done about this. It is hypocritical of the representatives of the Australian Hotels Association to say that the solution to the problem is to lower the drinking age and place a moratorium on liquor licences.

Heavier penalties should be imposed on hoteliers serving alcohol to youngsters. Heavier penalties should be imposed on those using forged documents and other ridiculous forms of identification which barmen and others do not seem to do much about checking. A good hotelier ought to be responsible for seeing that the birth certificates or whatever items these young people produce are not photocopies, fraudulent or altered in some other way.

In the United States of America and elsewhere the minimum drinking age has been raised to 21 years. Schools should concentrate far more on educating young people on the problems of drinking. I especially applaud a program for problem drinkers, run by the La Trobe University, who are taught to resist a drink more often and taught other ways of lowering their consumption of alcohol.

If the government ensures that the Liquor Control Commission keeps to the objects of the Bill, all the worst fears of the Australian Hotels Association and the National Party will be groundless. I wish I had more time in which to debate the Bill.

Mrs GLEESON (Thomastown)—I shall make my comments brief to allow sufficient time for remaining speakers to make their contributions. I support the clause. I congratulate the Minister on his careful approach to the whole Bill and the consultative processes he undertook. The four paragraphs of the clause deal with the objects of the proposed legislation. I especially support paragraph (a) which promotes economic and social growth in Victoria through the liquor, hospitality and related industries. The hospitality industry has enjoyed considerable growth and created employment throughout the State. It has helped the development of the Victorian tourist industry, which is one of the fastest growing economic indicators in the State.

Many comments have centred on the comparison of the New South Wales and Victorian hospitality industries. A traditional rivalry has existed between Sydney and Melbourne about which State is superior. The current issue of *Mode* includes a lengthy article detailing the nightclubs in both Melbourne and Sydney. Melbourne and Victoria emerged as the superior city and State and the article contained glowing praise for the Victorian government and its approach towards freeing up the overregulated liquor industry which had not been addressing the concerns of the consumers and the businesses involved.

On 19 September 1987 an *Age* editorial praised the government for the introduction of the Bill and for the consultative processes it undertook in its preparation. It stated:

The government and, in particular the responsible Minister, Mr Fordham, deserve praise . . . for giving priority to soundly based social criteria and economic rationality.

That is high praise for a Bill. It demonstrates the community support for the Bill. Over a two-year period, from the beginning of the liquor control review undertaken by Dr Nieuwenhuysen until the introduction of the current Bill, broad community consultation has taken place. Considerable support has been gained by the introduction of the licensing system. The *Age* editorial further stated:

Taken as a whole, the new legislation provides for a simpler, cheaper, more liberal and more flexible licensing system that should encourage innovation and diversity and respond more sensitively to consumer demand, without relinquishing justifiable controls over the irresponsible use of alcohol . . .

That sums up the response to the Bill.

Mr Jasper interjected.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Fogarty)—Order! The Committee listened in silence to the lengthy contribution of the honourable member for Murray Valley and I ask that he extend the same courtesy to the honourable member for Thomastown.

Mrs GLEESON—The editorial demonstrates the broad support of the community for the Bill. Many red herrings in the guise of community concern have been introduced by speakers tonight. The Minister has always remained open to consultation. He has responsibly revised the ability of local government to comment on licensees and what they might see as an abuse of licences. The Minister has not approached the Bill dogmatically, and he and his committee, and the people in the department, deserve commendation for that approach. I shall comment briefly on clause 50 (3).

Mr Jasper—The Committee is dealing with clause 5.

Mrs GLEESON—I am dealing with paragraph (b) of clause 5 which mentions facilitating the development of a diversity of licensed facilities reflecting consumer demand. I express support for the provision that not more than 25 per cent of the total area of some restaurants will be able to be given over to the sale of liquor which does not have to be served with a meal.

That provision demonstrates that the government is showing consideration for people who wish to have access to a variety of licensed premises without having to resort to the big beer barns. Women in particular will appreciate the inclusion of that provision.

I hope that provision passes through this place and the other place because it provides a choice to people who want to have access to licensed premises for a drink, but not necessarily for a meal. They may not wish to resort to the big beer barns which are traditionally the prerogative of the male drinkers.

Paragraph (c) concerns the provision of adequate controls over the sale, disposal and consumption of liquor. The government has adopted a careful approach towards safeguarding the sale of liquor to protect against its abuse and misuse. That subject will be dealt with during discussion on clauses 127 to 131.

It is important to acknowledge at this point that the majority of young people are responsible. They deserve to be commended. Some provisions must be placed in the proposed legislation to protect the few who are not responsible. The government has adopted a responsible approach to this matter since it has occupied the government benches.

I shall list a few things the government has done to demonstrate its responsible approach to young people who abuse alcohol. The government has legislated to increase penalties on a range of offences relating to under-age drinking. The government formed a Ministerial task force in early 1986 on under-age drinking. It acted speedily to address the issue of the availability of low alcohol content in cooler drinks and legislated to deter drink-drivers.

One of the greatest achievements of the government is the conditions it has placed on probationary licences. People say that many young people go out to drink, but they love their cars even more and that is an extra consideration that the community has in addressing the problem of alcohol abuse by young people. The government should be commended for the inclusion of paragraphs (c) and (d) of clause 5.

I congratulate the government in introducing the Bill and for undertaking the extensive consultation it has conducted throughout the community. The Bill has wide community support. It will civilise the social life of the community and it will increase the economic benefits to the State.

Mr J. F. McGRATH (Warrnambool)—I listened with interest to the contribution of the honourable member for Thomastown. In dealing with clause 5 (d), I am intrigued at the philosophy of a government that prides itself on delivering social justice to everyone and boasts particularly about its assistance and support for young people. Clause 5 (d) states that the object of the Bill is to respond to community interest by:

contributing to the effective co-ordination of the efforts of government and non-government agencies in the prevention and control of alcohol abuse and mis-use.

The paragraph contravenes the philosophy of the government.

I direct the attention of honourable members to the draft of the National Health Policy on Alcohol in Australia report, which is part of the National Drug Offensive. The report says that one of the issues of grave concern is the assured availability of liquor. The Bill says there will be effective coordination of the efforts of government and non-government agencies in the prevention and control of alcohol abuse, but the draft national health policy on alcohol says that one of the main areas of concern is the availability of liquor.

The draft of the National Health Policy on Alcohol in Australia report is to be presented in November this year and one should have thought it would be more appropriate for the

government to examine the issues contained in that draft report and superimpose them in the proposed legislation so legislation in Victoria is consistent with the rest of Australia.

The Victorian Association of Alcohol and Drug Agencies Inc. and the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, two well respected organisations in the field of drug abuse, particularly in the education area, have grave concerns about the Bill. They believe it will not work in coordination and in concert with their ideas and objectives.

I have great difficulty in understanding how honourable members can support clause 5 (d) and also support the proliferation of extra outlets, which will be the result of the implementation of the Bill. It is a contradiction. The Bill will work against the interests of those government and non-government agencies. The agencies state clearly in the documentation that one of the main problems is the availability of liquor. It is difficult to understand how any honourable member can support the Bill given that clause 5 (d) is an important object of the Bill.

Members of the government party have congratulated each other about the Bill and spoken about the importance of the Bill to the community, but they have turned a collective blind eye to the implications of paragraph (d). The proposed legislation will result in the proliferation of additional outlets, which will exacerbate the problem of under-age drinking.

I strongly disagree with the comments of the honourable member for Doncaster on the hotel industry. He was most unfair and unjust in his criticism of the industry. There may be a small minority who have acted irresponsibly, but it is my view that the majority of hoteliers have acted responsibly and carefully in their supervision of young people on their premises. The honourable member for Doncaster is wrong because he has generalised about something that is applicable only to a small minority. The honourable member has cast aspersions on an industry that I, and several speakers before me, have said has taken great pride in building itself up to what it is today.

The Bill will open up the gambit for the availability of liquor.

Mr Fordham—That is wrong.

Mr J. F. McGRATH—That is not wrong. The Bill will provide the opportunity for additional outlets, which the drug agencies and draft report state is the last thing they want. These organisations accept the responsible role of doing something about the drug problem, particularly with young people. It is hypocrisy to connect clause 5 (d) with the views of those government and non-government agencies.

The government and the Committee should consider the views of these agencies because they represent responsible people who have made a critique of the proposed legislation as it affects their ideals and they are disappointed because of what they believe will face them after the implementation of the Bill, picking up the pieces of human debris.

Ms SIBREE (Kew)—I would have liked to have contributed to the second-reading of the Bill, but time was not available. I am concerned that the objects clause of the Bill does not match up with other clauses that will be dealt with, probably not tonight. I share the concern of other honourable members about the abuse of alcohol, but we must understand that with a legally available drug, alcohol, Parliament must either bite the bullet and say it should not be available or, if it is available, live with the consequences of its availability.

The community must grapple with the question of why people abuse the drug of alcohol. It might not necessarily be the drug that is at fault; it may be that people use the drug in an attempt to overcome other problems. Many young people may feel unloved, unwanted and without direction. Complex issues are involved and I do not wish to canvass those issues during the debate tonight.

The Bill does not adequately cover the area referred to in the objects clause about community involvement, economic and social growth and the control of the sale of liquor. However, my real concern is about the decision-making ability of people in the Box Hill

and Camberwell areas that come within the electorate I represent. Those communities many years ago decided that their residential areas would remain alcohol free.

Mr Fordham interjected.

Ms SIBREE—The Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources may well say that these people go and drink in other municipalities. Be that as it may, that community of 135 000 people have chosen a residential amenity without the normal liquor outlets of hotels. As a child growing up in Box Hill, I thought it was strange not to have hotels in the area and, if I were asked to vote on the matter, I would probably vote in favour of opening up the area to liquor outlets. Nevertheless, people have chosen to live in that area because it has no hotels and we should respect that historical situation.

The Minister should be aware that a spectrum research poll taken in 1985 showed that fewer than 50 per cent of the people of Box Hill were enthusiastic about having hotels in their area. I understand that Box Hill will be taking another poll next year. The reason for my concern in bringing the matter to the attention of the Committee tonight is that I believe the honourable member for Box Hill should have something to say about the clauses in the Bill. She should be telling the community in the electorate she represents who will vote for her in eighteen months or two years' time how she feels about the subject.

How does the honourable member for Box Hill feel about voting for a Bill that will take away the democratic rights that the citizens of Box Hill have enjoyed for many years?

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, liquor is a drug. It is up to the community to decide how to deal with that drug. If it is not to be prohibited in the community, sensible arrangements about liquor outlets must be made. If a particular community does not want an hotel in its area, its decision should be respected. The sword of Damocles should not be held over the heads of people who do not want liquor outlets in their area. The Minister is holding that sword of Damocles over people's heads as will become obvious in further clauses in the Bill that will be discussed later.

I place on record my concern that the democratic rights of 135 000 residents in the Box Hill and Camberwell areas are being taken away from them. They should be allowed to have their say and maybe we can act after they have done so but we must not act beforehand.

I am also concerned about under-age drinking and about the presentation of age identification. Some novel ways could be provided for young people to show proof of identity of their age. For instance, the Federal government could encourage young people to enrol as electors at the age of eighteen and provide them with an enrolment card that perhaps contains a photograph—it would not be an ID card—which would be a useful presentation and proof of age.

With those concerns about the objects clause, I am happy for my colleague, the honourable member for Prahran, who has the lead on this Bill, to make some further comments.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I welcome the comments made by honourable members on all sides of the Committee to the objects clause. It was described by the honourable member for Dromana as the key ingredient in the Bill. He went on to commend the objects but later on, despite saying the objects had been improved from the first Bill to the second Bill and that it did everything that people expected, the Bill was significantly floored.

Much care and concern has gone into the objects clause. The reference in clause 5 (c) to provide adequate controls over the sale, disposal and consumption of liquor and clause 5 (d) relating to effective coordination of the efforts of agencies is an appropriate measure of the commitment of the government to assure the public that issues of abuse and misuse are properly addressed.

I made it clear in my May statement that it is not simply the liquor licensing legislation that should be regarded as the general vehicle for addressing issues of liquor abuse and misuse. I refer honourable members who are serious about this issue—and I accept that the honourable member for Dromana is serious about it—to that May statement. They would find page after page of initiatives that the government has taken on the issue of alcohol abuse and misuse.

I give credit to the initiatives taken by our predecessors. Victoria has led the way over the past ten years in alcohol abuse and misuse, both under the previous Liberal government and the present Labor government. Significant initiatives in the control of the road toll and the abuse of liquor by young people have taken place. Since I have taken responsibility for the liquor legislation in this State, the significant amendments made last year have been embodied in the Bill before the House. I see this issue as being crucial and the one on which the government will be tested and judged by the community in the future.

It is obvious that the Committee will not have a chance this evening to discuss clause 6 relating to the Co-ordinating Council. I mentioned in my second-reading speech and in the May statement that the prime task of the Co-ordinating Council will be to address the issue of alcohol abuse and misuse among young people. That will have a wider ambit than the liquor licensing aspect.

Ms Sibree—They cannot expect to be better than their seniors.

Mr FORDHAM—I understand the point made by the honourable member for Kew. The government will receive considerable input from a range of organisations. As mentioned by the honourable member for Warrnambool, a whole range of organisations now functioning in this State are properly concerned and have knowledge and expertise that should be made available to a range of government bodies, such as health, youth, welfare and education, and involving my own Ministry, the Liquor Control Commission and the bodies mentioned in the Co-ordinating Council clause.

The Co-ordinating Council will have an important role. Obviously it will receive its resources through my department and I envisage my department having a significant responsibility in this crucial area involving young children.

I repeat that it is not the Bill that should be regarded as the major measure in addressing issues of alcohol abuse and misuse, but rather the whole battery of government bodies and agencies within this area.

Reference was made to advertising. That matter needs to be addressed. Legitimate concerns have been expressed by agencies to the honourable member for Warrnambool and a number of other members of Parliament on whether the present voluntary advertising code is working satisfactorily. I accept that the code should be reassessed because the criticisms being made of the present arrangement appear to be legitimate.

The objects of the Bill provide a proper and sound foundation for the Bill and present a proper reflection of the commitment of the government not only to ensure an industry that provides significant economic development, investment and employment but also to meet a social need. The government is committed to meeting the issue of abuse and misuse in a proper and constructive way.

I again thank honourable members for their contributions to clause 5 and other clauses. Those amendments that have not yet been reached will be discussed in detail with representatives of the other parties when the Bill is between here and another place.

Mr DICKINSON (South Barwon)—I support the objects of the Bill and thank the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources for clarification of the many subjects addressed by the government. Many community groups, including social welfare and church organisations, have commented on the Bill. Municipalities in the Geelong region have welcomed the opportunity of airing their concerns. At a recent council meeting the Geelong City Council received a report on the Liquor Control Bill (No. 2), including

concern about the impact of licensed premises on adjacent residential areas and about the town planning controls being applied.

The *Geelong Advertiser* has taken a continuing interest in this subject, particularly alcohol abuse. In an editorial of 28 July 1987 it expressed concern about drink-driving. Honourable members will be aware of the publicity about the subject; recently I received a poster from Charles Perkins, expressing his and the community's concern on statistics that reveal frightening facts about excessive drinking.

The community is aware of the need for moderation and control; statistics highlight the dangers and disclose that 36 per cent of the 2812 car and motorcycle driver deaths in Australia in 1984 were alcohol related. The adverse effects of alcohol are estimated to cost Australia \$3 billion a year. More than 600 000 Australians could be classified as alcoholics, and 1.2 million Australians are affected by alcohol abuse every day in the home. It is tragic that 40 per cent of divorces are the result of alcohol abuse—honourable members know the consequences of marriage breakdowns. The statistics also indicate that 73 per cent of men who had committed violent crimes had been drinking; and approximately 140 000 children aged between twelve and seventeen years get very drunk once a month.

The electorate I represent encompasses coastal resorts where many municipalities offer restaurants and excellent hotel facilities; the licensed grocers supermarkets welcome the opportunity of trading on a weekend, on a par with hotels.

The community is not trying to escape the problems presented and hopes that the reports that appeared in the *Herald* on 1 September, describing discotheques that pour drunk young people onto the streets at 3 a.m., may lead to future controls.

I welcome the opportunity of making these brief remarks and hope that time will prove that the Bill will lead to better marketing controls and understanding in restaurants, discos and other liquor outlets.

Mr HAYWARD (Pahran)—I refer to clause 5, the objects clause. It is unfortunate that the Opposition has been unable to proceed with its proposed amendments to the remainder of the Bill.

The objects clause refers to promoting economic and social growth, and to providing adequate controls over the sale, consumption and disposal of liquor. Very much part of that is ensuring that there is adequate protection for neighbourhood communities.

The Opposition will be insisting upon its amendments in another place, and, hopefully, constructive discussions will occur with the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources while the Bill is between the two Houses.

There is no stated object concerning the raising of revenue in the objects clause. The Bill should not be used as a revenue-raising measure. During the debate this evening strong cases have been put by members of the National Party and the Liberal Party, that consideration should be given to reducing the licence fees, remembering that the objects of the Bill do not include the raising of revenue. As stated by various members, some existing licensed premises may be placed at a disadvantage because of the Bill; there is a real case for the government to consider a reduction in licence fees; in particular, it should consider the \$800 application fee for restaurants.

My information is that no net revenue is raised through the liquor industry; if this information is incorrect, no doubt the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources will advise the Committee. A document prepared by the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources, referring to the 1986–87 balance sheets of the Liquor Control Commission, stated:

I note that the amounts expended on salaries and expenses, together with allowances to licensing police, exceed the amount gained from the issue of permits. I am also aware that the Police Force attend the permit venue, etc. to ensure compliance with the permit conditions. There is no direct charge to the commission for this service.

That is an important factor for the new commission because part of its objectives must include effective administration. The operations of the existing commission have been expensive. It is correct that the expenses of that commission have exceeded the amount of money raised.

When the new commission is implementing its objectives, the Opposition hopes it will achieve cost reductions in administration, thereby enabling the government to consider a reduction in the licence fees.

The objects of the Bill involve the preserving and protecting of the amenities of local neighbourhood communities. The Opposition will be pursuing this aspect of the objects clause through its amendments in another place.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—In the remaining few minutes of the Committee stage of debate on the Liquor Control Bill (No. 2), I express extreme disappointment to the Minister for guillotining and limiting the time available for honourable members to debate the objects clause and, indeed, all clauses in the Bill. On numerous occasions the Minister has said that it was a clauses Bill, that there would be ample time for discussing all amendments and that all parties, and individuals, could debate the Bill in this Chamber.

The National Party has proposed a range of amendments, yet the Committee is still dealing with clause 5, concerning the objects of the proposed legislation. The honourable member for Prahran queried whether provisions relating to the fee-raising ability of the Liquor Control Commission should be included in the objects of the Bill; he referred to the 9 per cent licence fee. Section 3 of the Liquor Control Act sets out the objects of the legislation; it contains no reference to fees and charges. The fees are listed in the Act, and in the regulations.

The National Party considers there is no need to include those provisions in the objects clause and is concerned that those objects do not go far enough in precisely defining the aims of the Liquor Control Commission. The objects of the commission should be to provide for the stable, orderly economic development of the industry.

The National Party will oppose clause 5 because it does not go far enough and because the government has not accepted my amendment; honourable members have not been given sufficient time to debate all the clauses of major areas of concern to the National Party and members of Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Fogarty)—Order! The time allotted for the remaining stages of the Bill has expired. The question is:

That clause 5 stand part of the Bill.

The Committee divided on the clause (Mr Fogarty in the chair).

Ayes	..	..	..	..	..	66
Noes	..	..	..	..	..	9
Majority for the clause	..	..	..	..	..	57

AYES

Mr Brown
Miss Callister
Mr Cathie
Dr Coghill
Mr Coleman
Mr Cooper
Mr Crozier
Mr Culpin
Mr Cunningham
Mr Delzoppo
Mr Ernst
Mr Fordham
Mr Gavin

NOES

Mr Hann
Mr Jasper
Mr McGrath
(Lowan)
Mr McNamara
Mr Ross-Edwards
Mr Steggall
Mr Whiting

Tellers:
Mr McGrath
(Warrnambool)
Mr Wallace

AYES

Mrs Gleeson
 Mr Harrowfield
 Mr Hayward
 Mr Heffernan
 Mrs Hill
 Mrs Hirsh
 Mr Hockley
 Mr John
 Mr Kennedy
 Mr Kennett
 Mr Kirkwood
 Mr Lea
 Mr Leigh
 Mr Lieberman
 Mr McCutcheon
 Mr McDonald
 Mr Maclellan
 Mr Mathews
 Mr Micallef
 Mr Norris
 Mr Perrin
 Mr Pescott
 Mr Plowman
 Mr Pope
 Mr Ramsay
 Mrs Ray
 Mr Remington
 Mr Reynolds
 Mr Richardson
 Mr Roper
 Mr Rowe
 Mr Seitz
 Mr Sheehan
 Mr Shell
 Ms Sibree
 Mr Sidiropoulos
 Mr Simmonds
 Mr Simpson
 Mr Smith
 (*Glen Waverley*)
 Mr Smith
 (*Polwarth*)
 Mr Spyker
 Mr Stirling
 Mr Stockdale
 Mr Tanner
 Mr Trezise
 Dr Vaughan
 Mr Walsh
 Mr Weideman
 Mr Wilkes
 Mr Williams
 Mrs Wilson

Tellers:

Mr Andrianopoulos
 Mr Dickinson

NOES

PAIR

Mrs Setches

Mr Evans
 (*Gippsland East*)

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Fogarty)—Order! To conclude the Committee stage of the Bill, the question is:

That the remaining clauses and schedules of the Bill, together with the printed and circulated amendments of the government, be agreed to.

The question was agreed to.

The printed and circulated amendments of the government referred to in the question were:

1. Clause 69, after line 43, insert—
“(b) the documents or copies of documents referred to in section 63 (5) except paragraphs (k) and (l); and”.
2. Clause 69, page 36, after line 14, insert—
“(4) If the Commission requests an applicant for the transfer of a licence or permit to give any other information, the applicant must comply with the request.”.
3. Clause 101, line 24, after “extended” insert “hours”.
4. Clause 106, after line 8, insert “Penalty: 5 penalty units.”
5. Clause 108, lines 22 and 23, omit “the prescribed manner the prescribed particulars” and insert “a manner approved by the Commission the particulars determined by Order of the Governor in Council”.
6. Clause 113, lines 12 and 13, omit “or a limited licence granted to an auctioneer”.
7. Clause 128, page 63, line 10, after “18” insert “years”.
8. Clause 152, page 73, line 21, omit “or” and insert “and”.
9. Clause 152, page 73, line 22, omit “he or she” and insert “the owner or mortgagee”.
10. Clause 152, page 73, line 24, after “owner” insert “or mortgagee”.
11. Clause 152, page 73, line 27, after “owner” insert “or mortgagee”.
12. Clause 152, page 73, line 33, after “owner” insert “or mortgagee”.
13. Clause 153, page 74, line 11, omit “the prescribed form” and insert “the form approved by the Commission”.
14. Clause 173, line 28, omit “or permit”.
15. Clause 173, line 33, omit “or permits”.
16. Clause 173, line 34, omit “or permit”.
17. Schedule 1, line 24, omit “their membership of” and insert “reciprocal arrangements with”.
18. Schedule 3, Item 25, omit “Victorian”.
19. Schedule 3, Item 25, omit “On-premises” and insert “General”.

The Bill was reported to the House with amendments, and passed through its remaining stages.

TOBACCO BILL

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I am proud to present this Bill today as it represents a very important social reform that addresses a fundamental issue in community health and is a very clear demonstration of how the community's attitudes have changed over the past six years.

There are more than 1 million children in Victoria under the age of sixteen years. If current trends continue, some 320 000 will be smokers by adulthood and, as a direct consequence, it can be anticipated that no fewer than 64 000 of them will die of smoking-related diseases if no intervention occurs. That is 64 000 smoking-related deaths that are avoidable; 64 000 people who could live longer and more satisfying lives but for a habit sold to them in their youth; 64 000 people who unintentionally add to the burdens of the public hospital health system and increase the cost to the whole community of providing the best available health services to all who need them. Tens of thousands more will add to the hospital burden due to non-fatal smoking illnesses.

Smoking is the greatest single preventable cause of ill health and death in Victoria. Just more than 6200 Victorians die each year from tobacco-related diseases, including lung cancer, mouth, throat and other cancers, heart disease, strokes, chronic bronchitis, emphysema and a range of other illnesses. The appalling significance of this statistic is that it means seventeen deaths every day of the year.

This represents nearly ten times the number of people who die on our roads and 100 times more than die due to other drugs, including heroin. Furthermore, people suffering tobacco-related illness account for more than 7 per cent of Victoria's hospital bed-days. The direct cost of treating smoking-related illnesses has recently been estimated to be around \$240 million. Clearly this is a problem that the Government and the community must address.

Honourable members will recall that in the 1970s concern about the road toll reached a high point. The government of the day launched a campaign based around seat belt legislation and drink-driving laws to deal with the problem. This was supported by the media, and in particular the Herald-Sun group, which ran the memorable "1034" campaign which vividly portrayed the carnage on the roads.

The benefits that have come from these efforts and the subsequent measures being taken right up to today are undeniable. The road toll dropped to 669 deaths last year, despite increases in vehicle and licensed driver numbers.

Other examples of successful public health campaigns are:

- widespread immunisation to remove the threat of polio and diphtheria;
- compulsory screening programs as part of the fight against tuberculosis; and
- the prohibition of fireworks in the home to avoid injuries to children.

Each of these measures had its initial critics but was quickly accepted by the community at large as responsible and appropriate action. This shows that the public will change their behaviour and support government action to protect community health.

The dangers of smoking are now universally recognised, despite some claims to the contrary by those with a vested interest. Among organisations that have registered their strong concern are: the World Health Organisation, the International Union Against Cancer, Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council, the National Heart Foundation, the Anti-Cancer Council, the United States Surgeon-General, the British Medical Association, the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, the Australian Medical Association and specialist bodies representing almost every sector of medicine, including obstetricians and gynaecologists, thoracic surgeons and paediatricians.

Indeed, there is no health authority, no medical faculty and no medical association anywhere in the world which denies the overwhelming scientific evidence of health damage caused by smoking. More than 30 000 medical and scientific papers provide the evidence to support these opinions.

TOBACCO CONTROL STRATEGY

The government's strategy to discourage smoking has three principal components:

1. To encourage smokers to give up the habit.

Information and education programs such as Quit, are succeeding in convincing adult groups to drop the habit. The strong support of professional and medical groups has given backbone to this approach.

2. To stop the recruitment of new smokers.

Smoking must be stripped of its glamour and healthy non-smoking lifestyles portrayed as the norm if young people are not to continue to be drawn into lifelong smoking

habits. Peer group pressure is a powerful force which must be redirected to promote good habits.

3. To protect the health of non-smokers.

The different needs of smokers and non-smokers who share the same public places or work environment demand sensitive solutions.

The Bill deals primarily with the second component, namely, the recruitment of new smokers.

The government will continue its successful programs to encourage existing smokers to give up the smoking habit. Through the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation established by the Bill, funds for community education in a wide range of prevention programs will be substantially increased.

The government will also continue its negotiating efforts to increase the number of non-smoking areas in public places and to achieve voluntary arrangements in work situations to limit the impact on the health of non-smokers of people wishing to smoke.

The Bill does not seek to ban smoking or prohibit the sale of tobacco products to adults. In a free society smoking must be tolerated, provided that smokers are well informed about the consequences of their activity and non-smokers in the community are given adequate consideration when sharing confined spaces with smokers. The government's concern is directed at people who do not yet smoke, particularly impressionable young people.

Adults are starting to heed the message of campaigns like Quit. Between 1983, before these campaigns started, and 1986, when the most recent Victorian survey was done, the proportion of smokers was reduced from 34.1 per cent to 31.8 per cent of the population.

Twenty years ago 58 per cent of men and 28 per cent of women smoked while the 1986 survey showed only 33 per cent of men but 29 per cent of women were smoking. Smoking rates among young people remain unacceptably high and are increasing among girls in the fourteen to sixteen-year age group. Unless the government tackles this problem of recruitment of new smokers, the health problem will become even more acute in the future.

Some studies indicate more than 80 per cent of smokers commenced their habit before the age of sixteen years—that is prior to the age at which the purchase of cigarettes is legal. Thus the glamorous image of smoking and the way in which it is promoted to young people in their teens and early twenties is critical.

TOBACCO PROMOTION

The major objective of the current package of measures is to greatly reduce the recruitment of new smokers by reducing the association of smoking with social success, wealth, sex and sporting prowess.

Research shows that the factors involved in young people taking up smoking are predominantly social and the "role modelling" provided by parents and peers. They are not related to any inherent attractiveness of the drug tobacco.

The images of advertising and sponsorships, therefore, are crucial determinants of recruitment. While governments cannot directly influence family or peer group example, they can and should act to reduce the influence of cigarette advertising and promotion and help provide an environment in which children are exposed to positive models of non-smoking behaviour. The acceptability of smoking very strongly derives from long-established advertising strategies.

The Bill aims to end this process of recruitment of new smokers by:

prohibiting cinema advertising, billboards and other external signs which are forms of cigarette advertising highly visible to young people;

prohibiting other forms of promotion including competitions and free samples of tobacco products;

ending tobacco sponsorship of sport, except in limited cases; and

providing replacement funding to sport and arts groups through a new Victorian Health Promotion Foundation charged with promoting positive and healthy lifestyles for young people.

These prohibitions are justified in being applied to tobacco promotion because of the 6200 smoking-related deaths each year.

The prohibition on sponsorships has been tempered with a power to provide exemptions in order to cater for national events which have a major component in Victoria. Applications for an exemption will not lightly be given and will be given only where they meet the criteria set out in clause 10 of the Bill, that is where:

- (a) there is national or international interest in the functions or events;
- (b) links with similar events occurring interstate or overseas are of such a nature that an exemption should be provided; and
- (c) sufficient efforts have been made to obtain an alternative sponsor for the event to occur in Victoria.

It is not expected that the restrictions on tobacco promotion will lead to a significant short-term drop in consumption. Adults with a developed tobacco habit are unlikely to change their habit in the absence of advertising. However, limiting advertising and prohibiting sports sponsorships will significantly reduce the appeal of smoking to young people who have not yet taken up the habit. The effect will be that tobacco consumption should fall steadily but surely.

Quite a few countries around the world already have cigarette advertising bans but most do so in support of a State monopoly on tobacco sales and not as a means of discouraging young people from taking up smoking. Thus the tobacco industry often quotes reports on the effects of advertising bans out of context. A good example of a country where an advertising ban has been accompanied with a positive education program is Norway and the results were very marked, particularly in the reduction of smoking among young people.

The tobacco industry is also not frank in its claims that advertisements only sway smokers from one brand to another. More than any other commodity, cigarettes have been marketed on image, and many of these images are undeniably aimed at recruitment of new smokers. Common images are initiation into adulthood, sophistication, social success, association with sport and other overt psychological and sexual messages. Peter Jackson and Alpine are examples of two brands relying on blatantly youth-oriented advertising, and it is not surprising that they have recently shown up among the most popular cigarettes for young people.

Inducing people into a health threatening habit on the basis of spurious links to social success is objectionable. To do this knowing that a significant part of the target group is below sixteen years of age and not legally entitled to buy cigarettes is simply unacceptable.

The issue of responsible tobacco advertising has been on the public agenda throughout the decade since television and radio advertising was banned. The industry effort at self-regulation has failed. For this reason, it is necessary for the government to increase the prohibitions on tobacco promotion concentrating on sports and arts sponsorship and the forms of advertising particularly effective with young people.

Due to the nature of the printing industry, advertising in newspapers and magazines is only effectively controllable at the national level. The State government does not propose any prohibitions or further action in this area. It also does not propose to prohibit advertising at the point of sale. Among other reasons, serious difficulties exist in distinguishing legitimate packaging and point of sale advertising. The tobacco industry is expected to strictly avoid recruitment of young smokers in these permitted areas of advertising.

The government does not see action on the issue of tobacco as any precedent for action on advertising of other products such as alcohol. Tobacco is a serious health threat which has been irresponsibly promoted for too long. No other product is as great a health risk, and no industry has behaved so irresponsibly.

Tobacco impairs health, regardless of how it is used. Products such as alcohol or fast foods are unhealthy only when abused and overconsumed. Unlike the tobacco industry, which irresponsibly continues to deny any health risks, the alcohol industry has supported programs such as anti-drink driving education. Only last week both the vehicle industry and the food industry voluntarily withdrew potentially dangerous products at considerable cost to themselves as part of their commitment to responsibility.

VICTORIAN HEALTH PROMOTION FOUNDATION

To complement the prohibitions I have outlined, the Bill also establishes the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation. Its role will be to address the issue of health promotion and illness prevention throughout the community, and it is not limited to smoking-related illness.

The government will be seeking to appoint a board of prominent people with experience in health, sports, arts and communications. The foundation is being established as an independent statutory body, accountable to the Minister and Parliament. It will be funded by a new health promotion levy of 5 per cent on wholesale tobacco sales which will be directed straight into a trust fund set aside for the foundation's purposes. The increase will result in no more than a 4 per cent increase in retail prices, which is well below the consumer price index.

Victoria's rate of tobacco franchise fee will be 30 per cent from 1 December, which is the rate already applying in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. It will be lower than the 35 per cent applying in Western Australia and the Northern Territory and well below the 50 per cent applying in Tasmania. South Australia has a 25 per cent rate while Queensland is the only State without such a franchise fee.

The objects and functions of the foundation are set out in the Bill and include the funding of health promotion programs, grants to groups involved in the prevention and early detection of disease and sponsorships for sporting and cultural activities. Ten per cent of the funds will be provided to support medical research into preventable disease. This money will initially be directed through the Amrad Corporation Ltd, established under the economic strategy to promote Victoria's excellent research resources. It is expected that the new levy will raise \$23 million a year.

Sponsorships by the foundation will effectively end the association of tobacco with sports and the arts in Victoria.

The SPEAKER—Order! The time appointed by Sessional Orders for me to interrupt business has now arrived.

On the motion of Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources), the sitting was continued.

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—Current tobacco sponsorships will be replaced with health promotion sponsorships especially targeted to specific groups in the community, except where an exemption is provided. For example, tobacco sponsorship of an outdoor sport could be replaced by skin cancer or anti-drug and alcohol messages.

Those to be eligible for funds fall into three main groups: firstly, any sport or activity that promotes health by active participation and is able to promote an appropriate health message. The sports that come to mind include those that currently attract media attention and sponsorship, such as football and cricket. However, the foundation will give those who have previously not had tobacco sponsorship the opportunity of obtaining worthwhile financial support while promoting a message they can be proud of. A good example could be the promotion of road safety by BMX clubs.

The second area that will benefit from the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation is any cultural activity that delivers a significant audience for an appropriate health message. For instance, a theatre group that performs for a specific migrant community could be sponsored to enable the delivery of a health message in their native language. Another example could be the sponsorship of a rock concert in order to deliver an anti-drug and alcohol message to teenagers.

Health promotion groups within the community will be able to apply for funds to sponsor an activity if it comes under one of the above two categories. A good example would be if the National Heart Foundation of Australia applied for funds and were linked with a junior sport in order to promote the relationship between exercise and good health.

Health groups will also be able to apply for grants to assist in research into preventable disease or to aid in the development of educational campaigns designed to raise awareness of ways to prevent disease or improve health.

The Bill also deals with a range of matters necessary for the establishment of the foundation and setting out its accountability to the Minister and Parliament. I direct attention to two aspects: firstly, the power in clause 19 (2) to give the foundation a discretion to make grants for relief of loss should special circumstances warrant this. This will enable any particular problems arising from the measure to be addressed fairly.

Secondly, the Bill provides for applications to the foundation for grants and exempts documents under the Freedom of Information Act 1982. The concern raised by sporting groups was that they would be very reluctant to provide material about their detailed operation as the exemption for "commercial documents" within the Freedom of Information Act may not be interpreted to cover their activities. Clause 44 resolves this concern without limiting access to the normal papers of the foundation.

SMOKING AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

The Bill also consolidates a range of other provisions to deter tobacco usage, particularly among young people.

The prohibition on selling cigarettes to people under sixteen years of age is restated and enforcement is upgraded by giving health surveyors enforcement powers and introducing a \$100 on-the-spot fine. The emphasis will, however, remain on education at the local level.

Vending machines will in future be limited to premises with a licence or permit under the Liquor Control Act. Unsupervised machines in other locations are a notorious source of cigarettes for children and virtually impossible to police.

Packets of fewer than twenty cigarettes are prohibited from next July. This message along with the price increase as a result of the health promotion levy will make cigarettes less accessible to the young.

Chewing tobacco is prohibited by the Bill in line with a national agreement by the Australian Health Ministers Conference. Nasal snuff will not be prohibited.

The Bill presents a major development in the community response to the problem of tobacco usage. The measures have been developed after careful deliberation and are in step with community opinion. The redirection of resources towards health promotion is a very positive step which other States would do well to consider.

The potential impact of the measures in the Bill has been considered and appropriate provisions have been made. The Bill should, therefore, command bipartisan support as an important step forward in the protection of public health and community well-being.

I am certain important groups such as the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria and the National Heart Foundation of Australia will agree with the provisions in the Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston South), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

JOINT SITTING OF PARLIAMENT Monash University

A message was received from the Council acquainting the Assembly that they have agreed to meet the Assembly for the purpose of sitting and voting together to recommend members of the Parliament of Victoria for appointment to the Council of the Monash University, as proposed by the Assembly.

INTELLECTUALLY DISABLED PERSONS' SERVICES (AMENDMENT) BILL

This Bill was received from the Council and, on the motion of Mr SPYKER (Minister for Consumer Affairs), was read a first time.

SUPERANNUATION SCHEMES (ACCIDENT COMPENSATION) BILL

This Bill was returned from the Council with a message relating to amendments.

It was ordered that the message be taken into consideration next day.

ADJOURNMENT

Retraining under WorkCare—Grain freight rates—ANZ Bank charges—Melbourne Wholesale Fish Market—Principal of Milawa Primary School—Cement dumping—Tabling of annual reports

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—I raise a matter for the attention of the Treasurer, but in his absence I direct it to the attention of the Deputy Premier. The matter concerns a Mrs Olivia Edwards of Mt Martha who has written to the Treasurer about the position of her daughter under the WorkCare scheme.

Her daughter Cathryn is 28 years old. She has had considerable education and training, much of it being job orientated, having undertaken two and a half years of teacher training and also having completed a secretarial certificate course in 1981.

She worked for the Police Force at one stage of her working life, and during that time she was diagnosed as having a painful disability which restricted the use of her arms. Her mother describes her ailment under the generic term of repetitive strain injury.

The Opposition is aware that there is a bulk of evidence in Australia and throughout the world which questions many RSI claims. It appears that this is not one of the contestable claims, as there is a disability. Whatever the view that others might have, it is clear that

the government certainly cannot contest the claim because the Police Force has admitted the claim and accepted liability.

This 28-year-old lady is anxious to obtain employment although she has a history of this chronic painful disability. Her mother explains in her letter to the Treasurer that her daughter has been unable to obtain employment because of the effect of WorkCare and particularly because her prospective employers have been concerned that there will be a recurrence of her condition and they will then be liable under the WorkCare system for the recurrence of her disability.

Mrs Edwards on page 2 of her letter to the Treasurer said:

There has been a lot of publicity by employer groups about the failure of WorkCare. I agree with their criticism but from the employees side. No-one has mentioned the greatest fault of WorkCare, this fault is the reason why the genuine injured employee finds it almost impossible to return to the work force. This fault is the liability clause whereby each latest employer must accept liability regardless of where or when the original injury occurred. This fault leaves Cathryn, whose employment was terminated, unemployable, because no employer is going to employ her and so risk her chronic injury reoccurring which leaves him having to accept liability . . .

Mrs Edwards goes on to say that her daughter is anxious to obtain retraining in alternative employment, notwithstanding this painful disability, but she has been unable to do so.

Her mother raises the fact that WorkCare is refusing an increasing number of retraining applications, and she has drawn the conclusion that WorkCare prefers people to return to their original work where it is likely—as with this lady—that they must pursue an occupation where a recurrence of the ailment is likely.

Rehabilitation and retraining was a central part of the rhetoric of the government on WorkCare and it is not being borne out in this case. I ask the Treasurer to respond to this lady by helping this young 28-year-old woman who is being obstructed by WorkCare and is not able to obtain employment.

Mr W. D. McGRATH (Lowan)—The matter I direct to the Minister for Transport concerns the setting of grain freight rates for the 1987–88 grain harvest. I read through the evidence given by the Minister for Transport to the Estimates Committee on 21 September in which, in reply to Mr Hallam, a member of another place and one of the committee members, the Minister indicated that the State Transport Authority had made costings available to the Victorian Farmers Federation and the consultants, Price Waterhouse Urwick.

The Minister for Transport goes on to say that there have been various meetings between the State Transport Authority, Price Waterhouse Urwick and the Victorian Farmers Federation, and there was some disagreement between the overall costing of some \$4 million to \$5 million. That \$4 million to \$5 million equates with the amount of revenue raised by the STA for the movement of grain in this State.

The Minister stated that he is expecting a report on the final discussions with the STA on the figures suggested by Price Waterhouse Urwick and the Victorian Farmers Federation that the farming community has been overcharged by that amount on grain rates on last year's activities.

The Minister indicated that when the report is made available in about a week's time he will meet with the Victorian Farmers Federation to discuss and finalise freight rates for the 1987–88 harvest.

Another document that the Minister presented to the Estimates Committee, on this occasion from the Budget Papers, item 686, freight services, related to the actual revenue raised for the grain freight movement in 1986–87, which was \$60 749 million. If one further examines the Budget Papers, it will be seen that the actual grain tonnes moved was 3.06 million. It is estimated that, in 1987–88, 3.25 million tonnes will be moved and that will produce revenue of \$62 283 million for the 1987–88 harvest.

Based on those indicators and the comments made by the Minister for Transport to the Estimates Committee, the Minister should announce to the graingrowers of Victoria that there will be a 6 per cent reduction in money terms in freight rates for the forthcoming season.

Mr CUNNINGHAM (Derrimut)—I direct the attention of the Treasurer to a matter relating to the withdrawal fee now being charged by the ANZ Banking Group Ltd that came into effect on 1 October 1987.

I ask the Treasurer to do all he can to ensure that no such fee is introduced by the State Bank of Victoria.

On 14 September 1987 the ANZ Bank had a full page advertisement, which states:

You may not need to pay bank fees

ANZ Access Savings Account

Withdrawal Fee

The first 20 withdrawals each quarter are free. After that a fee of 25 cents for each withdrawal will be charged. Accounts with an average daily balance over \$5 000 will not attract any fee.

Other Banks' Automatic Telling Machines

From 1 November 1987 a fee of 25 cents will apply each time a customer makes a cash withdrawal from an ANZ Access Savings Account using another bank's machine. Balance enquiries are free.

That very expensive advertisement would be bad enough if it just stopped there. Unfortunately, other banks greeted with delight the lead shown by the ANZ Bank. According to an article in the *Age* of 9 September 1987 the Commonwealth Bank was examining the possibility of introducing similar charges, perhaps more extensively. That appears to be an ominous warning.

In the same article, a spokesperson for the Westpac Banking Corporation was quoted as saying that the bank was definitely considering introducing charges. The National Bank spokesperson said that the bank was also considering introducing charges.

This transaction fee is unjust, unnecessary, and unwarranted. It is unjust because it discriminates against and would affect low-income earners more than it would affect those who have the capacity to maintain the basic \$5000 deposit so that the fees could be avoided.

The charge is unwarranted because banks are in a specially privileged position. By being licensed in Australia they are guaranteed by the Reserve Bank of Australia, which acts as a lender of last resort. The decision by the banks will affect low-income earners and pensioners, most of whom are just making ends meet and need to go to their banks more often as their limited funds are spent.

The charge is unnecessary because banking is a profitable industry, using depositors' funds to attain that position. The *Australian* of 19 January 1987 reported that the ANZ Banking Group Ltd should lead the pack with a \$40 million rise to \$355 million a year—in 1986, their profit was \$315 million.

Following the announcement of those potential charges by the banking fraternity, the *Australian Business Magazine* of 7 October 1987 on page 47 had this to say:

Banks are not the only ones who could levy a transaction charge—the idea could boomerang.

The article suggests that commercial operations associated with banking could well pass on this levy to their customers. As well as banks having to provide banking services as part of their licences, they are also free to enter other business activities—share broking, insurance, travel, etc. It is interesting to note that they do not impose a transaction fee on those competitive areas of business. They want to impose this fee on their captive depositors. The fee will be the thin edge of the wedge.

In its advertisement of 14 September, the ANZ Bank tells "How to avoid fees". That can be very easily arranged. I am suggesting that all ANZ customers who are depositors should vote with their feet—close their access accounts, and transfer to a bank that does not impose those charges.

This would impress on the banks the injustice and the unnecessary and unwarranted imposition of this charge and the rejection of it by customers.

I ask the Minister to do all within his power to ensure that the State Bank of Victoria—that is, the people's bank—is protected from this iniquitous charge.

Mr HEFFERNAN (Ivanhoe)—I direct the attention of the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources to a report undertaken in 1986 at the direction of the government on the wholesale marketing and promotion of fresh fish in Victoria at the Melbourne Wholesale Fish Market at Footscray. It is twelve months since the report was issued.

Reading the report, it is quite alarming to me to realise the situation which has developed in the fish industry. The government should treat this matter as urgent in light of what was reported to be happening at the Footscray wholesale fish market.

The trading of fish at the market, which is Victoria's biggest clearing house for fish, is controlled by only three agents. One would wonder, after today's debate and the talk of monopoly in the liquor industry, whether the government has considered this classic monopoly. It makes the liquor industry look very competitive.

The three agents are Jim Racovolis, Jack Miriklis and Malcolm McLaughlin. They have total control over the fish industry in this State.

The agents and their associated companies hold all the available licences for the auctioning of fish at the market, which handles more than 12 000 tonnes of fish a year, as stated in the report. Anyone waiting to compete at the market must buy one of the agents out as the agents have first option when any of the licences come up for renewal. It is a classic example of monopoly control.

In theory, all fish going through the market should be publicly auctioned and placed with the highest bidder but, as the report commissioned by the State government indicates, more than 60 per cent of the fish never makes it to auction. Instead, it is sold by private agreement between the agent and buyers, in contravention of existing regulations.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr HEFFERNAN—One would have thought you would have taken more action rather than ridiculing the report.

By buying in their own right, the agents become merchants rather than commission agents and thereby create a conflict of interest between their roles as fishermen's representatives and their roles as agents. They have a financial stake in the catching side and, some say, are trying to integrate their operations from the fish to the can.

According to the report prepared for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources, the agents claim their processing operations are one of the key factors in ensuring that all fish are sold. This is disputed, the report says, by other processors who say that they are willing to buy the fish, but cannot gain access because the agents either do not offer it for sale, impose an artificially high reserve, or intimidate potential suppliers.

Another controversial aspect of the market's operation is the so-called preselling of fish which makes a farce of auctioning and permits price manipulation. According to the report, price fixing is inhibiting the development of the industry. The report said that agents also deliberately manipulate prices to reduce the sharp swings which would otherwise occur between gluts and shortages.

However, by reducing the swings in price, the market is also reducing the premiums and discounts paid for various standards of quality, thereby leaving the fishermen with little incentive to change handling and storage procedures. The extreme variability in the quality and quantity of fish caught and sold makes outside scrutiny of the fairness of prices very difficult.

Under the current system, the Melbourne City Council is the de facto fish marketing authority in Victoria. But the report prepared for the government said that the Melbourne City Council had adopted a laissez-faire attitude to the management of the market as "evidenced by the lack of maintenance or enforcement of regulations". The agents, it is said, have taken advantage of this deregulated environment. The Melbourne City Council said that it is not carrying out its duty to enforce the regulations on the market.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—The matter I raise with the Minister for Education concerns a serious problem that has developed at the Milawa Primary School, which is approximately ten miles south-east of Wangaratta. The problem has developed with the principal of the primary school, Mrs Barbara Burns, who suffered a back injury approximately eighteen months ago.

Mrs Burns has been on WorkCare during that time but recently she was instructed by the Ministry of Education to return to work at the start of this school term. Mrs Burns has returned to work at the school but is still suffering from her back injury. The Victorian Accident Rehabilitation Council has also instructed her to undertake a rehabilitation program.

Although Mrs Burns has returned to work she is still wearing a back brace and is not fit to continue full-time school work. While Mrs Burns was on WorkCare, a replacement teacher was provided at the school. The teacher, Mr Greg Parsons, has been teaching Mrs Burns's students but he has been instructed that at the end of the week he will have to leave the school because Mrs Burns will be returning to full-time duties.

Although Mrs Burns has been ordered to return to work, she believes she is unfit to do so. She has been instructed to undertake a rehabilitation program as well. The chairman of the school council, Mr Wayne Spittle, contacted me today expressing the school's concern about losing the replacement teacher, Mr Greg Parsons, and that the principal, Mrs Barbara Burns, is not in a position to return to full-time teaching.

In a letter sent today by facsimile machine to the Minister for Education the council said it understood the difficulties in staffing schools as well as the difficulties of the Ministry with returning teachers to full-time employment after illness.

It believes the teacher should be returned to the school on the basis of part-time employment while she is on a rehabilitation program. It said that Mr Greg Parsons should remain at the school for the remainder of the school year. It pointed out that the teacher is in breach of the Occupational Health and Safety Act if she goes back to full employment because she should be attending a rehabilitation program.

The school council is so concerned that it wrote a further letter to the Minister saying that it wants the information from the Ministry of Education by 3 p.m. on Thursday, 8 October so that it can determine precisely what can be done about the situation.

It has said that unless it receives definite information, it will be considering the withdrawal of students from the school as from next Monday, and they will be sent to other schools in the area.

The situation is serious because, at a meeting at the school last night, more than 70 per cent of parents were represented. Although the meeting was amicable, those attending were clear in the passing of a resolution stating that, unless corrective action is taken and clarification is provided about the position of the principal, Mrs Barbara Burns, being put on a rehabilitation program and unless the other teacher is permitted to remain at the

school until the completion of the school year, the students will be withdrawn from the school from next Monday.

I ask the Minister to investigate the case urgently and ensure that clarification is provided and that the teacher can be placed on a rehabilitation program.

Miss CALLISTER (Morwell)—I direct the attention of the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources to the Victorian cement industry and, in particular, to the potential problems with which it will be confronted if below-market-cost cement imports are permitted into Victoria from Korea and Indonesia.

My understanding is that at this stage the matter is only a potential problem for the industry in that a cement marketing company is establishing facilities for the importation of cement. Apparently the company has potential contracts that would mean that cement would be imported in 20 000-tonne shipments and would be at least \$23 a tonne cheaper than the local product.

This, by the way, is also a dumping situation in that the market price in the originating country would also be higher than that which would be charged here. Obviously if the importers grab a significant share of the market, it would mean a threat to employment in Victoria's cement industry.

The cement industry operates in Traralgon and employs 102 workers. As the honourable member for Geelong pointed out last night, a significant number of workers in the electorate he represents are involved in the cement industry. He raised similar concerns about this potential problem. The information I have obtained illustrates that the Western Australian cement market is engaged currently in a price war after being invaded by importers.

Victorian cement producers are facing a similar problem and their concerns have been further emphasised by the actions of union representatives involved with the Australian Workers Union. Those workers have published information in local newspapers circulating in the electorate I represent, one being the *Express*, and they advocate certain possible measures that could be set in place, such as the Federal government increasing import duties that currently stand at \$2 a tonne.

I ask that the State Minister liaise with his Federal counterpart to explore possible action that could be taken either by the Federal government or by both governments to ensure that jobs are not lost because of cement being dumped on the Australian market from Korea and Indonesia.

The Latrobe Valley has 102 workers engaged in the cement industry. If that industry collapses, further jobs in the town will be lost due to the lack of spending of wages by those cement workers. The Latrobe Valley can ill afford to lose people in those jobs, especially in Traralgon: I know that is also the case in Geelong, but Geelong may be less impacted than the Latrobe Valley because it has more sophisticated and larger operations.

Nevertheless, the matter is of concern and I ask that discussions be undertaken with Federal government representatives to implement some measure to avert this potential problem.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—I direct the attention of the Treasurer to the failure of government departments and statutory bodies to report to Parliament. I have in my hand an historic document. It is the 46th Annual Report of the Patriotic Funds Council of Victoria and is the only report to ever be presented to Parliament in all 46 years of that council's existence.

That report is here only because I complained in the House last year about that very matter. The report was sent to the Attorney-General on 17 December 1986 and that Minister sat on the report until September of this year.

I also have in my hand a document compiled by the Papers Room dated 2 October 1987. I shall table that document for any honourable member who may wish to peruse it.

With one or two exceptions, this document shows that no reports to the year ended 30 June 1987 have been presented to Parliament.

If it is good enough for companies listed on the stock exchange to report their activities promptly, why should not it be good enough for government bodies to do so? Some reports have not been presented since 1981 or 1982. That is an insult to Parliament.

I table that document for the information of the Treasurer and I hope that at the next Cabinet meeting the Treasurer will ask his colleagues to smarten up and show some respect to the people of Victoria and their representatives in this House.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—The honourable member for Ivanhoe raised some concerns about the operations of the Melbourne Wholesale Fish Market and he made reference to a report to which he had access. I shall be pleased to discuss the matter with my colleague, the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs, and I shall direct his attention to the comments made about the operation of the market.

The honourable member for Morwell commented on the suggestions of the importation of cement into Victoria and its impact on the existing cement industry, with particular reference to the existing plant in the Latrobe Valley at Traralgon.

I understand the concern expressed by the honourable member for Morwell, and I know she is very much in touch with local industry in the Latrobe Valley.

I have received representations from the trade union movement on this matter within the past couple of days, and I have undertaken to discuss the matter with my Federal colleague, the Minister for Industry, Technology and Commerce, Senator Button.

I have also received representations from the industry—that is, the employer groups—and I will also meet with them on the matter in the very near future.

I am conscious of the significant impact that dumping in particular could have on existing industries.

Mr Stockdale interjected.

Mr FORDHAM—The honourable member for Brighton is, by interjection, seeking that the government not intervene in this matter. That is very interesting; it is a further indication of how far the Liberal Party has now distanced itself from important sections of Victorian industry.

I shall be pleased to take up this matter with my Federal colleague and to keep the hardworking honourable member for Morwell informed of the situation.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—The honourable member for Brighton raised the inability of a person on WorkCare benefits to obtain access to retraining. I shall certainly investigate the matter. I should be interested to know the claims administration agents involved, so as to follow the case through properly.

The government's aim has been to encourage people to become involved in rehabilitation and retraining programs. As the honourable member would be aware, the government has introduced reforms that will have an even sharper focus on return to work. I shall certainly examine the matter raised by the honourable member for Brighton.

The honourable member for Derrimut referred to a charge imposed by the ANZ Bank on transactions on small accounts. I have certainly made clear my views to the ANZ Bank, and also to the State Bank of Victoria. The State Bank operates on commercial principles and I do not direct it in its commercial operations. However, I am confident that a similar charge will not be introduced in Victoria by the State Bank.

The honourable member for Doncaster raised the issue of annual reports and asked that his message be transmitted to Cabinet. The Labor government introduced the annual reporting legislation. Before it came to office, annual reporting legislation was non-existent.

If the honourable member for Doncaster cared to cast his mind back to the long period when the Liberal Party was in power in Victoria, he would recall that in 1979, even the State Superannuation Board—a huge organisation—presented an annual report that was about three years out of date and did not even include a balance sheet!

That was the state of annual reporting that existed in Victoria prior to the election of the Cain government. There is no doubt that annual reporting has been improved dramatically under this government, which will certainly continue to ensure that all the important annual reports are provided to Parliament on time.

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—The honourable member for Lowan raised for the attention of the Minister for Transport the matter of grain freight rates and advocated that they should be reduced.

I am sure the honourable member would agree that the Minister has done everything possible in the past few years to keep costs and charges to a minimum. The Minister ought to be congratulated for the work he has done in the past year, and I am sure he will continue to ensure that the costs associated with grain handling are kept to an absolute minimum. I shall convey the honourable member's comments to the Minister.

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—The honourable member for Murray Valley raised a matter causing concern to the parents of the students of Milawa Primary School because of the return of the principal who had been away because of a WorkCare claim but who is still suffering from a back injury. There appears to be a difference of opinion on the need for rehabilitation and the way in which that can best take place. I will inquire into the case and ascertain what can be done to clarify the situation.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.46 p.m.

Thursday, 8 October 1987

The **SPEAKER** (the Hon. C. T. Edmunds) took the chair at 10.34 a.m. and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF TRANSPORT

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—I refer the Premier to the fact that last night the Director-General of Transport, Mr Ingersoll, once again informed the public of the government's position on transport matters. That is clearly the responsibility of the Minister for Transport.

Will the Premier instruct the Director-General of Transport that it is the responsibility of the Minister for Transport to make all public statements on areas affecting his administration, and that it is the Minister who is publicly accountable?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—That is an extraordinary question coming from the Leader of a Parliamentary party whose backbench has been hauled down to party headquarters today to give an account——

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—Honourable members opposite say it is not true, but I read it in the newspaper. The honourable member for Narracan should be called down, too.

Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I might as well get in early and direct your attention to Standing Order No. 127. The Premier ought to be brought back to order early in today's sitting.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—On the point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr Ross-Edwards—Chair!

Mr CAIN—The Leader of the National Party is becoming strident. He seems to have lost control of himself. The honourable member is now relying on shouting to get his message across.

On the point of order, Mr Speaker, I believe I am entitled to comment on the sincerity of the question——

Mr Ross-Edwards interjected.

Mr CAIN—The Leader of the National Party should listen for a moment; he might learn something. I believe I am entitled to answer a question asking about the responsibilities of a Minister for his department. I am entitled to draw a parallel between that and the responsibilities of members of the Parliamentary Liberal Party in determining their leadership.

I find the two totally parallel and that is what I was directing to the attention of the House. I believe I am entitled to do so.

The SPEAKER—Order! I shall make that decision at some stage during the response by the Premier. I do not uphold the point of order; in my view, it was taken too early.

Mr CAIN—As the Minister for Transport said yesterday, public communication concerning the transport industrial dispute has been handled——

Mr Lea interjected.

Mr CAIN—I recognise that the honourable member for Sandringham is very nervous today. When is he going down to Exhibition Street to give an account? The honourable member is on the list.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER—Order! I advise the honourable member for Sandringham that, if he wishes to be provocative by interjection, he may get a response, but he is out of order. I ask the honourable member to cease interjecting.

Mr CAIN—As the Minister for Transport explained yesterday, recent public communications on transport matters have been provided by the Minister for Labour, the Director-General of Transport, Mr Ingersoll, and the Minister himself. I believe that is a perfectly proper course to adopt.

Different aspects of the matter can be properly handled by the two Ministers, according to the issues under consideration; other matters can be properly handled by Mr Ingersoll, and that will continue. I believe the Minister will say something publicly—

Mr Kennett interjected.

Mr CAIN—When is it the turn of the Leader of the Opposition to go down to Vapold House? He should not talk to me about whose turn it is. Not one, two or three, but seven backbenchers were involved. What sort of rabble is that? I understand why members of the Opposition are so nervous. All the backbenchers in marginal seats are shaking in their shoes.

The position is similar to that in 1981 when the honourable member for Polwarth, who was then a Minister of the Crown, delivered the Premier, Mr Hamer, to the executioner. It is just the same.

Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—Once again, on a point of order, Mr Speaker, I direct your attention to Standing Order No. 127. The Premier is obviously debating the question and should be brought back to order and directed to answer the question.

The SPEAKER—Order! I advise honourable members that I will not uphold the point of order while the Leader of the Opposition continually interjects across the table to provoke the Premier to debate the question. If the Leader of the Opposition will respect Standing Orders, I shall have an opportunity of controlling the activities of various Ministers.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—All members of the Opposition are nervous.

Mr Williams—That is not true!

Mr CAIN—The honourable member for Doncaster will not have a turn down there; they will not want him because he used to work there. It was a decent building then. Members of the Liberal Party did not try to run the Parliamentary party then! We went through that 25 years ago. That is how immature members of the Opposition are!

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask the Premier to come back to the point and not to debate the question.

Mr CAIN—For the benefit of members of the Liberal Party, I repeat: the Minister for Transport made it clear yesterday that he is the one responsible for making any comment. Before the Leader of the Opposition interjects again to try to shore up his position, I was saying before I was interrupted that the Minister for Transport will comment about some aspects of the matter this afternoon.

To suggest or imply that the public stage is totally occupied by one person is wrong. The issue is complex and will be handled by the government as it handles all issues by using the person who is best able to communicate and provide information to the public.

ACCIDENT COMPENSATION COMMISSION

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—I refer the Treasurer to section 37 of the Accident Compensation Act 1985 which contains a statutory requirement that the Accident Compensation Commission must present to the Treasurer by 30 September each year a financial statement for that year. Has the Treasurer received the statement from the commission that was due on 30 September this year?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—At this stage I have not received the annual report.

EDUCATION AND PRISONS IN BENDIGO REGION

Mr KENNEDY (Bendigo West)—Will the Premier detail to the House recent government initiatives to develop community services in the Bendigo region in education and prisons?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The level of capital works spending in schools and prisons in the Bendigo region has never been greater than since the Labor Government came to office. Currently a new minimum security women's prison is under construction at Maldon. It will be completed this year at a cost of \$1 million. The honourable member for Bendigo West has been wholeheartedly behind the project.

Strong representations were also made for a new medium security prison at Castlemaine. That prison was promised by the former Liberal government more than twenty years ago but that government never got around to building the new prison. I suppose if the Liberal Party had remained in office, the people of Castlemaine would have had to wait another ten years or more for the prison and the jobs that will go with it.

The government is continuing with that and work will commence soon. The prison is expected to be completed by 1989 and will house 250 prisoners. The prison will be a welcome boost to the economy of Castlemaine.

The government has received strong representations about a primary school at Maiden Gully. Work is now under way to replace the old, cramped school at a cost of \$1 million. The Minister for Education also approved the development of the Eaglehawk North Primary School and \$2 million was allocated to that project. This is in marked contrast to what occurred previously under the former Liberal government and what Opposition members are now saying about the Bendigo region. It seems that members of the Liberal Party could not care less about the Bendigo region. Liberal members who represent that area are opposed to the women's prison at Maldon.

The honourable member for Bendigo East has been hostile towards the construction of any Ministry of Housing houses in the region. He opposed the establishment of community houses to help out families in need. I know the honourable member is nervous; a lot of the Liberal Party members are nervous. The honourable member for Bendigo East also opposed the new Chinese dragon museum at Bendigo.

Mr John—That is untrue.

Mr CAIN—That is what I am advised. He is a bit like Groucho Marx: whatever it is, he is against it. I understand why honourable members opposite are nervous.

Mr John interjected.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Bendigo East will have the opportunity of responding during the proceedings today. The same applies to the honourable member for Murray Valley. I ask all honourable members to cease interjecting.

Mr CAIN—In the same region, the honourable member for Bennettswood is on record as opposing the Maldon tourist accommodation complex for no better reason than that it is a government project. I suppose it is all one can expect when breeding, family, and good looks are the criteria!

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the Premier is now debating the question. If the Premier goes through a litany of untruths for political purposes, it makes a mockery of question time. You, Mr Speaker, have a responsibility to Parliament to ensure that Ministers answer questions; that is their right. If Ministers do not answer questions, that is also their right, but they are not entitled to debate them or make Ministerial statements. The same opportunity for arguing the point during today's proceedings applies to the Premier as it does to the honourable member for Bendigo East. The Premier should not have an opportunity of making a Ministerial statement, being deliberately provocative and wasting the time of Parliament during question time.

The SPEAKER—Order! The House has got off to a bad start this morning for some reason or another. To me, all honourable members seem to be out of order with their disorderly interjections. I ask the Premier to come back to the point of the question and not take the question further, as he appears to be doing.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The government has made major strides in Bendigo and the surrounding areas despite what I regard as the best endeavours by many honourable members opposite to try to criticise, carp, and oppose a whole range of initiatives, which are for the good of the people of that region, for no other reason I believe than that they are government initiatives.

It is no wonder honourable members opposite are nervous about their electoral prospects with the kind of events we see taking place. They are nervous about their prospects and they go on criticising for no reason. I commend the efforts of the honourable member for Bendigo West for promoting the region he represents.

GRAND FINAL TICKETS

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—I direct a question to the Director-General of Transport—

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr BROWN—A slip of the tongue! Will the Minister for Transport advise whether it is a fact that V/Line's experiment in grand final ticket scalping turned into a financial fiasco with 200 tickets remaining unsold and 100 tickets being sold to employees at \$30 each even though V/Line's total outlay for each ticket was \$148?

Does the Minister agree with his colleague, the Minister for Consumer Affairs, that scalpers are the scum of the earth?

The SPEAKER—Order! The latter part of the question is out of order.

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—The only opportunity the honourable member for Gippsland West will have to direct matters to the Director-General of Transport will be from his Opposition bench because he will never have a more formal opportunity.

V/Line, among a number of business ventures, sought to market some additional services last week. The honourable member for Gippsland West would not know about them because he was interested in things other than V/Line last week. The material that came from V/Line to the media indicated that the venture had lost approximately \$20 000.

Mr Brown—A \$20 000 loss!

Mr ROPER—Just as there had been substantial profits from other ventures.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER—Order! I advise the House that if honourable members do not exercise control, I shall leave the chair and come back at the ringing of the bells at some other time.

Mr ROPER—It is no wonder that Opposition members are so excitable; they do not know who will next be summoned down to Exhibition Street. The Liberal Party has not learnt anything since it was in government when it managed to sell the building in Exhibition Street to itself all that time ago.

Over the past few years, as the Budget documents demonstrate, V/Line has started to reduce its ever-increasing deficit that has existed for twenty years. It will continue to do so.

It is interesting to note that the Liberal Party has not yet produced its policy on transport. The government will continue to reduce the cost of V/Line to the community of Victoria.

ACCIDENT COMPENSATION COMMISSION

Mr McNAMARA (Benalla)—Following the question asked by the Leader of the National Party, I ask the Treasurer whether he has received financial advice or statements from the Accident Compensation Commission advising that the accumulated liabilities of the commission are in excess of \$2.4 billion.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I have been asked similar questions before and I have indicated that the position of the Accident Compensation Commission will be set out in the annual report, which I shall provide to the House as soon as possible.

SOCIAL JUSTICE STRATEGY

Mr KIRKWOOD (Preston)—Will the Premier inform the House of the steps being taken by the government to inform Victorians of all aspects of the social justice strategy and especially its impact in the Heidelberg area?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The wish of the government is to inform people as widely as possible about the social justice initiatives of the government. The City of Heidelberg is showing the way by holding a forum to encourage consideration and discussion in the community.

I regret that the honourable member for Ivanhoe has distinguished himself by slamming the Heidelberg City Council for encouraging——

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—It is a council to which he used to belong—it is not a Labor council. The council is being slammed for encouraging discussion in the community about a State government program. According to reports in the *Heidelberger*, the honourable member for Ivanhoe says that the council is wasting ratepayers' money in convening such a forum. That is extraordinary. I suppose it is a measure of his nervousness as a marginal seat holder that he believes any program that is supported and promoted by the government should be criticised.

I point out to the honourable member for Ivanhoe that Heidelberg families who have children at school, aged people wishing to stay in their homes, and the long-term unemployed who wish to return to work——

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—The honourable member says they are worse off. Having previously canned the forum, he has, I understand, now been invited to speak to it and he has accepted the invitation!

Mr Heffernan—It is a square-off.

Mr CAIN—That is again evidence of the honourable member's nervousness and the nervousness of all honourable members opposite who hold marginal seats. They want to criticise and slam government programs, no matter what they are.

It is ironic that, having slammed the forum and allowed his comments to be published in the local press, in which he seems to do well from time to time, the honourable member for Ivanhoe will speak at the forum. He cannot really make up his mind. Is the honourable member in favour of social justice or anything that will help the people in Ivanhoe?

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—I know the honourable member for Ivanhoe is troubled and that his party has no social justice policy. The Liberal Party does not know what that means.

I emphasise that the Heidelberg City Council is not a Labor council and never has been. If one were to give it a political label, one would call it a Liberal council, but I do not wish to label it. The council is prepared to promote government policies that help people, regardless of that government's political colour. I will support the Heidelberg council or any other council that does that. The Opposition will continue to criticise because the policy comes from the government, and people will judge the Opposition accordingly.

The Heidelberg City Council should be applauded for wishing to cooperate with the State government to help the people of Heidelberg. I want people in this State to have access to and knowledge about the social justice strategy. Any honourable member who believes it is wrong for a council to convene a forum in its area to inform people about social justice issues does not belong in this place.

PROFESSIONAL BOXING CONTROL BOARD

Mr REYNOLDS (Gisborne)—How does the Minister for Sport and Recreation justify overturning the decision of the Professional Boxing Control Board, which refused to grant to promoter, Michael Ryan, a permit for a promotion at the Melbourne Town Hall last Friday evening?

Mr TREZISE (Minister for Sport and Recreation)—The Minister for Sport and Recreation has a right to overturn any decision of the Professional Boxing Control Board on an appeal from any of the licensed trainers, managers or promoters concerned.

I called a hearing last week, at the request of Michael Ryan, on his appeal against the rejection of his application on the ground that the fight he proposed to stage was not financially viable. I was satisfied with the evidence and decided to allow him to stage the fight, which I believe proceeded quite satisfactorily.

BASSINETTE LOAN SCHEME

Mr GAVIN (Coburg)—Will the Minister for Transport inform the House of the effects of the Government's bassinette loan scheme and the outcome of recent initiatives to extend the scheme to all municipalities?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—I am pleased to be able to respond to the question of the honourable member for Coburg who has shown significant interest in road safety. The scheme, which was originally piloted on the initiative of my colleague, the present Minister for Labour, has been so successful that it is being copied not only in Australia but also, I understand, by overseas countries.

The scheme commenced on a pilot basis, but I am happy to inform the House that all of Victoria's 210 municipalities will now take part in the scheme. Last year there was some delay with and criticism of the scheme. The criticisms were basically unfounded, and the efforts to overcome them have resulted in a number of councils changing their decisions. I am particularly pleased that the cities of Camberwell and Echuca have now joined the scheme. Bassinettes will be sent to Echuca and 50 bassinettes will be sent to Camberwell

tomorrow. The Shire of Otway is the only remaining municipality that has not joined the scheme, and the government is hopeful that it will do so later this year.

A 1985 study showed that approximately only 12 per cent of babies aged six months and under were adequately restrained in bassinets while in vehicles. As a consequence, a significant number of injuries occurred and fatalities often resulted. The situation has now totally changed. Since the scheme was introduced, although 50 vehicles fitted with bassinets were involved in road accidents, no infants in bassinets supplied through the scheme were injured.

As a result of the close work between the Road Traffic Authority, the Ford Motor Co. of Australia Ltd—which I particularly congratulate for its joint efforts in the scheme—and local councils, lives are being saved and injuries are being prevented.

There are now more than 13 000 bassinets available, and that is adequate for 40 per cent of babies in Victoria. Of course, many people purchase their own bassinets. The government has supplied additional bassinets when requested by councils, and it will continue to do so.

I particularly thank those councils and individuals of the City of Camberwell who have waged what, in the end, was a successful campaign to have the scheme extended to that municipality. There are more than 1000 eligible families in that area and they will have access to what I believe every member in this place would agree is an excellent scheme. I look forward to joining with others to promote the scheme in Camberwell.

TAFE TEACHERS AGREEMENT

Mr E. R. SMITH (Glen Waverley)—Why has the Minister for Education agreed that members of the Technical Teachers Union of Victoria teaching in technical and further education colleges are to be paid to attend stop-work meetings this afternoon to ratify next year's conditions agreement while demanding that non-union teachers must remain at school?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—The new agreement with the Technical Teachers Union of Victoria relating to the TAFE Teaching Service is a major breakthrough. A meeting of members of that union is the last step in a fairly lengthy process of consultation and negotiation which will, the government believes, ratify the agreement it has reached with the union. The normal industrial processes allowing union members time off to ensure that the ratification takes place will be followed.

PETITIONS

The Clerk—I have received the following petitions for presentation to Parliament:

Ambulance services on southern peninsula

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the State of Victoria sheweth:

We are concerned about the quality of ambulance service available to residents on the southern peninsula.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the Legislative Assembly will call upon the Victorian government to reassess the efficiency of operation of the service, immediately provide two attendants per ambulance to enable sick patients to be moved without delay to hospital, and provide an efficient MICA ambulance service for the area as was promised when the amalgamation of ambulance services was announced.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

By **Dr Wells** (4340 signatures)

Police strength in Mornington

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the State of Victoria sheweth:

That the township of Mornington and its surrounding areas require the continuation of a Mornington-based 24-hour police station and any proposal to close down the existing 24-hour police presence in Mornington is totally rejected.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the government immediately implement its previous election promise to build a new police station in Mornington and in the interim period continue to provide a 24-hour police presence by utilising suitable temporary premises in the town.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

By **Mr Cooper** (81 signatures)

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

PAPERS

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

State Bank of Victoria—Reports, statements, returns, etc., for the year 1986–87—Ordered to be printed.

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme, Amendments Nos 385 Part 2, 431 Part 1, 467 Part 1, 484, 485, 486, 487, 489.

GRIEVANCES

The SPEAKER—Order! The question is:

That grievances be noted.

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn)—The matter I direct to the attention of the Minister for Consumer Affairs comes within the purview of my shadow portfolio of small business. It relates specifically to the illegal activities of a company known as Richard Armstrong and Associates, which is promoting an event called the Bicentennial Great Australian Home Show, to be held at the Melbourne showgrounds in March next year.

Considerable concerns have been expressed by industry associations to the Minister on two separate occasions. The Victorian Guild of Furniture Manufacturers Ltd and the Solid Fuel and Wood Heating Association of Australia are concerned at the way Richard Armstrong and Associates is acting. Their first concern is that they have not yet received a response to the concerns they expressed to the Minister. They have not even received a telephone call; the Minister's office has given them no encouragement at all.

The associations received a letter from the Minister's agency effectively telling them to take action under another Act of Parliament and to go away because they were a nuisance. That is a contradiction of terms when one considers the words the Minister has used in the past about company activities. An article in the *Sun* of 21 September 1987 under the headline, "Spyker to probe ad accounts" stated:

The State government is investigating at least two publishing companies alleged to be "conning" small businesses out of money through bogus advertising accounts.

The Minister is reported as having referred to those companies as unethical, crooked, despicable and as companies that tell blatant lies.

I am in no position to know whether it is true that this particular company is involved in crude activities but I suggest that the Minister ought to examine the activities of Richard Armstrong and Associates much more thoroughly than he has apparently done.

The organisation has represented itself as organiser of a major home show proposed for March next year. Its representatives have travelled around the countryside and have told

a series of lies. For example, one of its salesmen visited Hugal and Hoile and spoke to Gary Dryden. Gary Dryden said that a salesman of Richard Armstrong and Associates, Peter Garrot, had told him that the Australian Bicentennial Authority is behind the show and that the Premier is opening the show.

These associations have taken up this matter not only with the Minister for Consumer Affairs but also with the Premier. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet clearly stated that the Premier has no intention of becoming involved in any support of the function and will not be opening it. However, it appears that the Minister for Consumer Affairs does not care what the Premier is or is not doing. Sabina Hoppe and Ron Hoppe of the Crystal Tree company were approached by this company. It was stated:

In the company of her husband, Ron Hoppe, they were told by John Nolan in answer to Sabina Hoppe's question as to whether Mr Spyker would again be warning people about the home shows: John Nolan said "Mr Spyker would not make statements as it is backed by the government."

The organisations to which I referred earlier have written to the Minister on two occasions—the most recent on 21 September—seeking his assistance but so far, for some curious reason, the Minister has remained silent.

Robyn McCreadie of Noel Jordan Ducted Vacuum Centre was contacted this time by Mr Peter Drackecce, a salesman from Richard Armstrong and Associates. I quote:

She was put on to John Nolan in response to her demand for refund.

This company wants a refund—

Robyn McCreadie was told by John Nolan that the Premier had been asked to open the show, that the Premier's office was so very impressed that it had said they had neglected one thing—Richard Armstrong & Associates had overlooked to invite the Premier. John Nolan told Robyn McCreadie to wait till next Wednesday when Touche Ross will present an audited statement, and that Touche Ross were so impressed they have booked a stand in the show.

Chrissie Peters of Holiday Company was approached. I quote:

At a further meeting with Kevin Reed salesman Chrissie Peters was told that John Cain was opening the show on the 18th; that bicentennial authority had appointed Richard Armstrong & Associates to organise the BGAHS, that Richard Armstrong & Associates were flying down crocodiles from Kakadu to display at show . . .

Chrissie Peters, of course, pulled out. The Bush Haven Homes company representative, Peter Young, was told that the government was contributing \$250 000 towards the event and that the event was part of the bicentennial celebrations.

All these series of lies, innuendoes and suggestions have been made to try to get people to participate in the show and these attempts have been directed to the attention of the Minister. The list to which I am referring has been presented to the Minister in an attachment to the letter to him of 21 September. Apparently the Minister does not regard the letter as sufficiently important for him to take action.

False claims are being made that the Premier will open the show—the truth is that he is not; that the event is to be a bicentennial event—it is not; that the Victorian government is contributing \$250 00 towards it—I believe the government is not unless the Minister for Consumer Affairs can advise me whether the government has had a change of heart, and that various personalities including Max Gillies, who would impersonate no doubt Crocodile Dundee and Bob Hawke, and Prue Acton would be involved and that the Roulettes aerobatic display team had been booked. All these complaints were listed in the letter to the Minister but he has not regarded them as sufficiently important and he has not given the association and the companies the courtesy of a response.

I ask the Minister to take a direct and personal interest in this matter. I have admired the way in which the Minister on many occasions has taken up causes in the interests of people where practices of companies have been wrong. This issue is a clear example of misrepresentation of the truth and false and misleading approaches being undertaken by a company to achieve an income, and it is truly deserving of the Minister's attention.

The letter of 21 September to the Minister refers to the Victorian Guild of Furniture Manufacturers Ltd contacting the department, and states:

In response, the Trade Practices Commission Regional Director indicated that while the commission was unable to assist, your Ministry had jurisdiction in this matter.

I believe the Minister has some jurisdiction in this matter. Indeed, his personal actions in the past in this area demonstrate that he has taken an interest. Earlier I referred the House to an article in the *Sun* of 21 September to support my assertion.

The guild received a letter of 21 August from Mr Brian Clifford, Manager of the Industry Regulation Branch of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, which states:

The policy of this Ministry is to protect the rights of individual consumers rather than to take sides in disputes between traders. As I stated in my previous letter to you dated 2 July 1987, your association is free to initiate court proceedings.

That is a bit like Pontius Pilate washing his hands of it. In the past the Minister has directly involved himself in such matters as the champion of right and proper activities. I ask the Minister to become actively involved again.

I have a list of companies that are attempting to recover deposits paid on space for the Bicentennial Great Australian Home Show being promoted by this organisation. I shall make all this documentation available to the Minister; I do not wish to deny him anything. The two associations to which I have referred will be grateful if the Minister can meet with and assist them in achieving propriety in this case. It is not fly-by-nighters that have been duped by these rogues and charlatans, but companies such as A. V. Jennings, Robinhood Industries Pty Ltd, Luxaflex, Ducted Vacuum Systems, Brashs Pty Ltd, Crane Taps, Valley Pride and so on. Some 26 companies are currently attempting to recover deposits from this company.

The exhibition was to be conducted at the Royal Agricultural Society's showgrounds from 18 to 27 March 1988. However, when some of the associations and companies inquired whether the showgrounds were available, they discovered some of the areas had already been booked for other activities. Some of the areas at the showgrounds for which they were asked to make payments included horse stables. What a group of charlatans this Richard Armstrong and Associates must be!

I enjoin the Minister to take direct action in this matter. In the past the government has not been slow to call in the Police Force when alleged illegal activities have taken place. I suggest this matter deserves, at the very least, close scrutiny by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.

I suggest to the Minister that the activities of this company warrant investigation by the Fraud Squad. I have no doubt that the efforts of the Minister will be well rewarded by police prosecutions. I have no qualms about saying that, because I know representatives of the industry associations and companies involved in this matter.

It pains me to bring a matter such as this to the attention of Parliament because I do not like seeing this sort of activity take place. The Opposition will not sit idly by and allow such activities to occur unchecked.

I shall now concentrate on the Department of Labour. It is appropriate that the matter be again raised during the grievance debate. I started by dealing with matters that concern the responsibility of the Minister for Consumer Affairs and I shall continue along that line because if anyone should be booked for deceptive packaging it should be the Minister for Labour.

Yesterday the Minister for Labour was asked a Dorothy Dix question about Luna Park and the fiasco that occurred there. The matter is extremely serious. Yesterday I appreciated the Minister's aside of blowing the whistle; and I enjoyed the good promotion he received in today's *Sun*. No doubt the Minister for Labour was trying to pre-empt my raising the matter today.

I do not wish to deal in detail with the fact that nearly twenty people could have been killed at Luna Park. I do not criticise the department for intervening and launching prosecutions. I agree that prosecutions may need to be instituted because people who make the errors when running machinery should find it difficult to have their licences renewed.

The matter that I shall deal with today was raised in a previous grievance debate; it relates to the organisation of the Department of Labour. The director-general of the department, Mr Philip Bentley, has spearheaded a newfangled idea of decentralising the department. He was obviously supported by the Minister because it is already underway. The reorganisation deemed it necessary to call in officers from the Dandenong division because St Kilda comes under the Dandenong division.

The officer concerned, Mr Howard Steele, who was brought 26 kilometres, is an expert in Favco cranes. He was pulled out of the Melbourne branch and put into the suburbs as a result of which the cranes in the city were not adequately inspected. I expressed concern about that move during a previous grievance debate.

It quickly became obvious that Howard Steele was not qualified to deal with this matter. The metro-central branch, which had more appropriately qualified personnel, was called in. I understand a Mr John Dennis was called in to deal with this matter. Either yesterday during question time or today in the press release, the Minister said that experts were involved in the assessment of the Luna Park fiasco.

In a sense that is part of the deceptive packaging to which I referred earlier. The experts involved were professional engineers employed by Luna Park; they were not independent people brought in from outside. One must be a little concerned about the independence of the assessment. From the advice that I have received it seems nothing was mechanically wrong with the outfit at Luna Park, and that human error was largely responsible because people did not abide by the procedure used of the blowing of the whistle on the three occasions while the red light was on. The human error concerns me because that accident should not have occurred. Twenty people could have been killed had the train gone off the track.

During the last grievance debate I raised with the Minister for Labour the illegal issuing of certificates through employees of the Department of Labour. I referred in particular to a Mr Curnow. I shall again remind the House of the details of that matter. Mr Curnow had stolen applications from the Department of Labour to use them for personnel gain. He made thousands of dollars from this illegal exercise. The Minister for Labour then attempted to berate me for raising the matter.

It is interesting that Mr Curnow is no longer an authorised examiner and that he has been fired by the department. Could it be that the matters I raised in the House three weeks ago proved to be true? Of course they were true! This raises another question. In the event that Mr Curnow did what I said he did—I know that he did—and his subsequent dismissal, why have the police not been called in? Why is Mr Curnow not being charged? Why is the Minister for Labour not pursuing the matter?

I shall explain to the House why these things have not occurred. The Minister for Labour will go to any lengths to keep scandals that occur under his administration from the public gaze. When he was the Minister of Transport, he covered up activities at Flinders Street. As Minister for Labour, he has covered up on more than one occasion scandalous activities in the Department of Labour. The Minister is scurrilous and is getting away with blue murder in the press.

I am not suggesting that the Minister is buying the media, but he seems to have a charmed life. Why are the media not prepared to report the facts as they are? Why is this Minister not holding an open inquiry into the activities of his department? Mr Williams—who is the person pursued by the Minister for Labour, and the Director-General of the Department of Labour, Mr Bentley—is still answering telephone calls and watering pot

plants. He has not been approached by the police about his activities. Mr Williams is no longer listed in the directory of the Department of Labour. If Mr Williams is guilty of an offence, he should be prosecuted. If he is guilty, he should be taken before the Public Service Board.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—I thank the honourable member for Hawthorn for providing me with the opportunity of replying to the matter he raised about Richard Armstrong and Associates wanting to produce the Bicentennial Great Australian Home Show at the showgrounds next year as part of the bicentenary celebrations. If the show gets off the ground, which is doubtful, I hope it is a success.

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs was contacted by a number of companies that wanted to take legal action or requested the Ministry to take legal action on their behalf to recover some of the alleged costs or deposits that they had paid. The letter from which the honourable member for Hawthorn quoted, from Brian Clifford, Manager of the Industry Regulation Branch of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, pointed out that the Ministry cannot intervene in a dispute between two traders because the Consumer Affairs Act prevents it from doing so. That is what the situation amounts to.

As a representative of both traders and consumers, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs has a responsibility under section 34 of the Fair Trading Act to take action if any advertising is deemed to be misleading. If evidence exists that Richard Armstrong and Associates had used misleading information, it could lead to prosecution. Officers of the Ministry explained that the Ministry could not initiate that prosecution.

The Fair Trading Act was introduced to protect consumers and traders. The Ministry has no power to intervene in a dispute between two traders.

I have a letter from the acting director of the Social Development Division of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, which clearly states:

The Victorian government has neither endorsed nor in any other way offered financial support for the show.

I assure honourable members that the Ministry could use the money in better ways than in supporting this type of organisation. The Australian Bicentennial Authority would also be interested in examining the use of its name in this event.

Some time ago I recall that another organisation tried to claim that it had the support of the Australian Bicentennial Authority for a particular project. I am sure the authority would be interested in the organisation entitled the "Bicentennial Great Australian Home Show". The organisers said it would be the biggest event this side of the black stump. These are the sorts of things being put around, but it is not the case.

I have a list including a whole range of companies who claim to have been misrepresented. They have been asked to make an input. Normally one would encourage any exhibition like the Bicentennial Great Australian Home Show, and also would encourage company sponsorship, particularly in view of the forthcoming bicentenary celebrations. I am sure that all honourable members would agree that the Royal Agricultural Society's showgrounds would be an excellent venue and would be keen to promote companies that manufacture and sell Australian products, especially during the bicentenary year. I have a letter from Mr Taylor, the licensing manager of the Australian Bicentennial Authority, to Mr Uthmeyer, the Director of Australian Trade Promotions Pty Ltd. It states:

Thank you for your letter faxed to me on 4 June regarding the Bicentennial Great Australian Home Show. I confirm that this home show is in no way associated with the Australian Bicentennial Authority.

It would seem that the show is purely a commercial venture promoted by Richard Armstrong and Associates.

I have noted your comments regarding the fact that Armstrong and Associates may be misrepresenting this home show in saying that it is endorsed by the Australian Bicentennial Authority. We will contact the companies you have supplied names for with regard to substantiating your comments.

If the need arises, I will contact you again.

Even the Australian Bicentennial Authority has made it clear that it in no way supports the Bicentennial Great Australian Home Show. I encourage aggrieved companies or companies that consider they have a dispute with Richard Armstrong and Associates to take the appropriate legal action.

If it reaches the stage where it looks as though the show may be successful, I shall not hesitate to make a statement in Parliament at a future date. At this stage I have grave doubts that the show will get past the first post.

In his closing comments the honourable member for Hawthorn said he would like me to meet with various associations. Apparently he has a list which includes the Victorian Guild of Furniture Manufacturers Ltd. That is a reputable organisation which promotes Australian products. I am sure all honourable members would support that organisation to ensure that manufacturers are not ripped off.

Mr PERRIN (Bulleen)—The matter I grieve about today relates to deception, fraud and lies by members of the Australian Labor Party. It relates to criminal breaches of the Victorian law by members of that party. I have a letter addressed to Mr Murray Nicholl of the radio station 3AW from a Ms Helsdon of 30 Clausen Street, Lower Templestowe. The letter is an absolute lie and a complete distortion of the truth. It states:

I listened with interest and considerable amusement to your afternoon program last week, when you spent much time and effort berating the amateurish attempts of a group of Labor supporters, presumably from the Labor Resource Centre, to write letters to newspapers critical of John Howard in particular and the Liberal Party in general.

Having noted that you have decided that the Conservatives should govern this country after July 11, I doubt if you would be interested in the contents of this letter. However, you constantly refer to yourself as a journalist, so perhaps you may be interested in a true political story, even if it does not favour the conservative side of politics.

I am married (happily) to a gentleman who is a long standing member of the Doncaster branch of the Liberal Party. My husband is also an eminent solicitor in this city and generally regarded as a very literate being. Since 1982 he has been the coordinator of a media monitoring group run by the Liberal Party. He works with a group of approximately 80 members of the party; and the tasks of this group are to monitor every talk back program in this State, to ring in and get on air as often as possible, together with each member of the group being required to ring Access Age at least once between Monday and Friday, and to write letters to the daily papers at least once a week.

Instructions on how best to easily obtain access to talk back programs are issued. These include familiarising oneself with the program, being able to tell when the presenter is about to take talk back calls, and learning to dial the first 5 or 6 digits as the case may be before the announcement of talk back is made, dialling the final digit as soon as the indication is given that calls will be taken. Information on how best to get oneself to be listened to include such information as to explain to Derryn Hinch how much he has improved your knowledge and quality of life (if you are a woman of course) and that of course you listen to him, and learn from him every day. This is guaranteed to get Hinch at least beginning to listen to you.

On your own talk back segment on Friday afternoons, the instructions are to say how good it is to have you in Melbourne, and to use the phrase, "Always enjoy your show Murray, but don't always agree with you". Find it familiar? Try listening for it, it's quite easy to recognise when you know how these people are programmed.

Letters to the paper are written on a variety of typewriters, and indeed in our own home we have four different golf balls to use on our own IBM so that editors of daily papers and indeed our local papers cannot recognise the same type. The names and addresses and telephone numbers used are worked out as follows:

One takes the given name of a branch member, attaches it to the surname of another branch member, then uses the address of a third branch member, together with the telephone number of a fourth branch member.

All members are alerted, so that when Access Age rings back to confirm the message telephoned through there are no slip ups.

The offices of Neil Brown, Federal member for Menzies, and Morris Williams, State member for Doncaster, have been used for this activity for several years; since 1985 the office of David Perrin, State member for Bulleen, is also used.

During election periods, when radio presenters request calls from listeners as to their voting intentions the directions are to ring, proclaiming oneself as a long time Labor voter, who will be changing his/her vote this time.

I find it very difficult, Mr Nicholl, to think that a journalist of your experience would not be well aware of highly organised campaigns of this nature. That is why I was so surprised at your shock horror reaction to the inept attempts of what one imagines would be a crowd of young student types to infiltrate the papers with a biased viewpoint. Will you be as interested in acknowledging, on air, my letter? I could happily post you a copy of the very detailed material issued to all members of the Liberal Eastern Suburbs Media Monitoring Group as this organisation is known within the party.

I do not belong to any political party, although it would not be sufficiently fraudulent to refer to myself as "apolitical" as you did recently. We all know that no such animal exists, and I am sure you are aware of the old adage that anyone who refers to themselves as "apolitical" in this country is of course a closet conservative.

It is disappointing to find that an even handed, objective approach has, for the time being, disappeared from your program. I assume same will return on July 13. I look forward with much anticipation to hearing your second shock horror reaction to a far more sophisticated and dangerous media set up group.

The letter is signed by Ms D. Helsdon, with a copy to Derryn Hinch at 3AW.

This letter is bogus. Ms Helsdon is the maiden name of Mrs Dorothy Kingston, a widow, of the same address. Mrs Kingston is not a member of the Liberal Party; she is a prominent member of the Australian Labor Party and she has deceived or attempted to deceive two media personalities in this city: Derryn Hinch and Murray Nicholl.

Fortunately, Mr Murray Nicholl did not accept this letter at face value. Had he done so, he may have slandered many members of Parliament and of the Liberal Party. Mr Nicholl checked out the facts and established that Mrs Kingston is so prominent in the Australian Labor Party that at the last State election she authorised brochures for ALP candidates.

Mr Leigh—For which members?

Mr PERRIN—For the Labor candidates for Bulleen, Doncaster and Templestowe Province. Interestingly enough, those three candidates lost at that State election. Those ALP pamphlets were authorised by this woman who made herself out to be a member of the Liberal Party. She told lies to media journalists and breached the electoral laws in Victoria and the Commonwealth. She is well known in the Templestowe area as a Labor Party stalwart.

What Ms Helsdon outlined in the letter to Murray Nicholl is not what the Liberal Party does but what the Labor Party does. It attempted to coerce the media at election time. Ms Helsdon has done a service to the people of Victoria because she has outlined how the Labor Party distorts the truth. Goebbels could not do it any better than Ms Helsdon. She has set it out chapter and verse.

This is how it is done: to the Christian name of one Labor Party branch member is attached the surname of another branch member, the address of a third branch member and the telephone number of a fourth branch member. That is distortion of the highest order and that is how the Labor Party gets its point of view across in the media, whether it be the written media or the airwaves of a radio station such as 3AW.

The Premier could not deny that he has no involvement with this woman because his photograph is on the front of the brochures authorised by Mrs Kingston.

When one considers the letters and spurious statements made about members of this House and members of the House of Representatives in Canberra, and when one then finds out the truth of the situation, one can more readily understand how the Labor Party in this State tries to manipulate the media. It makes no apology for what it does; it is prepared to do anything necessary to manipulate the media.

It is known that these people campaigning for the Labor Party actually change the golfballs on typewriters to disguise their identity or similarity with other bogus letters being written to editors of newspapers and to the "Access Age" column. In these letters they make fraudulent statements such as, "I do not belong to any political party".

Ms Helsdon stated in her letter to Mr Nicholl that her husband was a prominent member of the legal profession and supposedly a member of the Liberal Party. As I said

before, Helsdon is the maiden name of Mrs Kingston who is a widow; her husband died some years ago. The person she describes in the letter is not her husband but her son, Mr Edward Michael Kingston who at present is overseas but who has in the past carried on his legal profession in Victoria and lived at Mrs Kingston's address in Lower Templestowe. He is a senior legal person in a prominent legal firm in Melbourne.

Mrs Kingston and her son deliberately attempted to distort the media during the last State election campaign. I have reliable information that they wrote bogus letters to local papers and I have copies of those letters, the authors of which I have checked with the electoral roll, the telephone directory and the municipal roll and ascertained that the people who were supposed to have written the letters did not exist. Those letters attacked Liberal Party members but the names and addresses of the authors are not able to be checked out.

One letter was supposed to have been written by a Mr Donald E. Jenkinson of Fyfe Drive, Lower Templestowe. He does not exist. That was in the *Doncaster Mirror* on 30 January 1985 as was another letter by a Dr Elaine St James of Mayfair Avenue, Lower Templestowe. Dr St James does not exist.

Another letter to the *Doncaster-Templestowe News* of 12 February 1985 was from a supposed Josephine Carter of Bulleen. I have checked the electoral roll, the telephone directory and the municipal records and have ascertained that Josephine Carter does not exist.

I believe Mrs Kingston and her son have been behind these bogus letters. When one can work out the system of using one member's christian name, another member's surname, another member's address and another member's telephone number, one can see clearly how they operate.

Labor Party hacks have created these distortions to deceive the people of Victoria. That was obvious at the last State election and more recently at the Federal election. These people do not care which member of Parliament they harangue.

It is possible that breaches to both State and Federal law have occurred with these bogus letters and campaign brochures. Ms Helsdon has certainly breached the Commonwealth Electoral Act and I understand that proceedings will be taken against her with regard to lies, deception and misinformation contained in the letter I read to the House. That action will be taken by the Chief Electoral Officer of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Having examined the bogus letters that were circulated prior to the last State election by Labor members of Parliament, we now know how those members manipulate people.

In my view, there has been a breach of The Constitution Act Amendment (Electoral Legislation) Act 1984, which makes it clear that the laws made by this Parliament do not allow letters to be published that do not contain the correct and truthful name of the authors, and which contain the sort of distortion that occurred during the last State election campaign.

The breaches were committed by members of one of the top legal firms in Melbourne.

Mr Steggall interjected.

Mr PERRIN—Yes, I suggest that he probably would be a member of the Labor lawyers group. He has breached laws made by the Victorian Parliament. He should have known that what he was undertaking was deceptive and, in my view, even criminal.

Michael Kingston should have known better than to be involved in perpetrating a fraud on the people of Doncaster and Templestowe. I am not aware whether he was involved in the latest incident, but I understand that he is in London at present as a representative of his firm; that is how highly he is placed. He should have known better than to become involved in circulating deceptive letters prior to the last State election, and he should have known of the conspiracy of Labor Party members to provide fraudulent misinformation.

He may be the ringleader; I am not quite sure whether it is the mother or the son who is the ringleader. It was indicated on the Murray Nicholl radio program that Mrs Kingston did not take an active part in the Federal election campaign—I think she went to ground.

Nevertheless, it is about time people recognised the distortion in which the Labor Party involves itself at election time and the methods it uses; they should realise that the Liberal Eastern Suburbs Media Monitoring Group is not affiliated with the Liberal Party but, rather, with the Labor Party, to distort information.

Mr Steggall interjected.

Mr PERRIN—The problem is that we do not know where they come from; they are probably all Ministerial advisers and, for all we know, they may well be on the public payroll at the same time as they are breaching Victorian and Commonwealth laws and engaging in deception and fraud.

Fortunately, Murray Nicholl saw through the charade and checked out the details. He is a good journalist. After receiving all the information—and the Liberal Party provided him with pamphlets that the Labor Party had circulated during the last State election campaign—he recognised that Mrs Kingston was a prominent member of the Labor Party, not the Liberal Party. He found that Mrs Kingston's husband was deceased. During the second run of the story on his radio program, Mr Nicholl was able to make that information available.

The critical point is the way in which the Labor Party deceived the people of Victoria and manipulated the media. It is all on the record: the use of different typewriter balls, the use of fictitious names and addresses, and the way everything was distorted.

I want to ensure that this activity never again occurs in Victoria and that Victorians are never again deceived in this way. The only way in which that aim can be achieved is by exposing in this Parliament these frauds and lies and the people involved and ensuring that action is taken. If that does not occur, at the next State and Federal elections the practices perpetrated on Victorians by the Labor Party will continue.

It is about time the community said it did not want a bar of those practices and that some action was taken to put the offenders where they belong—in prison.

Mrs GLEESON (Thomastown)—The matter I raise concerns the needs of advanced technology development in Victoria and the action that the State government and different levels of government need to take in supporting that industry to bring it to its full potential.

I am mindful of the assistance that the government has provided to advanced technology industries by way of programs, but today I shall talk about the locales where those industries are based and the types of systems that need to be established for locality-specific industries so that we can, therefore, capitalise on the potential that is already available in those industries and develop their full potential for the economic development of this State.

It is necessary to place on record some of the programs that the government has introduced because the Victorian government has been acknowledged as being the government that is most supportive of high technology in this nation. It is doing a considerable amount in this area, and it has committed more than \$50 million to programs relating to Daratech, which commercialises genetic engineering research—this was undertaken by the research institutes of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs—and the establishment of Bioplantech, which provides a commercial focus for the research carried out in universities and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation—CSIRO—in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

A joint venture was also undertaken by the State government and the Calgene Pacific company, which is a large California-based company conducting research into biotechnology. The government gave its commitment in that area through a financial

package. The Victorian government entered into a partnership with a commitment of \$14 million for the establishment of the \$40 million Australian Medical Research and Development Corporation. It should be recognised that the State government has provided vast monetary assistance in the development of those programs.

I direct the attention of the government to the need for further assistance to those industries and other emerging industries in the high technology area by concentrating on localities. Localities are developed in many other nations as well as in other States of Australia, and the development has proved to be beneficial in bringing high technology based industries to their full economic potential and hence providing employment opportunities in those areas.

All honourable members are aware that the needs of advanced technology industries are vastly different from those of the traditionally based industries. Therefore, there is a need to be aware of the types of locations where those industries are based and to ascertain their common links so that they can be formed together and made to work for their collective betterment.

In several regions of Victoria there is a commonality of interest in high technology. With its development in the biotechnology field, Werribee is a good example of where location-based high technology industries can be developed and an infrastructure that will bring that through can be put in place.

When talking about infrastructure, I refer to the network of communications, information systems, road networks, and bodies such as the Industrial Supplies Office, which can deliver the necessary components and link those industries with the domestic industries and further improve the economic assistance to other industries in this State.

Another example is the Monash area, which has the advantage of the Monash University, where a science and technology centre is being developed. A locality based specific technology industry is being developed there. As is occurring in Werribee, there is a need to consider building in the support systems in communication, information and so on to bring that into operation. That section of Monash University is extremely small; it is an emerging centre and it needs all the encouragement it can get.

La Trobe University is even further down the track. It has entered into a partnership to acquire approximately 250 hectares to develop a high-tech park. La Trobe University has large tracts of land available to it, so it is in a prime position to develop in the high technology area with all the associated industries attached to it. The development of the high-tech park will prove invaluable for the development of technology industries in the northern suburbs.

La Trobe University will concentrate its interests in the agricultural science and education areas. With regard to agricultural science, the university could use its vast tracts of land to bring to fruition the concentration of research and technology development in that area. With regard to education, the northern suburbs area is fortunate in that it is serviced by the La Trobe University, the Phillip Institute of Technology and the Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences. It also has some excellent technical and further education campuses, which are currently re-evaluating their programs. An amalgamation is taking place between the La Trobe University and the Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences, and I know that education in that area is being improved and curriculum developed.

The Bendigo region, like La Trobe University, has an interest in agricultural sciences. It will work towards developing different fields of agricultural sciences from those undertaken by La Trobe University, but, at some stage, they will be made complementary. With good information and communication systems, those two areas could be mutually supportive.

There are other stages of technology development in the State in various localities which need to be brought together so that their common elements can be established and so that support systems can be developed for mutual benefit.

Australia is a long way behind overseas countries in developing high-technology based industries. The Local Government Bill, which will be debated later in this sessional period, will allow for the development of economic enterprises by local government, and, therefore, that tier of government will be able to support the development of high technology. That is happening in the northern suburbs with the Heidelberg City Council moving into that area.

La Trobe University is looking to encourage some of the industries that have networks in the Heidelberg and northern suburbs areas to locate within its campus on approximately 14 acres which have been set aside for a scheme where those industries have access to the research facilities of the campus and the various faculties. That working relationship will be forged with the Heidelberg City Council, and the university is also working with the Preston City Council, through its industrial officer, to identify the needs of advanced manufacturing industries in that area and to develop research areas to support the employment endeavours of that municipality.

The high-tech park of La Trobe University falls within the Shire of Whittlesea, which is interested in supporting the university's endeavours to move into the high technology area. The park, which is in the electorate I represent, comprises 250 hectares, and it will provide not only for research but also for the introduction of its own infrastructure, including housing and communication. Plans also exist to establish a school in conjunction with the Ministry of Education. The university intends to construct 600 houses, so that approximately 2500 to 3000 people will live at the park.

The high-tech park is reasonably close to Melbourne Airport. As detailed in the ten-year Metropolitan Arterial Road Access Study plan, the arterial road system through the Broadmeadows and Tullamarine areas will be developed, and that will provide the high technology industries in the northern suburbs with access to the airport and allow people in that area to have better access to their places of employment.

Along with the road system in the northern suburbs, the development of high technology in the various regions of Melbourne and rural Victoria has been totally ignored by the Opposition. The Opposition has not indicated that it will develop an infrastructure of roads through a network based on the economic and social development of this State. The road network must be put in place to continue the momentum of economic development throughout the State so that Victoria's employment levels can be maintained.

I applaud the government's assistance for programs to develop high technology and its release last year of its technology statement. There must be an orderly and well-articulated plan to marshal the State's resources at every level to support the specific forms of development in selected localities. The government has an effective role in sponsoring and nurturing technology development in specific areas which, in turn, produce economic and employment benefits. The benefits of economic developments that already have potential must be maximised. I have listed those areas, but I want the government to support the local initiatives that are being established.

A task force needs to be established by the government to determine where the industries are situated and what are the common elements between them. It must begin to link them with the support services necessary to produce their full potential, thereby benefiting the State.

The government has produced well-articulated economic and technology strategies. In a recent study conducted by the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources, the articulated economic and technology strategies gained applause not only nationally but also internationally.

Honourable members must remember that, although Australia is a large country, its population is small comprising only 0.3 per cent of the world's population. Of that population, we are producing only 0.1 per cent of technology research base commodities. If Australia is to make an impact on the international market it needs not only program

assistance but also locality assistance with support networks built in. Australia produces 2 per cent of the world's patents but it is producing only 0.1 per cent of the technology based industries, and it has a long way to go in further developing their industries and exporting their products.

I call on the government to establish a task force to inquire into building that support system for the technology industries in the State, marrying them to program assistance and the assistance packages the government has developed for export. Once technology programs are brought into line with that sort of assistance the export industries will be well placed for growth, which is where the future of the State lies.

Victoria must be competitive not only on the domestic market but also on the international market to improve the economic performance of the State. Employment figures demonstrate that Victoria has led the rest of the nation for the past 51 consecutive months, that is, four years and three months, by having the highest employment rate in the nation.

Assistance-based programs are helping industry, which has advantages in the social context by providing employment. If the State moves towards locale-based assistance, high technology industries will be able to increase employment in high-growth areas such as Werribee, the northern suburbs and Bendigo, where industry needs to be developed to provide employment. This move can be achieved by supporting industries that provide employment. New technology industries provide a whole new field of employment. With the growth in technology expertise through education programs offered at La Trobe University and the introduction of new training programs, people will be able to take up positions in the new technology based industries.

For instance, only twelve months ago there was no training program for laser engineers. The local industry, in conjunction with the Box Hill College of TAFE, developed a laser technicians' course, the first of its kind to be developed in Australia. By linking the new technology developments to universities and by giving them a locale base, training programs will be able to be supplied, which will further support those industries. It will provide the development of a complete package. The locales comprise the four universities and the Western Institute. The industries are available; all that is needed is a task force to bring them together by identifying their common needs and developing appropriate support systems.

Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston South)—The issue I raise concerns the provision of integration aide traineeships under the Youth Guarantee Scheme. On 19 November last year I directed the attention of the Minister for Education to the integration aides provided for the Western Port area. He informed me that 89 youth guarantee traineeships were provided through the Youth Guarantee Scheme.

On 2 December last year, in answer to a Dorothy Dix question asked by the honourable member for Box Hill, the Minister informed the House that there were 461 integration aides for 1987, which was nearly 70 more than the previous year. He stressed the fact that approximately 89 traineeships under the scheme were currently on 0.6 work time, which would result in 54 equivalent full-time positions.

My colleague, the honourable member for Mornington, raised the issue on 3 December. We had imagined that the interest we had shown would have created concern in the Ministry of Education and the Department of Labour but it was not until 22 December that the Premier made a statement, which appeared to be a Christmas present offering of more help for the disabled. In fact, it was the reverse—it was less help for the disabled. The news release issued on that day stated:

The State government's integration program for schools will receive a significant boost with the announcement today of a further 90 youth guarantee integration aide traineeships in 1987 . . .

The 1987 intake of 90 trainees will join 425 integration aides already working full time in the . . . scheme . . .

It transpired that the 90 people to be trained under the youth guarantee integration aide program would join the 54 employed in the previous 1987 intake. Between ten and twenty young people were trained at the Frankston College of TAFE where I am a counsellor.

In February 1987 the youth guarantee hot line was contacted and it was found that 90 young people had been inquiring about their positions as youth guarantee integration aides. They were told that they would start in April as soon as the final details of the industrial agreements had been worked out with the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union of Australia. They were contacted in April and told that they would be employed in April, May or June and that agreements had not yet been reached with the union. I understand that a teachers union was also involved in the agreement.

In July the youth guarantee traineeship implementation committee and the Department of Labour were contacted. They indicated that fragile technical negotiations were occurring with the Ministry of Education and that it was hoped those young people would be placed in traineeships in October.

I was aware of the situation and, as a responsible member of Parliament, did not want to raise the issue publicly because I thought it may damage the capacity of the group to reach agreement so that the 90 young people could be placed in training. At that time, the Premier entered into the scene. As we know, the Premier is not beyond playing politics on any issue, whether or not he is aware of it.

The news release he issued on 22 December was playing politics by taking the credit for the program. In September he put out a list of Opposition costings for 1986-87, which he had also done in the previous year. He gave me the honour of receiving one, which was from the Minister for Education, and which requested 87 integration aides for the Western Port area at a cost of \$420 000. It is now the Premier who has created the problem; he has raised the issue and damaged the capacity of those young people to get off the ground. My understanding is that none of those young people will be trained this year.

Earlier this year other people were interested in this subject. In a letter to Dr Jeff Northfield, Chairperson of the Regional Board of Education, Western Port Region, the Minister said:

I refer to your letter of April 16, 1987 in which you provided detailed information about the shortfall in integration resources in Western Port Region in 1987.

There is a shortfall in that area of 26 integration aides.

The Premier and the Minister for Education have sent numerous letters assuring people about continuing discussions and the possibility that integration aides will be available for next year.

A public meeting was held in Frankston when parents of young disabled people expressed their concern about the need for more aides so that their children could enter primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. I received a letter from the Minister last week which states:

I am pleased to be able to reply that the increase in provision of integration resources for Western Port Region in 1987 was substantial. In particular, there were 40.8 effective full-time aides provided to 131 students in 1986. The government increased this provision to a total of 63.4 effective full-time aides in 1987. This represents a most significant increase in support provided to schools in these times of economic restraint and is evidence of the government's continuing efforts to provide adequately in this area.

I had previously asked the Minister to meet a deputation of local members of Parliament to discuss the problem. The Minister stated that other representatives had done a good job and that there was no need to discuss the matter with me or the schools involved.

The letter further states:

Furthermore, in the 1987-1988 State Budget, a commitment was made to provide additional aides for the 1988 school year. Additional integration teachers will also be provided. It is expected that sixty additional

integration aides and seventy additional integration teachers will be provided for Victorian schools from the beginning of the 1988 school year.

That is nonsense. The integration aides have not even commenced their training. The Premier said there would be 90 aides; the Minister for Education said there would be 89. Since then I have heard that 60 aides would be available after training. I recognise that some people drop out for various reasons or perhaps commence training for other professions. Last year 54 aides were made available, so if two-thirds of the 90 are successful this year, it will be a slight improvement. However, at present no integration aides are in training. No course is under way and, according to the Frankston TAFE board, there will not be a course next year.

Young people and parents have been ringing the youth guarantee hot line and asking for jobs to be made available. The Minister for Education does not even know what is happening in his Ministry. Yesterday I asked him a question about this matter and he was not aware that aides were not in training. The Minister believed the aides had been in training for more than one month. This program and the Youth Guarantee Scheme are a debacle. The Premier and the Minister do not know what is happening.

The Premier has jeopardised this program because of his stupidity in saying that members of the Opposition have made the scheme costly by their many requests for information. When requested to play it cool about having something done for constituents, honourable members take a responsible attitude. However, the Premier's attitude has destroyed the opportunities for 90 young people to be trained as integration aides.

I turn now to another aspect of community health and refer the House to the Frankston Community Health Service. In 1984 a working party was established in Frankston to examine the procedures and the need for a Frankston Community Health Service. The honourable member for Frankston North, Mrs Jane Hill, was chairman of that committee which comprised representatives of the local council, the hospital, youth, aged and disabled groups, the hospice and health organisations.

I asked the previous Minister of Health, the Honourable Tom Roper, whether I could be involved in that working party. In his typical high-handed fashion, the Minister said, "No, we do not want any Liberal Party people involved in something that the Labor government is doing". Now honourable members know why Victoria is in such a mess!

In September 1985 the working party's report recommended:

... that the Frankston Community Health Service give highest priority to preventive health education programs with particular emphasis to meeting the needs of women, children and youth, and the aged . . .

... that the Frankston Community Health Service work with the local community mental health service toward increasing local mental health services for adults and children . . .

... that the Frankston Community Health Service, in planning its facilities, provide additional group meeting space for other appropriate community groups, as well as space for staff in addition to those provided by the community health program funding.

One would expect that most of the twelve members of the working party would have nominated themselves as inaugural members of the committee to administer the health centre.

At the first general meeting, between 200 and 300 people, including a bus load of passengers, arrived. Two how-to-vote cards were given out: one from a so-called Labor Party left-wing faction and another from a group which included people who wanted to represent different health providers and other interest groups.

No franchise was given to any voter. One had only to be in the hall at the time; it did not matter whether one was from Frankston or involved in any health care organisation. Representatives from the neighbourhood house group and the left-wing of the Labor Party were elected.

At that meeting people were asked to become contributors by paying \$2. Some 57 of the 200 or more people contributed \$2 to the committee.

At the annual election held twelve months later two vacancies occurred. Candidates were proposed for those positions. The constitution required that the candidate should be proposed by a nominator and seconder. Within the allotted seven days required by the constitution, I inquired whether those people were correctly nominated and seconded.

If queries are raised about elections to positions on community health centres, another committee must be formed to consider the matter. It was not surprising that the committee decided that the actions of the original committee were correct. I received a letter informing me of that fact, which suggested that I had impinged upon the integrity of the local electoral officer. After speaking to that person, I discovered that he had not reviewed or examined the nominators or seconders and, as I had suggested, they may not even have been present at the meeting.

At the next general meeting which took place on 29 September it was reported that there were 252 people on the voters' or contributors' roll; that was a significant increase on the 57 members of the previous year. The earlier report stated that \$96.30 was collected from subscriptions and that there was a balance of \$17.70, which had to be added to the current accounts.

After examining what was handed out at the meeting of 29 September, I discovered that the 252 members had contributed \$196. If one subtracted \$17.70 the balance would relate to only 90 contributors. The \$2 contribution had to be paid by 30 June of that year. The Peninsula Ostomy Association, with which I am associated, collected \$106 from 53 contributors, and that had to be paid in by 4 o'clock on that day.

We were informed that the contributions would not be accepted after 4 p.m. but, after some discussion the contributions were finally accepted. The 252 contributors provided \$504 but there is a discrepancy of more than 100 voters.

I contacted Health Department Victoria. I was informed that contributions could be collected until midnight. That is all right for the staff but no-one else in the community can collect those contributions. By 30 June about 100 contributors were added to keep the status quo.

Many anomalies were associated with the running of the election on this occasion. Those anomalies were not evident to me on the running of the previous election but this time I took more interest. Of the 252 contributors on the roll, thirteen were listed as organisations. According to the model rules set down by Health Department Victoria, a group cannot vote. If an organisation wishes to register a vote, it must do so through a representative.

Some of the thirteen organisations voted on this occasion, and one of them nominated a representative of the organisation for election to a position on the committee of management. This is also contrary to the model rules.

During September, the group decided to incorporate. That suggestion was reasonable and 25 names were called for and forwarded to Health Department Victoria. As a contributor who receives a newsletter from the group, I did not know it was intended to incorporate. When I did not receive an invitation to the annual meeting I telephoned Health Department Victoria to inform its officers of the proposal to incorporate.

The incorporation meeting was not advertised in the local press but I understand that, according to the model rules, it is not necessary to advertise in the local press because it is only necessary to advertise in the public notices of the *Age*. I do not know whether honourable members read the public notices, I do not, but I keep an eagle eye out when reading the local press. I did not know the group intended to incorporate.

In reality, there were many breaches of the model rules: people voted when they should not have, and many nominations were accepted when they should not have been. At the

annual meeting, the chairman refused to answer questions about financial statements and voting procedures.

This group does not represent the interests of my community in the area of health. Community involvement should be broad based and I ask the Minister for Health to provide adequate representation in this area. A community health centre should function in unison with the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Frankston City Council, which spends \$4 million on social welfare, of which ratepayers pay \$1 million.

I ask the Minister to act immediately because the youth programs are not appropriate. I also received a complaint about some posters about pregnancy in the foyer of the community hall that many people found objectionable. The posters made some people feel they were not welcome in a public place.

As I said, the programs should be more broadly based and any service that is provided should not duplicate one that has already been established in the area. Health groups, health providers, and traditional organisations would be able to establish a community health centre in Frankston.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Kirkwood)—Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Dr COGHILL (Werribee)—I direct attention to the divisions within the opposition parties that have become all too evident in the past few days, especially the divisions in the Liberal Party that were revealed on Tuesday. I shall not reflect on the outcome or what would have happened if one person in that caucus had decided to vote for the honourable member for Bennettswood rather than the present Leader of the Opposition. One can only speculate as to what the situation would be had that occurred.

Both opposition parties are severely divided over their economic policies. One only has to examine the support given by individual members to the stated policies of their parties as advocated by their shadow Treasurers to understand the profound divisions that are splitting the parties asunder. For example, on the basic point of whether reductions should be made in government spending, on behalf of the Liberal Party, the honourable member for Brighton stated——

Mr Weideman—Mr Acting Speaker, I direct your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum was formed.

Dr COGHILL—I know the honourable member for Frankston South, who called the quorum, is embarrassed about his standing within the Liberal Party and about the leadership of the Liberal Party. I have no doubt that as a traditional Liberal member, the honourable member for Frankston South would not have been among the 24 who voted for the Leader of the Opposition on Tuesday morning; he would have been among the 23 who wanted to return to true Liberal policies and remove themselves from the arrant nonsense peddled by the honourable member for Brighton.

Honourable members know the honourable member for Frankston South does not support the economic policy proposed by the honourable member for Brighton. When one examines who said what, one finds that 30 of the 48 members of the Liberal Party caucus do not support, by their actions, the policy espoused by the honourable member for Brighton, who has the apparent support of the present temporary Leader of the Opposition.

The people of Victoria ought to be concerned that such a profound division over basic economic policy exists within the Victorian Liberal Opposition. How can the Opposition possibly expect to put a case to the Victorian people at the next election—within the next eighteen months—that will have any credibility whatsoever?

Some 30 Opposition members are saying that there should be increased government spending and, of course, one assumes they want increased taxes to finance it. Against that,

the remaining eighteen Opposition members, who apparently support the honourable member for Brighton, believe government is too big, taxes are too high and Victorians do not deserve the level of government services they presently enjoy and on which they depend for their own standards of living and those of their families, and if they are to make a decent and fair go of their lives.

The honourable member for Brighton obviously has a hang-up about the level of taxation and the size of government in the economic policy pursued by him. He has an absolute obsession about it; an obsession which has no rational basis whatsoever.

It is of even more concern when one examines the so-called intellectual support on which the honourable member for Brighton would claim to draw. In particular he has relied on material published by the Centre of Policy Studies at Monash University, of which Professor Michael Porter is the head.

The honourable member for Brighton should be aware—because it has been raised publicly often enough—that the Centre of Policy Studies has been stripped of its centre of excellence because it has never performed as a centre of excellence in economic policy or in any other sense. The way in which the Centre of Policy Studies has corrupted—in the sense of intellectual corruption—the use of public moneys allocated to it to develop excellent economic policy is a disgrace. It is a misuse of public funds and taxes.

One has only to examine the report tabled in the Senate early this year to discover that the Centre of Policy Studies is not reliable or credible and does not have any sort of academic base on which someone like the honourable member for Brighton and the other eighteen members who support him on economic policy should rely.

One should be even more concerned about an announcement I heard on the radio today that Professor Michael Porter is heading a push for some new private universities to be established in Australia and New Zealand. It would be a tragedy if anyone were stupid enough to invest money in an organisation headed by Professor Porter because they would find that their money was invested in a loser and the organisation would fail on basic academic criteria.

The credibility of the Centre of Policy Studies under the administration of Professor Michael Porter has been absolutely zero. The centre has not produced any original research. It has not had any material published in respected international publications, and it has even lost the support of the business community.

Last year the centre sought \$500 million from the business community for the establishment of a National Priorities Project headed by Andrew Hay. What happened? The centre was exposed for the false assumptions on which it was to base its work, and it did not come off.

Mr Leigh—Mr Acting Speaker, I direct your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum was formed.

Dr COGHILL—The Centre of Policy Studies at Monash University never received the \$500 million from the business community because it was exposed as having corrupt intellectual standards.

Only a few weeks ago the business community had to pass around the hat to bail out the centre from a \$250 000 debt that it had run up on the project. The centre found that the business community had seen through it and would not provide the funds it was relying on for the work it was doing. If one examines its publication entitled "Spending and Taxing", one would realise that it is hardly any wonder the centre has lost credibility. It contains some of the most appalling intellectual work that has ever come out of any Australian academic institution.

I return to my original theme, namely, the division in the Liberal Party over economic policy. That is what Victorians are most concerned about. The charade of the Centre of

Policy Studies is a side issue. The issue of concern to the party must be that, by their actions, 30 members of the Opposition have undermined the policies being put forward, purportedly on their behalf, by the honourable member for Brighton.

During the past few months members of the opposition parties have demanded that an extra \$1.364 billion government expenditure be undertaken. It is instructive to examine the names of the members who have sought the increased expenditure. The former Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the honourable member for Ripon, was to the forefront in suggesting that more government money ought to be spent. The honourable member for Syndal, who is sitting at the table, also suggested that more government spending ought to be undertaken.

The current Deputy Leader of the Opposition was a little more careful. He has learnt how to count and what one has to do to curry favour across the factions in the Liberal Party. He has been careful not to make proposals for new expenditure. However, plenty of others have including the honourable members for Portland, Narracan, South Barwon, Ballarat North, Hawthorn, Bendigo East, Sandringham, Bulleen, Evelyn, Forest Hill, Glen Waverley, Frankston South, Dromana, Doncaster, and the Leader of the Opposition. In the other place, the following members have made proposals for new government expenditure: Mr Ward, Mr Macey, Mr Reid, Mr Lawson, Mr Knowles, Mr Granter, Mr Birrell, Mr de Fegely, Mr Storey, Mr Chamberlain, Mr Connard, Mrs Varty, Mr Miles, and Mr Guest.

By their actions, those members have undermined the economic policy put forward on behalf of the Opposition by the honourable member for Brighton. They want more government spending. They seem to want more taxes raised so that more money can be spent and, at the same time, they purport to stand behind the honourable member for Brighton when he says that Victorians pay too much tax.

A discrepancy exists between what the honourable member for Brighton states on behalf of the Liberal Party and what the majority of Liberal Party members are actually saying and doing. They are asking for money to be spent.

I do not say that the projects requiring expenditure that are being advocated by Opposition members are improper; what I am saying is that the Liberal Party cannot have it both ways. There should either be a reduction in government spending and a realisation that the community must cop the effects with fewer services across the board or an expansion of government services that will need to be paid for by taxation or by whatever other sources of revenue are available to the government.

What one cannot do is to have it both ways. The honourable member for Syndal seems to think that one can. That attitude will destroy his credibility and the credibility of the whole Opposition at the next State election in eighteen months' time.

The National Party has completely different traditions from the Liberal Party. One of the traditions of the National Party is not to be in the House; not one single member of the National Party is present for this debate. I do see one standing at the door. Perhaps he will come in and join the debate!

National Party members have a long tradition of being wheelers and dealers and obtaining anything they can get their hands on. They seem to benefit from the lurks and perks that can be obtained from any government. Those are for the benefit not only of their constituents but also for themselves. The Leader and the members of the National Party are famed for their overseas trips, their big cars and whatever lurks and perks they can obtain.

They are the same members who, a few months ago, were backing Joh. What has happened to Joh now that he is desperate for friends? The Queensland Premier is on the ropes and he needs help. Where are his friends in the Victorian National Party? They are mute. They no longer come into the House and suggest that Victoria should be doing what Sir Joh has done for Queensland. They used to say, "Let's hear it for Joh! Let's have the

sort of policies that Joh has. Look at Queensland. That is what should be happening in Victoria”.

Those same National Party members have gone quiet on the subject. Is it because of the corruption in Queensland or is it more that they are fair-weather friends? The Leader of the National Party, who was happy to back Joh in March, April and May, will now not have a bar of him because Joh appears to be a loser.

When Joh appeared to have a chance of being a winner, the Leader of the National Party was arm in arm with him. He was more than happy to stand side by side with him and to help him in his confrontation with the Federal Leader of the National Party, Mr Ian Sinclair.

All we receive from the Leader of the National Party now is a testy response about anything that is going on. He is now embarrassed that he had anything to do with Joh. He has shown himself to be a turncoat when it comes to his continued support. That was opportunism of the worst type.

The National Party and the Leader of the National Party in Victoria are creatures of the past. They simply are not able to adjust to the changed economic and social circumstances that exist in the late 1980s, an adjustment that is so necessary in preparation for the 1990s.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member’s time has expired.

The sitting was suspended at 12.55 p.m. until 2.6 p.m.

Dr WELLS (Dromana)—In my contribution to the grievance debate I shall focus attention upon the reducing community services in the Shire of Flinders, which forms the largest part of the Dromana electorate. These comments are not based on irresponsible requests. I refer to actual reductions at a time when the State Budget level is higher than ever before.

The background to the Shire of Flinders is special, in that the nominal adult population is 33 000; but each weekend it escalates to 50 000 with holiday-makers, and to 150 000 for two months of the year, during the summer. To have 28 000 homes in the shire is far too high a number for 33 000 people. In fact, that figure includes 11 000 holiday homes. All the guests in the Shire of Flinders are registered elsewhere when it comes to Commonwealth-State grants, yet community infrastructure is required for them.

The shire is also special in that it has a growth rate of approximately 5 per cent per annum, which is about three times the State average. If ever there were a case for the shire to receive development funds, this is it. However, as I shall make clear, the reverse applies at present. I shall refer to Commonwealth-State grants, road funding, Road Traffic Authority funding, unemployment, vocational training and ambulance services in the shire and show that, in all of those cases, the situation is becoming worse, not better.

As was announced by the Victorian government, this year’s allocation to Victoria from the Commonwealth government for distribution to shires under the Commonwealth-State agreement was increased by 12.4 per cent. Yet the Shire of Flinders suffered the largest single cut in funding of any shire in this State: its allocation declined by 8.9 per cent, at the same time the allocations for Broadmeadows increased by 20.5 per cent; for Brunswick, by 21.8 per cent; for Northcote, by 18 per cent; and for Whittlesea, by 31.4 per cent.

Not one of those shires has a faster growth rate nor social and community characteristics to justify it receiving consideration of that magnitude when, at the same time, the allocation to the Shire of Flinders was cut by approximately 9 per cent.

That represents a difference of 30 per cent between the allocation received by the Shire of Flinders and those for other parts of Victoria, at a time when the funds allocated through the Commonwealth-State agreement increased overall by 12.4 per cent.

The Commonwealth government has made clear its formula for this allocation which will in future, progressively over four years, move to become totally reliant upon increasing

or decreasing population numbers. This year the allocation has altered by only one-quarter of the total vote. The Commonwealth government recognises the importance of increasing populations of developing areas.

The formula has not yet been made clear for all the shires. In the case of the Shire of Flinders, it will certainly result in a reduction. One finds it impossible to justify that sort of treatment for any shire in Victoria.

Has it anything to do with the statement by the Victorian government, during the long and heated debates about municipal amalgamations, that the government would move to work economically with shires that were cooperating with the Victorian government's plans?

I ask the Minister for Transport to explain the formula used for the treatment of the Shire of Flinders. I further ask that the matter be reviewed urgently and that something be done to assist the shire, which is below par in virtually any major community service to which one refers. That is not a fair deal, nor is it social equity.

Honourable members hear a great deal about the much vaunted social equity of this government. Social equity should apply across the board. Let us have fairness in government and administration, and let us be open. The government talks about open government, so let us know the formula on which the treatment of the Shire of Flinders is based.

I now refer to road funding to the shire, which is a matter of major importance within the shire because it is a rapidly expanding major tourist area which has no public transport in the normal sense. One bus service operates along the arterial road and a smaller bus service paid for by the Shire of Flinders to the tune of approximately \$140 000 a year also operates in the area.

Roads are of major importance to the shire. The government's own figures suggest that 95 per cent of journeys made by people are made by vehicle. That situation is accentuated in the Shire of Flinders. If people in that area do not own cars, they have only a second-rate service available to them.

This year, the classification of the shire for State government funding has been altered from a rural classification, where the shire was responsible for contributing 12.5 per cent of the funds, to a metropolitan classification, where it must contribute 20 per cent of the funds. It is a developing area and should be classified as a non-metropolitan area.

This year, funding for main roads in the Shire of Flinders has been cut by \$100 000, or 20 per cent. The shire has been required to almost double its contribution from \$53 500 to \$90 500. The shire is further disadvantaged in that way. Of the money provided for main roads, two-thirds is used for maintenance, leaving approximately \$150 000 for new road works. The shire would have to contribute at least \$100 000 to maintain any semblance of activity in an area that is expanding at three times the average for Victoria.

In a recent press statement, the Minister for Transport said that \$2.8 million had been allocated to municipalities wholly or partly within the electorate of Dromana. He said that the Road Traffic Authority would spend \$27 million on road works in the Dandenong region in 1987-88. That money will be spent on roads reaching the boundary of the Dromana electorate, but it will not be spent on roads across the boundary.

An arterial road in the area is being duplicated. However, it is unfinished—it sits in the dust stage—and will stay that way for two or three years. During the heat of the Federal election campaign, a combined press release from the Federal and State transport Ministers gave an undertaking that the duplication would be finished within the next three years. Additional money will be needed to bring the work already completed back up to scratch because of deterioration during the delay.

In another recent press release, the Minister for Transport said that the State government is providing almost \$2 million in special impact funding to municipalities throughout

Victoria for work on local roads that are carrying increased traffic as a result of the implementation of government policies.

Recently, the contract for the provision of a terminal for the vehicular ferry from Queenscliff to Sorrento included a penalty of \$1 million for non-completion by the due date. An undertaking was given that the project would be handled properly. However, nothing has been done about the minimal road rearrangement necessary around the terminal at Sorrento. The sum of \$60 000 was requested in order to finish the road works, but not 1 cent was provided to assist vehicular or pedestrian traffic in one of the most concentrated areas in the beautiful and prominent location of the Mornington Peninsula.

The Shire of Flinders is contributing from ratepayer's funds and from wherever it can scrape up money approximately \$1.2 million for road works, much of which I submit in all fairness and seriousness should be provided by the State government.

These are not irresponsible statements or requests; they are matters of social equity. If the \$1.2 million were not used for long-term capital works that are necessary immediately, it could be used to provide social services and social equity to the people of the Shire of Flinders. The shire is getting second-class treatment in terms of road funding.

I shall comment briefly on a small matter, but one which is important. I refer to the potential for young children to be bowled over on the Nepean Highway during the summer peak season. The shire has continually requested the installation of traffic lights along the highway. Last year, the Road Traffic Authority was to provide \$37 000 for one set of lights at Dundas Street. For reasons unknown to the shire, only \$8000 was allocated and the lights were not installed. This year, the installation of the traffic lights has been funded, but the cost has increased due to inflation. Requests for further urgently needed traffic lights along the Nepean Highway have been deferred for another year. There may be a reason of which I am unaware, but that decision could be interpreted as a slick step by the administration to delay expenditure for yet another year. It will be tragic if the lives of any young children are lost during the summer season when the area is flooded with people, and I want the government to be aware of the situation so that it cannot plead ignorance. I am delighted that the Premier has joined us in the House; I appreciate his hearing the comments I have to make.

The Shire of Flinders has continually requested that the Peninsula Freeway be completed. I cannot persuade the Minister for Transport to place that road in the Metropolitan Arterial Road Access Study plan. The government is making a fair to-do, and not unreasonably, about its concern regarding the construction of arterial roads. The Peninsula Freeway is an arterial road and its figures are impressive. Despite that, the Minister refuses to give it METRAS classification. Although I appreciate that road funding is a matter of long-term capital investment, it is extremely important and I invite the Premier to investigate why there are such discrepancies in the treatment of the Shire of Flinders with respect to road funding.

I shall turn to the third issue on which I have already commented strongly as it is the most significant disgrace, sociologically, on the southern Mornington Peninsula, namely, youth unemployment. At this stage, 642 young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years are registered for unemployment benefits. I have often said that there is little or no industrial or commercial development or other opportunities for those young people to get jobs, and there is little transport to take them out of the shire to get work elsewhere. The training facilities in Frankston are 30 or 40 kilometres away, which presents problems of transport and associated costs.

Every year, 650 youngsters are locked into what is becoming perpetuating poverty because what happens to young people in the years when they should be training affects them for the rest of their lives. The government was re-elected in 1985 on the promise that it would introduce the Youth Guarantee Scheme to provide employment or training, or a combination of both, for every young person in the life of the 50th Parliament covering the four years since 1985.

We are now almost three years down that track. I am delighted that the Minister for Consumer Affairs is interjecting and I inform him that I could not find ten people who have obtained places in this area under the Victorian government's Youth Guarantee Scheme. No matter how many people find work elsewhere each year, the youth unemployment figure has not altered in the past five years; it has remained constant at approximately 650 to 700. The fact that 40 per cent of young people are unemployed is a disaster not only for the present but also for the long-term prospects of those people.

To make matters worse, there has been a reduction in services in the Shire of Flinders. For the past seven years, a minute timber cottage has been used as an annexe to the TAFE college. No progress has been made during those seven years. The Commonwealth and Victorian governments have distinguished themselves this year by abolishing a small course that found work, through training, for approximately ten or twelve young people each year.

It was the only course that catered for the long-term interests of youngsters. It had a 75 per cent success rate; within one to nine months of persons joining the course 75 per cent found long-term employment. That was a good return on investment but the course has now been abolished. The government is getting worse all the time.

It is no good for governments to make excuses that Frankston is a regional centre for Rosebud, Rye and other areas. They should look at the actual results. They should consider what has happened under the Commonwealth government's priority 1 scheme and the Victorian government's Youth Guarantee Scheme, as well as the education and vocational training offered in the Shire of Flinders and on the Mornington Peninsula, and then make judgments on whether what is being done is successful and a fair and equitable deal for the poor citizens of Victoria who are paying taxes and yet receiving such treatment.

There is a need for effective vocational and educational courses on the southern Mornington Peninsula so that people may obtain jobs elsewhere if they cannot find employment in the area. I am referring to real courses, not make-believe courses or courses that are simply entertainment.

I shall conclude by referring to ambulance services. The Mornington Peninsula ambulance service was, in a sense, compulsorily taken over by the Victorian government. We were promised services that would be at least equal, if not better, than the service being replaced. However, in many cases it takes 45 minutes for an ambulance to arrive for heart attack cases and, in some instances, two or three ambulances have turned up at the same time. The major problem is that the metropolitan ambulance service provides only one ambulance officer for each call so that when the ambulance first arrives only the driver is available and he must sit and wait until someone else arrives to give him a hand lifting the person onto a stretcher.

The Minister for Health has unsuccessfully attempted to diffuse some of those problems. This is another example of the fact that services in my area are below par and unacceptable compared with those in the rest of Melbourne.

My requests today are not unreasonable. I am simply highlighting the irresponsible management of the Victorian government, a government that has lost \$2.8 billion in WorkCare, \$1 billion a year on rail transport—none of which is spent in the Shire of Flinders—and \$546 000 in the past couple of months on information polls to find out what people think of the Premier's policies. He could have spent that money in other areas and achieved considerably more by doing so. Victoria needs responsible management for all Victorians and real social equity.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—I welcome the opportunity of grieving today on what is happening to this Parliamentary institution, an institution that I personally revere, and what is happening to a once-great Victorian political party—the Victorian branch of the Liberal Party. This former great party—once known as the jewel of the Liberal crown—is

being devastated by a monstrous attack being perpetrated by a sleazy body of faceless men operating from a smoke-filled backroom at the infamous location of Vapold House.

This faceless group is hellbent on controlling the political futures of Liberal men and women who are members of the Victorian Parliament, which I believe is an attack on the very institution of Parliament itself.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I, for one, take objection to the remarks on this important matter because they reflect on me personally because I was engaged in the formation of the Vapold company. I believe this matter should have been raised in a substantive motion; if not, it should be brought before the Privileges Committee.

The SPEAKER—Order! I cannot uphold the point of order. The honourable member for Niddrie has spoken for only 1 minute in the introduction of his grievance. I shall have to hear him out; I, therefore, do not uphold the point of order.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—I refer to an article that appeared in today's *Age* under the heading, "Liberal principals will lecture class of '85 for playing up during Kennett's term". It states, *inter alia*:

Senior party officials are expected to threaten ringleaders of the plot against Mr Kennett that their party endorsements for the next election might be blocked unless they promise to remain loyal to the party leader, Mr Kennett.

In my eleven years in this place I have never experienced such threats by faceless men operating out of the sleazy Vapold House in Exhibition Street. The article also states that members of the party's administrative committee—this group of faceless men—have been incensed by the plan to topple the Leader of the Opposition. They say that the group has now become known as the Liberal Party's "class of '85".

I shall detail to the House who I believe the attack is directed at—those whom the group has identified as troublesome and whose preselection is under threat by those faceless men. It includes the Honourable Rosemary Varty from Nunawading Province in another place. She has been a member of Parliament for approximately twelve months. Frankly, I have never had the opportunity of getting to know that lady, yet I am now advised that her preselection is under threat. I am an outgoing, friendly personality, yet I do not know a great deal about the Honourable Rosemary Varty. However, because she had the audacity to challenge the leadership of the drone who has been Leader of that party since 1982, we are told that her preselection will be challenged.

Then there is the Honourable Reg Macey. What will happen to him?

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the honourable member is out of order in referring to a member of the other place.

The SPEAKER—Order! I find myself in the greatest of difficulties in ruling on such a point of order, and I shall not do so. I do not believe it is a point of order that I can accept and, therefore, prevent the honourable member for Niddrie from continuing with his speech and the course on which he is set.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—I read a lot about the Honourable Reg Macey when he was a public figure in local government. However, as he has been a member of Parliament for only a short time, I have not had the opportunity of meeting him. I would like to find out more about his philosophies, but it appears that his preselection will be stopped because he had the audacity to speak in his party room about the leadership. It looks like the Honourable Reg Macey will find himself back in the South Melbourne City Council rather than in the Legislative Council.

The Honourable John Miles represents the Templestowe Province in the other place. I have had only rare opportunities of speaking with him, but it appears that there will not be too many more miles left in the honourable member.

The honourable member for Sandringham, Mr David Lea, has also been referred to in the newspaper report. I am surprised and devastated by that. Mr Lea is a quiet chap, a man who refrains from interjecting. Apparently he is well balanced. He is a former school teacher, but it looks as if he will be a oncer in this Chamber.

Threats from the faceless men at Vapold House have put his position on the line. The honourable member informed the House that he has never used the strap; but when he goes to meet the faceless leader, he had better put a telephone book in his pants because he will get the cuts.

Dr Ron Wells, the honourable member for Dromana, has also been mentioned——

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I ask you to rule on Standing Order No. 108 which states:

No Member shall use offensive or unbecoming words in reference to any Member of the House and all imputations of improper motives and all personal reflections on Members shall be deemed disorderly.

I believe the honourable member for Niddrie has impugned the integrity of some members of this Parliament, and I ask you, Mr Speaker, to so rule.

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—On the point of order, Mr Speaker, I can understand the nervousness of the honourable member for Malvern in raising this issue. Today is set aside for the grievance debate. The honourable member for Niddrie is demonstrating that this is a sad occasion and that there is much to grieve about.

The honourable member for Niddrie was not making any personal reflection on members of this House or the other place. He has indicated that members of the Liberal Party are under the control of an outside organisation. I submit, therefore, that there is no point of order.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—On the point of order, Mr Speaker, rather than reflecting on honourable members to whom I have referred, it should be obvious to anybody of minute intelligence that I was praising those honourable members.

The SPEAKER—Order! I do not uphold the point of order. The honourable member for Niddrie, in the broadest of terms, is detailing the various honourable members that he is categorising. It appears that he is repeating what has been printed in the newspapers. Honourable members have not asked to make any personal explanations or made any other attempts to refute those matters in the House.

Therefore, I do not uphold the point of order relating to Standing Order No. 108. I suggest to the honourable member for Niddrie that he does not make any imputations against honourable members.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—I raise a further point of Order, Mr Speaker. Standing Order No. 98 states:

No Member shall refer to any other Member by name, except for the purpose of distinguishing him from other Members returned for the same electoral district.

Mr Micallef interjected.

The SPEAKER—Order! I do not require the assistance of the honourable member for Springvale, who is out of his place. I uphold the point of order and ask the honourable member for Niddrie to use the correct title of any member of this House.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—Another name mentioned in the newspaper report is Dr Ron Wells, who is the honourable member for Dromana. He has also been subjected to this threat of preselection being withdrawn. Does that mean that a man whom I have met in Portsea or Sorrento, or in other parts of the Dromana electorate, will return to being a vet? Is the honourable member to be a oncer, for no reason other than that he had the audacity to reject the proposition that the Leader of the Opposition should stay in that position for another eighteen months?

The honourable member for Ivanhoe, who was listed in the newspaper as Vin Heffernan, is also subject to this threat. I have had many discussions with the honourable member for Ivanhoe, and I have found him to be a reasonable and balanced person. Unfortunately, his preselection is also on the line. Where will the honourable member go? He may be advised to do some negotiating with the Australian Democrats.

I now come to the glamour boy, the man referred to in the newspaper as the main challenger for the leadership of the Liberal Party. The honourable member for Bennettswood, Roger Pescott, has been referred to as the man with breeding, the man who knows how to do his hair and the man who has a business background. His position is also under threat. The honourable member lives in Toorak. He has chosen to stay in Toorak since being elected to Parliament. Can one blame him for not wanting to move into his electorate? Who among us would want to leave our homes if we were only to be oncers?

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the honourable member for Bennettswood lives in South Yarra, not Toorak.

The SPEAKER—Order! I find myself able to rule on that point of order. The honourable member for Niddrie is incorrect, and I uphold the point of order.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—I am indebted to the honourable member for Malvern for making that correction. All the honourable members to whom I have referred—the class of 1985—are obliged to toe the line or be kicked out by the faceless men in Vapold House. When interviewed by Derryn Hinch on 7 October, as reported in the Channel 10 news, the leader of this faceless group made an interesting comment.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr SIMPSON—I suggest members of the National Party should listen very closely because, if it can happen to the Liberal Party, it can happen to them.

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I ask the honourable member for Niddrie to identify the faceless men in the document.

Mr Shell—He did; are you deaf?

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Geelong will control himself. I uphold the point of order and ask the honourable member for Niddrie to identify the document.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—The document produced by Current Affairs Monitoring is the transcript from Channel 10 news at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, 7 October 1987. Every member of the Liberal Party except the honourable member for Malvern would have the document. The transcript states:

Hinch. Did you caution them or counsel against a coup?

Kroger: The organisational wing Derryn has a strong view of these things now. We don't get involved in the leadership battles. We leave that to the members of the Parliamentary party and, you know, it's a matter for them.

What a joke! In tonight's *Herald* the leader of the faceless men has indicated that he has been around Parliament House for the past two days. I presume he has been sleeping and eating here. He has certainly been making threats about the preselection of Liberal Party members. That man is now reported as having said to Derryn Hinch that, "We leave that to the members of the Parliamentary party" and "it's a matter for them".

The preselection of members of the Opposition means their livelihood. Their conduct and this institution are being threatened by this man who has been walking around Parliament House, eating and drinking here, and who then tells Derryn Hinch that "it's a matter for them".

Mr Speaker, I have been asked to drive the bus to Vapold House because one of the longest standing members of the Liberal Party told me, "Jack, no-one knows better than you where that place is".

I agreed to do so and hired a bus that carried 23 passengers. The faceless leader at Vapold House said that it is a matter for the Liberal Party.

What about the young Turks? Are they under threat of losing preselection? What about the 76-year-old honourable member for Ballarat North? Will he lose preselection? This leader of the young Turks may have his preselection threatened.

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the honourable member for Niddrie said the honourable member for Ballarat North was 76 years old; I think he meant to say 67 years old. The honourable member for Ballarat North may be a little upset to hear that.

The SPEAKER—Order! I take the point of order raised by the honourable member for Malvern as a proxy personal statement on behalf of the honourable member for Ballarat North.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—Another member of the Liberal Party who was classified as a young Turk was the honourable member for Balwyn. Is his preselection under threat, too? Another member who is probably also 67 years old, the honourable member for Portland, may also have his preselection threatened. Will the honourable member for Polwarth be under threat because he dared to exercise a right within the Liberal Party that is common knowledge to everyone? Will the Honourable Alan Hunt in another place have his preselection threatened?

Today the Honourable Andrew Peacock is in Parliament House; obviously he is here to teach members of the Liberal Party about grooming. He can do that but he cannot teach them anything about numbers! Is it any wonder, with all the threats of preselections being challenged, that a newspaper of five days ago carried a rather sizeable advertisement which was headed, "Member of Parliament"? It states:

The Liberal Party will select candidates for State seats early next year. We want to identify potential candidates now.

We are looking for men and women of talent . . .

The Liberal Party desperately needs talented members—

. . . and determination . . .

Obviously they need determination to follow the lead of the faceless men in Vapold House—

. . . interested in representing the party in State Parliament.

If you are thinking of candidacy for any State seat you should contact us now to register your interest.

We will help you with information and put you in touch with relevant electorates.

Can one imagine the response that will flow from the advertisement? Would anyone of any mettle, talent, breeding, or grooming respond when the person knows that if he or she does not toe the line and follow the hundreds-and-thousands man at Vapold House, he or she will be a oncer?

That person would be like the honourable member for Bennettswood, who will not move from South Yarra to Bennettswood because he knows that he is a oncer. I do not blame him because it is difficult to uproot the family and move it from one place to another when one knows one will be dismissed at the next election. What will happen? If one tries for preselection, one will be told to toe the Liberal Party line by the faceless men who will dictate the pattern of what should happen in this place.

I return to where I started my grievance: why it is a disaster for the Liberal Party, Parliament and this institution. The Westminster system should have a responsible,

competent and aggressive Opposition because that job cannot be left to the National Party. It is hopeless; its members know that; everyone knows that!

If a responsible Opposition is not presented by the Liberal Party, the government will be doubly responsible for this place. That is not fair on the government or the people of Victoria. I advise members of the Opposition to read today's *Age* which stated that a trip to Vapold House:

... was cancelled for fear it might be too obvious a public demonstration of disquiet between the two wings of the party.

Honourable members know that one of the wings of the Liberal Party represents the wets and the other wing represents the dries, but two other wings have emerged. One of the other wings is called the political misfits and the other is called the incompetents. Now the bird has four wings—the wets, the dries, the incompetents, and the collection of political misfits.

That has happened because the Liberal Party elected a 30-year-old young man who does not understand.

Mr LEA (Sandringham)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I have been listening with considerable interest to the erudite comments of the honourable member for Niddrie. When I entered the Chamber I discovered that the erudite comments of the honourable member were being read.

That was made clear by the piece of paper the honourable member held in his hand. He has been reading his speech. I should have thought an honourable member of his experience in this place would know better than to read a speech on such a serious matter.

Mr SPEAKER—Order! I cannot uphold the point of order. It was obvious that the speech by the honourable member was neither written nor read. The honourable member was referring to notes or documents, which is the customary practice of the House.

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—One can only feel sorry for the honourable member for Niddrie. He came into this place as a joke and he has done nothing but treat this place as a joke. He is about to finish his Parliamentary career with only one attribute to his name, and that is his lack of performance when he was given the opportunity of performing responsibly as a Minister. The honourable member for Niddrie failed the test and he was unceremoniously dumped from the Cabinet after the last State election. The House will not be the poorer the day it loses the services of the honourable member for Niddrie.

I wish to grieve about Ministerial responsibility and the way in which it has been exercised or not exercised by Ministers. Two instances stand out of Ministerial responsibility not being exercised prudently. The Premier is not demanding the high standards that should apply in any Parliament in the Commonwealth, especially in Australia.

Firstly, I shall refer to Ministerial responsibility as it applies to the Minister for Transport and his department. Recently the State transport system has been subjected to industrial action because of the failure of the government and two successive Ministers to adequately administer their areas of responsibility.

As the former Minister of Transport, the Minister for Labour was well known as the \$92 million man for having failed in his attempt to bring about reductions in staffing in the State transport system without incurring a huge loss. The Minister also established many work practices that have been inherited by the current Minister for Transport. Those work practices and the inability of the present Minister for Transport to achieve any successful dialogue with the union movement have resulted in the present problems in the transport system.

In real terms, the Premier has taken on board the administration of the transport portfolio. He had put his faith not in his nominated Minister but in the permanent head

of the Ministry of Transport, Mr Russel Ingersoll. Based on the Westminster system of government, a Minister is responsible for the administration with which he is charged by the Premier.

In recent weeks the Minister responsible for the transport portfolio has not exercised his responsibilities. He has not been extended the confidence of his Premier and government to articulate to the public information about his portfolio and he should be held accountable to the public for his lack of administration.

It is true to say that Mr Russel Ingersoll is a superb administrator. No-one on this side of the House would argue against that. However, the Opposition says that his role is that of a public servant. For any government to have so little confidence in its Minister that it would elevate the role of a senior public servant to that of a public communicator to save it embarrassment from one of its Ministers, puts at risk the whole operation of the Victorian Parliamentary system.

No other senior public servant who reports to a Minister continually stands in for his Minister and the government in explaining the government's position and mismanagement to the public. If the Premier allows this situation to continue it will set a precedent that will enable any senior public servant to speak publicly at his or her whim and thereby put at risk the whole democratic process and the workings of the Westminster system.

We have arrived at a situation where the Premier has to say clearly whether he has confidence in the Minister for Transport. If the Premier does not have confidence in the Minister for Transport the public will clearly be able to recognise that fact if Mr Russel Ingersoll continues to be the public mouthpiece for this discredited Minister.

At question time today the Premier said it was the Minister's turn to make a press statement. No doubt the Minister has run away to have his dulcet tones recorded on the electronic media. The Victorian public is faced with a situation which is not of its making, but of the government's making whereby we have an alternative spokesman for transport administration. A senior public servant should not have the responsibility of being a spokesperson for the government. If we are not to have proper Ministerial responsibility in this State, it is time for the Premier to say so. The only way for the Premier to say so is for him to tell the Minister for Transport—and if the Minister will not do it the Premier should do it—to direct the senior public servant not to make any further public comments. His actions put in jeopardy the role of senior public servants when they are forced to perform at the government's bidding through the air waves and other media.

The Premier also said today that those people best able to communicate and provide information to the public will do so. That in itself is an absolute condemnation of the Minister charged with the responsibility of administering transport in this State. The Premier is saying that the Minister is not the best person to communicate and provide information. I shall tell honourable members why that is so. Every time the Minister for Transport speaks, he upsets the unions. The government cannot afford to upset the unions. Therefore, when the Premier virtually took over the administration of the transport system, he gave Russel Ingersoll powers beyond those normally given to a public servant.

Certainly the Premier has given powers to a public servant that are greater than the powers given to the Minister himself. In terms of Ministerial responsibility, there is no doubt that the current Minister for Transport no longer has responsibility for the administration of his department and the carrying out of functions normally attributed to a Minister.

Dr Vaughan interjected.

Mr KENNETT—I can understand why the honourable member for Clayton is becoming upset. I would be upset, too, if I had a Minister like the Minister for Transport in the government. He is an absolute disgrace. He provides neither reliable service nor constant administration. He does not enjoy the full confidence of the Premier or the government. If he did, he would be doing his job like a fully-fledged Minister.

In the current situation the head of the department has been turned from an apolitical person into a political person who acts as a mouthpiece for this discredited Minister. Ministerial responsibility does not apply to the Minister for Transport in the same way that the Premier allocates Ministerial responsibility to other Ministers.

I turn now to a second area where Ministerial responsibility is not being met. Honourable members hear a great deal from the Premier about standards. I refer to the Nunawading Province by-election scandal and the involvement of not only the Premier but also the Minister for Property and Services.

Time and again the government applies standards to itself that are consistently lower than those it applies to any other political party if it were in government or to any other citizen who might have been seeking in any way to break the law. In Nunawading——

Mr Micallef—Boring!

Mr KENNETT—The honourable member for Springvale is probably saying that the subject is boring because he was involved in it. He is probably just as corrupt as his political partners who are prepared to enter into fraudulent activity to secure political support.

Mr MICALLEF (Springvale)—I know the Leader of the Opposition is in a state——

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask the honourable member for Springvale to resume his seat. If the honourable member wishes to raise a point of order he should do so. He does not have the opportunity of making a speech.

Mr MICALLEF—I ask that you, Mr Speaker, request the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the word “corrupt” in the context in which it was used.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member wishes the word “corrupt” to be withdrawn. In what sense was the word used? Was the honourable member accused of being “corrupt”?

Mr MICALLEF—I believe that was what was said.

The SPEAKER—Order! If the honourable member takes offence at the use of the word “corrupt” in the context used by the Leader of the Opposition, I ask the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the word.

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—If it enables me to continue my contribution, I shall say that the honourable member for Springvale is a member of a corrupt government. It is up to the government to prove it is not corrupt.

Mr Micallef—I asked for the word to be withdrawn, not for a speech.

The SPEAKER—Order! I advise the honourable member for Springvale that I have accepted the withdrawal of the word “corrupt” and have called the Leader of the Opposition to continue his speech.

Mr KENNETT—The honourable member for Springvale gets himself mixed up. The government’s involvement in the whole Nunawading affair and the non-preparedness of Ministers to meet their Ministerial responsibility—from the Premier to the Minister for Property and Services down—means that the government has the onus to prove that it is not corrupt and that it did not knowingly enter into actions to fraudulently deprive and mislead people of their ability to a freedom of choice in the Nunawading Province by-election.

The government deliberately delayed the proceedings and investigations into the Nunawading affair to ensure that the statute of limitations applied before any action or reporting was handed down and any subsequent action was taken. Therefore, in terms of Ministerial responsibility, it is up to members like the honourable member for Springvale to prove that he is not corrupt and that his government is not corrupt.

No worse crime could be perpetrated than to deny people their democratic right to vote freely and without undue influence. What the Labor government, members of the Australian Labor Party and employed members of the bureaucracy were involved in was a deliberate attempt to deceive the electors of the Nunawading Province.

The SPEAKER—Order! I advise the Leader of the Opposition that the rule of anticipation is practised in this place. He has in his name on the Notice Paper, General Business, Notice of Motion, No. 15, a motion dealing with the matters he is raising now.

I advise him that a passing reference to these matters is in order. However, if he continues his present course, he is anticipating debate on this subject.

Mr KENNETT—Thank you, Mr Speaker; I was not promoting the issue but rather attempting to articulate that a fraudulent act had been committed through the Premier and one of his Ministers not accepting Ministerial responsibility.

My contribution today has been based on the two examples of the Nunawading Province by-election and the administration of the transport portfolio. They illustrate the areas in which the government is not supporting the principle of Ministerial responsibility as laid down in the Westminster system.

The Minister for Transport is a joke. He will not apply to himself, nor will the Premier apply to him, the Ministerial responsibility that is naturally transferred to any individual who accepts commission as a Minister.

With the Nunawading Province by-election how-to-vote scandal, the Premier not only has refused personally to accept Ministerial responsibility—as the Minister for Property and Services has refused—but also has failed to apply the normal standards that he would have applied if the finger could have been pointed at any other citizen or any other political party. The Premier is not prepared to accept Ministerial responsibility on other issues such as the Continental Airlines Inc. matter. If something can be done to cover up the corrupt or fraudulent acts of a member of his team, the concept of Ministerial standards goes out the window.

That will be a major issue at the next election. Can one trust a government that is not prepared to accept and apply Ministerial standards? Can one accept and return to office a political party that, on its own admission and as stated in reports handed down by independent people, has been involved in fraudulent activity for which it has been recommended that people should be charged? Where is Ministerial responsibility?

Until the government accepts Ministerial responsibility as it applies to the transport portfolio and to the Nunawading Province by-election, the Opposition will continue to raise the issue.

Mr Micallef—Boring!

Mr KENNETT—Whenever I describe the honourable member's government as corrupt, he becomes upset.

Mr Micallef—Boring!

Mr KENNETT—He does not like being considered a member of a corrupt government.

Mr Micallef—You know what I responded to!

Mr KENNETT—It is up to you to prove that you are not a member of a corrupt government.

The SPEAKER—Order! I advise the honourable member for Springvale to cease interjecting.

Mr Micallef interjected.

An Honourable Member—Throw him out!

The SPEAKER—Order! If the honourable member for Springvale wishes to defy the Chair and the practices of the House, I shall have no alternative but to name him.

Mr KENNETT—It is obvious that the honourable member for Springvale knows how deeply involved were the members of his party in the Nunawading Province by-election scandal. He knows he is a member of a corrupt government and he knows some of the dirt is mud on his shoulders because he has not insisted in the caucus room that his government should apply the same standards to its own members as it demands of others.

The system of government under which we operate has been proven over many years for good reasons and unless members of all sides of the House recognise and apply the concept of Ministerial responsibility, the operation of Parliament as we know it today will be undermined.

In two areas at present those Ministerial standards are not being applied by the government. The first is in the transport area and the second involves the whole government led by the Premier in the Nunawading Province by-election how-to-vote scandal.

The government must make a real decision in the near future. Will the honourable member for Brunswick remain the Minister for Transport? If so, will he accept Ministerial responsibility for the management of transport in this State? If he does not intend to, he should go. If he intends to remain as Minister he should be a fully-fledged Minister rather than a half Minister.

Will the government accept responsibility for its fraudulent involvement in the Nunawading Province by-election how-to-vote scandal? If it will not, that will be an issue at the next election because the Opposition will continue to raise the matter.

Should the government wish to clear its name, it has the opportunity of doing so. It would appear that the reason it does not clear its name is the same reason for not clearing the air about the Continental Airlines Inc. issue.

This government is up to its eyeballs in deceit and cover-up. Its members have every opportunity in the world to prove that the government is clean. That applies also to the honourable member for Springvale who becomes agitated every time anyone suggests that the government is corrupt. It is up to him to prove to the people that the government is not corrupt. It is up to the honourable member to prove to the people of Victoria that those who it is recommended should be charged, including the General Secretary of the Australian Labor Party (Victorian Branch) and some of the bureaucrats in the government, are clean. If government members do not do that, the slur stays and they have no-one to blame but themselves.

The Westminster system of government is poorer by the government's refusal to accept the highest standards of Ministerial responsibility possible.

Mr KENNEDY (Bendigo West)—I express my concern over what I consider the negative approach taken by the opposition parties to economic development and development projects that have been and are being undertaken in the Bendigo region by the Cain government.

When the Liberal Party was in government in 1982, it let down the Bendigo area electorate because the series of promises that had been made over a period to the Bendigo community to undertake all kinds of works were not honoured. Bendigo was known at that time as the city of Liberal letdowns.

Some of the promised projects were a new fire station, a new police station, new school buildings such as the White Hills Primary School and a whole range of other projects that were promised year after year. One of the most notorious examples was the gaol which the Liberal Party had been promising for some 20 to 30 years in the Castlemaine area that was never constructed.

That is the background of the continuing failure of the previous Liberal governments to undertake what seemed to be serious electoral commitments by Liberal governments.

Tragically, in 1985, the Liberal Party was in no better position. It went into the 1985 election with no firm commitments for projects that it would undertake in the Bendigo area. No undertakings were made about works of the kind that the Cain government spelled out that it would undertake. The government published a document in 1985 that indicated a range of definite works and projects to be carried out in the four-year term of this Parliament.

By comparison, the Liberal Party had no policy for projects in the Bendigo area. Indeed, the whole objective of the Liberal Party in 1985 was to cut back heavily on government services, government spending and government capital works.

Mr Tanner—Mr Speaker, I direct your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum was formed.

Mr KENNEDY—As I was saying, in 1985 the Labor government produced a range of clear-cut and detailed policies and projects that it would undertake in the Bendigo area between 1985 and 1989. I am pleased to say that a number of them have already been commenced.

There has been significant development of the Cain government's policy of achieving economic growth in country areas, particularly around Bendigo.

It is obvious that the Liberal and National parties are still incapable of producing a clear-cut policy for economic development in Victoria, and they are certainly incapable of producing a policy that will assist and encourage the development of industries in country centres, such as those in the Bendigo region.

In fact, the National Party cannot yet decide on a policy. Its members run around the countryside complaining about the government's removal of payroll tax rebates as a result of a policy it introduced in 1984.

Mr Leigh—Mr Speaker, I direct your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum was formed.

Mr KENNEDY—The National Party is still incapable of producing a clear-cut policy. Its members run around the country complaining about the government's decision in 1984 to phase out payroll tax rebates. As a matter of fact, in its own 1985 State election policy, the National Party indicated its dissatisfaction with payroll tax rebates as a policy for helping country industry and said it would examine alternative methods of assisting individual firms.

In 1985 the National Party took a decision in the party room to allow the passage of legislation to remove payroll tax rebates.

Recently, the Leader of the National Party made a speech on country radio in which he criticised the Victorian government for supposedly having no policy for assisting country industry. On the following day the National Party released a statement that was grossly inadequate.

I checked with the Parliamentary Library in an attempt to obtain a copy of that mysterious speech, which was broadcast throughout country Victoria. Finally, I was forced to ask the Leader of the National Party himself for a copy of the statement that had already been made public. He refused point-blank to provide me with a copy of his speech, and he still refuses to do so; yet one would imagine that it was a public statement.

It obviously caused some embarrassment because just before the presentation of the recent State Budget the National Party claimed it was in favour of reintroducing payroll tax rebates.

Mr Leigh—Mr Speaker, I direct your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum was formed.

Mr KENNEDY—Prior to the presentation of the Budget, the National Party said it believed payroll tax rebates should be brought back, yet the recent statement of the Leader of the National Party contained no reiteration of that policy. I asked the Leader of the National Party for a copy of the speech he had made over the radio, and he refused point-blank to provide it to me.

There is similar embarrassment within the Liberal Party, which still has no policy on economic development or assistance for country industries. Indeed, the Liberal Party in Bendigo recently made a far-fetched statement that the government had let down country industry and that the Liberal Party was supposedly formulating a regional economic development policy. It has not yet produced that policy.

The Liberal Party in Bendigo recently indicated that it would seek details of specific assistance that had been given by the Victorian government to firms operating in the Bendigo area. In fact, the information finally had to be released by the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources; of course, it was quite impressive. It detailed a significant financial commitment by the Victorian government in a number of ways to a vast number of firms in the Bendigo area. Unfortunately, the Liberal Party representative of the electorate of Bendigo East, who made much noise about requesting the information under the Freedom of Information Act, has still not chosen to publish it. Obviously the information provided to him is simply too good to release and obviously also refutes the case he has been putting forward.

I shall instance a number of other areas where the Opposition in Bendigo is not only negative but also, in many cases, is actually obstructing the implementation of government policies, which are of vital importance to the Bendigo region.

I itemise first the situation of public housing. The government has undertaken a substantial housing construction program in the Bendigo area, yet this is consistently opposed by the Liberal Party. Indeed, the Opposition has gone to the extent even of criticising and opposing community houses, which are of considerable significance in the government's social justice strategy. Opposition members are so hostile towards many of the government's policies being implemented in the Bendigo area that they even oppose the construction of public housing and the provision of community houses.

The Liberal Party's performance has been equally dismal in regard to the government's commitment to provide funds for the purchase and restoration of the historic Capital Theatre. This is an amazing situation, particularly when in 1985 the Liberal and National parties strongly supported the purchase and redevelopment of that theatre.

There has been continuing conflict in Bendigo between the Bendigo City Council and a number of other local councils over the refusal of the Bendigo City Council to support the project. Over recent months the Liberal and National parties have both let Bendigo down by refusing to speak out in support of the restoration of the Capital Theatre. That is despite the fact that, in 1985, the Liberal Party supported the project.

The Opposition has an equally negative approach to tourism. One of the fine developments taking place in central Victoria is the construction of a major tourist accommodation complex at Maldon. That will bring new and much needed accommodation facilities to Maldon and will attract people to the central Victorian area. Despite that, the Liberal Party, through its spokesman on tourism who was supported by the Liberal Party members in the region, has opposed the project because it believes it is not the type of project that should be undertaken by government. That is a typical new right attitude towards economic development.

The Liberal Party has also been critical of the development of a proposed Chinese museum at Bendigo. It has made no commitment to support the development of that

museum, and that is in contrast to the strong commitment made by the Premier in 1985 and the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources last year to support the project.

The government is awaiting the further development of plans for the project, and has indicated that, as soon as the planning has reached the stage where the cost of the project can be calculated, Cabinet will give a specific commitment to the project. The government has already made a broad commitment of support, but the Liberal Party will not make a similar commitment.

Members of the opposition parties, particularly the honourable member for Bendigo East, have tried to belittle the museum project by suggesting that it will be a white elephant. That attitude is anything but supportive and will work to the detriment of that important tourist project.

The Opposition has shown an equally negative attitude towards the provision of further Public Service accommodation in Bendigo. Recently, I was in the staggering situation of being the only member of Parliament from that area prepared to openly defend public servants' entitlement to improved accommodation. As a result, the Victorian government purchased the old State Electricity Commission building at Bendigo and is moving to make it available for public servants and for use as a shopfront for the Government Information Centre. The Opposition supported the purchase of the building in the first instance, but later decided that the building should not be purchased but that it should be auctioned.

Members of the opposition parties in the Bendigo area have a similar strange attitude towards the development of the Bendigo goldfields. One politician from the area will not even say what his attitude is. The honourable member for Bendigo East said that he believed the goldfields should be opened up to a number of goldmining companies and not just to Western Mining Corporation Holdings Ltd. He then changed his mind because the Leader of the Opposition came to town and cracked the whip. A comment from the honourable member for Bendigo Province could not be extracted; even when challenged, he refused to express any viewpoint.

An even more curious situation has arisen within the National Party. The National Party member for Western Province gave the impression that he supported a number of small firms developing the Bendigo goldfields but, when questioned while in Bendigo, the Leader of the National Party did not make a commitment one way or the other; he chose to sit on the fence.

Remarkable situations have arisen within the portfolio of the Attorney-General. As the Premier indicated this morning, the government is developing a minimum security women's prison at Maldon. Despite the Opposition's claims that more prisons should be constructed, it is opposed to the project.

The government has undertaken to establish a neighbourhood mediation centre in Bendigo. That fine project was recently opened by the Attorney-General. However, the Bendigo representatives of the Liberal Party found grounds to oppose and criticise the project.

A spectacular situation has arisen with regard to WorkCare. All members of the opposition parties voted against the introduction of WorkCare and occupational health and safety measures; yet when the government provided funds for a rehabilitation service in Bendigo, the honourable member for Bendigo Province attended the opening function. The two or three other Opposition members from the area chose not to accept the invitation to the official opening.

The Opposition has obstructed the government in the area of planning. For more than two years the government has been working to introduce proposed legislation for the Loddon-Campaspe Regional Planning Authority, but it has faced continual stalling by the opposition parties. The National Party eventually found the pressure so hard to cope with that it made a humiliating backdown and agreed to pass the proposed legislation. The

Opposition was opposed to a crucial part of the Bill, but it was passed because the National Party walked away from the Liberal Party.

The Cain government is doing a magnificent job in the Bendigo region. I am proud to be its representative; I am proud to support the wonderful projects being undertaken in the region. It is regrettable that members of the opposition parties do not show the same positive approach to the development of the Bendigo region. I ask them to take a more constructive attitude to future developments and, at long last, to produce a policy that will indicate that they have some idea of the direction in which Victoria and the Bendigo region should be moving.

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—I wish to speak on a subject that is important not only to political parties but also to the government. Earlier today, honourable members heard a diatribe from the honourable member for Niddrie about what is happening in the Liberal Party. Even if my party has problems from time to time, at least it is not wasting massive amounts of taxpayers' money. In the circumstances, it is appropriate that I give an exposé of the power structure of the Labor Party in local government and what goes on among those who sit in this Chamber representing that party. The foundation stone of the Australian Labor Party is local government. It is obvious to anybody, including the honourable member for Dandenong—or it would be if he bothered to find out what is going on in his electorate—that the power base of the Labor Party is local government. That fact has been recognised over the years by people such as Senator Robert Ray, the Federal Minister for Home Affairs.

Last weekend, the Labor Party went through a fascinating experience of deciding whether to pull out of local government. I have spent a lot of time exposing the corruption in local government, particularly in Labor Party councils. The honourable member for Doncaster was responsible for the sacking of the Richmond City Council. It is a pity that the Liberal Party is not in government because, if it were, it would sack the Oakleigh City Council.

What was discussed at last weekend's Australian Labor Party conference? The Labor Party discussed whether it should withdraw from local government. Prior to the conference, I spent a lot of time lobbying Labor members of Parliament and pleading with them to maintain their involvement, to enable the election of the Liberal Party at the next State election.

When one considers the councils of Oakleigh, Richmond, Sunshine, Keilor and Essendon—I could go on—one realises that that political structure is basically made up of the incompetents of the Labor Party who cannot get a seat in Parliament.

The Labor Party gives those people the third prize of local government positions. Good luck to the ratepayers! An article in the *Age* of 5 October 1987 on the Labor Party conference stated:

The proposal by the Minister for Home Affairs, Senator Ray will be debated at the next ALP State conference. Senator Ray has predicted the ALP "will pull out of local government because it is not successful there".

Senator Robert Ray is the chief numbers man for the ALP in this State, the equivalent to Senator Graham Richardson. He has said the ALP will pull out of local government. However, his arithmetic was wrong and he was rolled at his own conference. I shall deal with the reasons for that later.

This incident demonstrates that the Labor Party recognises how important local government is to the Labor Party's structure. In the past five years that I have been a member of this place, I have persistently and consistently campaigned against the City of Oakleigh Labor Party structure—the Cr Perrymans of this world who would have felt at home in Chicago in the 1930s. Those people have controlled local government and used it to their own ends and to look after their mates.

I shall quote further from the *Age* article to demonstrate the feelings of the Labor Party. I should be interested to know whether Ms Jean Walsh of the North Richmond ALP branch is the party's chief media monitor and minder—obviously, the honourable member

for Richmond knows her. She said that the reasons for the dismissal had been forgotten and that most of those implicated had died or moved on.

They have not done anything years later. I remember asking the Premier a question on 2 November 1984 on behalf of Mr Geoff O'Connell, who was the last Mayor of Richmond. At that time he was a member of the Administrative Committee of the Labor Party but he approached the Honourable G. P. Connard, the honourable member for Higinbotham Province in the Upper House, a member of the Liberal Party, to arrange for me, on his behalf as the Labor Party's remaining officer in Richmond, to ask the Premier when he was likely to be charged. The Premier said that he had noted my remarks and those of the honourable member for Caulfield, and would take up those matters with the Ministers concerned.

Years later, and \$1 million later, not one of the people involved in the City of Richmond scandal—although legal documents were being prepared—was charged. Not one of the crooks was charged under this government! All those faceless people who sit on the government benches who participated in this affair, such as the honourable member for Springvale, who is a friend of those sorts of people, are members of the party that allowed that situation to occur.

The other day I asked when an election would be held in the City of Richmond so that the people of that area could vote. They have not had local government voting for five years. On behalf of the City of Richmond I asked when the people of that area would have their democratic rights restored.

The honourable member for Richmond may say that people's democratic rights are boring—that is what he says—but it is a pity for him that the rest of the community does not think the same way. I did not receive an answer from the Minister at the time but later received an answer from members of the government. They said that there has never been democracy in Richmond.

What a joke! Even before 1982 people in that area did not have democratic rights. The council at the time was sacked; they were a corrupt group of people who were not interested in democracy and used the power for themselves. That was demonstrated over many years. An excellent article in the *Herald* states:

After more than 50 years of being embroiled in the rough and tumble of council politics, the Victorian ALP is considering a tactical retreat. Poor results in recent local government elections have divided the party over the merits of grassroots politics—many believe direct ALP involvement in local councils has become a liability rather than an asset.

It is to the credit of my party that it does not participate in local government. It believes it is up to the community to decide those issues. However, the Labor Party would rather be involved in garbage and planning issues. I understand why it wants to be involved in garbage, but not planning.

What has happened to those former councillors? The people who traditionally voted Labor at State and Federal elections are turning on their friends. They have deserted them in the City of Fitzroy and, in the City of Richmond, the honourable member for Richmond does not want to give them a chance. He does not believe in democracy.

Mr Sidiropoulos interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! I ask the honourable member for Malvern to address the Chair. He is aggravating the situation by directing his remarks to the honourable member for Richmond.

Mr MACLELLAN (Berwick)—On a point of order, whether or not the honourable member for Malvern was aggravating the situation, the honourable member for Richmond used an unparliamentary expression, which I believe the Clerks heard. He should be asked to withdraw it.

Mr SIDIROPOULOS (Richmond)—I apologise for using the word “hypocrite”.

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—It is unfortunate that a member of the socialist left, as the honourable member for Richmond is, is not a true supporter of democracy as the Labor Party has always demonstrated—and the Labor Party comprises the socialist left—that it does not believe in democracy except when it is not in power. Once the Labor Party is in power one can kiss democracy goodnight.

The honourable member for Richmond does not visit schools; I believe I have visited more schools in his electorate than he has. What a pity! The *Herald* article also states:

The problem, they say, stems from poor candidates and a faulty preselection process . . . many councillors who have won seats with the backing of and in the name of the ALP are not up to scratch. "Local government—as with State and Federal—has its share of time servers, hacks and incompetents," said one former ALP Mayor.

He must have been in this House and seen the performance of some Labor Party members to have made that comment. The community has decided that it does not want party politics in local government.

Mr Micallef interjected.

Mr LEIGH—I heard some chirping from Springvale—it must have been a bird!

The time has come for the government to recognise that it must get out of local government. Earlier today the honourable member for Niddrie spoke about the activities of my party. I remind him that my party does not produce phoney how-to-vote cards for by-elections. It does not have two sets of standards.

Honourable members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! I ask the honourable member for Springvale and the honourable member for Malvern to exercise some decorum in the debate.

Mr LEIGH—I shall direct my remarks through the Chair, Mr Deputy Speaker. The fact is that there are two sets of standards: there is one standard for the ALP and another standard for the rest of us. Perhaps it was right that Sir Brian Murray was sacked, but what about Peter Batchelor? What is more corrupt than someone attempting to manipulate the electoral processes of the State for his own ends? That is what Mr Batchelor, leader of the ALP organisation and a member of the faction that the honourable member for Springvale supports, did. Of course, he thinks it was correct because it was a factional decision.

The community is becoming increasingly aware of what is going on. It is not just the Opposition that is saying it. The Continental Airlines Inc. scandal is an example. The matter was taken up by the *Herald*, not my party. The media have recognised that there is incompetence, corruption and maladministration within the government. It is time for the government to clean up its act. In 1982 I recognised that the Liberal government got what it deserved when it lost office. It is incredible that the Labor government has gone five steps past what the Liberal Party took 27 years to do; it is much more incompetent than the Liberal Party was when it was thrown out of office. The Labor Party is incompetent, corrupt and uses smear tactics and suspect electoral procedures. One has only to name it and this bunch has it.

Mr Richardson—Other than that, they are OK.

Mr LEIGH—That is right. One must strike a balance on whether a government makes good or bad decisions or decisions that are in the interests of the community.

It appears that the government has some desire to increase the public profile of its backbench. The Opposition hopes the government will adopt that course because more Labor Party backbenchers will then become known to the public. Apart from Liberal Party policies, I can think of no better reason for voting Liberal than to have the honourable member for Springvale recognised in the community. His constituents would say, "My God, this person, who appears to be a relative of Fidel Castro, is my member of Parliament."

What has happened to Victoria's Parliamentary process when people such as that can be part of the government?" Can honourable members imagine the honourable member for Springvale as the Premier?

Mr Norris—Can anyone imagine you as Premier, which is more relevant?

Mr LEIGH—I can imagine the honourable member for Dandenong as the Deputy Premier, with all his television experience.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! I ask the honourable member for Malvern to direct his remarks to the Chair. I am not happy with some of his comments in this debate.

Mr LEIGH—I am attempting to address my remarks to the Chair but it is difficult when honourable members make interjections.

The Labor Party has attempted to gain control of the Malvern City Council by devious means. I refer honourable members to the former two-term mayor, Mr Max Dumais, who was a Ministerial adviser to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services at the same time as he professed to be an independent councillor in the City of Malvern. Some six months after he professed to be an independent councillor, he became the endorsed Australian Labor Party candidate against me at the State election.

That gentleman did not tell members of the community that he was really a Labor Party stooge. He said nothing when he was negotiating with the government over the arterial road that runs through the municipality that I represent. Mr Dumais accompanied the honourable member for Springvale and other Labor Party members to the site of the arterial road and had his photograph taken while standing on the freeway. Although these people profess to represent the community openly and honestly, it is clear that they do not.

I hope the honourable member for Richmond will encourage his local community to elect a city council. After five years of supposedly good management of local government affairs, why have councillors not been elected to the Richmond City Council? That has not been done for one reason: they are not members of the faction to which the honourable member for Richmond belongs. People who are interested in becoming councillors are members of the centre unity faction, a faction which the honourable member for Richmond regards as being filled with crooks.

Those people may have extremely right-wing views, but the socialist left faction of the Labor Party will not allow a democratic election to occur. Political point scoring among factions of the Labor Party, particularly the socialist left to which the Minister for Local Government belongs, is the reason there are no Richmond city councillors. It is too bad that the rights of ratepayers suffer. Instead of dealing with elected councillors, ratepayers must deal with bureaucrats.

The Labor Party should recognise that it has been wrong over the years and that it should keep out of local government. No endorsed Labor Party candidates should run for the Richmond City Council elections. If that decision were made, an election could be held tomorrow.

Mr Coleman—They would all be independent candidates.

Mr LEIGH—All the former Labor Party candidates would be classified as independents but they would not win. The ratepayers of the City of Richmond would elect honest, decent candidates.

It is a shame that in his last term the honourable member for Richmond is not prepared to support the democratic rights of his constituents. They accept him as an Australian but he does not support the rights of other Australians to have open government in this country.

Mrs HIRSH (Wantirna)—Today I grieve about people who require medical advice and service and are manipulated by a system against which they are powerless.

The Cain government was aware of problems faced by people without power—the elderly, frail, disabled and people on low incomes. In May 1986 it established Health CALL—Health Complaints Advisory Link Line—which is a community-based committee of management supervising a health complaints service. An independent telephone information service was established for consumers who wanted to complain or make inquiries about a health provider or health service.

In the following twelve months more than 2500 complaints were made and 500 general inquiries were referred to other services and facilities. The need for ordinary people to gain redress when they have been treated badly or overcharged or have been unhappy with treatment from a health care provider is vital.

It is important to inform the House about the aims and objectives of Health CALL because it is such an important community service. Often the people who wish to complain about a health service have less power and fewer resources than health providers. As health providers have more resources, are more powerful and more articulate, it is vital that a service should be biased towards consumers so that they can be properly assisted.

The aims of Health CALL are, firstly, to promote consumers' legitimate rights to complain. That right is often not recognised by consumers, particularly when attending general practitioners, specialists or pathologists. People often feel intimidated, fragile or powerless in the health field.

A person visits a doctor when he or she is ill or has something wrong, and that is when the person is the most vulnerable. If a service is too expensive or inadequate, or the doctor or other health care provider does something that is unsatisfactory, it is difficult to know what to do.

The second aim of Health CALL is to empower consumers to raise concerns and to take action on their own behalf. This is an extremely important function of the service so that consumers can be assisted in making complaints about something that is unsatisfactory.

In the majority of cases service providers and health care providers are caring and ethical people, but there are exceptions and people need to be made aware of them and given the opportunity of dealing with them.

Another aim of Health CALL is to identify problem areas in the health care system and to advocate for action to be taken to overcome problem areas. For example, Health CALL received numerous complaints from consumers about people purporting to be able to cure smoking or drinking habits in only three days through hypnosis. Often those alternative health providers are expensive.

Consumers have complained to Health CALL that after undergoing hypnotherapy and paying a lot of money, there was no magic and they were still smoking or drinking. Often the advertisements are untrue and the claims by the hypnotherapists are not as easily achieved as is suggested in their advertisements. Health CALL could perhaps examine a problem area like that to ensure that the advertisements do not claim to provide a magical solution to an addiction or whatever when it is not always the case. Often this type of alternative treatment is ineffective unless the patient has a commitment to changing his or her behaviour.

Health CALL raises consumer and provider awareness by publicising complaints and making recommendations to improve health complaint services. As a result the Health Services Complaints Office was opened recently and it is headed by Commissioner Ian Siggins. This office will provide a conciliation and arbitration service for people who have complaints about health service providers in a range of areas. They will include not only doctors but also dentists and alternative medical practitioners, like naturopaths and herbalists.

Herbal therapy is a popular service with consumers. Many people are moving away from traditional, science-based practices and are looking for alternative practitioners for treatment of their illnesses and complaints. Many of the alternative practices are of great benefit and value. I was advised by a naturopath to drink camomile tea as an aid to sleep. That was a useful piece of information and has been an effective remedy for insomnia.

Alternative medical practitioners and their practices are not regulated. Therefore, consumers need to know they can make a complaint to Health CALL if they are dissatisfied with any alternative medical service. This complaint will then be dealt with by the Health Services Complaints Office. Health CALL and the complaints office are extremely important parts of the consumer protection service.

Health CALL aims to monitor the overall complaints mechanism to ensure that procedures are accessible, efficient, effective, and responsive to consumer needs. The Health Services Complaints Office is a government department that will be carefully watched and monitored by Health CALL. The office is a community based service that has a community based committee of management. Health CALL is outside government interference and has a built-in consumer bias to compensate for the lack of power and ability some consumers have to make complaints.

Health CALL is an advocate for change. It advises people of their consumer rights. People learn that they can demand from their doctors proper diagnoses of their complaints or illnesses. Health CALL also assists them to clarify their complaints and concerns about particular services by carefully analysing the complaints.

Health CALL advises consumers on what course of action to take to deal with any discontent or dissatisfaction that has resulted from any health care service. In the one and a half years that Health CALL has been in operation, I have been able to refer to it many people who have come to my electorate office with complaints. On every occasion the consumer has either been satisfied by the explanation or has been referred to another area where the problem can be satisfactorily dealt with.

Health CALL records details of all inquiries and complaints as well as the recommended courses of action. Statistics are collected also. It monitors patterns that emerge from carefully collected data. A glance at the statistics, which have been gathered for a year, easily identifies the areas that are important to consumers. This data is published regularly and can be used to trigger change in the form of service delivery.

Health CALL addresses shortcomings in the health system. One of the major complaints about health services is the cost. Many health providers overcharge and the providers about which the majority of complaints were made were dentists. Perhaps dentists should take heed of that information.

Another issue that emerged from the first annual report of Health CALL was consumer access to records. For example, a consumer telephoned Health CALL complaining that his former medical practitioner would not pass on medical information about his condition or the results of tests that had been recently undertaken. This information was refused at both his request and at the request of the current doctor.

This is not a good thing to be happening. The consumer had changed doctors because of transport problems and he was upset when the new doctor's request for reports was refused. If the consumer had to have the tests performed all over again, it would have involved unnecessary duplication and time wasting. With some medical tests, it could even be dangerous. If a person has to undergo further X-rays not only is this time wasting and costly but also if it has to be duplicated health risks are involved.

Health CALL was not able to do much, but it told the consumer that there was no legal requirement for doctors to pass on records. Additionally, there was no professional or ethical requirement to do so. The appropriateness of this position is something for the community, the medical profession, the Australian Medical Association and the Doctors Reform Society to consider.

Perhaps access to and the passing on of medical records should be the right of the consumer if it is requested by the consumer. Perhaps there should be a legal requirement for medical records to be passed on at the request of a consumer of a medical service.

A further problem occurred when a consumer who had paid \$610 for upper and lower dentures suffered problems six months later. A considerable amount of new work was done at a further cost of \$110. The consumer was under the impression that the costs of the second lot of work to try to make the dentures useful and wearable would be free because they had not been adequate in the first place. The dentist had not informed the consumer that a further cost would be involved to correct the dental work that had not been of any use in the first place.

Therefore, Health CALL and the Health Services Complaints Office are extremely valuable services, a little like the Consumer Credit Legal Service Co-operative Ltd, which has a consumer bias, the Tenants Advice Service, the Tenants Union of Victoria, and the tenants advisory services funded through the Ministry of Consumer Affairs in areas throughout the State.

A similar important consumer service is the cooling-off period after the purchase of motor cars, which was recently introduced. In our complex and difficult society it is important that services biased towards consumers are an important function of government. Ordinary people are often intimidated and overwhelmed by people whom they consider to be important, powerful or rich. Doctors are often seen in that light by ordinary people. It is important that services with a bias towards consumers, such as Health CALL, are put into place.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mrs HIRSH—It is interesting that members of the National Party think that rather than protecting ordinary people we should be patronising them. People have a right to decent ethical medical services when they become ill. They also have a right to be treated for fair prices and obtain proper information about their conditions through a careful and caring health service.

The establishment of offices such as Health CALL and the health complaints office are important also in respect of alternative medicine so that people can comfortably participate in that field of medicine.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! Before calling the honourable member for Lowan I advise that it would be useful if his party Whip could supply a list of speakers.

Mr W. D. McGRATH (Lowan)—In fairness to my colleague, the names of National Party speakers were provided, but you were not in the chair at the time, Mr Deputy Speaker.

The subject I raise in the grievance debate is the Victoria Grants Commission allocations to country municipalities. Country municipalities are none too pleased with the new grants formula, bearing in mind that the former Federal Minister in charge of local government, the Honourable Tom Uren, made a commitment when the new formula was adopted that no municipality would be financially worse off, and that the new formula would be phased in over a three-year period.

In the first year the new formula applied, 105 municipalities received lower financial allocations in money terms—let alone real terms—when comparing 1987–88 with 1986–87. In every instance those municipalities were located in the country.

I shall refer in particular to two municipalities in the area I represent. In 1987–88 the Shire of Arapiles, which is located at Natimuk, received only \$170 549 and, in 1986–87 the allocation was \$188 000. In 1987–88 the Shire of Donald received only \$241 192 and, in 1986–87 the allocation was \$266 000.

The editorial of the *Donald Birchip Times* of 2 October 1987 discusses the government's commitment to non-metropolitan areas. It states:

Mr Kerin, Minister for Primary Industry and Energy told us recently that "the 1987-88 Federal Budget demonstrates the government's commitment to non-metropolitan Australians and the development of their industries".

The honourable member for Bendigo West spoke about that earlier. I shall deal with that in a moment. The editorial also refers to a letter received by the Shire of Donald from the office of the Federal Labor member for Bendigo, Mr John Brumby. The letter was signed by Mr Brumby's secretary, Fabian Reid. The Shire of Donald forms part of Mr Brumby's electorate. The editorial quotes the letter as follows:

"The distribution of funds to Victorian municipalities was conducted by the Grants Commission using a new formula based on population. The formula is the responsibility of the Victorian Ministry of Local Government."

The truth, hurtful as it is, is finally out! A formula for funding based on population can only work in favour of larger metropolitan and provincial centres in both the short and long terms. The country can and will go to hell.

And now for the final crunch—one you will really enjoy. The Brumby/Reid message concluded, "your concerns would be best directed to your State Members of Parliament".

The Donald council wrote to the Minister for Local Government and received a reply signed by Ms Robin Matthews, personal secretary:

On behalf of the Minister I acknowledge your letter and advise that the contents have been noted.

The editorial states that the personal secretary could have saved everyone a good deal of time. She could have replied as effectively in similar words to that in the editorial: "Go to hell, we are not interested in the country."

The pious honourable member for Bendigo West an hour ago ridiculed the National Party about its decentralisation policy. The honourable member for Bendigo West undoubtedly has been under much pressure recently. He has been allocated back-bench Dorothy Dix questions by Ministers so that he may rate a mention in *Hansard*. If it were not for these he would never receive a mention because he is totally ineffectual.

It is interesting to consider what the honourable member for Bendigo West has done for decentralised industry. He and his government both State and Federally have been responsible for increases in fuel prices and record taxes through business franchise fees. That does not help decentralised industry. No-one in their right mind would consider leaving the metropolitan area to set up business in the country when fuel is one of the main cost components.

The cost of communication is also a disadvantage and a disincentive for business people contemplating decentralisation. A city-based industry can contact probably eight-tenths of the population through local telephone calls. A country-based business must pay long-distance service charges for the same contact.

The honourable member for Bendigo West has done nothing but criticise the honourable members for the North Western Province in another place and the honourable member for Bendigo East. He ridiculed them and said that their parties had no policy. All the honourable member for Bendigo West is doing as a member of the government is supporting high taxes and costs for those in country businesses.

The honourable member for Bendigo West was at one stage the Federal member for Bendigo. During that time, the Catholic Bishop of Bendigo became alarmed about the policy that the honourable member was espousing for non-government schools and it was not long before he departed the Federal scene. He could not assist his own constituents at the Federal level and the same thing is happening at the State level; he will disappear from the scene at the next election because he is not assisting the local people of Bendigo.

Tourism is an important aspect of decentralisation. The Labor government has acted positively with tourism—and it has not been backward in coming forward with taking a deal of the credit. Be that as it may, when Dick Hamer was Premier of Victoria he made

the statement that by the year 2000 tourism would be the biggest industry in Victoria. My opinion is that agriculture will always be the biggest industry in Victoria. However, tourism is certainly important.

The government can take credit for much of the expansion that has occurred in tourism but the tourist industry must be spread across the whole State and not gathered in the metropolitan area or large regional centres such as Ballarat or the Latrobe Valley. Visitors to Victoria must be encouraged to tour the interesting areas of the north-east, the Big Desert, the Little Desert, the Grampians and other places that have magnificent scenery.

I am concerned about government policy on payroll tax. The rebate system for decentralised industry has been phased out and industry now operates on preferred development areas for industry. Those preferred areas are not decentralised in the true sense of the word.

So often industries in the country have had to return to major regional centres or the metropolitan area. Of course, this is because of union pressure on the government to centralise all activities. If industry is centralised, it is easier to control. Any industry flourishing in the country regions has done so not with the help and support of the government; it has flourished purely through the encouragement and support of local government.

Incidentally, local government is being strangled financially by the government in its push for restructuring and amalgamation of the whole local government area. That is what the financial support of the Victoria Grants Commission allocation is all about. It is financial blackmail by the Minister for Local Government and the government to drive local government to a point where it cannot remain financially viable and will need to amalgamate to survive.

The remarks of the honourable member for Bendigo West today did not paint the true picture of country Victoria. The Labor government has been pathetic in its assistance to country industry and country municipalities. One needs only to identify allocations under the Victoria Grants Commission to recognise that fact.

The question was agreed to.

AGRICULTURAL ACTS (FURTHER AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

PURPOSE OF BILL

The Bill amends a total of eleven Acts dealing with agricultural matters. It is typical of general amending legislation in that one of its main purposes is to implement a series of unrelated measures which essentially deal with housekeeping matters.

However, the Bill also contains a package of amendments involving three Acts to address recent problems in the livestock industry arising from the detection of chemical residues in beef exports. This package is of special significance and, together with changes relating to animal welfare, occupies most of the following discussion of the Bill.

CHEMICAL RESIDUES

As outlined in a recent Ministerial statement, the problem of chemical residues in agricultural products poses a great threat to Victorian agriculture. As also stressed in that statement, we must tackle the problem on a broad range of fronts. The measures contained in the Bill are an integral part of a wide-ranging strategy to deal with the problem.

The first series of measures are contained in Part 5 and involve amendment to the Abattoir and Meat Inspection Act. These changes are required to place on a secure legal footing the carrying out of sampling and testing programs in abattoirs. Major steps have

already been taken to increase the monitoring of domestic and export meat. The amendments complement these new arrangements and will require the implementation of approved testing programs. Details relating to such matters as the number and types of samples to be taken and the tests to be performed will be spelt out in orders. Provision is also made for the results of such tests to be forwarded direct to the department to ensure close monitoring of results.

The second group of amendments proposed are contained in Part 6 and relate to the Stock Diseases Act. These changes will ensure that the range of measures already available to deal with diseased stock can also be applied to stock with unacceptable limits of chemical residues.

The amendments will enable the implementation of on-farm testing programs, the quarantining of properties where stock with chemical residues above maximum residue levels have been detected, and the compulsory introduction of property identification systems for livestock. Any animal detected with chemical residues will be able to be traced back to its property of origin.

Also included in this package is an amendment to the Cattle Compensation Act to permit moneys from the Cattle Compensation Fund to be used to meet part of the cost of the cattle identification system. Moneys in the Swine Compensation Fund can already be used for a pig identification system, and in the first year of operation of these programs it is proposed to use some \$102 000 from the two funds.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Amendments to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act are also of significance and are set out in Part 7.

The first change relates to the debarking of dogs. At present a dog can be debarked only for therapeutic or prophylactic reasons. Both involve health considerations, but neither covers a further ground for lifesaving treatments where the only alternative to treating a dog that barks incessantly is to put the dog down. The circumstances in which a dog can be debarked will be detailed in a code of practice. The code will contain appropriate safeguards to protect the welfare of dogs that are a public nuisance.

The second amendment concerns the use of dogs and cats from municipal pounds in scientific research. Honourable members may recall that an outright ban on the use of pound animals was included in the Act by the Opposition, but that an undertaking was given not to proclaim the provision until further consultation occurred. That consultation has now taken place. The use of such animals is to be permitted, but only in accordance with procedures detailed in a code of practice to ensure that stray pets are not used and that the welfare of unwanted animals is protected.

REMAINING AMENDMENTS

Most of the remaining amendments deal essentially with administrative matters. I shall deal briefly with these changes in the order in which they appear in the Bill.

Part 2 amends the Dairy Industry Act to make changes suggested by legal counsel to deal with problems encountered in bringing prosecutions under the Act. Where appropriate, they are modelled on existing provisions of the Food Act.

Part 3 amends the Barley Marketing Act which, together with complementary South Australian legislation, regulates the marketing of barley in the two States. The changes proposed naturally mirror changes also proposed by South Australia. They extend the Act a further five years, insert a definition of "hedging" in connection with futures trading and protect the Barley Marketing Board from claims arising from any right under a bill of sale or like instrument over barley delivered to the board.

Part 4 makes a series of unrelated amendments to the Dried Fruits Act. These streamline administration of the Act and, in the case of the change to provide for contributions to be paid into a special fund, clarify a point of constitutional law.

Part 8 amends the Animal Preparations Act, essentially for the purpose of clarification. For example, the powers of authorised officers are to be spelt out clearly in the body of the Act rather than in regulations. The amendment to the constitution of the board will enable an additional member to be selected from a panel of names submitted by the Victorian Farmers Federation.

Part 10 contains a machinery change to enable certain Commonwealth orders to be incorporated in regulations made under the Fruit and Vegetables Act.

Part 11 amends the Melbourne Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market Trust Act. Most of the changes are designed to streamline the administration of the Act or to complement changes to the Land Act to enable the trust to acquire and manage Crown land. The latter are required to permit the trust to manage land acquired by it which will not in the immediate future be used for market purposes and to finance the purchase of additional land. Provisions relating to the membership of the trust are also amended to increase the number of trust members by one and to spell out the skills and expertise required of certain members.

Finally, Part 12 amends the Canned Fruits Marketing Act. This Act is part of complementary Commonwealth and State statutory marketing arrangements which expire at the end of this year. The Commonwealth proposes to extend the arrangements for one further year, after which they will terminate, and has requested Victoria to do likewise. Accordingly, the Bill provides for a one-year extension of the marketing arrangements under the Canned Fruits Marketing Act.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr AUSTIN (Ripon), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES (EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY) BILL

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to require public authorities in Victoria to implement equal employment opportunity programs.

The State government employs approximately 15 per cent of the Victorian labour force, of which women comprise 45 per cent. However, women have not had a fair go in employment in the Victorian public sector. They are spread unevenly across the system. They are more likely to be found in hospitals and schools than in the transport, water resources or energy areas.

Women are more likely to be found in low status jobs, at lower classification levels, earning less money. They are generally found in a narrow range of occupations—in teaching, nursing, clerical, administrative and domestic jobs. There are relatively few women in senior management positions in the public sector.

Already the Victorian government has taken action in other areas. It has increased women's representation on government boards, supported by the establishment of a women's register in my department.

The Victorian Public Service Act was amended in 1984 to include eight principles of personnel management—a first for any government in Australia. In 1984 the government

also introduced an action plan for women in the Victorian Public Service and another for women teachers.

These initiatives have resulted in improvements in the status of women. This has been done in a way which reinforces the merit principle. The government now wishes to extend these actions to the public sector generally.

This proposed legislation will help improve the employment status of women in public authorities by giving women access to, and ensuring that they are equipped to undertake, a wider range of jobs in different occupational categories and at different levels.

In order to achieve this aim, the Bill will require authorities to:

- improve their personnel systems so that people are properly assessed for recruitment, promotion and training;

- provide information to employees on the content and effectiveness of equal employment opportunity programs;

- confer responsibility for the development and implementation of the equal employment opportunity program on a person with sufficient authority within the organisation—guidelines will be issued in respect to this provision;

- establish equal employment opportunity consultative committees, with an appropriate balance of management and union representation, the intention being that there will be approximately equal numbers of each;

- eliminate discriminatory employment policies and practices;

- review qualifications required for all positions to ensure that they relate directly to the job; and

- set up information systems to provide information on the effectiveness of programs.

Under this Bill equal employment opportunity programs will be introduced in all authorities employing more than 40 employees. In fact, more than 95 per cent of public sector employees will be covered.

Organisations such as the Gas and Fuel Corporation, Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, State Bank of Victoria, water boards, the Teaching Service, teaching and non-teaching staff in TAFE colleges, public hospitals and the Victoria Police Force will be covered.

Some authorities already have successful equal employment opportunity programs in place. The Bill will provide legislative support for their existing programs.

For other authorities which do not have equal employment opportunity programs, or which have only limited programs, the Bill will set the minimum standards they must meet in order to ensure equality of opportunity for their employees.

The Bill provides for equal employment opportunity programs for women. We may find that other groups, such as Aborigines, people from non-English speaking backgrounds or people with disabilities, require special attention. Accordingly, there is provision for the Governor in Council to order that the legislation be extended to apply to other designated groups.

The Bill will also require authorities to adopt the same principles of personnel management as are set out in the Public Service Act. These provide that all recruitment and promotion be carried out on the basis of merit; that all employees be treated fairly and equitably, without discrimination, arbitrary action or coercion; that equal pay be provided for work of equal value; that employees be provided with effective education and training and be used efficiently; and that employees maintain proper standards of integrity, conduct and concern for the public interest.

Authorities will report annually to Parliament or to their Ministers on the profile of their work force and the impact of their equal employment opportunity programs. There will also be an annual report to Parliament on the overall implementation of equal employment opportunity in public authorities.

In the unlikely event that an authority refuses to comply with its equal employment opportunity obligations, the proposed legislation will allow quotas to be applied to that authority for a limited period. However, quotas would be applied only as a last resort. It is not expected that they will be needed. Under this Bill, authorities will be required to do no more than is already required of other employment sectors.

The Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1983 provides for similar programs in Commonwealth statutory authorities. The Commonwealth Public Service Act ensures that Commonwealth government departments implement equal employment opportunity programs. The Commonwealth Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986 covers the private sector and certain tertiary institutions. My government has included principles of personnel management in the Public Service Act and has established equal employment opportunity programs in the Public Service. This Bill will extend equal employment opportunity programs to Victorian public sector authorities not covered by other legislation.

Honourable members will note that the Bill does not apply to local government. However, I am sure the House will be pleased to know that the Local Government Bill 1987 will be amended to provide for consistent equal employment opportunity principles across local government.

While the principles of this proposed legislation are not new, their application across the public sector in Victoria is a major step forward. The Bill is further evidence of my government's commitment to enhancing the status of women in Victoria and promoting equality of opportunity for all Victorians.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr AUSTIN (Ripon), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

LAND (AMENDMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS) BILL

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purposes of the Bill are, firstly, to amend the Land Act 1958 to enable the purchase of Crown land by public authorities and municipalities for public purposes, and, secondly, to revoke part of the permanent reservation and associated Crown grant of the former South Melbourne Girls Orphanage site and to repeal the South Melbourne (Roman Catholic Orphanage) Lands Act 1969.

PURCHASE OF CROWN LAND BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES

The current provisions of the Land Act permit direct purchase of Crown land by municipalities only for the purposes of housing or for decentralised industry. Municipalities are unable to directly purchase Crown land for public or community purposes and must compete at public auction or tender.

Similarly, most public authorities seeking to purchase Crown land for community purposes are forced to compete at public auction or tender. By contrast, the legislation establishing some public bodies, such as the Urban Land Authority, override the provisions of the Land Act 1958 enabling direct purchase of Crown land.

The Bill aims to retain surplus Crown land used for public purposes, in public ownership, and at the appropriate level of government. Sale at public auction or tender would enable private purchase of public land used for community purposes, a result which would be inconsistent with this aim.

The Bill provides for the substitution of a new section 99 of the Land Act 1958. The Bill adopts the same interpretation of the term "public authority" as that used in the Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987. This definition covers bodies corporate established for a public purpose and includes any municipal council or municipality, the State Superannuation Board, colleges, universities and other educational institutions established by legislation. It also includes any body corporate declared by the Governor in Council as a public authority.

Clause 99 (3) provides that, subject to Governor in Council approval, the Minister may sell land to a public authority. The standard administrative practices will apply in these cases. Direct sales will be in accordance with valuations and will be subject to review by the land monitoring process.

Crown land under a permanent or temporary reservation remains protected. The Bill, therefore, provides that the Minister cannot sell reserved land to a public authority.

The Bill provides that a public authority may purchase Crown land for purposes consistent with its authority. The Bill does not diminish the protection afforded by section 100 of the Land Act 1958 which protects the rights of lessees of Crown land. This means that any land sales undertaken under the new section will be subject to section 100 of the Act.

SOUTH MELBOURNE GIRLS ORPHANAGE SITE

The Bill also provides for the revocation of part of the permanent reservation, and associated Crown grant of the former South Melbourne Girls Orphanage site.

An area of 0.812 hectares in Napier Street, South Melbourne, was set apart in 1855 as a site for a Roman Catholic orphanage and in 1859, an additional 0.758 hectare area nearby in Napier Street was added as a girls' division. Both sites were included in a restricted Crown grant to the church authorities. When it was decided to replace the girls' division with a series of family group homes in 1969, the interest of the church authorities in the greater part of the site was acquired by the then Health Department. The enabling legislation provided for payment of appropriate compensation. The then Health Commission in turn vacated the premises in 1984.

A working group of interested agencies and the City of South Melbourne recommended that the entire girls' division site be used for a mixture of child-care facilities, Ministry of Housing independent and frail-aged housing, private sector housing and open space. The church authorities have consented to the proposal. To give effect to the scheme, the revocation of the permanent reservation of the balance of the girls' division site will be necessary.

The opportunity will also be taken to repeal the South Melbourne (Roman Catholic Orphanage) Land Act 1969, No. 7827, which is no longer relevant.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr AUSTIN (Ripon), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

ABATTOIR AND MEAT INSPECTION (ARRANGEMENTS) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill provides the legislative machinery to enable Victoria's meat inspection powers and services to be transferred to the Commonwealth. It represents the final stage of

implementing the policy that there be a single meat inspection service in Victoria to undertake all meat inspection for the domestic and export markets.

It is important to recognise that the transfer involves the meat inspection function only and that Victoria will remain responsible for the important functions of licensing and setting standards for domestic meatworks.

The government is satisfied that the transfer of meat inspection to the Commonwealth will not adversely affect the interests of domestic meatworks. Firm assurances have been received from the Commonwealth that the interests of smaller country based operations will be safeguarded. Indeed, the Bill spells out certain undertakings to be given by the Commonwealth in relation to domestic meat inspection before the transfer can take place.

The government has been anxious to ensure that meat inspection staff affected by the changeover are not disadvantaged by the move. Following negotiations between government officials and union representatives, a transfer package has been developed that deals equitably with the rights and entitlements of State officers involved in the transfer.

I turn now to discuss the main aspects of the Bill. The central measure contained in the Bill is the reference of meat inspection powers to the Commonwealth. This will occur on a transfer day that will be fixed by proclamation, but only after a satisfactory arrangement to give effect to the transfer has been entered into. There is also an ability to revoke that reference, should that need ever arise in the future.

Supporting the reference of powers is a provision that enables the Commonwealth and the State to enter into a formal arrangement for the undertaking of meat inspection within Victoria. The arrangement will set out the terms and conditions of employment of transferred staff as well as a range of other matters associated with the changeover. Some matters are of such importance to a smooth transition that the Bill expressly provides for them to be included in the arrangement.

The transfer of Victorian meat inspectors from the State to the Commonwealth Public Service is also critical to the transfer arrangements. For the changeover to be effective, it is necessary to ensure that there be an orderly and large-scale transfer of meat inspectors to the Commonwealth, particularly as there will be no meat inspector positions remaining in the State Public Service. Accordingly the Bill provides that any meat inspector who does not elect to transfer to the Commonwealth will be deemed to have resigned from the State Public Service. This provision will, of course, not prevent any meat inspector from voluntarily resigning or retiring from the service, nor from applying for another position in the service before the changeover becomes effective.

The Bill ensures that any person who transfers to the Commonwealth under the arrangements is entitled to retain his or her membership of the State Superannuation Scheme or the State Employees Retirement Benefits Scheme for so long as that person continues to be employed by the Commonwealth.

The Bill also makes some minor consequential amendments to the Cattle Compensation Act 1967, the Swine Compensation Act 1967 and the Stock Diseases Act 1968.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr AUSTIN (Ripon), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

LAND (TRANSACTION INFORMATION) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Minister for Property and Services)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to facilitate the development of an integrated, computerised land information system for the State of Victoria that will reduce the regulation, cost and time spent by the public in land transactions.

As honourable members may be aware, work has been under way for some time in the Department of Property and Services to establish an automated land information system. Known as LANDATA, this project aims to provide efficient and prompt access to information relating to any block of land in Victoria.

The Bill is concerned with the next stage of the implementation of the LANDATA system. This stage has two aspects. The first is to provide for the future introduction of a single lodgment point at the Land Titles Office for all notices relating to the acquisition or disposal of land.

Currently, persons disposing of land are required by the relevant legislation to give notice in writing to the relevant municipality, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, or any other relevant water board and sewerage district authority; and the Commissioner of Land Tax. In addition to these notifications, a transfer document has to be lodged at the Land Titles Office under the Transfer of Land Act. It is proposed to simplify the procedures so that a future single notification at the Land Titles Office would be sufficient.

Obviously, a future single lodgment point system will eliminate unnecessary regulations and avoid expensive duplications in notification requirements. Information on change of ownership lodged at the Land Titles Office will be provided, in bulk, to the necessary rating authorities and utilities without the present cost and inconvenience to buyer and seller.

It has been estimated by the Law Reform Commission that the general community will save approximately \$8 million per annum on costs once such a system is in place.

The second aspect of the Bill is to facilitate the implementation of the LANDATA inquiry service. Once fully operational, this service will be able to provide details quickly about specific properties, such as location and address, title particulars and ownership information.

At present there is no centralised land information service in Victoria. Persons requiring information about a property must consult many differing sources to assemble the information they require. More readily accessible information will be of considerable use to all those dealing in land, particularly estate agents, solicitors and valuers as well as the conveyancing public in general. LANDATA provides an important breakthrough in service to the public by making it possible for buyers and lenders to conduct a variety of land inquiries at a single point.

The information to be available through the inquiry service is derived from property identification data obtained from the existing public register at the Land Titles Office, sale data from the Valuer-General's Office and land address and ownership details from the State Taxation Office. The amendments to the Valuation of Land Act 1960 and the Land Tax Act 1958 will allow property details including ownership and sale price to be brought together from various sources.

The present system requires multiple attendances at the Land Titles Office and other agencies to access information which is already publicly available information, but which is both expensive and time consuming to obtain by these methods. The new system will simplify land conveyancing and planning processes by providing quick access to relevant land information from one point. It is intended that this information service will be available from the Titles Office in the city and regional centres.

A similar system has operated successfully in South Australia and the Northern Territory for several years, and other countries for many years. LANDATA will provide a long overdue reform of land-related services in this State. The measures proposed in this Bill to further its development deserve support to ensure its benefits are realised as quickly as possible.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

INTELLECTUALLY DISABLED PERSONS' SERVICES (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to amend the Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act 1986, the Guardianship and Administration Board Act 1986, and the Mental Health Act 1986 to enable effective implementation of those Acts. As honourable members would be aware, these three Acts were the result of major and comprehensive reforms in law relating to intellectual disability and mental illness.

The Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act is partly proclaimed and became fully operational on 1 October 1987, except for the financial provisions in sections 45 to 50, which are subject to amendments. The Guardianship and Administration Board Act came into operation on 14 July 1987, and the Mental Health Act is partly proclaimed and became fully operational on 1 October 1987. It is important that the proposed amendments, which I shall detail later, are brought about as quickly as possible so that the major legislative reforms are fully realised.

The Bill amends the Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act 1986 to overcome some anomalies and operational difficulties which have become apparent. The amendments to this Act are listed as follows:

(a) Section 44 (2) is amended to clarify the intention that provisions dealing with restraint and aversive therapy apply to eligible persons only while they attend the programs and services and not at all times or after hours as may be currently implied. It is not intended to intrude into homes or private situations.

(b) Section 44 (3) is amended to enable restraint to be used in emergency situations. The current wording allows the use of mechanical and chemical means of bodily restraint of an eligible person in certain circumstances and enables restraint to be used only when it has been approved as part of a person's individual program plan which in effect does not allow restraint to be used in emergency or unplanned situations.

(c) The financial provisions in sections 45 to 50 are amended; firstly, to provide for individual bank accounts to be maintained for residents in community residential units and for moneys not immediately required for the residents to be invested on their behalf; and secondly, the financial provisions are amended to enable effective management of residents' funds to maximise returns for the use and benefit of the residents in institutions. This will be done by using modern banking methods in operating one bank account and maintaining a financial management system which separately records and clearly identifies individual financial records for each eligible person in an institution, and an interest account, a residents' amenities account and any other account that may be established from time to time.

(d) Schedule 2 is amended to enable the President of the Intellectual Disability Review Panel to act as a member of any division of the review panel.

The Bill makes amendments to the Guardianship and Administration Board Act 1986 as follows:

(a) Because of the absence of power of delegation, the President of the Guardianship and Administration Board has found it necessary in the early weeks of operation of the new Act to be available at all hours to deal with applications for urgent temporary orders; for example, an interim guardianship of an incompetent person needing urgent medical

attention. Clearly this is not practical. The relevant provisions are amended so that the president's powers and responsibilities can be delegated.

(b) In section 44, the period within which the executive officer is obliged to give notice of a board hearing to affected people is varied to make it not less than 14 days rather than 21 days. The 21-day requirement is proving impractical; a 14-day minimum would be more practical and fair to all concerned.

(c) Section 58 creates a special fund into which is paid any amounts raised by way of a charge on estates administered under an order of the board. These fees are intended to assist in meeting part of the costs of administering the board and the office of the Public Advocate. There was an oversight in the drafting of section 58 which did not provide for moneys paid into the Guardianship and Administration Board fund to be appropriated to the board or the Public Advocate. This amendment seeks to rectify this omission.

(d) Section 66 of the Act is designed to deal with transfer to the Guardianship and Administration Board of funds presently administered by the Supreme Court and the County Court. The amendment extends the provision to cover Magistrates Court funds, a category which was overlooked.

The Bill makes the following housekeeping amendments to the Mental Health Act 1986:

(a) The Act provides that all patients must be personally served with a notice of a hearing of an appeal or review by the Mental Health Review Board. At present more than 1000 patients are absent on leave. It would be difficult and unreasonable to require personal service of notice in these cases. The amendment to the relevant provision will allow patients who are absent on leave or subject to a community treatment order to be served notice by mail.

(b) The transitional provisions are needlessly complex. The amendment will simplify the provisions to deem patients admitted under the old Act to have equivalent status as patients admitted under the new Act. There will be a further requirement that within three months or more of the commencement of the new Act all hospitals must reassess patients admitted under the old Act to determine their suitability or unsuitability for services under the proposed legislation.

(c) A further machinery amendment is made to change the functions of the department to the functions of the chief general manager to enable these functions to be delegated.

(d) For the avoidance of doubt, provisions have been included which permit security patients to be treated without consent in certain limited circumstances. These provisions mirror those which pertain to involuntary patients and are added to clarify the intent of the legislation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr COLEMAN (Syndal), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill provides for various changes to the National Parks Act 1975 and to the Wildlife Act 1975 in order to achieve five main purposes, as follows:

1. A Point Nepean National Park to be declared as an Australian bicentenary project, as a result of cooperation between the Federal and State governments.

2. Prohibition of live keeping and display of whales and other cetacea and to improve the law relating to their protection, along lines following the recommendations of the 1985 Senate Select Committee on Animal Welfare.

3. Major extensions to Little Desert National Park, and declaration of Carlisle State Park, Lerderderg State Park and Terrick Terrick State Park, in accordance with approved recommendations of the Land Conservation Council.

4. Other necessary but minor changes to the boundaries of three national and State parks and to the National Parks Act.

5. A method of temporary closure of particular waters or areas to hunting.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARK SYSTEM

The Bill continues the government's program of developing a Statewide system of national and State parks to ensure that representative samples of Victoria's major natural ecosystems are permanently protected. This process ensures that representative components of Victoria's natural landscape—the land types, vegetation, flora and fauna, and the soil and water support systems—are included in the park system. Representative ecosystems can, therefore, be protected to ensure that:

- competing land uses, such as forestry and agriculture, that would affect their evolutionary potential are minimised;
- plant and animal communities, including rare and endangered species, can be protected by protecting their habitats;
- areas of high wilderness quality are included;
- there is access for public use for recreation and inspiration, education and scientific inquiry; and
- sympathetic tourism is encouraged.

These principles are part of government policy outlined in the conservation strategy and the flora and fauna conservation guarantee program.

Development of the park system has resulted in substantial growth in the area set aside as parks. Some 1·3 million hectares or 6 per cent of Victoria were reserved under the National Parks Act as at 30 June 1987. This is an increase of 38 per cent in area since the Labor government came to office in 1982. The new parks and additions in this Bill total 117 000 hectares. This represents a relatively small area in which there are no timber resource conflicts.

To place these additions in context, I should like to foreshadow the extent of the park system still to come, on the basis of Land Conservation Council investigations and recommendations adopted by the government. This includes two new national parks in east Gippsland—Errinundra and Rodger River—and of course the Alpine National Park. There are also some eight State parks—Mount Granya, Bunyip, Enfield, Paddy Ranges, Lake Tyers, Mount Buangor, Dergholm and Lake Mountain—a number of smaller parks and various additions to existing parks yet to be legislated for.

These parks, when created, will give the State of Victoria one of the most accessible and diverse systems of parks in the world taking into account the relatively small size of Victoria and the wide range of environments found here. Equally important, it will be the first time anywhere in the world that such a representative system of parks has been established, and will be a system of which Victoria can be justifiably proud.

RESOURCING THE PARKS

The government will continue to provide resources to manage parks as they are proclaimed. The 1987–88 Budget figures show there is a 10·8 per cent increase in funding to the recreation and conservation resource-use program compared with 1986–87

expenditure. Staffing of parks will be increased by fourteen additional rangers and ten Aboriginal trainee rangers, to be appointed in 1987-88.

POINT NEPEAN NATIONAL PARK

The Bill provides for proclamation of a Point Nepean National Park of 2200 hectares, to be proclaimed during the national bicentenary year 1988. There are three main components of this new national park:

- 296 hectares of the Commonwealth area at Point Nepean to be acquired by the State;
- Cape Schanck coastal park of 1095 hectares; and
- 809 hectares being the Greens Bush-Highfield sector of Nepean State Park.

POINT NEPEAN COMPONENT

Agreement has been reached in principle for the State to acquire from the Commonwealth, land at Point Nepean for national park purposes. This land does not become a national park until the transfer is completed. It is expected that transfer arrangements will be completed by the end of this year.

Point Nepean is a very significant nature conservation area as a remnant of the original vegetation of the Mornington Peninsula, and as one of the few extensive areas of natural vegetation on the Port Phillip foreshore.

Point Nepean commemorates the name of Sir Evan Nepean who, as Secretary of the Admiralty, commissioned Flinders' ship, the *Investigator*, and was associated with sending Victoria's first colony to Sorrento in 1802. Point Nepean contains the ruins of defence fortifications originally constructed in 1882 for the protection of Port Phillip Bay and later enlarged over two world wars. A Fort Nepean gun fired the first Allied shots in both world wars. These sites are of national and, to some extent, international significance.

Development of the park is being funded by a \$2 million grant from the Commonwealth-State bicentennial program. A ranger is being funded by the department. A steering committee was formed to assist in planning of the park which involved Commonwealth and State agencies and the Shire of Flinders.

Planning in detail for visitor use of the park is now being carried out and a draft plan of management was prepared in March this year. Some 60 submissions were received and the plan is now being finalised. Public access and safety are of paramount concern. Interpretation of the historical and natural themes in the park will be integrated with the additional park areas and the adjacent quarantine station and associated museum.

CAPE SCHANCK COASTAL PARK COMPONENT

Cape Schanck Coastal Park abuts the Point Nepean area and includes all the ocean coast between London Bridge and Bushrangers Bay, and from Stockyard Creek to Flinders. It is renowned for the scenic rocky headlands and sandy beaches along Bass Strait. A coastal walk of 26 kilometres from London Bridge to Cape Schanck is one of the features.

NEPEAN STATE PARK COMPONENT

Nepean State Park consists of several separate bushland areas on the Mornington Peninsula that contain precious samples of the natural valley, escarpment, and ridge landscapes of the peninsula. Since 1974 the State government has purchased well over 1000 hectares of land for the park. The Greens Bush-Highfield sector is to become part of the new national park, while the remaining area will be renamed Arthurs Seat State Park.

The proposal to establish the national park involving these three components was widely canvassed in the draft management plan for Point Nepean and accepted. The combination of these three areas gives a park of sufficient size—2200 hectares—to meet criteria of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

WHALES AND DOLPHINS

In accord with the government's recent policy decision to give greater protection to whales and dolphins, the Bill will contain provisions to totally prohibit the live display of whales and dolphins anywhere in Victoria and to outlaw their capture in Victorian waters.

These changes reflect the concerns expressed in the 1985 Senate Select Committee Report on Whales and Dolphins in Captivity and the government's own view that available scientific evidence and opinion does not satisfy all of the doubts raised concerning the well-being in captivity of these highly specialised mammals.

Specifically, the Senate Select Committee recommended:

That no further facilities for keeping captive cetacea be permitted to be established in Australia and that no further permits be issued for the capture of cetacea in Australian Commonwealth or State waters.

The Victorian government has adopted this recommendation, but is retaining those parts of the Wildlife Act 1975 which allow and control the rescue, rehabilitation, and benign study of stranded whales and dolphins, as well as research on dead specimens obtained as a result of natural mortality.

The government has considered the Senate Committee's recommendations and is legislating to abide by them.

EXTENSIONS TO LITTLE DESERT NATIONAL PARK

The Little Desert National Park of 35 300 hectares was established in 1968 and currently includes the eastern section of the Little Desert from Kiata to Dimboola. The expanded Little Desert National Park will be one of the State's great national parks. Covering 130 800 hectares, it will be Victoria's second largest park, after the Grampians.

Stretching from the South Australian border to the Wimmera River, the park comprises the three large blocks that incorporate most of the remaining native vegetation of the Little Desert.

Little Desert National Park contains diverse and significant flora and fauna. One-fifth of the State's native flora is found there in vegetation communities that range from the low heath in the drier eastern block to tall yellow gum woodlands in the wetter western section. A wide variety of fauna, particularly birds and reptiles, is found in the park, including the famous Mallee fowl.

Visitors can enjoy the park in a variety of ways, including camping, picnicking, walking, nature study, horseriding and four-wheel drive touring. Several groups already use the area for educational purposes. One of the park's highlights that attracts visitors is the brilliant spring wildflower display which turns parts of this somewhat subtle landscape into a blaze of colour.

The government's introduction of legislation to expand the Little Desert National Park is an historic occasion for conservation in Victoria. The legislation flows from the government's acceptance of the recommendations of the Land Conservation Council for the Wimmera area.

The occasion is historic because the recommendations for the Wimmera area mark the completion of the council's first examination of public land use in the State, and because it was the controversy in the late 1960s over proposed subdivision and clearing for agriculture in the Little Desert that led to the creation of the current Little Desert National Park and establishment of the Land Conservation Council in February 1971 under the Land Conservation Act 1970. The Land Conservation Council process has significantly raised the standard of land use decision making in Victoria. It is a process that has been marked by its systematic attention to all pieces of public land, extensive public participation, and the high degree of acceptance of the council's recommendations by successive governments.

The acceptance of these recommendations by successive governments has led to a conservation reserve system being established that is the envy of many other States. The enlarged Little Desert National Park will further enhance the system's value and reputation.

TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF WATERS

In recent years, as a part of an ongoing program to improve the management of waterfowl hunting in Victoria, the government has closed certain waters to hunting. This measure has proved very successful in protecting colonies of breeding birds and certain non-game species. The current procedural requirements prevent the closure and opening of waters at short notice. This short notice is required for the following reasons.

Firstly, the occurrence in Victoria of large flocks of the uncommon freckled duck is often unpredictable. This species is also fairly mobile on Victorian wetlands in late summer and, therefore, may occur in large flocks on wetlands open to hunting a few days prior to the start of the season. Also, because of identification problems, large flocks of this species may remain undetected until just before, or after, the season starts.

Secondly, the discovery of colonies of breeding waterbirds just prior to the start of the season will necessitate rapid closure of wetlands. Though the location of many of these breeding colonies is known it is often difficult to estimate when the young birds will reach the flying stage. Therefore, the decision to close waters holding such colonies may have to be made at short notice.

Thirdly, large concentrations of other protected species, some of them uncommon, may be vulnerable to hunting activity when they congregate on popular hunting waters that historically hold a high density of hunters over the opening weekend. The occurrence of large numbers of protected birds on wetlands is, again, unpredictable because of the mobility of these species once the main breeding season has finished.

The decision to close waters to hunting is not taken lightly and waters considered for closure must satisfy strict criteria which have been developed in conjunction with hunting organisations and other conservation groups. The mechanism proposed in the Bill to facilitate closure of waters would obviously also enable waters to be promptly reopened again, once the reason for closure had passed.

TERRICK TERRICK STATE PARK

Terrick Terrick State Park is located on the granitic Terrick Terrick Range, a major landmark and scenic feature on the flat northern plains near Mitiamo between Bendigo and Kerang.

The park is a valuable remnant of the northern plains flora, which elsewhere in the region has substantially been cleared for agriculture. It is the largest and most significant area of white cypress pine forest and woodland formation remaining in Victoria.

Its reservation makes a major contribution to the establishment of a representative system of parks in Victoria and will add to the opportunities for visitors to enjoy parks in the Bendigo region.

Visitors to the park currently enjoy activities such as viewing the scenic vistas from Mount Terrick and Reigels Rock, picnicking and nature study.

LERDERDERG STATE PARK

Lerderderg State Park is a significant park located just to the west of Melbourne. It includes a major portion of the Lerderderg River watershed between the historic goldmining township of Blackwood and Bacchus Marsh, as well as the spectacular 300 metre deep Lerderderg Gorge.

The park is of considerable importance for nature conservation because it is an isolated tract of almost undisturbed bushland. It supports forests of messmate, red stringybark and

red ironbark as well as several rare plant species. Raptors such as the peregrine falcon and species of kites, eagles, hawks and kestrels occupy the gorge habitats.

Popular forms of recreation include day walks along the river and overnight camping walks through the gorge, recommended for the experienced only. Picnicking and fishing are favourite pastimes where park roads meet the river, such as at O'Briens Crossing. The park, in conjunction with the roads and townships of the region, is already popular as a day trip and overnight "get away" from Melbourne.

The attractiveness of the region is found in its combination of the natural and semi-remote experiences offered by the park, the sense of history conveyed by the townships of Blackwood and Simmonds Reef, and the spectacular land forms and panoramic views, which can be observed from roads and lookouts around the park.

CARLISLE STATE PARK

The park is on the north-western side of the Otway Ranges nestled between the Gellibrand and Carlisle rivers.

It includes an unusual range of vegetation communities from extensive wet heathlands and woodlands of shining peppermint and brown stringybark to small pockets of tall mountain grey gum and messmate forest.

The heathlands are part of a mosaic of heaths found in the Otways which are important habitat for the ground parrot—a vulnerable species in Victoria. The parrot requires specific heathland plants which are regenerated by fire.

Survival of the ground parrot is, therefore, dependent on maintenance of a suitable fire regime and the department is implementing an "ecological" burning program.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

CRIMES (CUSTODY AND INVESTIGATION) BILL

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for the Arts)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

INTRODUCTION

The Bill will significantly reform the law governing the custody and interrogation of suspects. The reforms introduced by the Bill include:

liberalisation of the time limits on consensual questioning of and other investigative procedures involving persons in custody on suspicion of having committed an offence;

providing suspects with statutory rights:

to communicate with friends or relatives, legal advisers and, where relevant, interpreters and consular officials;

in the case of children, to have a parent or independent person present; and

to be notified of their rights, including the right to silence;

in cases in which a person is suspected of having committed an indictable offence, the mandatory tape-recording of:

the notification to the person of his or her rights and the person's response; and

the questioning of the person.

The Bill implements the recommendations of the Consultative Committee on Police Powers of Investigation in its report on custody and investigation.

BACKGROUND

Traditionally, the law required that a person arrested or taken into custody be either released, or if charged, granted bail or brought before a justice as soon as practicable. There was no power for the police to detain a person for questioning or to delay taking a person before a justice for this purpose. Following a series of court decisions in 1983, in which alleged confessions by suspects who had been detained illegally were excluded from evidence, the government established the consultative committee, under the chairmanship of the then Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr John Phillips QC, now Mr Justice Phillips, to examine the associated issues. In 1984, the committee recommended that the common law rule be relaxed to allow police to delay taking a suspect before a justice for up to 6 hours to allow consensual questioning. The consensual questioning could be continued for a further period of up to 6 hours if the suspect consented and a magistrate or clerk of courts so ordered. The government accepted this recommendation and accordingly amended the relevant provision, section 460 of the Crimes Act 1958.

In 1985, the government asked the present Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr John Coldrey QC, to reconvene the consultative committee to examine the effectiveness of the amendments which followed its original report. The Coldrey committee included six members of the Phillips committee and four new members. Like its predecessor, the Coldrey committee included senior police officers, a crown prosecutor and representatives of the Victorian Bar, the Law Institute of Victoria, the Legal Aid Commission, the Attorney-General's Department and the Office of Corrections. The committee operated on a voluntary basis. I wish to express the government's gratitude to Mr Coldrey and the members of his committee for their important and valuable work.

THE COLDREY COMMITTEE REPORT

The Coldrey committee delivered its report last year. In the light of experience in the operation of section 460, it found the fixed 6-hour limit on consensual questioning to be too inflexible. Instead it recommended a package of changes to the law which were designed to strike a balance between the need to protect individuals from unlawful and unfair treatment on the one hand, and the need for effective law enforcement on the other. The proposed package envisaged:

- replacing the fixed time limit on consensual questioning and investigation with a more flexible limit based on "reasonable time";

- giving statutory basis to the rights of suspects to communicate with friends, relatives and legal advisers, and, where appropriate, to have the assistance of an interpreter and a consular official; and

- mandatory tape-recording of interviews for indictable offences.

After extensive public consultation on the recommendations, the government has decided to implement them through this Bill. The Bill combines a liberalisation of the rules governing interrogation with several crucial safeguards. The Bill contains a clear statutory statement of rights of suspects which were previously recognised only through decisions of the courts and through police standing orders. To reinforce these rights, the Bill also requires that suspects be notified of their rights and, in indictable cases, that this notification be tape-recorded. These matters are too important to be left without a statutory footing. Finally, and most importantly, the Bill requires questioning of suspects for indictable offences to be tape-recorded.

TAPE-RECORDING

I wish to highlight particularly the provisions of the Bill dealing with tape-recording. Tape-recording of interviews with suspects was first proposed in Victoria in a 1965 report by the then Solicitor-General, now His Honour Mr Justice Murray. Since then it has been

called for by a series of reports in Australia, including those of the South Australian Criminal Law and Penal Methods Reform Committee (1974), the Australian Law Reform Commission (1975 and 1987), the Beach inquiry (1976) the Lucas inquiry in Queensland (1977) and the Shorter Trials Committee (1985). Similar proposals have been made in other common-law countries such as Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America. Victoria will be the first Australian jurisdiction to implement these many calls for reform in this area.

It was the firm view of the Shorter Trials Committee and the Coldrey committee that universal tape-recording of interviews with suspects by law enforcement officials would have substantial benefits, financial and otherwise, for the administration of justice. It should be borne in mind that in many criminal trials a great deal of time is taken in determining the admissibility of an alleged admission by the accused; often it is the only real issue in the trial. Tape-recording will eliminate many of these disputes. As a result, trials will be shortened and more guilty defendants can be expected to plead guilty, leading to a great saving of public money. In this regard, honourable members may recall the estimates of the Shorter Trials Committee in 1985 that a trial in the Supreme Court costs the taxpayer an average of \$7200 a day and a County Court trial, \$5500 a day.

In addition, there is strong evidence that tape-recorded interviews take far less time to conduct than those recorded by the traditional method of two-finger typing. The widespread use of tape-recording will therefore free-up many hours of police time, both through shortening interviews and by avoiding long hours in courts.

The Bill will, therefore, further advance the government's program of making better use of resources in the criminal justice system.

However, the benefits of tape-recording interviews are not merely financial. Both the Coldrey committee and the Shorter Trials Committee stressed the likely improvements in the quality of justice. An accurate, undeniable record of what transpired between law enforcement officials and the accused person protects all concerned against false allegations, indicates better the circumstances of the questioning and gives magistrates, judges and juries a sounder basis for decision making.

Since receiving the Coldrey committee report on section 460, the government has established and funded a pilot study of the tape-recording of police interviews for indictable offences. The study is presently under way at several metropolitan and country police stations. Early indications are that it has been very successful and will provide a good guide in determining the appropriate quantity and type of equipment to be used, precise training and personnel requirements and detailed technical and procedural needs when universal tape-recording is introduced Statewide.

CONCLUSION

The Bill is a major landmark in the reform of the law relating to the interrogation of suspects and the investigation of offences. It strikes a careful balance in a difficult and complex area and shows the combination of justice and efficiency which is the hallmark of a Labor government.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr JOHN (Bendigo East), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27.

ADJOURNMENT

Organised crime—Visiting teacher service—Integration aides—Rail services—Ancillary staff at Westall schools—Malvern Criminal Investigation Branch

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—I direct a matter to the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. I was pleased to note that the Minister and other senior people are actively engaged in the fight against organised crime, as shown on a recent television program. I was most impressed by the Minister's calm, uncomplacent attitude to the enormous problems that he faces. I am particularly pleased at the appointment of Mr Kelvin Glare as the new Chief Commissioner of Police. I mean no disrespect to his predecessor, who is a great man, but he belonged to the wrong era. No matter whether one is a member of Parliament or whatever, one is sometimes tarnished by the times in which one is brought up.

Emanating from Queensland is evidence from the former Queensland Chief Commissioner of Police, Mr Whitrod, that will not only blow the roof off corruption in the Queensland Police Force but will also point the bone at police forces of other States—and, regrettably, that may include Victoria.

I am concerned at the tardiness of any publicity about the investigations of the National Crime Authority. Many of the authority's activities seem to be conducted in secret. That is all very well for the preservation of the rights of individuals, but the manifestations of criminal organisations in this country require other action. Nothing is to be gained by putting the lid on crime.

I hope that, when the new Chief Commissioner of Police settles in, he will be able to confer with his colleagues in other States, and particularly with the National Crime Authority and the Federal Police, to determine whether a collective document can be produced that can be tabled in each of the Parliaments to alert Australians to the enormity of crime in this country.

In 1978, the *Sunday Observer* published an article containing the following:

A report on organised crime in Victoria has been branded "too hot to handle" by State politicians.

I know my own party was then in power—

The report is believed to link several prominent people, including government officials, with organised crime.

The article deals with all sorts of activities, such as massage parlours, prostitution, corruption, drugs, race rigging and so on. The article also states:

A group of prominent businessmen are named as the backers of Melbourne's major massage parlours.

I am far from happy about the fact that people whom I regard as disreputable are still able to remain in the massage parlour trade; it seems some of them are obtaining permits, and yet other people whom I regard as more reputable are not able to do so.

According to the article, the report states that this tax-free money is being laundered overseas with the help of bank officials on the payroll of the crime tsars. What upsets me is that the article stated that this report was unlikely ever to be made public because many government members were said to be scared of possible political repercussions.

The article appeared in the *Sunday Observer* of 12 November 1978.

The SPEAKER—Order! I remind the honourable member that he has not yet indicated what action he wants the Minister to take.

Mr WILLIAMS—I have asked that, as soon as the new Chief Commissioner of Police settles in, the Minister says to him, "Mr Glare, you know where all these hidden documents are. What about the document about race rigging and the document prepared within the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence naming about 100 people in Victoria, including businessmen and others? What about it Mr Glare? It is a new ball game. You are honest; you are 100 per cent clean. Let us start afresh and let us tell the people of Australia what is really going on, as is occurring in Queensland, because Victoria has a first-class commissioner in charge of the investigation".

It is no good the Minister looking at me quizzically. It is a new ball game. Let us start afresh, and whether the people concerned are Liberal, Labor or whatever, let us not spare them.

Dr COGHILL (Werribee)—I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Education concerning the operations of the visiting teacher service in the Western Region.

The visiting teacher service has expanded considerably in recent years as more and more children have been integrated into the normal education system. In past times, children who had some handicap, whether physical or mental, would have been consigned to a special institution.

I cite a particular example of a young girl who attends a school in Werribee South. The girl is about seven years of age and contracted a disease in her eyes which led to her having both eyes removed approximately eighteen months ago. Obviously, she is now totally blind. The young girl has had the benefit of intensive supplementary tuition from the visiting teacher service in the Western Region and, despite her severe physical handicap, she was able to keep up with the class in her academic progress, so much so that she has been among the top of her class. That is a remarkable tribute not only to the girl but also to the parental support she has enjoyed and to the visiting teachers who have worked with the teachers at St Mary's Primary School.

The girl is one example of many within my electorate and elsewhere living in the Western Region who have benefited greatly from the services provided by the teachers of the visiting teacher service in that region.

The difficulty is this: due to some deficiencies in the administration of the travelling allowance paid to the teachers when they use their own cars to visit the children, the travelling allowance for 1986–87 was overcommitted. As a consequence, the teachers were reimbursed from the 1987–88 allowance allocated in the Budget. That has meant that less funds have been available for the teachers to use their own cars to service students during this financial year.

I ask the Minister to indicate any action he is able to take to ensure that the children will continue to receive the much needed services provided by the visiting teacher service in assisting normal classroom teachers in the academic and general educational performance and achievement of these handicapped children.

Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston South)—I direct a matter to the attention of the Minister for Education. I remind him of correspondence between the Ministry of Education and me referring to integration aides. I refer to a meeting held in March this year between the local members of Parliament from the area and the parents of children with disabilities who expect integration aides to be provided at primary schools in the Western Port Region.

A regional officer attended the meeting and promised to make available to me a report regarding integration. I agreed to inform all local members who attended the meeting about the contents of the report.

The report was not written until July this year, and on 25 August, I wrote to the Minister stating:

I raise with you the understanding you gave to the Parliament on the issue of the number of integration aides to be provided to the Western Port Region for the school year, 1987. Your answer to my adjournment led me to believe that adequate aides would be provided to service the need of the region.

From the enclosed report of the Western Port Regional Board of Education there is a shortfall of some 26 aides. I have only received the enclosed report in July, but have requested the information from the region since March 1987.

I request that the shortfall of integration aides be addressed in line with your undertaking to the House that sufficient aides would be provided for this region.

At a public meeting held earlier this year it was requested that a meeting be held between yourself and all local members of Parliament, should the required number of aides not be provided. I would be grateful if such a meeting could be arranged in the near future to discuss the issue further.

I received an undated reply from the office of the Minister for Education—maybe he was too embarrassed to date it because I had written in August. The letter states:

I am pleased to be able to reply that the increase in provision of integration resources for Western Port Region in 1987 was substantial. In particular, there were 40.8 effective full-time aides provided to 131 students in 1986. The Government increased this provision to a total of 63.4 effective full-time aides in 1987. This represents a most significant increase in support provided . . .

Furthermore, in the 1987–1988 State Budget, a commitment was made to provide additional aides for the 1988 school year. Additional integration teachers will also be provided. It is expected that 60 additional integration aides and 70 additional integration teachers will be provided for Victorian schools from the beginning of the 1988 school year.

The Premier has said, as was revealed today in the grievance debate, that 90 integration aides are to be trained, but natural attrition will reduce that number to about 60. The Minister for Education may not be aware that the courses have not yet started, and will not start. All Victorian areas, including my area, will be denied the additional 90 or 60 aides. This letter is misleading in its intent; it has misled me.

I have to return to those people; the Minister has refused to meet with them or with local members of Parliament. We have been misled. Government members, the honourable member for Mornington and I have been misled. The letter was misleading in its intent and the Minister for Education is unaware of what is occurring with the Youth Guarantee Scheme.

I ask the Minister to place those 90 people into TAFE colleges, to train them for next year, as the Premier said would happen. He has misled Parliament and now the Minister for Education is doing the same. Perhaps he should apologise if he does not know what is happening.

The Opposition understands that the negotiations with the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union of Australia were fragile. We did not raise the issue; the Premier raised it in a statement to the House and he tried to make political capital out of it.

I ask the Minister to come clean and to give the true information on this matter.

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—At 5.30 p.m. today, only 14 minutes ago, Victorians heard that trains are not running on several lines, in particular those servicing the western suburbs. The transport system in Victoria under the Cain Labor government is in crisis.

The SPEAKER—Is the honourable member addressing the matter to the attention of the Minister for Transport?

Mr BROWN—Yes, I am seeking his urgent intervention to take on the unions once and for all, to find out who is running this State—the unions, or the elected government. The Metropolitan Transit Authority and the State Transport Authority services have been removed, supposedly because of a dispute over a signalman at the Kensington signal box.

The Director-General of Transport should be brought before Parliament because he is now supposedly running the transport system, according to the Premier's admission this morning. Government members have chosen the man best able to communicate the policies of the government; he should be brought before Parliament to account for the mismanagement under his administration.

He has said that the resolution of the issue depends on how things are moving today. The trains are not moving, they are not running and the tens of thousands of commuters who are at present standing on the railway stations in Melbourne will not get home for hours.

The Australian Railways Union is ensuring that the government is acting in a subservient manner. Mr Joe Sibberas, who runs that union in Victoria, is the chairman of the government's transport policy committee; he decides the transport policies of the Cain government.

What thuggery! The mates of the government have closed down the railway system because they have not been paid off adequately. The union has put the government on notice. It is all-out war. The troops are in the trenches and the battles will continue on a daily basis. After being brought in to work, commuters will not know whether they will have trains to take them home at night.

The union has given the government notice that there will be no retrenchments, despite the Minister for Transport having stated publicly that 1700 staff are surplus in the railways. The government knows it has a staff surplus but is not prepared to sack people because its friends and fellow travellers in this corrupt government are insisting that the 1700 staff be retained.

The actions of the government are costing Victorian taxpayers \$1000 million a year, or \$2 million a day, on the Victorian transport system.

On behalf of the Opposition, in consultation with my Leader, I offer my support in closing down the railway system for a month to settle this dispute. The union should not be allowed to force its will unreasonably and unfairly at whim on the government and the taxpayer. It is better to have a total shutdown than to allow this mongrel union to selectively stop trains from running, without warnings of any kind, and leaving people stranded on railway stations in metropolitan Melbourne.

The government should close down the system, have it out with the union and win the battle for the taxpayers. Victorians who use the service are entitled to that action, as are the 85 per cent of Victorians who never use the system but are forced to subsidise it to the tune of \$1000 million a year. There is no financial incentive to keep the system open. The financial advantage is that, in having it out with the union, the government will save \$2 million every day. Ultimately it will save the community hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Minister has admitted that the railway system has 1700 more staff than it requires. The government should not continue to allow the union to dictate terms and run the State. The government should be run out of office. It is scandalous that the government has the hide to allow this to occur. Members of the government may cringe, but they must go.

Mr COLEMAN (Syndal)—I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Education concerning ancillary staff at the Westall high and primary schools. The schools are located in an area with a high percentage of non-English speaking students. I have been advised that 88 per cent of primary school students and 90 per cent of high school students are defined as ethnic. The schools have a significant number of students who are in need of additional assistance.

The ethnic population of the schools is significantly influenced by the presence of a migrant hostel which operated in the area until eighteen months ago. With the family reunion scheme operating, families who settled in the area in the past are still contributing to the high level of pupils of ethnic backgrounds attending these schools.

Some 40 language groups are represented at the high school. That school has a pupil welfare coordinator, a social worker, an integration teacher, a careers teacher and a community development officer. The school is making a significant input to ensure that students adapt to the community in which they live and that they benefit from the education system.

Funding for the pupil welfare coordinator and the social worker has been reduced. The school is unable to continue to deliver the appropriate service to those students. This is a matter of concern to both the school council and the local community.

A number of students find it necessary to use the language centre at Noble Park and that means the school programs are disrupted. Some students have discontinued their schooling altogether. The Minister should investigate this matter to ensure that ancillary staff are provided and to ensure that the ethnic students are assimilated into the community.

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—I raise for the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services a matter concerning the Malvern Criminal Investigation Branch, about which I wrote to him a week and a half ago. A raid was conducted on the Malvern CIB by the property section of the police Management Services Division without the Malvern CIB being informed. Two fifteen-year-old typewriters were taken from that station to another police station in Dandenong.

The reason behind the raid was that the Dandenong police station was unable to purchase new typewriters so, according to the logic of the department, as the Malvern CIB had half its normal quota of staff, it needed only half the number of typewriters. Therefore, the two fifteen-year-old typewriters were taken in the raid. It would have cost more to have those typewriters removed and transferred to the Dandenong police station than to purchase two second-hand typewriters from a second-hand dealer.

The Police Force is incompetent under the direction of the present Minister for Police and Emergency Services and this was evidenced by the need to pinch the typewriters from the Malvern police station. A number of constituents who were present at the police station when the raid took place have since approached me and related the amazement they felt at the time.

The Minister was prepared to present \$1000 to a crank poet about whom no-one cared and to spend money on some of his lunatic Labor mates, yet he is not interested in providing funds to purchase equipment for the Police Force. It is a disgrace.

Dare I say the performance of the present Minister for Police and Emergency Services is probably the worst of any in my memory—I cannot remember as far back as some honourable members but I still believe his performance is among the worst. My constituents are entitled to have the typewriters returned to the Malvern branch. In fact, the Dandenong police station can keep the two fifteen-year-old typewriters and new ones can be presented to the Malvern CIB.

The Malvern CIB is undermanned and this is indicative of the general manning problem faced by the Police Force. Malvern has one car to patrol the area at night, which causes problems, and policemen who are listed as being present at the Malvern CIB are not available. Four years ago one officer at Hawthorn was charged with an offence and is still awaiting his trial, yet he is listed as an active policeman in that district. This is how the Minister gets his numbers! Another policeman is working with the National Crime Authority, which is probably investigating some of the activities of the Labor Party, and another is involved in an overseas project.

The community of Malvern is entitled to its full complement of police and typewriters. Can the Minister explain why neither Malvern nor Oakleigh is properly manned or equipped? I suggest it is because the Minister is not prepared to deliver the goods.

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The honourable member for Doncaster suggested that the new Chief Commissioner of Police should take an early opportunity of having tabled in Parliament a report on the incidence of organised crime in the community. I think it may well be felt by the new chief commissioner that the community has already had a plethora of reports on this subject of which, I suppose, the Costigan commission is only the best known of many.

The honourable member quoted, by way of example, what sort of report he would regard as appropriate. I understood, from his remarks, that it was the so-called Aldred-Saltmarsh report of 1978.

Mr Williams—No, it was a Bureau of Criminal Intelligence report.

Mr MATHEWS—If I am incorrect, I am happy to stand corrected by the honourable member about the nature of the report to which he referred. In any case, the matter is one for the new chief commissioner himself to decide.

The honourable member for Malvern used some extremely strong language in reference to the Management Services Division of the Police Force. He accused the division of having staged a raid on the Malvern police station and, indeed, of having stolen typewriters from the station. The suggestion that he makes that those actions on the part of the division were unauthorised is extremely serious. I shall see that that matter is followed up with the police.

However, the honourable member went on to make some remarks to suggest that, under the current government, the Police Force has been under-resourced for the purpose of acquiring typewriters and other equipment. I consider that in those circumstances it is reasonable to direct the attention of the House to the actual figures that prevail.

These are figures taken from the Budget Papers of the State under both the present government and the former conservative government. In 1977–78 the police works and services program was allocated \$9.7 million; in 1978–79, \$10.3 million; in 1979–80, \$9.3 million; 1980–81, \$10.8 million; and in 1981–82—a reduction to \$10.6 million. In the last five years of Liberal government in this State the police received, for works and services purposes, a maximum of \$10.8 million in any one year.

Compare and contrast that with the record of the Cain government for works and services which is as follows: 1982–83, \$14.4 million; 1983–84, \$21.2 million; 1984–85, \$30.3 million; 1985–86, \$38.7 million and, 1986–87, \$47.8 million.

In other words, the funds made available to the police for works and services in the last financial year were five times greater than in the final year of the former Liberal government. That demonstrates conclusively the fallacy of the argument that the honourable member for Malvern sought to put to the House. Honourable members are accustomed to fallacies from the honourable member for Malvern. What is more serious is the charges he raised tonight against the police themselves.

I take seriously accusations of conducting raids and stealing property being levelled against the police and I shall at the earliest opportunity raise with the police the matters about which the honourable member has again been misleading the House.

I believe the actions described by the honourable member for Malvern were perfectly proper administrative actions taken with authority by the police concerned pursuant to the appropriate application of resources within the force. The honourable member is totally unjustified in these slurs he has cast on the Police Force and I shall ensure that the matter is forcefully followed up.

The honourable member for Gippsland West raised some concerns about train services to the western suburbs tonight. I understand that the Minister for Transport is currently following up that matter.

I found extraordinary the suggestion made by the honourable member that the secretary of the Australian Railways Union was running the government when, in fact, that union this evening is not providing a service to the lines to which the honourable member referred. That is an extraordinary inconsistency, to say the least. The whole nub of the matter is the government's determination to stand up to the union on the very matters to which the honourable member referred.

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—The honourable member for Werribee raised a problem being faced by the visiting teacher service in the Western Region. I agree with him that this is a wonderful service. It provides teaching help and guidance to handicapped children in the provision of their education.

Although its budget remained at the same level as last year—indeed, all budgets for these services remained at the same level—for reasons best known to itself, the Western

Region of the service committed to last year the funds for the first three months of this year, with the result that it now has budgetary problems and is under direction to meet the budget by the end of the year.

The Ministry recognises that, despite the mistakes of that service, the children concerned should not suffer. The provision of a number of red-plate cars from the centre and elsewhere have been provided to the region; certainly three red-plate cars have been made available.

The honourable member for Rodney, who is interjecting, complains that I have been placing stress on management and he seems to think there is some conflict between management and education. I assure the honourable member that no conflict exists. However, at a time of declining resources and economic restraint, the government must demonstrate that it has the capacity to obtain value for every dollar of its large expenditure.

The honourable member for Frankston South raised the issue of integration aides. The government is proud of its record in the provision of integration aides and the success it has had with integrating some 3000 disabled children into mainstream schooling.

The government adopted the Collins report. So far as I am aware, the Collins report has been fully implemented in only two or three years. Approximately 600 integration aides and 170 integration teachers currently work within Victorian schools.

The honourable member for Frankston South referred specifically to a commitment that I made for the provision of 90 additional integration aides through the youth guarantee work study traineeship program. Nobody regrets more than I that, over a long period, negotiations have broken down with the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union of Australia about the placement of those people. Those negotiations are continuing.

It is the responsibility of the Department of Labour to undertake those negotiations and I shall have further discussions with my colleague, the Minister for Labour, on how to resolve those issues.

The information given to the honourable member for Frankston South was correct. The government has made a commitment to the provision of Youth Guarantee Scheme funds and to the integration aide program and will continue to meet that commitment.

The honourable member for Syndal raised the issue of ancillary staff employed at Westall primary and high schools, where there are, apparently, a high proportion of people in the migrant community who require special assistance. The government provides a range of special programs, including programs designed specifically for disadvantaged schools which takes into account the number of people from a migrant background in a particular school.

The honourable member said that the funding for a pupil welfare coordinator and a social worker had been reduced. I am not aware of the circumstances of this case, but I shall make inquiries. It sounds to me as though enrolments had been declining in those schools. If that is so there is, of course, a redeployment of resources across the Ministry of Education to ensure that ancillary staff are placed in priority areas and areas of greatest need.

I do not know the circumstances of this case, but I shall make sure that I find them out and report back to the honourable member.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 6.6 p.m. until Tuesday, October 13.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The following answers to questions on notice were circulated—

JOINT VENTURES OF DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

(Question No. 17)

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton) asked the Minister for Water Resources:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the period 4 April 1982 to 1 May 1987:

1. What is the name of each joint venture or business entity created in which the State of Victoria had equity, indicating—(i) the nature of each business; (ii) the proportion of equity held by each State instrumentality; (iii) the amount of consideration given for the equity held by the State instrumentality; and (iv) the proportion of equity held by any other organisation?

2. What is the name of each joint venture or business entity created in which the State of Victoria acquired equity, indicating—(i) the nature of each business; (ii) the proportion of equity held by each State instrumentality; (iii) the amount of consideration given for the equity held by the State instrumentality; and (iv) the proportion of equity held by any other organisation?

Mr McCUTCHEON (Minister for Water Resources)—The answer is:

In so far as the question relates to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works,

1. Nil.
2. Nil.

In so far as the question relates to the Rural Water Commission,

1. Nil.
2. Nil.

In so far as the question relates to the Department of Water Resources,

1. Nil.
2. Nil.

WORKCARE

(Question No. 102)

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton) asked the Minister for Education:

In respect of each month since June 1986, how many teachers made claims under the WorkCare scheme—(i) on the grounds of stress-related incapacity; and (ii) on other grounds, indicating the number of teachers who subsequently sought early retirement?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for Education)—The answer is:

This information is not presently available from within the Ministry's own resources, nor does the State Insurance Office have access to these details. After consultation, the Accident Compensation Commission (ACC) was able to provide the following figures for standard claims for each month since June 1986:

	<i>Mental Disorders</i>	<i>Other</i>	
July	41	137	
August	43	154	
September	48	80	
October	73	140	
November	59	114	
December	56	115	
January	5	5	
February	26	38	
	351	783	1134

Note that:

(i) Statistics are not kept for claims under stress-related incapacity. The ACC terminology is "mental disorders" and this could cover a wider range of disability than stress.

(ii) These figures are for "standard" claims only for which the ACC has provided payment. The ACC cannot provide figures for claims below the threshold level (less than \$269 and/or 5 days' absence from work), for which the employer pays.

It is not possible to indicate the number of teachers who subsequently sought early retirement following WorkCare claims, as a readily accessible database is not available. The Rowe Review into WorkCare and Associated Services will be making major recommendations for the establishment of a database in this area.

COMMUNITY SERVICES VICTORIA

(Question No. 125)

Mr PERRIN (Bulleen) asked the Minister for Consumer Affairs, for the Minister for Community Services:

In respect of each department, authority and agency within her administration, which properties formerly owned by the department, authority or agency have been sold since 30 June 1982, stating—(a) the address and nature of the property; (b) the date of sale; (c) the sale price; (d) the reason for the property being sold; and (e) the use to which the proceeds of each sale were put?

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Community Services is:

1. There is no provision in the Community Welfare Services Act 1970 for the department to purchase or own real estate. Property under the control of the Department is vested in the Crown.
2. Property surplus to the department's requirements is referred to the Department of Property and Services or prior to 1986 was referred to Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands for disposal.

ROAD FATALITIES IN GEELONG PROVINCE

(Question No. 152)

Mr DICKINSON (South Barwon) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

How many fatalities occurred due to motor car accidents within the Geelong Province during the years 1985–86 and 1986–87 to date, indicating at what locations?

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

1. During 1986, 33 road fatalities occurred in the Geelong area and, in the six months to 30 June 1987, 23 fatalities in this area were recorded.
2. Details of accident locations may be obtained from the Road Traffic Authority.

JOINT VENTURES OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

(Question No. 167)

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton) asked the Minister for Public Works:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the period 4 April 1982 to 1 May 1987:

1. What is the name of each joint venture or business entity created in which the State of Victoria has equity, indicating—(i) the nature of each business; (ii) the proportion of equity held by each State instrumentality; (iii) the amount of consideration given for the equity held by the State instrumentality; and (iv) the proportion of equity held by any other organisation?
2. What is the name of each joint venture or business entity created in which the State of Victoria has equity, indicating—(i) the nature of each business; (ii) the proportion of equity held by each State instrumentality; (iii) the amount of consideration given for the equity held by the State instrumentality; and (iv) the proportion of equity held by any other organisation?

Mr WALSH (Minister for Public Works)—The answer is:

The Public Works Department has not been involved in any joint venture or business entity in which the State of Victoria has equity.

PAYMENT OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS

(Question No. 180)

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Premier:

Whether his direction that all government accounts are to be paid within the normal commercial time limits has been adhered to? If not, which departments, authorities and/or agencies are still behind in their payments?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The answer is:

In terms of the dollar value of accounts payable, 95 per cent of money owing was paid on time during the quarter ended 30 June 1987. This means that agencies were generally paying large dollar accounts within normal commercial time limits.

In situations where the payment of smaller dollar accounts needs to be improved, investigations are currently under way with the intention of developing a more efficient method of processing and paying smaller accounts.

POLICE MOST WANTED PERSONS

(Question No. 181)

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

1. What are the names of the people on the State's most wanted criminal lists for the past ten years?
2. How many of these people have been caught, and what are their names?

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

The following is a list of persons who have appeared on the "Victoria Police 10 Most Wanted Persons" list over the past ten years.

	<i>Current Position</i>		
	<i>Arrested</i>	<i>Deceased</i>	<i>Wanted</i>
1. Cox, Russell			W
2. Deane, Helen			W
3. Smith, Gregory John Peter			W
4. Kettleton, Graham Douglas	A		
5. Corsino, Carmello			W
6. Mooseek, Esmond Arnold			W
7. Blake, Alan Gordon			W
8. Boyle, Leslie William	A		
9. Cohen, Rafi			W
10. Sadan, Joel			W
11. Smith, Roderick John			W
12. Whiteman, Jeffrey James	A		
13. Marinof, Pavel Vasilof		D	
14. Hill, Alexander Kirkwood		D	
15. Rafferty, Peter Whitehead			W
16. Mayne, Larry John	A		
17. Griffiths, Debbie Ann			W
18. Loudon, Renton John	A		
19. Stone, Clive Edward	A		
20. Gartrell, Donald William			W (possibly O/S)

	Current Position		
	Arrested	Deceased	Wanted
21. Smith, Gary Wayne	A		
22. King, Dennis Patrick	A		
23. Nylander, Harry Richard	A		
24. Vassis, Basil William	A		
25. Creed, Colin James	A		
26. Buchanan, Glen Alan			W
27. Allen, Peter John	A		
28. Dunn, Gary William	A		
29. Fuller, William Alan	A		
30. McMenamin, Mark Francis			W
31. Williams, Alan David	A		
32. Richardson, Robert Jack		D	
33. Chee, Lance Lemual			W
34. Wright, Robert Lindsay	A		
35. Clune, Peter Patrick	A		
36. Hutchinson, Gordon	A		
37. Beaumont, Ronald Peter John			W
38. Baxter, John			W
39. Saly, Antonius Johannes	A		
40. Marinos, Nick	A		
41. Clarke, Gregory James	A		
42. Cavanough, William Edward John	A		
43. Stratton, Colin Vincent			W
44. Reshat, Cahit	A		
45. Boundy, Debra Mary			W
46. Clark, Howard George	A		
47. Hamilton, Ronald John	A		
48. Johanson, Robert Walter	A		
49. O'Neill, Anthony John Joseph	A		
50. Bazley, James Edward	A		
51. Brearley, Gary Hilton	A		
52. Airey, Robert John	A		
53. Skillicorn, Stephen	A		
54. Baxter, Robert John Peter	A		
55. Blue, Sky	A		
56. Glover, Priscilla Ann	A		
57. Chuck, Raymond	A		
58. Levidis, Stephen		D	
59. Jones, Phillip Francis	A		
60. Bell, Ronald James	A		
61. Beswick, Francis James	A		

	Current Position		
	Arrested	Deceased	Wanted
62. McClure, Robert Maxwell	A		
63. Wingate, Alexander Curry	A		
64. Brooks, Frederick Colin	A		
65. Fairless, Alan Peter	A		
66. Ballis, Francis Heatherington			W
67. Karanges, Paul	A		
68. McGann, Peter Joseph	A		
69. Smith, Edward James			W
70. Hind, Gary Allen			W
71. Wilson, Glen Edwin	A		
72. DePetro, Anthony			W
73. McLachlan, Francis Guy			W

GOVERNMENT CHAUFFEURS

(Question No. 187)

Mr DICKINSON (South Barwon) asked the Premier:

In relation to government chauffeurs for the period 30 June 1983 to 31 July 1987:

1. How many people have been employed?
2. How many chauffeurs have received overtime payments?
3. What is the total amount expended on overtime payments?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The answer is:

The information in the following table is for the chauffeurs employed by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) or employed by other departments and used, when required, by DPC (shown in the table as associate chauffeurs). These chauffeurs are provided for the use of Ministers, the opposition parties and some senior officials.

	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87
No. of chauffeurs employed by DPC	42	44	41	42
No. of Associate chauffeurs	7	8	7	8
No. of chauffeurs who received overtime	49	52	48	50
Total Overtime	\$309 160.36	\$401 922.99	\$373 393.98	\$414 928.83

BLASTING AT PORT PHILLIP HEADS

(Question No. 198)

Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn) asked the Minister for Transport:

In relation to blasting carried out in the vicinity of Port Phillip Heads:

1. What explosive material or materials have been used over the past twelve months, indicating—(a) the name of the material; and (b) the company manufacturing and supplying the material?
2. What was the maximum weight of explosive material used in any one detonation during the past six months, indicating the name of the explosive material and the metric weight in each case?
3. What was the maximum weight of explosive material used in any one day over the past six months, stating the material or materials used and the metric weight in each case?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Transport)—The answer is:

1. The explosives used over the past twelve months in blasting work in the navigation channels at Port Phillip Heads are:

Principal explosive—Aquapour 105.

Explosive accessories—Anzomex “Q” (a booster charge to assist in the detonation of the Aquapour 105); Flexicord (a detonating cord); a No. 8 electric detonator.

2. The maximum weight of Aquapour 105 explosive used in any one detonation during the past six months was 75 kilograms (packed into two 37.5 kilogram cartons). Each detonation includes one Anzomex “Q” booster (weight 500 grams) and 36 metres of Flexicord (weight less than 500 grams).

3. The maximum weight of Aquapour 105 explosive used in any one day over the past six months has been 150 kilograms (two detonations each of 75 kilograms, approximately 6 hours apart).