

Wednesday, 2 November 1988

The **SPEAKER** (the Hon. Ken Coghill) took the chair at 2.5 p.m. and read the prayer.

TELEVISIONING OF PROCEEDINGS

The **SPEAKER**—Order! I advise the House that I have given permission for Channel ABV2 to film question time today. The approval is on a pool basis on behalf of other channels and is for one camera and no additional lighting.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr **KENNETT** (Leader of the Opposition)—I ask the Treasurer whether he is aware that an application by Islamic Abattoirs of Australia Pty Ltd for a \$7.5 million loan was twice rejected by the Victorian Economic Development Corporation board, and that it was approved on the third occasion only because it was strongly pushed by the then chairman, Mr Max Currie? Is he further aware of an allegation by a former VEDC board member that Mr Currie was leaned upon by a Labor politician to lend his support? Will the Treasurer investigate and report to the House the name of the politician and the full circumstances surrounding the granting of the loan?

Mr **JOLLY** (Treasurer)—It is an amazing performance by the Leader of the Opposition, the Pinocchio of Parliament. He does not care about his source; he relies on the *Herald* for his research documentation because that is the only documentation produced by him on the VEDC during the whole issue.

In relation to Islamic Abattoirs of Australia Pty Ltd, I also read in the *Herald* the reference to a former Liberal Party Minister making representations in relation to that firm. That information was disclosed in the *Herald*. I also understand that the former chairman of that company was a former member of the National Party. It is a fact of life that members of Parliament, particularly from the Liberal and National parties, make representations to various organisations, whether or not it be the VEDC. In relation to Islamic Abattoirs of Australia Pty Ltd, obviously negotiations are at a delicate stage but the Opposition could not care less.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr **JOLLY** —They could not care less about public money; there is only laughter. They laugh when they understand that negotiations have reached a delicate stage.

The government is concerned to ensure that maximum opportunity is given to protect the VEDC funds—unlike the Opposition members who use every opportunity in an attempt to undermine individual organisations in receipt of funds from the VEDC. I shall take every opportunity to protect VEDC funds, unlike the Opposition or the *Herald*, which has been running this campaign. Often the *Herald* has been wrong, yet the Leader of the Opposition relies on it. That is why he has misled Parliament on many occasions on this issue.

Mr **McNAMARA** (Leader of the National Party)—I ask the Treasurer: what steps are being taken to recover an amount of \$1 million, part of a total loan of \$7.5 million

by the VEDC to Islamic Abattoirs of Australia Pty Ltd, that apparently was sent overseas into the pockets of a Malaysian princess? Why did the government take no action on this and other concerns raised by the former chairman, Mr John Boland, at a meeting last December with Mr Beattie, Mr Currie, and Gary Needham? Will the Treasurer advise the House what steps the VEDC has taken to recover the \$1 million sent to Malaysia without its knowledge or consent?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—In my previous answer I thought I had made it clear that the VEDC is involved in ensuring that its funds have the maximum chance of protection. The Leader of the Opposition has made no constructive contribution on this issue or in any other debate before Parliament. That is why I have said on another occasion that he will become the longest-serving Leader of the Opposition that Victoria has ever known. There is no doubt about that.

The Leader of the National Party asked a question that clearly indicates that a former National Party candidate was the former Chairman of Islamic Abattoirs of Australia Pty Ltd. The facts of life are these——

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER—Order! It is impossible for question time to continue with the current level of interjection. In particular, I ask the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the National Party, and the Minister for Property and Services to restrain themselves and allow the Treasurer to complete his answer.

Mr JOLLY—The Leader of the National Party will join a scurrilous coalition if he continues along this track. Delicate negotiations are going on at present.

Mr McNamara—You have done nothing!

Mr JOLLY—The Leader of the National Party does not have a clue. He is an auctioneer with an open mouth and he wants to join Pinocchio over there——

Mr McNamara—What have you done?

Mr JOLLY—I have made it quite clear that I am concerned about protecting the interests of Victorians, unlike the Opposition or the National Party, particularly the way the Leader of the National Party behaves. This fellow is nowhere near the calibre of the former Leader of the National Party!

The mouth of the Leader of the Opposition got him into trouble not only during but also after the election campaign. He has lied to this House on a number of occasions but I shall forget that for the moment.

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask the Treasurer to withdraw the unparliamentary expression that he has just used.

Mr JOLLY—Because it is unparliamentary, Mr Speaker, I shall withdraw it. But the Leader of the Opposition has told so many untruths; he knows he has told untruths, and he will continue to do so. The Victorian Economic Development Corporation is hopeful of recovering its full security on the loan. Islamic Abattoirs of Australia Pty Ltd is involved in delicate negotiations, but the mob on the other side would like to undermine those negotiations.

Mr Kennett—That's rubbish!

Mr JOLLY—That is what the Opposition wants to do because it has no interest in the VEDC maximising——

Mr Kennett interjected.

The SPEAKER—Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition. I have already asked him to show some self-restraint and to cease interjecting. I again call on him to observe the forms of the House.

Mr JOLLY—The Leader of the Opposition has no interest in the truth. He does not care whether the VEDC gets its money or not. He is trying to undermine the corporation in this place. I repeat: delicate negotiations are under way, and I am hopeful that that money will be fully recovered. I shall be doing everything possible to facilitate that, unlike the Opposition, which wants to undermine the corporation.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Mr GAVIN (Coburg)—Further to the claims made by the Leader of the Opposition last week, will the Treasurer advise the House whether the Director-General of the Department of Management and Budget, Dr Peter Sheehan, was briefed at a meeting held last December on the Wallace International Ltd float?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—The article that appeared in the *Herald* newspaper which referred to this meeting was a scurrilous lie. That claim, which was repeated by the Leader of the Opposition in debate in this place, is a deliberate attempt by him to smear Dr Peter Sheehan.

Mr Harrowfield—Disgraceful!

Mr JOLLY—It was absolutely disgraceful. The Leader of the Opposition has, in effect, used the cowards' castle of Parliament to attack Dr Sheehan in his capacity as Director-General of the Department of Management and Budget. Dr Sheehan has done a marvellous job for the people of Victoria. He is a major architect of the long-term economic strategy of the government. Dr Sheehan has done everything within his power to encourage positive investment in this State and has assisted in turning the Victorian economy around. What credit does he get from the Opposition? A scurrilous lie from the Leader of the Opposition that he was at a meeting and said, "My God, this cannot be made public." That is an absolute lie. Dr Sheehan would not say such a thing, in any case. The Leader of the Opposition has deliberately misled Parliament on this matter. He should apologise.

The SPEAKER—Order! I direct the attention of the Treasurer to Standing Order No. 108, and indicate that it is out of order for him to make imputations against a member of Parliament as he has just done.

Mr JOLLY—To conform to the conventions of the House, I shall certainly treat the matter in another way, but it is about time the Leader of the Opposition had respect for people who cannot hide behind the cowards' castle of Parliament.

If those comments were made outside this place, he would have seriously libelled Dr Peter Sheehan. I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to make such a statement outside the House. At the very least, he should publicly apologise because it is a lie to suggest that such a meeting took place; it is a lie to suggest that Dr Sheehan was fully briefed on the matter. Certainly, he was not fully briefed until the whole matter was finalised. He was in exactly the same position as I was, and it is despicable that the Leader of the Opposition continues to make that sort of attack. He should publicly apologise.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—Is the Treasurer aware that a creditor of Horticultural Holdings Ltd has demanded repayment of a \$250 000 debt and given notice that, unless the debt is repaid, it will apply to have the company wound up? What steps has the government taken to protect its \$3.9 million equity investment and loans of at least \$1.35 million in Horticultural Holdings Ltd?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—The Opposition delights in trying to highlight all the negatives associated with the Victorian Economic Development Corporation. It makes no mention of the positives. It disregards the fact that the corporation has assisted in—

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Forest Hill will cease interjecting. There are far too many interjections, and it is impossible for question time to proceed in an orderly manner and for honourable members to hear the answer by the Treasurer. I ask all honourable members to restrain their enthusiasm and to hear the Treasurer's reply in silence.

Mr JOLLY—Opposition members completely disregard all the positive features of the corporation, such as the creation of more than 40 000 jobs in this State and the provision of funds to an organisation like Moldflow Pty Ltd, which has received a major export award across the nation because of its successful venture.

The Opposition highlights the small number of cases where there are difficulties. The honourable member for Gippsland West should realise that Horticultural Holdings Ltd is in receivership. The government, as with every other difficult account, is making every endeavour to ensure that there is maximum protection of corporation funds. The chief executive of the corporation is managing all those accounts in the best way possible in the interests of the people of Victoria, and he will continue to do so. He is certainly receiving no help from the Opposition on these matters. In fact, the Opposition does not give a continental—that is the reality.

One needs to put it in perspective. A major finance development organisation in Victoria is making a significant contribution to the State government's economic strategy. It has been prepared to make the capital available in areas of export, which has been important, and one of those companies, Moldflow Pty Ltd, received a major export award recently because of its successful venture.

There is no doubt that that will be an important issue in the future, and certainly export growth is basic to the economic fundamentals of Victoria and to future growth prospects in this State.

Mr W. D. McGRATH (Lowan)—I refer to the Treasurer a statement made by the then Chairman of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, Mr Currie, on 7 September that a report of a five-month investigation of Horticultural Holdings Ltd by the Queensland Fraud Squad was a "load of nonsense." Is it a fact that Mr Currie misled the public, because that investigation did take place, as has since been confirmed by Detective Sergeant Mansfield of the Queensland Fraud Squad? I also ask whether an officer of the Queensland Fraud Squad personally delivered the file on Horticultural Holdings Ltd to senior police officers in Melbourne at the time of Mr Currie's statement.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—One principle should be crystal clear in any police investigation; that it is a matter for the police, whether it be the police in Queensland or the police in Victoria. I have more faith in the police in Victoria than I have in the police in Queensland and the Victorian government does not behave in the way the National Party in Queensland behaved in relation to police investigations. So far as I

am concerned, police investigations are matters to be undertaken solely by the Police Force; they are not matters in which I would intervene. Any suggestion to the contrary is totally incorrect.

ANZAC SHIP PROJECT

Mrs GLEESON (Thomastown)—In the light of recent discussions the Premier has held, can he inform the House of developments that have occurred in support of Victoria's bid to build the Anzac ship project?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I welcome the positive response from this side of the House about what is happening in this State. A whole group of companies across the world regard this State as the place in which to invest. I am delighted they do and that is why Victoria is leading this country's economic recovery and the reason the Opposition was rejected for the sixth consecutive time at the election four weeks ago. That is six elections on the trot that the Opposition has lost. The honourable member for Warrandyte is the \$3 million man. It cost \$3 million to have one Liberal member elected!

Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I direct to your attention Standing Order No. 127. The Premier is debating the question. A second point of order is that he is addressing his remarks to the Opposition rather than to the Speaker. I ask you to bring him to order.

The SPEAKER—Order! It is the usual procedure in this House to raise one point of order at a time. I shall deal with the first point of order. I thought the Premier was merely making a passing reference and not embarking on a debate of the question. I have no doubt the Premier will return to the central issue. There is no point of order.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—In further answer to the question asked by the honourable member for Thomastown, I am pleased to announce that the West German company, Blohm and Voss, is to join the Melbourne-based Australian Marine Engineering Corporation—AMEC—in a consortium to build the ships at Williamstown. I welcome the Blohm and Voss decision to take a 25 per cent equity in the project, and I assure the House that the government will do everything it can to ensure that this \$5 billion project is developed in this State. I am especially pleased that Blohm and Voss is involved because it is committed to ensuring that the Australian content in those ships is high. In fact, the Australian content will be 70 per cent.

It also means that Blohm and Voss will have a significant and permanent establishment in Australia beyond the building of the Anzac ships; and a broad range of technology will be transferred from the company to Victoria through the company's involvement in oil and gas-based technology.

It is no wonder that the State President of the Liberal Party, Mr Kroger, wants to change the preselection methods of his party. If Mr Kroger were to sit in the visitors' gallery and listen to members of the Opposition, he would want to change the preselection methods now and not wait until the next State conference. The Liberal Party is in all sorts of trouble; it is no wonder that Mr Kroger wants to get rid of many members of the Liberal Party. They are hopeless!

I am delighted to have the positive and confidence-boosting support of my Ministers, particularly the Treasurer. They are concerned about getting things done in the State. Those companies to which I have referred think the Opposition is hopeless; and it is! The government will do all it can to win the project, because it is an important project. It will mean more jobs for Victorians, something about which the Opposition does not care.

The project will provide 1500 jobs through Australian Marine Engineering Corporation with another 4000 jobs being provided downstream for subcontractors. The project is the key to the development of a world-class defence and major engineering industry based at Williamstown. It is a magnificent opportunity for Victoria. I wish the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would understand that. It is very easy for honourable members opposite to try to score cheap political points. The National Party has caught the Liberal Party disease: it cannot get its facts right. That disease is endemic to the Liberal Party. It was only recently that members of the National Party caught the same disease.

That is the difference between the opposition parties and the government! The government wants to see the State progressing, by doing everything it can to encourage the establishment of such projects. All members of the Opposition want to do is to discourage such projects. They want to undermine confidence. You think you are smart, but you are not very smart at all! As I said the other day, I do not know how it makes members of the Opposition feel——

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask the Premier to come back to the question.

Mr CAIN—The contract will lead to future refitting work on those ships. Also, a wide range of ancillary and related programs will build upon the expertise and the stake in Victoria that will be established by AMEC and Blohm and Voss—as well as the involvement of the Thyssen Corporation, through Blohm and Voss. Those companies have made a significant commitment to the future of marine engineering in Victoria. I welcome that commitment, and the government welcomes it.

It is further proof of what can happen when a government gets behind firms that are prepared to have a go—the very thing that the Opposition is discouraging. The project is in Victoria's long-term interests. The tragedy of the Opposition is that it seems to have no vision at all. The only vision it has is one of ten and a half years in opposition; it has no other vision at all!

Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, having allowed the Premier his passing reference, I now direct to your attention Standing Order No. 127, and I ask you to bring the Premier back to order.

The SPEAKER—Order! I uphold the point of order. The Premier has been answering the question for approximately 8 minutes. I ask him to round off and complete his answer.

Mr CAIN—I shall round it off. I have had some competition, which I am sure you will understand, Mr Speaker! The involvement of Blohm and Voss is proof that the government is getting behind industries that have something to offer both Victoria and Australia. Such firms have the government's full support. We are supporting AMEC and Blohm and Voss in Williamstown all the way in order to obtain the project for Victoria.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr MACLELLAN (Berwick)—Will the Treasurer tell the House why the government approached Tricontinental Corporation Ltd, the State Bank's merchant bank, asking it to take over the business of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, and will the Treasurer tell the House why Tricontinental declined?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I thought I had made it quite clear in comments I have made here and publicly that the government decided to approach the Rural Finance Corporation, not Tricontinental Corporation Ltd, about the VEDC. Apparently the former Deputy Leader of the Opposition, now the honourable member for Berwick,

has been misled on that matter as well. I do not know what source he relied upon for his information but he is not correct. There has certainly not been an approach by me to Tricontinental concerning the VEDC.

I shall clarify the matter in relation to the Rural Finance Corporation. I have indicated that I consider the Rural Finance Corporation to be the most appropriate organisation to absorb the VEDC. I have taken steps to appoint Mr Ian Morton as Chairman of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation as well as Chairman of the Rural Finance Corporation. The experience of the members of both those corporations will be invaluable to the management of a development finance organisation. There are many advantages in ensuring that the expertise available is concentrated in one single development finance organisation.

I have also indicated to the House that the financial viability of the Rural Finance Corporation will be fully protected, and I have stated that the debt of the Rural Finance Corporation to the government will be converted into equity. That is an appropriate method of ensuring that the RFC is fully protected.

It has always been my view that there should be one single development finance organisation. That view has been shared by Mr Ian Morton, who is, as I said, the Chairman of the Rural Finance Corporation and now Chairman of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation. I indicate clearly that I have always regarded that as the preferred approach, and I was pleased that Cabinet adopted that course of action.

PRIVATE BUS OPERATORS

Mr CUNNINGHAM (Derrimut)—Will the Minister for Transport advise the House of the progress of discussions he has held today with the Bus Proprietors' Association (Vic.) Inc. in relation to the private tendering of bus contracts?

Mr KENNAN (Minister for Transport)—I thank the honourable member for Derrimut for his question and for his continuing interest in public transport. I outlined to a number of bus proprietors this morning that the government would be acting in the public interest and to protect the public interest.

I directed to the attention of the bus proprietors especially a memorandum dated last Thursday, 27 October, from Mr Norris, in which he recommended to operators, by a directive, that they impose a flat fare structure of \$1.50 a passenger. It was pointed out that services would be maintained at current levels for one week, but there was a clear indication that off-peak services would be abandoned. There was a throw-away reference to the provision of a few days' grace to genuine hardship cases such as kids and pensioners. Can anyone imagine a more patronising or disgraceful reference?

I informed them that if the operators were determined to go down that path they would be met by the full force of the government's legal, financial, and administrative strength to ensure that, over the medium and longer term, the government would be taking action to allow private contractors to cooperate if they were interested.

I also outlined to the bus operators that Metplan foreshadowed Metlink services and that the government envisaged those services being run by Met buses. I indicated that over the course of the next fortnight the government would be in a position to consult in detail with the bus operators on how those Metlink services would operate and how other services would be rationalised to achieve greater efficiencies in the provision of bus services in the metropolitan area.

I also told the bus operators that the government is concerned about the inflexibility of current contracts as they do not provide an incentive. It does not matter whether

there is 1 passenger or 100 passengers on a given route—the operators do not receive more money for a larger number of passengers. I indicated that the government was anxious that there be a more competitive style of contract offering more flexibility than the existing contract, which is tied to a particular route; if other routes became more popular than an existing route the current contracts provide no capacity to redeploy.

I further informed the bus operators that in a fortnight's time I would be in a position to have the Met discuss the contract issues with them and that, after they had held discussions within those parameters, I would be happy to again meet with them to consider the position.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr I. W. SMITH (Polwarth)—I direct a question to the Premier following his failure to answer a question from me last week. Will the Premier state precisely when he was first aware of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation–Wallace International Ltd sub-underwriting proposals?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I can only conclude that in coming from the paddock, from where the honourable member for Polwarth has come, to contest the leadership of the Opposition, he has learnt not to listen. Last week I made very clear the position about a whole range of events, such as those happening with Rothwells Ltd. I shall make it clear to the honourable member who has pretensions to the office I hold that it is not my role nor the role of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to vet or otherwise be engaged in the day-to-day management and investment decisions made by the Victorian Economic Development Corporation.

The Wallace International Ltd float was not a matter in which I nor my department was involved. The honourable member should understand that. If the honourable member for Polwarth wants to make generalised assertions like those made by the Leader of the Opposition, whom he seeks to displace, he should be specific. The honourable member is getting into the same cesspool as the Leader of the Opposition. I make it clear that I am not involved in this matter. If the honourable member for Polwarth wants to make those assertions——

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—I told the Opposition that the department does not involve itself in those matters and nor do I. The VEDC makes its own decisions. For the Opposition to suggest the contrary is simply to reflect its desperation in general, and the desperation of the honourable member for Polwarth, in particular.

PETITIONS

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

Road upgrading in Doncaster and Templestowe

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

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Victoria sheweth that the roads in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe are in need of urgent upgrading.

Your petitioners therefore pray that more funds be made available to Doncaster and Templestowe to upgrade its roads.

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

By **Mr Perrin** (383 signatures)

In vitro fertilisation

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

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

human life begins with the fertilisation of a human ovum by a human sperm and from that time is a complete new human being;

there is no point beyond fertilisation that is other than a significant event in a continuum of development until birth; and

the State government's recent decision to allow the creation of 80 human embryos for the purposes of experimentation that would cause their destruction violates the respect that should be due every human life.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the government of the State of Victoria will legislate for the protection of human beings from the moment of fertilisation and halt in vitro fertilisation, in particular the abuse of human embryos for experimentation at any stage of development.

By **Mr Plowman** (213 signatures)

State Emergency Service funding

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 their great concern at the lack of funding provided by the State government for the volunteer units of the Victoria State Emergency Service.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the Parliament will give urgent attention to providing additional funding for the volunteer units of the Victoria State Emergency Service so as to enable them to efficiently and safely carry out the statutory functions delegated to them under the Victoria State Emergency Service Act 1987.

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

By **Mr Steggall** (150 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:

Exhibition Act 1957—Report of the Minister on the failure to submit the Annual Report of the Exhibition Trust for the year 1987–88, the reasons why, and the granting of an extension of time.

Port of Melbourne Authority—Report for the year 1987–88.

Sport and Recreation—Report for the year 1987–88—Ordered to be printed.

Statutory Rules under the following Acts:

County Court Act 1958—No. 393

County Court Act 1958 and Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984—No. 394.

Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981—No. 397.

Firearms Act 1958—No. 398.

House Contracts Guarantee Act 1987—No. 395.

Nurses Act 1958—Nos 357, 396.

Public Service Act 1974—PSD No. 53.

Transport Accident Commission—Report for the year 1987–88—Ordered to be printed.

Victorian Arts—Reports of the Council and the Ministry for the year 1987–88.

Water Resources Department—Report for the year 1987–88.

COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr CRABB (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Country Fire Authority Act 1958 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

BUSINESS FRANCHISE ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Business Franchise Acts and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

BORROWING AND INVESTMENT POWERS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Borrowing and Investment Powers Act 1987 to provide that the limits to the financial accommodation that may be obtained by certain authorities be determined by regulations, to make the borrowing and investment powers of the Totalizator Agency Board subject to the Borrowing and Investment Powers Act 1987, to amend the Gas and Fuel Corporation Act 1958, the State Electricity Commission Act 1958, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Act 1958 and the Racing Act 1958 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

STATE CASUAL EMPLOYEES SUPERANNUATION BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to establish a State Casual Employees Superannuation Fund, to repeal the Superannuation (Lump Sum Benefits) Act 1981, to amend the Borrowing and Investment Powers Act 1987 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

STATE INSURANCE OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make various amendments to the State Insurance Office Act 1984, to make consequential amendments to the Borrowing and Investment Powers Act 1987 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

SUPERANNUATION (PORTABILITY) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to re-enact with amendments the law relating to the portability of superannuation within the public sector, to repeal the Superannuation Benefits Act 1977 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

LIQUOR CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Liquor Control Act 1987 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

SHOP TRADING (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal provisions for the registration of shops and market sites, to amend the Shop Trading Act 1987 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

ROAD SAFETY (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS) BILL

Mr KENNAN (Minister for Transport) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make miscellaneous amendments to the Road Safety Act 1986 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CONSTITUTION (DECLARATION OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General) moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the recognition and declaration of human rights and fundamental freedoms, to amend the Constitution Act 1975 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CRIMES (FAMILY VIOLENCE) (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Crimes (Family Violence) Act 1987.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

TRUSTEE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Trustee Companies Act 1984 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

BUILDING CONTROL (PLUMBERS, GASFITTERS AND DRAINERS) (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr POPE (Minister for Labour) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Building Control (Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainers) Act 1985.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CREDIT (ADMINISTRATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr ROPER (Minister for Consumer Affairs) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Credit (Administration) Act 1984 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

LICENSING AUTHORITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr ROPER (Minister for Consumer Affairs) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Credit (Administration) Act 1984, the Motor Car Traders Act 1986 and the Travel Agents Act 1986 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (OZONE LAYER) BILL

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Environment Protection Act 1970, to control the manufacture, sale, use and disposal of ozone-depleting substances and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

ABORIGINAL LAND (NORTHCOTE LAND) BILL

Mrs **SETCHES** (Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to authorise the granting by the Crown of certain land at Northcote to the Aborigines Advancement League Incorporated and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

THE CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT (ELECTORAL REFORM) BILL

Mr **WALSH** (Minister for Property and Services) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1958 to provide for the appointment of an independent Electoral Commissioner, to regulate electoral material, to consequentially amend certain other Acts and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

TRANSFER OF LAND (COMPUTER REGISTER) BILL

Mr **WALSH** (Minister for Property and Services) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Transfer of Land Act 1958 concerning the automation of the land titles register and other matters, to make consequential amendments to various Acts and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH **Address-in-Reply**

The debate (adjourned from October 25) on the motion of Mr Cole (Melbourne) for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech was resumed.

Mr **BILDSTIEN** (Mildura)—I am proud and honoured to be standing in this place today. Not for 26 years have honourable members heard a maiden speech from a member representing Mildura. From the outset, I join with honourable members who have spoken before me to congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your elevation to the chair and, likewise, the Deputy Speaker.

I am delighted to have the opportunity of making my first speech during the debate on the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech made at the opening of the 51st Parliament. My predecessor, Milton Whiting, was not afforded that opportunity; his maiden speech, made on 4 December 1962, was confined to a debate on the Mildura Irrigation Water Trusts (Amendment) Bill.

It would be remiss of me not to pay tribute to Milton Whiting's outstanding Parliamentary service. He represented the Mildura electorate with great dignity and eloquence. I am deeply privileged to be elected as his successor. His retirement at the 1 October election marked the end of an era. The National Party's primary vote fell from 58 per cent in 1985 to 38 per cent at this year's State election. That is a clear indication of the huge personal following that Milton Whiting commanded.

The Liberal Party walks tall as a result of its election victory in Mildura. Never before has the Liberal Party held this seat; in fact, it has not so much as even won a booth. For the past 30 years, the seat has been a stronghold for the National Party. In fact, it was the fifth safest seat in the State. The Liberal Party's primary vote increased from a mere 18 per cent in 1985 to 32 per cent this year, sufficient for it to take the seat after the distribution of preferences. That means that, for the first time since 1955, Mildura is represented by a local member who is part of the official Opposition and, after the next election, the government. Mr Alan Lind, a member of the Labor Party, was the last local member for Mildura to be part of a State government, and that was in 1952.

For his strong contribution, support, and encouragement, I thank my Leader, Jeff Kennett, who came to Mildura four times during the election campaign and arranged a series of visits by high profile members of Parliament, such as the Federal member for Kooyong, Andrew Peacock. Mildura is now on the threshold of a vigorous and exciting new era.

I bring to this place a number of messages from the Mildura electorate. The first relates to the breakdown of law and order in our community. In his Speech at the opening of Parliament, the Governor stated that the safety and security of the people of Victoria in their homes and on the streets was of paramount importance to the government. I am pleased to hear that because, at the moment, criminals are running rampant; the government is not controlling them, the criminals are controlling the government.

In my home city of Mildura, crime statistics are at record levels and residents are naturally up in arms. One continually hears of cases where police have acted quickly to arrest an offender only to see him walk free, smirking at the law, within days of being gaoled. I am not referring to petty crimes; I am speaking about drug growers, car thieves, and sex offenders.

What is being done to curb the crime epidemic? Recently in Mildura an habitual thief—a young man of about twenty years of age, with a list of prior convictions—stole a car and crashed it into a pole. He had been drinking and was charged with having a blood alcohol content above .05. He broke a leg in the crash and I am informed that he is openly bragging that he will get an insurance payment of approximately \$70 000 when his case goes before the courts. The pendulum must swing back in favour of the victims; at the moment, the emphasis of the judicial system favours the criminals. Somewhere, sometime, somehow is not good enough; it must start now, and it begins by putting more police officers on the street.

There is talk in my electorate of, at the very least, the establishment of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme and, at the very worst, of vigilante groups. The escalating crime wave has prompted daily front-page reports in the local press. The chief reporter for the *Sunraysia Daily*, Mr Alan Erskine, wrote on 15 October:

Each day brings new tales of bashings, smash and grabs, handbags snatched, car thefts, thefts from houses and cars, drunken parties in our beautiful gardens, wilful damage and vandalism.

He also said:

There are feuds between rival street gangs, pack bashings and rapes. The streets are filling up with derelicts and the homeless, most of them affected by alcohol.

I remind the House that I am talking about Mildura, a premier town and a tidy town, which is often described as an oasis on the desert fringe.

As its contribution to cleaning up the city, the Mildura City Council has bravely banned the consumption of alcohol on council property within the city limits. That is a drastic step, but one which is obviously working and one which people appreciate.

Last week, if one were gazing outside my electorate office window, one could count a number of drunken derelicts flaked out on the centre plantation lawns. This week they are gone. Now one can see elderly women and families enjoying their lunch and afternoon teas, which is a sight that has not been seen in a long time.

Many people in my electorate believe we have become a society where the only protection provided is for the hoodlum, the druggie, the thief, and the pervert. An acquaintance of mine, a very longstanding and highly respected former senior sergeant of police at Mildura, Mr Les Milborn, predicts that vigilante groups will ultimately be formed to maintain control of Mildura unless the government takes a firm hand to control crime and violence. He considers that not only should corporal and capital punishment be returned in extreme cases but also, for crimes involving violence, there should be a return to the use of the whip.

In a letter published in the *Sunraysia Daily*, Mr Milborn said:

Murder verdicts should be classed in three degrees. For the first degree, such as domestic or spur of the moment killing, leave any sentence for the judge.

For second degree, premeditated killing, a mandatory life sentence without any remission. For the third degree—sickening, horror type murders—to be executed.

This former policeman makes his comments knowing full well the likely outcry from civil libertarians and do-gooders. To them, he says—and I should like every honourable member in this place to listen carefully:

I can only reply by wishing that their home be broken into by a pack of criminals, their women savagely raped, their valuables stolen and property destroyed . . . and if apprehended . . . the offenders refuse to give their names, submit to any tests, answer any questions, and be released after the 6-hour limitation because no evidence could be obtained—even though they were known to have committed the crimes.

By no means is his concern isolated. Police across the State are worried and they are commenting publicly.

The House will recall that after the Walsh Street killings of two policemen, a Constable Peter Kaneen wrote in the Melbourne *Sun* on 15 October:

Ordinary citizens and police alike are sick of the mollycoddling of the criminal minority. Justice must be done and seen to be done if it is to be of any deterrent at all.

Day after day people are urging this government to do something about the increasing lawlessness—and I am talking about policemen on the beat, the front-line troops.

Melbourne *Sun* columnist, Derryn Hinch, on 22 October observed that we are being robbed, burgled, and mugged with such impunity that it is now a sick joke to say that a man's home is his castle—in fact, it is a second-hand shop. Mr Hinch says that the crime rate in the suburbs is so high that a new, dangerous air of defeatism has permeated our society, because people do not any more even bother to report many thefts.

As I said, the problem is not confined to Mildura. This is happening throughout the State. We are living in a sick society—a jungle, if you like—and it is time that law and order prevailed once again. Police numbers must be increased. More police have to be back on the beat and, when we get them there, for God's sake, let us not tie their hands behind their backs! Let us not humiliate them by letting criminals laugh in their faces by putting them back on the street within days of their arrest, and sometimes even on the same day.

The next message that I bring to this Chamber from my electorate relates to the government's commitment to declaring new national parks and wilderness areas in the Big Desert and the Sunset Country. On 19 September, just twelve days before the State election, the Land Conservation Council released a draft report containing

recommendations for an extra 800 000 hectares to be declared national parks. A handful of people, quickly realising the enormous ramifications of the report, rallied together and called a public meeting. Just three days before the election, they drew a gathering of almost 600 people.

In this, our bicentenary year, as we reflect on the past 200 years, one thing stands out in the history of the Mallee—we have always been prepared to battle the odds. We do not owe our start to the lure of gold or as a repository for convicts from a far-off land. People came to the Mallee because they genuinely wanted to; they wanted to own the land or to work it. Cooperation rather than confrontation has been the hallmark of our development. But rest assured these proposals will be fiercely challenged! We will fight those challenges with the same determination, energy, and enterprise that characterised the efforts of our forebears in the Mallee to get us where we are today. Our campaign, which will be spearheaded by the Mallee Heritage Committee, will show that graziers have the reputation of being environmentally conscious, with emphasis on protection of our native flora and fauna.

I know there are some who are extremely worried that the Premier and the government do not give a brass razoo for what country people think. One local landowner, Mr Steve McArthur, probably summed up the feelings of a great number of rural people the other night at a meeting in Mildura when he related a dream that he had had of telephoning the Premier and asking him to reconsider his election pledge. He dreamt that he dialled the Premier's home number and, sure enough, someone answered. The conversation went something like this:

Hello, Mr Cain?

Speaking.

My name is Stephen McArthur, Mr Cain.

Oh yes, never heard of you.

I'm one of all Victorians that you govern for.

Oh no, you're not. I heard the STD pips . . .

I should like to think the Premier and his new Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands will not blindly accept the Land Conservation Council's report without first considering other viewpoints.

I invite the Premier, the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs, and every other Minister to tour the areas of the Mallee recommended for declaration as national parks. We will be able to show them areas where regeneration can occur on land that is grazed and to show them what happens to public land when grazing is ceased and the land is locked up. In a nutshell, the Land Conservation Council recommends the phasing out of grazing on public land in the Mallee and that the land be managed by the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands.

Basically, the council proposes to increase State national parks and wilderness areas from 10 per cent to nearly 38 per cent of the Mallee. The reason is to "conserve" the Mallee; but, with respect, the government cannot manage what we already have. Hattah-Kulkyne National Park is overrun by weeds and kangaroos, and the local Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands office does not have the resources to manage the area; it does not have a hope in hell of managing the proposed new areas. The land degradation at Hattah-Kulkyne makes a mockery of the Land Conservation Council recommendations. If some of the leaseholders it is proposed to toss off their land allowed their grazing areas to degenerate to the extent to which our existing parks have deteriorated, they would be told immediately to remove their stock or their leases would be terminated.

The budget of the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands for the Mildura region is about \$4.6 million. Local staff estimate that this would need to be doubled immediately should the council's proposals be accepted. The proposed increases in parkland are enormous—they are mind-boggling in anyone's language. They pose questions. Why so big? Can it be managed?

Local departmental staff concede privately that their current budget allocation is less than perfect. The region has the problem of overcoming difficulties with weeds, rabbits, and kangaroos; staffing in a remote area; supervision over such a large area; and the logistics of governing such massive areas. Parklands almost four times the size of the existing area can only magnify these problems.

Local graziers inform me that the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands is having difficulty in establishing regeneration programs in the Hattah-Kulkyne National Park; more than twenty years after livestock was removed the department has failed to establish regeneration trials on the grazing areas. It could be argued, Mr Speaker, that this demonstrates either a lack of knowledge and concern about the issue or negligent management by the government.

But it is not only the stockmen who will be affected by the present proposals; the impact on business will be severe. Retailers, manufacturers, stock agents, and cooperatives, and service industries will be hit also. So will beekeepers, brush cutters, horse riders, trail bike riders, four-wheel drive enthusiasts, fishermen, sporting shooters, field and game members, tourists, football clubs, witchetty tribes—the list goes on.

The Country Fire Authority, the State Emergency Service, the Police, the Army reserve, local councils and some local CFA members have indicated that they will not go into these parks to fight bushfires if the government accepts the proposals to close off tracks and water points. Service and welfare groups, such as the Country Women's Association, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Lions Club, and the Rotary Club, are all beginning to express concern as they realise the ramifications of the proposals.

Many names with proud traditions in local history, such as Pine Plains, Cowra, Keera, Kulnine, Ned's Corner and Glencoe, will disappear with the phasing out of grazing. They are all properties that are part of our heritage and are the remaining few of the pioneering settlements of Victoria. For example, Pine Plains has been grazed for more than 140 years.

The impact of these proposals on recreational users of this land is far-reaching and has already prompted letters to my office. Thousands of families regularly use these areas and enjoy the recreation and isolation. Under the Land Conservation Council's proposals they fear that they will be herded into controlled areas where such signs as "no camping", "fires in constructed fireplaces only", "walking only", "no vehicular traffic", and "no dogs" will be displayed. After realising the likely restrictions if the proposal is adopted, one of my constituents responded, "We might as well camp on the Rosebud foreshore."

The emphasis of the council's report on recreational use is to match one's ability against nature—on foot. Anyone who tries to conquer these proposed new parks and wilderness areas—over one million hectares—in 40 degree plus heat without a support vehicle will indeed be taking a big risk.

The best way to properly conserve this land is for the government to issue perpetual leases to allow grazing to be maintained. This will give the graziers some certainty over their future and will encourage them to invest in the protection of the environment. Much greater liaison between the graziers and the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands should take place to develop management strategies in areas where grazing is to be excluded to promote regeneration and plots for trial plantings.

I turn briefly to tourism which is now worth about \$120 million a year to the Sunraysia economy and which employs about 14 per cent of the district's total work force. Sunraysia has natural attractions, such as the river system where the Murray and Darling rivers meet, the warmer, dry climate, unique landscapes, wildlife, and wineries. Although Sunraysia is one of Australia's great destinations for tourism and leisure, country Victoria has tended to suffer at the hands of Melbourne-based promotions.

The current review of the regional tourism structure is long overdue, and I share the view that it is time areas like Mildura—although it cooperates closely with centres such as Swan Hill and Echuca—stood on their own feet. It is time for a major push for country Victoria because Victoria is a compact edition of Australia. Victoria has vast national parks, desert country, great inland lakes, the best surf, a wonderful coastline, wilderness, the superb River Murray system, and the snow. It has everything except Ayers Rock and the Great Barrier Reef, all within a day's drive of Melbourne. It is a hidden resource and a major campaign must be undertaken to tell the world how great a country is Victoria.

The development of tourism also offers a promising solution to the unemployment problem. Unemployment in Sunraysia is between 12 and 15 per cent, which is well over double the State average. Growth in tourism can only help alleviate the jobless situation. Not too many locals, nor even recent arrivals, would willingly return to metropolitan life after experiencing the wonderful climate and the wide range of recreational facilities that Sunraysia offers. We call it the weather resort. In fact, Sunraysia averages about 400 hours a year more sunshine than the Gold Coast.

In conclusion, I was pleased when the Minister for Transport gave an assurance in this place last week that country rail services will be maintained. There is speculation that the government intends to shut down the *Vineland* passenger service between Mildura and Melbourne and replace it with buses. Not only does my electorate insist that the train service be retained, but also I strongly urge the government to improve the service.

There is continuing concern about the deterioration of rural roads. I remind you, Mr Speaker, that country Victoria does not have the same opportunities for people to use public transport. They must use private vehicles. The ongoing discrepancy in fuel prices between the city and country areas is such that at times rural motorists pay up to 20 cents a litre more than their city cousins. For example, at Ouyen, one month's fuel for the two State Emergency Service vehicles often exceeds the total annual subsidy that the unit receives from the government.

As one who does a lot of driving, I strongly support an increase in the speed limit on some country highways to 110 kilometres an hour, particularly from Mildura to Bendigo on the Calder Highway.

In conclusion, I reaffirm my loyalty to the people of the Mildura electorate and assure them that I will always be striving to improve their lot. I thank the Mildura branch of the Liberal Party for its dedication and support in adding the seat to the Liberal fold.

Mr W. D. McGRATH (Lowan)—I congratulate the honourable member for Mildura on his maiden speech and wish him well in his political career. That particular seat was held by Mr Whiting for many years, during which he served the National Party in an excellent manner.

Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your appointment as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. I am sure you will provide a fair and equitable control over this House. Difficulties exist for the Speaker but in time more and more respect will be paid to

you as you exercise your control and influence over question time. Indeed, that control will flow through to the rest of the Parliamentary debates. I wish you well in your role.

I also congratulate the Governor of Victoria, His Excellency Dr Davis McCaughey. I surely speak on behalf of all Victorians in acknowledging the fine job being done by the Governor, and his wife, Mrs McCaughey.

I had an interesting experience in the week before the recent election. Mrs McCaughey was to be the guest speaker at the Nhill Hospital annual meeting. Unfortunately, she was taken ill on the morning of her planned visit. The Official Secretary, Office of the Governor, Mr Charles Curwen, telephoned the Nhill Hospital and said, "I have some bad news for you. Mrs McCaughey will not be able to attend because of illness. However, I have some good news because the Governor has an evening free and will be able to attend in place of Mrs McCaughey." That typifies Dr McCaughey—he took over at short notice the role intended to be filled by his wife. He flew to Nhill at a moment's notice on probably one of his rare free evenings when he could have been relaxing at Government House. He flew 250 miles to Nhill, gave the keynote address, and returned that night to Melbourne. I pay full credit and give full marks to the Governor for his consideration and thoughtfulness to the Nhill Hospital committee of management and to the Nhill people. More than 200 residents, including myself, attended the meeting and everyone appreciated the fact that the Governor had inconvenienced himself to ensure the commitment was honoured.

The House has heard the maiden speech of the honourable member for Mildura. He won the seat of Mildura from the National Party. It would be improper of me not to pay tribute to Milton Whiting upon his retirement after holding that seat for 27 years. When I entered Parliament in 1979 Milton Whiting took me aside and gave me some basic grounding on the role and operations of the Parliamentary system. He taught me how to analyse aspects of a Bill. He introduced me to the statutes, showed me how a Bill was dealt with and gave me an appreciation of the processes involved in amending an Act. Milton was absolutely correct in his understanding of procedures, including the progress of Bills, to the extent that the learning exercise was enjoyable. He exercised a marked influence in Parliament and within the National Party, as well as on the other parties. Milton Whiting was Chairman of the all-party Legal and Constitutional Committee. He was held in high regard by members in this House because of this role and his active participation in this place.

In his address at the commencement of the 51st Parliament of Victoria, the Governor itemised a number of issues. He spoke about social justice, health, education, police, transport, the economy, tourism, and the Olympic Games. The term "social justice" has become a buzz word, having been the policy of the Labor Party when it first came to office. In claiming victory on election night recently, the Premier referred to governing for all Victorians. Indeed, the honourable member for Mildura spoke about governing for the whole of Victoria.

In his maiden speech, the honourable member for Mildura, indicated that the Premier during his period in office had forgotten about country Victoria. It is up to the opposition parties to continually remind the Premier that, if he speaks about governing for the whole of Victoria, he should start on day one with social justice. Social justice should be practised in every region of Victoria. The same considerations should be given to all regions of Victoria on transport, education, health, and the many other subjects referred to in the Governor's Speech.

Mr Micallef interjected.

Mr W. D. McGRATH—The honourable member for Springvale has interjected that there was no reference to privatisation. That reminds me of the heartache being

experienced by the bush nursing hospitals. The private health insurance agents, have covered long-term patients in bush nursing hospitals but the financial strain is getting heavy, because the Federal government is not prepared to grant a reclassification.

The Federal government considers bush nursing hospitals to be private hospitals even though they provide services that are not those of private hospitals, namely, acute bed care and nursing home care. The Federal government does not recognise that fact and is thereby introducing hardship for the families and relatives of the many elderly, long-term care patients in the bush nursing hospitals.

I have sent a telegram to the Federal Minister for Community Services and Health, Dr Blewett, requesting that he resolve the problem in company with the management of bush nursing hospitals and the private health insurers in Victoria.

I have a graph demonstrating that, in 1984, when the Medicare system commenced, 82 per cent of Victorians took out private health insurance; the percentage has now dropped to 51. People do not want to pay twice. They already pay for the Medicare system through their income tax levies but do not feel obliged to take out private health cover. The private health insurers have covered bush nursing hospitals for long-term patients but the load is becoming too great and they are withdrawing payments to the long-term nursing home type patients in those hospitals. Hopefully, the Federal Minister will have some compassion and move speedily to overcome what may become a difficult problem for the relatives and families of the elderly, who are confined to long-term hospitalisation in bush nursing hospitals.

Another important matter I raise in my contribution to the debate on the motion for Address-in-Reply involves 370 Wimmera-Mallee farmers who have strongly protested to the State government over increases in their water rates. The farmers withheld more than \$90 000 from last year's water rates, ignoring three demands from the Rural Water Commission to pay. They have now voted to end their protest and will pay the 9 per cent increase, partly as a gesture of goodwill towards the new Minister for Water Resources.

Water for Victorian irrigators and for stock and domestic supply is vital to country Victoria. If, as the Premier claims, he will govern for all Victorians, and consumers of resources provided by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works will not have to pay a dollar more during the government's next four-year term, it is only fair and equitable to ask that the same principles apply to people living outside the metropolitan area who depend on the water resources of this State for irrigation or for the Wimmera-Mallee stock and domestic supply. That domestic supply provides water through a channel network of around 16 000 kilometres, and it is the lifeblood of the Wimmera-Mallee farmers. My farm is served by the Wimmera-Mallee stock and domestic supply, which is dammed in the Grampians and is supplied through a channel system to towns and properties lying between the Grampians and Hopetoun in the Mallee and over a large portion of the Wimmera-Mallee farmlands and townships.

One message I can spell out to the Minister for Water Resources is that the honourable member for Swan Hill, who is handling the portfolio of water resources, will ensure that the Minister earns his keep. Water is vital to country Victoria, to the farmers, and to the townspeople represented by the National Party. Unless water can be provided at a fair, equitable, and reasonable price, country Victorians cannot even consider giving any credence to the Premier's claim about governing for the whole of Victoria.

Another important matter that I have raised on previous occasions in this Chamber

involves the tax on petrol. It is of concern to all honourable members that some \$6.5 billion is taken by the Federal government in fuel excise. If one adds up the \$250 million taken by the State government through business franchise fees, and the State government tax on fuel, one realises the extent of the significant tax imposed on fuel users—motorists, truck operators, and so on—by the Commonwealth and State governments.

The National Party believes a fair and equitable proportion of those funds is not being returned to country Victoria. I am glad the Minister for Transport is in the House at present. Although last week the Minister claimed that more money than ever before was being spent by the State government on roads, he has to look only at the line item for the local roads category to discover that the amount has decreased from \$71 billion to \$63 billion—a reduction of 11 per cent. Local government depends on those funds to maintain and reconstruct the local roads in categories for which it is responsible. Local government is responsible for about 135 000 kilometres of local roads in Victoria—98 per cent of the network.

The Federal government returns only 18 per cent of the moneys that it collects from fuel excise for road construction and maintenance. That is a pittance when one considers the job opportunities created by road making and maintenance. The Royal Automobile Club of Victoria Ltd claims that some 60 jobs are provided for every \$1 million spent on roads. If \$100 million were spent on roads, unemployment benefit payments would be reduced by \$38 million. It is economic commonsense for the Federal government to spend \$100 million on building or reconstructing roads throughout Australia rather than paying \$38 million in unemployment benefits. That is a much better way of using funds for the benefit of all Victorians and Australians.

I refer the House to comments made by the Treasurer in question time today on the administration of Queensland by that State's National Party government. The opposition parties ask questions of the government in good faith, and, as has been said before, Ministers have the right to answer questions as they see fit.

Mr Richardson—Within certain limits.

Mr W. D. McGRATH—Today the Treasurer answered a question by criticising the Queensland government's administration. I refer the House to the costs involved in producing energy in Victoria. The best administered electricity supply operation in Australia today is that provided by the Queensland government. Honourable members will recall the big confrontation that took place when Queensland electricity supply workers went out on strike three years ago. The Bjelke-Petersen government was the winner on that occasion. New work practices were adopted. Rather than working for wages, a number of employees were put on contracts. Today the Queensland Electricity Commission is probably the most efficient and economical of all State electricity suppliers in Australia.

Honourable members should understand, as should Victorian workers, that they must carefully consider the need to change work practices. There must be a proper understanding of multiskilling. If government departments or instrumentalities are to produce electricity at the most economical rate and provide the best economic performance, they must consider multiskilling across two or three different areas of work. A full and proper understanding of changes in work practices must take place from time to time without going down the path of imposing industrial disharmony through disputes and strikes.

While I am speaking about Queensland, I should mention probably one of the greatest feats that any State has accomplished in recent times which occurred in Queensland; I am referring to World Expo 88 in Brisbane, which ended recently. The

possibility of staging World Expo 88 was offered to various States, but the only government prepared to pick up the ball and run with it at that time was the Queensland government.

World Expo 88 was a huge success; it is a credit not only to the Queensland government but also to all people who participated in its staging. I pay tribute to Mr Neil Smith, who was in charge of the Victorian exhibit at World Expo 88. Anyone fortunate enough to have visited World Expo 88 would have experienced Mr Smith's hospitality and courtesy when visiting the Victorian exhibit. On behalf of Victoria, I congratulate Mr Smith, for Victoria's part in the World Expo 88 spectacular.

I should like to turn now to decentralisation. The Leader of the National Party, in his speech on the Budget, stressed the need for the decentralisation of Victorian industry. Many questions are being asked at present about the Victorian Economic Development Corporation. The concept of the corporation is good, but there has been some poor administration, and no-one on the government side is prepared to stand up and take some blame or acknowledge that a mistake has been made. If government members were prepared to do that, as they rightfully should, they would not experience the barrage of questions from Opposition members. I reiterate: the concept of the corporation is good and there was no need to roll it over into the Rural Finance Corporation. It could have stood on its merits quite well. However, the administration and the overview from the Minister and the Ministry needed to be more sound.

Many good projects have been backed by the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, and I shall come back to those. Mistakes have been made because of the lack of scrutinisation of the principles and credibility of the directors of some companies. I do not have to list those problems—they have been mentioned on many occasions—but one has to question how a person with a criminal record can obtain a loan from the corporation. If one examines the business acumen of some of the people seeking loans, one must certainly wonder why anyone in their right mind would provide funding for their enterprises.

A successful example is a company at Nhill being managed by a Mr Magrath—the spelling is different and he is obviously no relation—and the company is called Lowan Whole Foods Pty Ltd. This man processes the raw foods grown in the Wimmera, packages them, and then distributes them around Australia. There is an export option in New Zealand and for the rest of the world, and the small company has grown from infancy to providing employment for 22 people. The Victorian Economic Development Corporation made money available for that business, and the business is doing well.

Other businesses could do equally well. One proposal concerns the establishment of a service—kill abattoir at Donald. In recent months corporation backing was requested for the business—not in a big way but, in fact, one-fifth of the capital was required. I do not know whether the corporation was out of funds at that time because of the cloud hanging over it, but the business was unable to convince it that it was a worthwhile and reasonable decentralised project that ought to be supported.

If we are to have decentralised industries, they must place a value-added component on products grown in the community. Transport and communication costs are making it impossible to bring raw materials from the cities or ports, take them into the country, manufacture them, put on a value-added component, and then transport them back. However, many raw products grown in the country should go through one, two, or three stages of processing in the country so that they leave the country areas as consumable items, rather than being sent to regional centres or even overseas to undergo processing.

An example of this problem concerns wool, which is exported in raw, greasy form. The best wool basically yields about 70 per cent of its weight in clean fibre. The other

30 per cent comprises grease and foreign matter. The wool goes overseas in greasy form and we pay 100 per cent freight on it. However, 30 per cent of the export weight is virtually washed down the sewers in some overseas country.

Surely there have to be jobs for Victorians processing our wool a further one or two stages before it goes into the textile industry. That is a question Parliament must address quickly. We must try to provide jobs not only in the city but also in the country regions.

In conclusion, although the Labor Party has been elected for the next four-year term and must serve three or four years, it has not been given a conclusive mandate as a government; in fact, it has come nowhere near it. The Labor Party has gained government in the Legislative Assembly with less than 50 per cent of the vote, so there is no clear mandate for the Labor Party to say that it can govern for ever and a day in the way it wishes.

The Upper House has demonstrated also that there was no clear mandate for Labor in the State of Victoria. Certainly the Labor Party has won more seats in the Legislative Assembly and is, therefore, entitled to govern—it has a majority of three—but I assure the government that the Opposition will make the Labor Party earn every point it can over the next three or four years.

Mr DOLLIS (Richmond)—It is a privilege and an honour for me to represent the people of Richmond and the Australian Labor Party in Parliament. As I begin my term of office I pay a tribute to my predecessor, Mr Theo Sidiropoulos, the former honourable member for Richmond. He has been a political colleague and personal friend of mine for more than fifteen years. It is an honour to succeed him.

Theo Sidiropoulos was the first Greek-born member of the Victorian Parliament and he effectively represented the Richmond electorate. Theo was liked by honourable members from both sides of the House and, in many respects, he will be a hard act to follow.

He is a person with a great sense of humour and considerable charm, a product of his political and cultural environment. He is a proud Greek/Australian whose presence in this House will be greatly missed.

Honourable Members—Hear, Hear!

Mr DOLLIS—I am certain that the House will join with me in wishing Theo and his wife, Popi, an enjoyable retirement.

Like Theo, I am also an Australian who was born in Greece. I am proud of both my Greek heritage and my Australian citizenship. Like my predecessor, I intend to serve all the people in the Richmond electorate as a member of the Australian Labor Party and the labour movement.

As we are about to enter the last decade of this century, we must prepare to do so with an open mind and a desire to discuss our role and contribution in this society. Honourable members would agree that ideology, the role of political parties, and the role of Parliament are changing in a rapidly changing world. We are living in an age of transition. We are seeing a new type of community being formed, one that is usually defined as a post-industrial or information society. The role of technology, production methods, economic organisation, management, culture, and education is undergoing a qualitative change.

Industrial society was characterised by the tension between capital and labour and by the overriding determining power of economic factors. When Australia was an industrial society in that narrow sense, political parties also reflected the needs of that

society. Now that the world is changing, the philosophical and social basis of the Australian Labor Party is also changing to reflect the wide-ranging needs of our society. However, this change does not mean the abandonment of our traditional industrial base.

The Australian Labor Party has always been, and always will be, the representative of the working men and women in this country. What makes the ALP unique is its ability to change its direction as the interests of working people change. In that regard, traditional jobs are replaced by professional roles and the work takes place within a system in which the role of organisation is greatly enlarged. The all-pervasiveness of technology, knowledge, and information has led to a change in social stratification.

The powerful increase in the intellectual functions required in the productive process has led to a relative decline of the traditional blue-collar work force and to the rapid rise of a new and ever more numerous group of technicians, professionals, and workers in the tertiary and service sectors. In this new context, political action no longer takes place around the control of the means of production but manifests itself in a variety of ideological, cultural, and political contexts and processes.

All that this emphasises is that we can no longer get away by mouthing simplistic slogans. Parliament requires a sophisticated approach to today's issues. We as politicians are expected to learn and expand our horizons if we are to cope with this complex and challenging world. Our constituencies expect a great deal from us because they know that we are collectively responsible for the decisions we make. We are expected to respond to today's challenges with greater sophistication of analysis and action. We need to think more in terms of the new social reality and we need to pay increasing attention to issues that concern working men and women and to develop social justice strategies for all people.

The ideology of production for the sake of production must be critically challenged so that cultural and moral values and the issue of quality of life become more central to the political debate.

In the Australian post-industrial context, the commitment to multiculturalism remains more fundamental than ever and, in this wide sense, multiculturalism must be conceived, firstly, as an issue of social justice and, secondly, as a cultural choice that can enrich us and help offset some of the dehumanising tendencies operating in mass society.

In the remainder of my speech, I intend to examine more closely a number of themes in a more specific and locally based manner. I can think of no better place to represent and in respect of which to raise these issues than the electorate of Richmond, including as it does the municipalities of Collingwood, Fitzroy, and Richmond. The electorate of Richmond contains a mixture of recently arrived migrants and wage earners and a growing proportion of tertiary educated people. Partly because of this, Richmond is an area in which the major issues of today are being addressed. In the time available to me, I shall consider more closely three of those issues.

The first issue is multiculturalism. I state the obvious when I say that the immigration program since the second world war has economically and socially transformed Victoria and Australia. Migration has enriched Victorian society on many levels, whether through the contribution to its social and cultural life or through the development of its industries.

Today, the diversity of Australian society is recognised and accepted. Four out of every ten Australians were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas. Roughly half are from non-English speaking backgrounds. Unfortunately, the implications of this diversity have not always been accepted. There was a time

when the culture of migrants was devalued, when they were encouraged to assimilate to fit a single cultural pattern, and when their particular needs were ignored and their opportunities denied.

One great achievement of Australian society over the past twenty years has been the development of the policy of multiculturalism. Despite the debate about definitions, it is still fair to say that, in working for a multicultural society, we are working for a society which encourages equal access to government and community services and equal opportunity of participating in the decision-making processes of the community. It is a society in which all Australians should be able to develop and share their cultural heritage and to treasure their language.

The second theme with which I wish to deal concerns the issues confronting working men and women. Changes, whether due to technology, industry restructuring, or changing trade patterns—which undoubtedly will benefit Victoria as a whole—are often obtained at the expense of working men and women.

Richmond is an electorate which contains a high proportion of wage and salary earners and it is not surprising that it has had a relatively high unemployment rate. The first priority for a Labor government is to ensure that employment opportunities are created. The Cain government has been spectacularly successful in this regard. It has ensured that Victoria has had the lowest unemployment rate for the past 64 months. Labor has done well but there is much more to be done. In representing the people of Richmond I shall concentrate one of my main areas of attention on policies related to the labour market.

Those policies will include close cooperation with the trade union movement, the only organisation which, in the end, represents working men and women. An effective Labor government will always have close links with trade unions, and I intend to play my part to ensure that that happens.

With the restructuring of industry there is a pressing need to ensure retraining opportunities for all workers. Governments at all levels must play their part but so, too, must employers. Surely the days are past when employers were content to ignore their retraining responsibilities and depend on immigration to provide skilled labour.

Occupational health and safety must retain the priority given to it by the Cain government. A high proportion of workers in the Richmond electorate are employed in industries which take a heavy toll on their health. The strategy of the Cain government in involving workers to find solutions in their own industries must be strengthened and extended. If Labor leaves no other legacy than a healthy work environment, the years of Labor will have been well worth while.

The third theme with which I wish to deal is the protection of the environment. The inner city is one area in which Victoria's concern for the environment is being challenged. In the first instance I think of the traditional environmental issues such as open space, control of pollutants, and the planning of development, towards which I have already demonstrated my interest and commitment. I look forward to both working with and representing the electors of Richmond on issues affecting the environment, but concern for the environment goes well beyond those important considerations.

Honourable members should be aware that the inner city is a vital part of the recreational, cultural, and artistic heritage of Victoria. Those assets give the city its vitality and provide an attraction for both Victorians and international visitors. Honourable members must ensure that such treasures are enhanced and protected for the benefit of all Victorians. To do so, new visions and new horizons are needed.

It is in those three areas—a multicultural Victoria, a fair society for working men and women, and a new commitment to the environment—that future challenges lie. I believe a commitment to those issues will characterise the coming term of the Cain Labor government; and it is with a sense of pride and anticipation that I place on record my commitments to the future.

I wish to thank the branch members in my electorate for selecting me; and I express my gratitude to the electors of Richmond for electing me to represent them in Parliament. I owe a great deal to my family. No politician can survive without the support of his or her family. I take this opportunity of thanking them for the love, support, and encouragement that they have given me over the years.

I join with all honourable members, Mr Speaker, in congratulating you on your election as Speaker, and I wish you well for the future. I am sure you will perform your duties in a fair and impartial way, and bring great distinction to the high office of Speaker.

Dr NAPHTHINE (Portland)—I begin by pledging my allegiance and the allegiance of the electors of Portland to the Queen of Australia. I also join with the honourable member for Richmond, whom I congratulate on his maiden speech, in congratulating you, Mr Speaker, on achieving the high office of Speaker.

Mr Speaker, honourable members will be interested to know about the similarities in our careers. We are both graduates in veterinary science from the University of Melbourne, where we had the honour and privilege of being lectured in pathology by the honourable member for Dromana. Mr Speaker, you and I both worked in the field as veterinary officers with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs; and we both served terms as president of the Veterinary Officers Group of the Victorian Public Service Association. I am proud to have been both a public servant and a member of the VPSA.

Mr Speaker, I am confident that you will be true to your commitment to uphold the impartiality of the Chair, which is a key component of the Westminster system, and that you will conduct yourself in the same professional manner as you did during your veterinary career.

Our careers have taken divergent paths since our terms as president of the Veterinary Officers Group. I am proud to be the Liberal Party member for Portland. I thank the electors of Portland for electing me as their member. I assure both the House and all the people of Portland that I will work for the benefit of Portland.

Honourable members will be aware that Portland is the oldest permanent settlement in Victoria, having been settled by the Henty family some years before John Batman saw the banks of the Yarra River as a suitable site for a village. Portland is a much better city than the village of Melbourne!

Yesterday I had the pleasure of attending the Portland Cup, which was run at Hamilton. That signifies the way in which the two cities in my electorate, Portland and Hamilton, are able to cooperate to run a successful venture. Certainly, the Portland Cup was a successful venture. As an example of that spirit of cooperation, the horse which won the Cup, Majestic Apex, was bred in Portland but is raced by a syndicate of Hamilton people.

Portland and the surrounding district was developed by enterprising settlers who recognised the fertile agricultural land, the excellent river system, and the natural port of Portland as unique assets to be utilised by the people of Portland for both their families and the fledgling colony of Victoria, not as assets to be locked up forever.

I believe firmly in enterprise and reward for effort. I am reminded often of Vroom and Yetton's contingency theory of motivation which states that there are two components of motivation: firstly, the size of the reward; and, secondly, the likelihood of the reward being attained. For example, someone purchases a Tattsлото ticket because the reward that is promised for winning the lottery is large, even though the chance of attaining the reward is extremely slim.

When I examine the state of small businesses in my electorate—and I remind the House that small business is the largest employer in the State—I understand why employers in small business suffer from a lack of motivation. Firstly, any rewards they attain are heavily taxed and, therefore, devalued; secondly, the other component of motivation—that is, the likelihood of attaining a reward—is made more difficult because of high State taxes and charges, high oncosts, such as WorkCare, and a bureaucratic system that stifles initiative and incentive.

Governments have a clear role to play in creating an economic environment in which employers can confidently invest and reap a just reward for their investment of capital and labour. I shall work both inside and outside the House to ensure that in all endeavours, whether in the sporting field, the classroom, the Public Service, or the business sector, those who achieve reap the benefit of their achievements.

I wish to acknowledge the contributions made to the House, the people of Victoria, and the electorate of Portland by two former members for Portland. The late Donald McKellar was the member for Portland from 1967 to 1970 and from 1973 to 1985. He was an unassuming man who was more content to see a job done and done well than to seek praise for what he did. He was a tireless worker who was well-respected in the electorate. I am pleased to have known Don McKellar, to have been one of his constituents, and to be able to follow in his footsteps as the honourable member for Portland.

My immediate predecessor was the Honourable Digby Crozier. Although he served only three and a half years as the member for Portland, he was previously a member of the Legislative Council, where he represented Western Province for twelve years. He was a Minister for six years, serving as the Minister for Decentralisation, State Development and Tourism from 1976 to 1979, as the Minister for Local Government from 1979 to 1981, and as the Minister for Minerals and Energy and the Minister for Mines from 1981 to 1982.

Not only was Digby Crozier an excellent Minister; he was also a man of the people. As I was campaigning I was amazed to discover that when I introduced myself all I had to say was that I was taking over from Digby Crozier and his name was instantly recognised. Not only was his name instantly recognised by the electors, but also, in 99 per cent of cases, an elector whom I met would say "Digby achieved this for me. Digby did that for me." That was the type of person he was. I am sure all honourable members will join me in wishing both Digby and Jill a long and happy retirement.

The electorate of Portland covers approximately 14 000 square kilometres and includes some of the best agricultural land in Australia. Hamilton is not only currently Victoria's premier town but also is justifiably known as the wool capital of the world. There are 6 million sheep and 280 000 cattle, both beef cattle and dairy cattle, within the electorate. Last year, the electorate produced \$272 207 000 worth of agricultural produce.

I have listened with interest to many of the maiden speeches made by honourable members opposite. I listened intently to comments about the need for social justice and the redistribution of wealth. I did not hear a single comment from government members about the need for the generation of wealth. Honourable members must

address that question. We should not be arguing about how to divide the cake but, rather, how to produce a bigger cake.

In his Speech the Governor highlighted the fact that Victorian agriculture earns more than \$4 billion annually, which is 20 per cent of the State's gross domestic product. Therefore, it is unfortunate that the government has so badly neglected agriculture in the past six and a half years. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs is now faced with a Minister who knows nothing about agriculture and also senior management with little or no knowledge of agriculture. This is disappointing for people involved in agriculture in Victoria.

The Budget has increased agricultural funding by only 4.7 per cent, which all honourable members know is less than the expected inflation rate. It represents another cut in real terms on top of drastic cuts in recent years. The government must re-examine urgently its role in agriculture. One area in which I suggest the government reconsider its position is in the improvement of agricultural education and skills training.

Agriculture has a proud record of achievement. For example, in the high rainfall zones, such as the area which I represent, this industry has achieved, on average, a growth in productivity of 3 per cent a year since the mid-1950s, compared with a 1.1 per cent increase for the economy as a whole.

Agriculture is not a sunset industry but a progressive and productive industry that generates more than 40 per cent of Australia's exports annually. To maintain and increase this progress it is necessary to capitalise on Victoria's world-class research. I refer particularly to the research being conducted in the electorate of Portland at the Hamilton Regional Veterinary Laboratory and the Pastoral Research Institute. That research must be integrated with agricultural extension and education. There is a need to improve skills training for farm workers, shedhands, shearers, and farm contractors. In the years to come, Victoria's agricultural produce will not sell just because the State produces huge quantities; the government must look at the quality of agricultural products. The only way to improve the quality is through improved training and education.

I strongly recommend that the Minister for Education and the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs study closely the proposals to develop a wool industry training centre at Hamilton. That centre would be not only a centre for agricultural and skills training, but also a base for tertiary education and TAFE training in the area that I represent.

The Portland electorate includes the centres of Hamilton, Portland, and Casterton, which provide an excellent range of secondary schools, both private and public. The provision of a system to deliver tertiary courses in a supported off-campus mode would enable students to undertake tertiary education in the Western District without having to move from their home towns. I am not suggesting another university but a modern educational institution providing an off-campus system of education for students in my electorate.

I refer to the other city in my electorate, Portland, which has one of the best deep water natural ports in the world. Last year the total tonnage through the port exceeded 2 million tonnes and growth has continued in the past decade. The main exports from the port are grain, especially wheat, aluminium ingots from the Portland smelter, woodchips from the local forest industries, which are by-products, and live sheep. Last year more than 2 million live sheep were exported through Portland. The trade through the port is growing at the expense of other ports such as Adelaide.

Those ports are closer to the Middle East and one would expect exports from them to be cheaper, but Portland has developed a reputation in the live sheep industry as being the best port in Australia through which to handle live sheep, which is a tribute to those who handle the stock at Portland. It is also a tribute to the wharf labour, which is excellent, harbour management, and the live sheep industry. The industry is worth more than \$100 million a year to Victoria, and I am proud that it operates in my electorate.

The port is also the base for a fleet of more than twenty deep-sea fishing trawlers, which fish for orange roughy and more traditional deep-sea fish. The honourable member for Doncaster will be interested to know that there is also a significant crayfish industry out of Portland. Government encouragement and support for the continuing development of the port and associated facilities would be a sound investment for the future.

The aluminium smelter at Portland employs 800 people and produces 300 000 tonnes of aluminium annually now that both the first and second potlines are fully operational. Honourable members must remember that the smelter was located at Portland because of hard work by local Liberal members, led by Digby Crozier, who is remembered as the "father" of the smelter.

Members of the House will learn that I am prepared to give credit where credit is due. I acknowledge the role of the Cain government in assisting the smelter when help was needed. However, I emphasise my contention that the government should now sell its 35 per cent share in the smelter. The government should allow private enterprise to bring in the necessary expertise and capital to allow the third potline to be built as soon as possible, which will best be achieved through private enterprise.

The government should not forget its responsibility to help with the infrastructure; it must provide the necessary roads, schools, and health care facilities which will be needed as the smelter develops and Portland expands.

While on the subject of infrastructure, I indicate that I shall be monitoring closely the promised redevelopment of the Portland and District Hospital, which is needed and must be completed down to the very last nail. I shall not stand by idly if funds for this project are delayed or curtailed.

The Portland community health facility is in need of new premises. As a veterinarian interested in prevention rather than cure, I maintain that the same applies to health care for people—prevention is always better than cure. More of the health dollar should be directed towards preventive medicine and the promotion of healthy lifestyles than at the curative end of the spectrum.

One of Portland's major employers has been Borthwick's export abattoir, which is now owned by Australian Meat Holdings. The abattoir has been closed for several months because of changes in ownership and a lack of stock numbers. Portland is uniquely situated close to an export port and major livestock producing areas. There is available skilled labour. It can be successful for years to come as the abattoir industry is restructured. Therefore, I am working towards the reopening of these works.

I urge the new management and the unions to work together in an atmosphere of honesty, openness, and goodwill, to negotiate satisfactory working conditions for the workers and to allow management to operate the abattoir at a profit. It is unfortunate that there is not enough flexibility in Victoria's labour and industrial relations system to allow more free workplace negotiations between management and workers. Greater flexibility would allow many industries to benefit at both management and worker

level from workplace negotiations, rather than the rigid arbitration system we are stuck with at the moment.

The area I represent also boasts a significant forestry industry and an excellent range of tourist venues, including the Grampians, the Lower Glenelg National Park, the great south-west walk, and our unique western Victorian redgums. However, there is a continuing need to provide funds for vital road networks and for increased activity to combat dryland salinity, soil erosion, and pest plants and animals. Victoria needs an agriculture system that will be productive not only for the next ten years but also for the next 200 years. A sustainable agricultural industry is something all honourable members need to work towards.

In conclusion, I ask that all honourable members consider seriously the needs of rural Victoria and the development of programs, whether in services for the intellectually disabled, education, health, or transport.

All honourable members have a duty to work for all Victorians and I dedicate myself to that task.

Mr HAMILTON (Morwell)—I address this House for the first time, speaking as the honourable member for Morwell. It is with great pleasure that I take my place on this side of the House because I believe the Cain government is doing a very good job, especially in the Morwell electorate. The advantage of being in government is that one is able to be positive and is able to look forward to progress. I must admit that on entering this House last week I suffered a cultural shock. Someone said to me that my experience in local government would be good training for Parliament; I think that person got it wrong or perhaps half wrong! The local government training of working in the electorate and of representing people at that level will be valuable during my time in this place.

I pay tribute to my predecessor, Val Callister, who created history in this Parliament by being the first serving State Parliamentarian to become a mother. She did so twice! I am sure all honourable members wish her the best in her retirement. Not only did she serve the House well for seven and a bit years but she was also Secretary of the Parliamentary Labor Party. She will be better remembered for her work as the honourable member for Morwell. Not only did Val Callister serve her electorate with dedication, enthusiasm, and energy but she also showed real concern for the people she represented. On their behalf, I thank her. About the only thing she did not tell me was that I was about to be thrown to the lions! However, Daniel survived and I suppose I shall also.

I shall allocate my time to speaking about the image of the Latrobe Valley, which is important to the electorate of Morwell. To those outside this area, the image of the Latrobe Valley is that of a dirty industrial centre torn by industrial strife. That is not true—at least not since 1982 when the Cain Labor government was elected. Since then some wonderful developments have taken place in the valley and I trust that trend will continue.

The Latrobe Valley is the power centre of Victoria. Electricity is produced safely, efficiently and cheaply. I far prefer those descriptions for the acronym, SEC, to what some people used to say it stood for when I first moved to the valley in 1968! Electricity production in the valley is vital not only to the local economy but also to the State's economy. The government strategy of building on the strength of its electricity production and its brown coal resources in the valley is one of the major reasons Victoria's economy is leading the way in Australia.

Geographically, the Latrobe Valley is ideally situated. Within 1 hour's drive south is the magnificent Ninety Mile Beach, which is recognised as one of the best beaches

in Australia; 1 hour's drive north is the Baw Baw Plateau, one of the best snowfields in the State—if we have a few good winters again! A short drive from the valley are the Gippsland Lakes, which are recognised as one of the best tourist resorts in Victoria along with those provided at Mildura and Portland, which areas are represented by members of the Opposition. Also within a short drive from the electorate are some of the best national parks in the State, such as Tarra Valley–Bulga National Park and Wilson's Promontory National Park.

If people from the Latrobe Valley wish to travel to Melbourne or, in cases such as mine, have to travel to Melbourne, they can use the excellent passenger rail services that have been developed in the past few years. The government's commitment to improving passenger rail services in country Victoria and especially in the Latrobe Valley has been much appreciated by my constituents. The valley now has a frequent and well-timetabled passenger rail service to Melbourne that is provided at low cost.

Despite the hue and cry about road funding or the lack of it, since the Cain Labor government was elected in 1982 the Princes Highway east to Traralgon has been almost completely duplicated. This provides commuters with a safer, faster, and more efficient means of travelling to Melbourne by car.

As I said, one cannot overestimate the importance of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria to the Latrobe Valley. It provides jobs for approximately 10 000 workers and supports much of the local business, commerce, and industry. It is important to the confidence local people have in the valley. During the election campaign the government announced that it would proceed with the extremely important Loy Yang B3 and B4 stages of the major power development in the area. This boosted the confidence of local business, commerce, and industry in the belief that the government cared for the Latrobe Valley and was prepared to stake its future in the area. One could say that what is good for the Latrobe Valley is good for Victoria.

I shall speak about the image of the Latrobe Valley or rather the electorate of Morwell under the following four headings: planning, industrial relations, the environment, and some social issues. Under the heading of planning, for many years the people of the Latrobe Valley believed they had been disadvantaged by many decisions, which affected their future and daily lives, being made in Melbourne. In the late 1970s, the current President of the Legislative Council, as the then Minister for Local Government, initiated a proposal for a regional planning authority. Due to a lack of agreement among the local municipalities the planning authority did not eventuate. However, under the then Liberal government a Latrobe Valley Consultative Committee was established comprising State representatives from local municipalities and government authorities.

The consultative committee advised the then Liberal government on some of the needs of and issues that affected the Latrobe Valley. In 1982, when the Cain Labor government was elected, the concept of regional planning was developed and expanded. In March 1983 the Latrobe Regional Commission was established. For the first time the Latrobe Valley region had an authority which had real powers in regional planning and which had financial support to help diversify the regional economy.

The diversification of the regional economy is recognised by all people in the region as important. Currently, we are very much subject to the whims of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria. In terms of job creation, future positions, and the futures of our children, we must diversify the economy by establishing new industries and replacing those that are leaving the valley. The Latrobe Regional Commission has been successful in saving two or three textile industries and, with them, hundreds of jobs.

In the next week or two the establishment of a high-tech industry will be announced, and this will employ approximately 200 people in the next two or three years. Perhaps

the most important achievement of the Latrobe Regional Commission has been its ability to unite the various competing interests in the Latrobe Valley. During the recent Natural Resources and Environment Committee inquiry into Victoria's electricity supply and demand beyond the mid-1990s the commission was able to bring together units of local government, business, commerce, and local community groups so that they could speak with one voice. That voice argued strongly for the construction of the next stage of the Loy Yang power plants. The government's decision to proceed with the development of the next stage of the Loy Yang power plants was not given without qualification. The qualification was that there must be substantial cost savings in the construction and operation of the power stations.

Only yesterday the State Electricity Commission of Victoria announced a profit of \$100 million for the year. The general manager of the commission in the Latrobe Valley, when making that announcement on local television, said that the improved performance of the operation of the commission would not have happened without the cooperation of the union movement. Indeed, the productivity gains and the reduction in strikes that have occurred since the Cain Labor government came to office have been the paramount reasons for the improved performance of one of the real wealth generators of the State.

The annual report of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria sets out the improvements in industrial relations under the Cain Labor government. In 1979–80 approximately 265 000 worker hours were lost due to strikes and industrial disputes, but in 1987–88 that massive figure was reduced to 6500 worker hours. That is a remarkable improvement and reflects the attitude of the government towards worker cooperation and participation.

I shall give three examples of industrial relations in the Latrobe Valley so that the House may appreciate why that region leads the rest of Australia in developing joint management and industrial democracy. The Hazelwood plant life extension program for the refurbishment of the power station was designed approximately three or four years ago to reduce the capital outlays of the commission. It was initially called a half-life refit. After some negotiation it was agreed that the refurbishment program would be done by SEC day labour and agreement was reached between management of the commission and the unions involved. The first two units were refurbished satisfactorily. In fact, they were refurbished so effectively that they not only produced the power that they had been producing previously, 180 megawatts per unit, but also improved production to their specification limit of 200 megawatts per unit, something they had never produced in the history of the station.

The refurbishment of the unit three station at Hazelwood developed some problems. The program lagged and serious problems developed, not only for the union movement, but also for the State Electricity Commission production deadlines. Once again the unions negotiated with management and worked out a solution to the problem. I am pleased to announce that the refurbishment program will continue and that new milestones have been set in the agreement for the refurbishment of the remaining units. The Hazelwood power station will now come into operation on time and on budget.

The second example I give relates to the Morwell briquette power station. That power station employs approximately 900 people. The briquette factory has almost reached the end of its useful life. The capital required to replace that station is prohibitive. Once again the unions involved and the management of the SEC negotiated an agreement to continue the production of briquettes, which is an important part of Australia's export industry. The Coal Corporation of Victoria has developed an excellent domestic and overseas market for briquettes with the result that they are a very important use of our natural resource.

It was agreed that the government would inject \$30 million into the refurbishment of the briquette station if approximately \$5 million a year for ten years could be saved in the operation of that factory, a net gain of approximately \$20 million.

There is a recognition from all concerned that certain work practices, manning levels, and management practices need to be changed. Part of the briquette factory will be replaced and all the improvements will extend the lifespan of the factory a further fifteen years with a consequent saving of 900 jobs.

The third and perhaps the most important example relates to the Loy Yang Joint Study Committee. I said before that the Loy Yang B3 and B4 stages of the power station will only proceed if substantial savings occur in production techniques. The desired savings are approximately 12 per cent to 15 per cent, which are substantial savings.

The Loy Yang Joint Study Committee comprises union leaders and senior management of the State Electricity Commission. The committee is studying work and management practices, the way equipment is installed, and contracts let. The committee is supported by a secretariat and a working party and will report to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources by Christmas 1988. I am told that the study is proceeding extremely well and that savings equivalent to approximately 5 or 6 per cent have been clearly identified and will be implemented in the operation of the next Loy Yang power station section that is being built.

The point I make is this: these achievements can occur only if there is mutual respect between management and unions and with the support of a government that is willing to encourage this type of industrial democracy. The credibility of the unions and the management of the SEC is at stake and it is in the interests of all Victorians, not just the workers in the Latrobe Valley, for the government to encourage this exercise.

Many people, especially people who come from Melbourne to live in the Latrobe Valley, have a perception that the environment of the Latrobe Valley is not the healthiest environment. The Latrobe Valley Airshed Study has just completed one of its final reports. The previous Liberal government established the study in 1978 and it was continued by the current government, so it is a study across party lines. Its brief has been to monitor the air environment at a number of stations in the Latrobe Valley. The results of those measurements have indicated that the oxides of nitrogen and sulphur, and ozone levels are not only well below the acceptable world standards, but also well below the equivalent emission levels in Melbourne. The airshed study, I trust, will be continued. I shall return to that in a moment.

The State Electricity Commission is installing state-of-the-art precipitators at Yallourn W power station and this will further reduce the particulates. When I first moved to the Latrobe Valley in 1968, I noticed an unpleasant stench in the area. Upon investigation I was informed that this was emitted from the APM paper mill at Maryvale owned by the company now known as Amcor Ltd. The company has now spent millions of dollars to reduce its emissions into the environment with the result that the Maryvale stench—as it is called locally—is no longer so strong.

The honourable member for Gippsland South in his address last week mentioned the Latrobe Valley outfall sewer—LVOS—which is a new proposal, and is designed to take some of the waste from the industries in the Latrobe Valley to the ocean. The reason for the decision to go ahead resulted from the large pollution problems in the Gippsland Lakes. Earlier I referred to their value as a tourist area. Currently work is being done in relation to the Latrobe Valley outfall sewer. It is an important project, especially when one considers the problems that may be created for Ninety Mile Beach

where there may be environmental and ecological damage. I assure my colleague, the honourable member for Gippsland South, that the government intends that the effects of the outfall sewer will be monitored and, if there is damage done to the environment, the project will be modified; but the project does address another major problem and it represents the best possible solution.

The other problem that I should like to address is a matter which was taken up by an honourable member in another place that was reported in the local press. As a trained scientist I have learned that one cannot expect newspaper stories to be accurate regarding scientific information. The matter raised was acid rain. The honourable member for Narracan has also taken an interest in the area and has shown concern, which I share. However, the term "acid rain" is a misnomer at this stage.

Honourable members may know that the measuring of pH levels to determine whether there have been falls of acid rain is a difficult and delicate task. When measurements were taken at three stations it was not possible to determine accurately whether acid rain had occurred. Therefore, the reports that appeared in the newspapers should be treated with suspicion. I support the continuation of investigations into the fall of acid rain and agree that any source of this phenomenon should be removed.

The Latrobe Valley has seen many booms and busts. That is one of the characteristics of the history of the Latrobe Valley. Unfortunately, when bust times come it is always the same people who are affected—the poor, the disadvantaged, and the inarticulate. It is important to even out development in the Latrobe Valley to avoid these booms and busts.

One major problem that exists still in the Latrobe Valley is that of public housing. Under the policies of the previous government, public housing was sold off, with the result that stocks were depleted and those remaining required urgent repair. The Budget provides an injection of \$80 million to the Latrobe Valley Regional Housing Estate Improvement Program for the refurbishment of public housing stock. This will inject activity into the local building industry, which will benefit not only the builders but also the many employees in the area. The government should be given credit for that decision.

Emergency accommodation is urgently needed, and I am sure the Minister for Community Services will address that problem. The government has a large number of aggressive policies which I strongly support, such as the social justice strategy, the key words of which are: access and equity.

I have taken honourable members on a quick Cook's tour of my electorate. The Latrobe Valley is a vibrant, living place. It is Australia's leader in industrial democracy. Its environmental problems have been addressed and are continuing to be addressed. Some social problems have been and others will, I hope, be addressed during this term of government.

I shall maintain the momentum created by the progress in the Latrobe Valley during the term of the former honourable member for Morwell. It is my job to maintain that momentum already established and to represent my electorate strongly in this place with the Ministers and various departments.

I congratulate you, Mr Speaker, and the Deputy Speaker, on your election. It is encouraging and reassuring for a new member to see a friendly smile at the front table. I shall support you in your duty of keeping order in the House.

Mr RICHARDSON (Forest Hill)—I affirm the loyalty and the respect of myself and the electorate of Forest Hill to Her Majesty the Queen, and I congratulate His Excellency the Governor and Mrs McCaughey on the excellent way in which they

have discharged their duties as representatives of the monarch in this State to the satisfaction and benefit of the people of Victoria.

I also congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your election to the highest office within the House and I congratulate also the Deputy Speaker. I congratulate also the honourable member for Morwell, who has just resumed his seat, having made his maiden speech in this House; and I also congratulate the honourable members for Richmond, Portland and Mildura who have spoken in the debate today. I congratulate all new members who have been elected to this House and are yet to deliver their maiden speeches. We bear a heavy responsibility as representatives of our respective electorates, and I trust that the honourable members who have been elected for the first time will enjoy their stay as members of this House. I am sure they will be most productive and will give beneficial service to the people of Victoria.

The Governor's Speech, which is read by His Excellency the Governor at the opening of Parliament, has very little to do with the Governor himself. It is written for him by the government, and his task is to read it regardless of what it may say and regardless of whether he agrees with it. The remarks I am about to make relating to his Speech are not disrespectful to His Excellency because, as I said, he has no choice in what is presented to him to be read.

One reference was made in the Governor's Speech to Victoria leading the way. The Premier is constantly saying that Victoria leads the way. He is right; Victoria does lead the way. It leads Australia in the level of State debt, for example. When the Cain Labor Party was elected to office in 1982, it had taken 150 years for the State debt to reach \$11 billion. Only six years later, the debt has already reached \$23 billion. That is an achievement and a fine example of leading the way.

Victoria leads the way in taxes and charges, and in the employment of public servants. Victoria's Public Service has increased at a faster rate than the Public Service sectors of all States combined.

Victoria leads the way in scandals and gross mismanagement. The Victorian Economic Development Corporation is now assuming the serial proportions of *Days of Our Lives*. We have yet another scandal trotted out to us daily. There has been Wallace International Ltd and the Whipstick gold mining venture. In the latter case money was lent to a couple of crooks who did not have permits to mine and who have not yet produced a single ounce of gold. In a flight of fancy, the corporation lent thousands upon thousands of dollars to Fantasy Egg Farm Pty Ltd. There was also the hovercraft venture and the tourist train. Now we learn that some millions of dollars were handed over to Islamic Abattoirs of Australia Pty Ltd, money which found its way to Malaysia.

Mr Maclellan—She was a princess.

Mr RICHARDSON—Presumably the government decided that that meant everything was all right. The government leads the way in the appointment and disappointment of heads of departments. In tourism alone, there has been the Nordlinger scandal, which lingers on, and the Dunstan scandal. All of those scandals related to the Victorian Tourism Commission which was administered by—guess who—the Deputy Premier.

Victoria leads the way in discrimination in favour of trade unions and certain organisations that are favourable to the Labor Party. Victoria leads the way in discrimination in favour of certain ethnic organisations and communities which find favour with the government and in discrimination against other organisations and communities which do not find favour with the government.

Victoria leads the way in hospital waiting lists, and has done so ever since the government came to power. What is so impressive about the government's record with regard to hospital waiting lists is that it has kept up the standard; the lists have steadily got longer and longer. Not once has the government allowed the lists to fall back. It is a fine achievement of steadily increasing hospital waiting lists.

Another fine achievement in the way the government leads Australia is housing waiting lists. The government leads the way in money being wasted under the Community Employment Program. By way of example, thousands of dollars were allocated to train trade unionists so that they would understand union rules. Videos were made and lectures were given as part of that training. Another example is the transplanting of palm trees in Port Melbourne at a cost of \$30 000 a tree. That is leading the way! A further example is the studies in solar particle velocity in the vicinity of Ministry of Housing and Construction flats. That is leading the way in useless research.

The government leads the way in political cynicism. It is to be congratulated on its political acumen in calling the election when it did but it is not to be congratulated for its honesty. The government won the election.

Mr Micallef—Why don't you tell Kennett that?

Mr RICHARDSON—Why don't you drop on your head, Eddie?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Norris)—Order! The honourable member for Forest Hill will ignore interjections.

Mr RICHARDSON—It is extremely difficult to ignore interjections that are stupid. I like interjections provided they are witty, but the interjections of the honourable member for Springvale are not witty, they are just silly.

The government called the election when it did to achieve a number of results; winning the election was only part of the objective. The government had to close Parliament so that it could be removed from scrutiny in matters involving the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, the Nordlinger affair, and the other scandals that surrounded the government. What better way to close Parliament than to call an election and prorogue Parliament! That way everything is wiped off the Notice Paper, opportunities for question time are not available, Parliamentary privilege does not apply, and the Opposition, which is starting to breathe down the neck of the government, is held at bay because it does not have a forum.

Another reason for the government calling the election was that it knew there would be a multitude of diversions. The old Roman circus idea of placating the masses with bread and circuses was put to full effect because, during the election campaign, the Victorian Football League grand final took place, World Expo '88 in Queensland was continuing, and the school holidays came up. Those events not only diverted the attention of the voters of Victoria from the political reality of the mismanagement and disgraceful conduct of the Cain government but also they removed many voters from the State. The Labor Party knew that, although the Liberal Party normally does better than it does with postal votes, quite often the Labor Party does better than the Liberal Party with absentee votes.

Mr Micallef—And the popular vote!

Mr RICHARDSON—If one talks about the popular vote, I point out that, in fact, the Liberal Party gained more than the Labor Party, but that just shows how stupid the honourable member is.

The ploy was devised for the Premier by his advisers, in particular, by Mr Hogg, and Mr Cameron, the Australian Nationwide Opinion Polls Pty Ltd pollster who seems to pop up like a jack-in-a-box whenever an election is about to take place. That was the advice given to the Premier, who took the advice with fear and trembling. The Premier does not like elections; he does not like going out into the electorate and seeing and talking to people. He certainly does not like being under the sort of pressure that an election brings with it. But more frightening was the prospect of actually losing the election if he left it any longer. Therefore, the Premier jumped into the election.

It was a ploy; it was politically astute; it was dishonest—but, then, what does one expect from a dishonest government?—and the ploy worked. The government lost a seat. In fact, it did not score as many seats overall as the National and Liberal parties combined. It lost a few in the Upper House, where I suppose it did not really matter greatly to the government.

Mr Leigh—All the lefties went.

Mr RICHARDSON—Yes. Most of them transferred to this House and they are having considerable difficulty here. The government has to be mindful of the fact that the people now know they were conned; they know they were duped by a dishonest government. As the saga of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation unfolds, people are now realising just by how much they were duped and what a disastrous, dishonest, and incompetent government the Labor Party has provided.

When one considers the scandals, the collapses, and the mismanagement, one tends to find there is one person consistently at the centre of all of them; it is the person who is only a heartbeat away from the Premiership—the Deputy Premier. Let us examine the fascinating history of the Deputy Premier in this government.

In 1982, when the Cain government first came to power, the honourable member for Footscray became Deputy Premier and Minister of Education. That period in education marked the escalation of the power and the influence of the militant left-wing teacher unions. It marked an outrageous escalation in the amount of money spent on education at a time when there was a declining market for the education dollar. The number of children in Victorian State schools was steadily declining, yet the amount being devoted to education was steadily increasing.

As Minister of Education, the Deputy Premier caved in to the militant left-wing unions who had helped the Labor Party to be elected in 1982. It was they who ran education, not the Minister. Within six months, despite declining student numbers, he increased the number of teachers; he increased the teachers' salaries by 24 per cent. All of that occurred within six months. He did not control education; the unions controlled education because they controlled him.

Therefore, the Deputy Premier was a failure as Minister of Education. That was admitted by the Premier and by his colleagues in the government, so he was shifted from education. He moved to being the Minister responsible for economic development and tourism. The problem is that the Deputy Premier creates administrative disaster where'er he treads. Having created a disaster in education, he was turned loose to create another disaster, particularly in tourism, and so he did. He was an abject failure as the Minister responsible for tourism, and it was during his period as tourism Minister that the scandals occurred and there were dismissals of Mr Don Dunstan and Mr Nordlinger, both of whom had been in charge of the Victorian Tourism Commission under the Deputy Premier as the Minister responsible for tourism.

There was then the scandal of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation. Scandal after scandal and disaster after disaster have occurred. Who was the Minister in charge of that organisation? It was the Deputy Premier. The Deputy Premier made

a mess of that and so he was shifted again. He has now been put in charge of matters relating to agriculture and rural affairs and the arts. There are a great many members of this House who are better informed on matters agricultural than I am, and I shall leave it to them to maintain a watching brief over the Deputy Premier in his role as the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

However, I have a very keen interest in the arts, as a director of the Victoria State Opera, and I am really in fear and trembling as to what sort of devastation this man will now create among the various arts that are practised in Victoria, in some of which we excel. The arts in Victoria are important, not only for the Victorian community but also as a component in our tourism industry. They are important in the training of performers and also artists in the non-performing arts. Indeed, Victoria has a fine record of producing people of great talent both in the dramatic arts, music, and the graphic arts. I fear for the arts in Victoria under the administration of this new Minister.

We have been fortunate under this government in that there have been Ministers for the Arts, who have had my support, who have done extremely well. The former honourable member for Carrum was interested in the arts and served the arts well in the relatively short time in which he was the responsible Minister. The honourable member for Oakleigh was very interested in the arts, was a good Minister, and served Victoria well as Minister for the Arts. He was very shabbily treated by the Labor Party, which will regret the factional deals and the backstabbing that occurred to remove the honourable member for Oakleigh from Cabinet and replace him with lesser lights who will not shine with any of the brilliance of the honourable member for Oakleigh. As I said, I believe the Labor Party will regret its decision to dump the honourable member for Oakleigh.

The field of agriculture is now about to face the onslaught of the Deputy Premier. The honourable gentleman ought to be aware of one of the greatest threats facing this State. It involves agriculture to the extent that it is agricultural land that is under threat, but it involves many other departments and disciplines as well. The threat is salinity, which to date has not been tackled in any sensible or serious way by the government. The government has formed a few task forces and it has established many committees which go around and around in circles and which issue many press releases and glossy reports, but they do not actually do anything.

If it is to protect the heritage for future generations—and we are talking about 100 or 200 years from now—the government must commence serious action now on a cooperative basis with other governments, and certainly with the Federal government, rather than proceeding with the half-hearted nonsense that it is going on with at present.

Half the State will be unfarmable in 50 years' hence. The government should take off its ideological hat when it is considering the greenhouse effect, which is an environmental threat facing the world, not just Victoria. It would have no effect on the honourable member who is interjecting, no matter what happened; furthermore, no-one would care.

The government should examine the continued wisdom of the use of fossil fuels for the generation of power. Victoria has brown coal deposits—of which we are very proud and which make Victorians feel safe—that will last for hundreds of years at the present rate of consumption. But will the world allow communities to continue to burn fossil fuels if the greenhouse effect, which is now causing considerable alarm, is shown to be a fact and if action then has to be taken to reduce the environmental effects caused by the burning of fossil fuels?

The government, dominated as it is by the left wing with its paranoia about all things nuclear, will have to start thinking about whether one can continue to burn brown coal or whether Victoria has to start long-term planning as an industrial State to introduce nuclear power because it will be shown to be cleaner environmentally than the brown coal that is now being burnt.

Most Labor Party members by now will have gone slinking back to their burrows at the very prospect of nuclear power in Victoria. It is ideologically abhorrent to them, even to the most rabid right winger in the Labor Party. The whole idea sends them into paroxysms. They will have to stop and think about it and consider the use of nuclear power if it is shown that the continuing use of fossil fuels will ultimately destroy the environment within which we all survive.

I conclude by reiterating the loyalty and affection towards Her Majesty the Queen of myself and the people I represent in the electorate of Forest Hill, and I congratulate you, Mr Deputy Speaker, on your elevation to the second highest office in this place.

Mr SEITZ (Keilor)—I support the motion for the adoption of our Address-in-Reply to the Governor of Victoria's Speech and wish His Excellency Dr Davis McCaughey well for the future.

The Victorian economy is the best it has ever been and it is continuing to progress. No-one can deny that fact. To build the confidence of the business sector and the general community, the State must have a stable government, a government in which the community has confidence in investment for the future development of the State. Today, that confidence is in place.

The Cain government in 1982 had to make some hard decisions on the recovery of the building industry and the economy. That recovery has occurred and the building industry is continuing to boom to such an extent that it is short of skilled labour. That is proof that confidence in the Victorian economy has not been lost and that investment in the building industry is continuing. For eighteen months not one project has been shelved. Developers are clambering for planning permits for building projects on available land to further the development of Victoria, not only in office accommodation but also in other areas. Office space has increased from 22 per cent in 1982–83 to 29 per cent in 1988–89.

I am a member representing an outer-suburban area of Melbourne, and my electorate has experienced the same development. A number of delays were experienced because of uncertainties, but the developers now have confidence and a commitment from the government with its economic strategy. That strategy has given direction to the business community and developers are providing office space and commercial accommodation.

When I was looking for office accommodation for my electoral office, I could not obtain rental space. No-one was prepared to invest in building and expansion, but today sufficient vacant office space is available and builders and investors have gone ahead knowing that the growth will continue. People have confidence in the economy and wish to move into the area.

A shortage of accommodation will arise in the Keilor municipal area where semi-professional and professional people are seeking accommodation. The city of Keilor wishes to move its municipal offices in order to efficiently service the community. The shortage in accommodation has resulted from the back-log caused by the previous Liberal government and its bureaucracy in not planning development of the area or giving direction towards planning. That direction has been given by the Cain government.

The Bond Corporation—and everybody knows Alan Bond, the entrepreneur—sold its land holdings in my electorate. The Bond Corporation has subsequently purchased the Keilor land that it sold and has gone ahead with the development of that area. A boom in land prices has occurred and services must be provided for commercial enterprises, from fish-and-chip shops to supermarkets. Business enterprises are clampering for rental accommodation. Everybody is eagerly awaiting further expansion of the commercial area of my electorate.

As I said, the city of Keilor wants to relocate its municipal offices because of the increase in the population of the municipality. Its accommodation is insufficient to cater for its staff and the services it provides to the community.

The economy is now in sound shape. Despite the opposition parties' questions about the Victorian Economic Development Corporation during the past three or four weeks, no impact has been felt in the economic area. Investors have not been scared of putting their money into Victoria to again make Melbourne the financial capital of Australia, which was not the case when the Cain government was elected in 1982.

The government has a strong commitment to attract industry. The trend in 1982 has been slowly reversed and industry has reopened its doors in the northern and north-western suburbs. Victoria has experienced a lack of confidence in works and investments, with many industries moving interstate. New enterprises have now been established in Victoria.

Some community organisations are concerned at the rapid growth in their areas, particularly in the Broadmeadows municipality, which is a part of my electorate, and the required social planning for industrial development. The western suburbs are no longer the dumping grounds of noxious substances.

Mr Reynolds—It was close.

Mr SEITZ—Yes, it was close. The government's economic planning has returned a confidence to both small and large Victorian investors. Many people who had taken early retirement are investing their superannuation funds, perhaps by constructing small factories. I am pleased that a number of my former students who are now qualified tradesmen have leased factories and started their own businesses, each creating six or seven jobs. That confidence was not apparent in 1982 in either investors or students. Occasionally former students discuss with me the opportunities for training and education for their children.

The government has revitalised the bricks and mortar industry in its building of schools as well as in the refurbishment of old schools. St Albans High School has been refurbished. The old weatherboards and cement sheets have been replaced and an ideal teaching environment has been created in schools within the new growth area in my electorate. Planning has seen the development of a new primary school at Taylor's Lakes, which is to be ready for occupancy at the commencement of the 1989 school year.

On behalf of local government planners, and particularly the community, I am concerned that some government bureaucrats have been slow to identify the growth and development areas, particularly at Taylors Lakes. I was informed that the population growth had diminished and that the new primary school would not be required. However, construction is 75 per cent completed and I congratulate the Minister for Education for the initiative.

Many government bureaucrats who do not live in the north-western suburbs travel the two main highways and do not see what is happening in the areas between the highways. I encourage them to detour. The Deputy Premier, who is in the Chamber,

regularly travels throughout the north-western suburbs and he even knows where houses are being built on what was vacant land six months ago!

Many government bureaucrats should follow that example. They would be pleasantly surprised at the growth and development, particularly in the Keilor–Melton corridor, which has been presented as a public discussion paper for the planning of the provision of water, sewerage, power, and other services. When elected in 1982 I discovered that parts of my electorate were not provided with those essential services. Since that time, the Labor government has rectified the problem at minimal cost to residents; previous governments had decided that residents had to pay the full costs. The Minister for Water Resources at that time made a commitment and services were provided.

The Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria intends to install gas lines in the area in a joint exercise with municipal road construction contractors. It took some time for the corporation to be convinced that reticulation works could be carried out at the same time as road construction works. I wish Telecom could be persuaded to install telephone lines underground!

It has been pleasing for me in the past six years—I have lived in the electorate for 32 years—to observe the rapid development of the road network and the provision of services and of care for the aged. Such services were badly neglected.

Community services are particularly necessary in areas where people are less articulate, and perhaps, come from a migrant background. These people need assistance to complete forms and to write letters. At times, my office staff have been fully occupied in completing forms, typing letters, or explaining procedures for those people. That requirement has reduced since the resources have been provided within the community. It was often necessary for me to contact the Salvation Army and other welfare organisations to assist many people in my electorate.

The resources are now in place. Whenever a program is introduced, it naturally creates more demand and people say that there should be more staff. However, that can take place only slowly and with time as the program develops and the resources and accommodation become available.

When I have raised the issue with government Ministers and departments, they say that they cannot decentralise in that part of the Keilor electorate or in the outer-western suburbs because there are no bricks and mortar, no office space or accommodation that can be leased or rented at present. I encourage developers to provide accommodation so that services can be provided closer to where the people and their needs are.

The government is continuing to look after people with disabilities. Many improvements in that area have been made, but it will take some time for the community to fully accept the integration program. Many people do not agree with the integration program in schools. That process will be overcome by community education and by encouraging parents to participate in further development so that their children can be integrated into the school system. But again it is a slow process to develop confidence in the project.

A women's health centre has also been opened in the western suburbs. That is essential in this area, particularly when one considers the migrant population. I hope women will be encouraged to use the Western Women's Health Centre because at present women from various backgrounds have concerns about women's health issues that are not discussed. In their countries they did not have the opportunity of being educated about problems faced by women in later stages of their lives. They do not have confidence in the privacy of their consultations with doctors.

I have had personal experience with doctors, as have many honourable members, when I have asked too many questions about symptoms and the side effects of medication. They think patients are wasting their time and cut them off. If this happens to migrant women, they become shy and retreat back into their shells. They then go to the chemist and ask for medication which, at times, will do nothing for them. I congratulate the government and the Minister for Health on introducing that program.

The Governor's Speech referred to Victorians from non-English speaking backgrounds. The government has always sought to develop services for these people and to encourage them to use the government's mainstream services. One example involves interpreters used in the mainstream of government services because sometimes ethnic-specific services lack up-to-date information and can be used only in an advisory manner or as a guide. Sooner or later migrants must make use of mainstream services. For that reason, honourable members should encourage that development.

The care of the aged is another important program, particularly with their sporting and cultural activities. Ethnic communities have been prominent in doing much for themselves by fundraising and by acquiring their own land—sometimes out in paddocks where they have been gyped by real estate agents because they later discover they cannot obtain building permits. Not only do ethnic communities look after their own families but they are also community minded and raise funds to build facilities so that they can further care for their own communities. They should be congratulated for encouraging people from all walks of life and other ethnic backgrounds to participate in the community.

I am delighted that many of the conflicts that occur in the old countries are not creating problems in Australia. The Keilor electorate does not have any ethnic-based problems preventing people from living and working together, communicating with each other, and participating in sporting activities, which is something that all honourable members should cherish and promote.

The Cain Labor government has always been, and will always be, a government that listens to people. The Opposition often suggests that the government does not listen to people. What better example can be given than the Keilor electorate, where the government has listened to the people on issues such as prisons and undesirable storage space for industry? It was proposed that a prison be built in the north-western suburbs to overcome the problems faced by existing prisons, on which the former Liberal government spent little money. When I was elected to Parliament I joined the community services caucus committee and examined the existing remand centre and prison facilities required for the future. The present remand centre should have been closed down 100 years ago.

When it was proposed to build a prison in the Greenvale area, the local community joined together and opposed it. A similar situation applied to a proposition to construct a storage area for radioactive material. In both cases the government took note of the concerns of the community. There is a temporary liquid waste plant in the electorate. Brambles Liquid Waste Disposals closed its plant in Tullamarine and this temporary plant will be closed in 1990.

These three examples demonstrate that Ministers of the Crown and the government listen to and communicate with not only honourable members but also the community and their local government representatives. Unfortunately, some people are struck with the "not in our backyard" syndrome. All honourable members must tackle that attitude. State members of Parliament must make decisions about what is the best course for Victoria as a whole. At times there are difficult or unpleasant decisions to

make when community groups say, "We do not want this in our backyard." They bury their heads in the sand whenever development is to take place.

Some people residing in growth areas in the Keilor electorate do not realise that an additional 100 000 people will be living beyond the existing housing estates in the next few years. More vehicles will be using the roads and travelling through those estates, and new sporting facilities, shopping complexes, and other developments will be required. I suggest that in ten years the outer-western and north-western areas will have a completely different complexion with a society based on a different economic, political, and social perception. People must appreciate that we cannot stand still and block plans for development, including road construction. I publicly supported the R3–R5 road in 1982–83, but there was much local opposition to it.

When I became the first member of Parliament publicly to support that road, many people warned me against taking such a course because local councils and many people in the community had petitioned against it. These people are now asking, "Why has it not been built?" Unfortunately, cheap politics has been involved in this issue. The government allocated money in 1984 to carry out this work, but the project did not proceed because of opposition to it. This year's Budget has again allocated the funds, but the road requires a five-year construction period. Honourable members on both sides of the House need to take that sort of responsible attitude for the benefit of the community and the State as a whole. During the election campaign just past, I was pleased to see that the Opposition also supported the construction of that road link, which should have been the case five years ago. If it had been the case then, the R3–R5 road would have been completed.

Although the government listens to the community, sometimes hard decisions have to be made for the sake of the community as a whole. Sometimes individual pressure groups are misled by those people who have the knowledge but only pass on selective knowledge for their own aims and objectives.

I still maintain that all the questioning and hoo-ha heard about the Victorian Economic Development Corporation will have no effect on the standing and reputation of the government and will have no effect on the community's confidence in the State. The Opposition is doing a disservice and exhibiting disloyalty to the State by continuing this barrage of attack, and seeking to bring down the economy drive of the government, rather than supporting economic growth.

World Expo 88 in Brisbane has meant increased profit margins for Queensland. We are promoting the State of Victoria in all spheres, not merely in terms of, for example, the bid for the 1996 Olympic Games. In saying that, I am not trying to gain cheap political mileage from the issue.

In conclusion, I give my commitment to my electorate. I will lobby for its needs, but I reiterate: decisions have to be made on the basis of all the facts and on the basis of what is best for the development of the Victorian community as a whole, and for its economic growth.

Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston South)—Speaking on the debate on the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech gives me an opportunity of committing myself on behalf of the constituents of Frankston South to Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen of Australia. I also commend the Governor on the way he has conducted himself since his appointment. I also commend his wife who has assisted him in his duties in Victoria. I have had the pleasure of their company in the electorate I represent, and I am sure other honourable members would agree with me that, among other qualities, he has a magnificent speaking voice, which makes a pleasant occasion out of any duty he undertakes.

I also congratulate the honourable members for Portland and Morwell and other honourable members who will be making their first contribution, now known as the inaugural address, to the House this evening. It would appear that 1988 will be known, as was the year 1976, for the large number of new members entering this place. Their expertise, competence, imagination, and thought will add to the workings of this place, as they do what they can for their constituents and for the House in general because, as we all know, great knowledge does not come from one person or one side of the House.

Today honourable members have the opportunity of walking around their electorates and talking individually to constituents about some of the government's promises. One can discuss whether it was a popular vote, a marginal win by one side or the other, and so on. The facts are that the Labor Party has been returned, and it was clever in the way it promoted the twelve marginal seats, the seat I represent being the sixteenth most marginal.

In the electorate of Frankston South there was a swing towards the Liberal Party. Unfortunately, in the other three marginal seats in my area, including Chelsea Province in the Upper House, the Liberal Party was unable to gain the 2 to 3 per cent swing that I was able to achieve, which indicates that a new strategy may be required. In the New South Wales election a strategy failed for the Labor Party, but in the previous Federal election it worked. Maybe it is a case of two out of three, and next time the Liberal Party will be on the government benches. Whatever the situation, it is a workable majority for the House, and the Opposition will highlight the need for change and continue to put forward its views.

In that vein, I was lucky enough to travel overseas this year on a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association study trip. It is interesting to note that issues being discussed overseas in May and June of this year are now being highlighted in Australia. The greenhouse effect was a major issue in the United States of America and in England when I was there. Another big issue over there concerned vehicle problems. For reasons which later became explainable, Mazda and Suzuki cars would start up and charge through garage doors! At first I thought this was a joke, but apparently it is related to the fuel injection in the cars. In other words, the car is started and the fuel injection creates a problem. The fuel is injected into the cylinder heads, great power is exerted, and the car moves forward without the need to push the accelerator. This caused many problems for people in the United States of America and Great Britain. I understand that that problem has not yet been noticed in Australia, but we are facing the problem of AIDS, which I shall deal with in a moment.

In my travels overseas I noticed that there is not the same commitment to the environment as there appears to be in Australia. For example, when I was visiting the Great Lakes I saw chimneys belching out sulphur dioxide. The gas was so solid it looked as though columns of it were being produced. On a television show called *Sunday Conference*, I was surprised to see an industry executive in America suggesting that though they were only 800 miles south of Canada it was not the Americans creating the acid rain, and that it was caused by something else. He said acid rain was not being created by pollutants from American factories travelling up to the north of Canada, and destroying its forests and wildlife.

I was fortunate enough to visit the Niagara lakes and Niagara Falls where it was explained to me by a gentleman that every day 3000 tons of chemicals flow into the lakes. While I was there the Greenpeace people had a yacht on Lake Ontario. Despite their protests, they did not receive great headlines as they would have done here. They were saying that nothing could live in the environment or the surrounds of the Great Lakes in Ontario because of the chemicals, deposits of heavy metals, and so on.

Listening the other night to the *Sunday Conference* debate hosted by Michel Schildberger made me think that people have to start somewhere, and maybe Australia is the place to start. At least we have an Environment Protection Authority, controls on the size of our chimneys, and controls on the emissions from those chimneys.

In America I rented a motor car which ran on lead-free petrol. I had no real hassles with that. I put in \$18 worth of lead-free fuel required to fill up the tank of a big V8 car. That was a pleasure given that, in Australia, it would have cost me \$50!

The price of petrol in England was much the same as in Australia. However, England does not promote lead-free petrol; the display notices on pumps simply give the different combinations of octane ratings. The people in England to whom I spoke did not seem to think it was important to use lead-free petrol. Probably 40 million to 50 million people in England are driving around the country polluting the atmosphere.

I hired a car in England and filled up at various petrol stations, the first three of which sold lead-free petrol. The next petrol station had a notice stating that I should consult the car manual to ascertain the correct petrol to use. The manual stated that the car I had hired was able to take lead-free petrol, but lead-free petrol was not available at that outlet.

Since 1986, all cars manufactured in Australia have been designed for lead-free petrol. Australia has a population of 16 million, a small population compared with other countries in the world. Australia has been a world leader in the introduction of lead-free petrol. That point was raised in a conference I attended a few nights ago.

I was especially interested in tourism during my recent world trip. I know that the Premier sometimes gets his facts on tourism wrong, and that it is subsequently corrected in *Hansard*. The Premier recently said that tourism brought in \$20 billion to Victoria. I think he meant to say that that was the figure for tourism for the whole of Australia.

In 1980–81, more than one million visitors came to Australia, 30 per cent from New Zealand and 10 to 15 per cent from America, Europe and England. Since that time, the major increase in tourism has been from the Asian areas—Japan, Korea, and so on. One needs only to go to Queensland, to places such as Sanctuary Cove, to find that every street sign is written in both English and Japanese. That situation would have been unthinkable in 1980.

In 1980–81 tourism accounted for \$4 billion of the Australian economy. Victoria's share was 25 per cent. Tourism now accounts for \$20 billion and Victoria's share is \$4 billion. Tourism has had an enormous effect on the economy of the State.

Mr John Rowe is the head of the Australian Tourism Commission. He was once the Chairman of the Victorian Tourist Commission and was probably one of the most outstanding heads of that commission. Victoria has had problems in recent times with that commission. Mr Rowe said recently that by the year 2000 Australia will have five million guests annually. This year Australia expects more than two million guests. The number of tourists has virtually doubled in eight or nine years and will increase in the short period of ten to twelve years to five million. That will have an enormous effect on tourism not only in Australia but also in Victoria.

This morning the honourable member for Morwell spoke about the tourist attractions that are an hour's drive from Melbourne. In the triangle located between Newcastle, Adelaide and Tasmania is 75 per cent of Australia's population. Anywhere within that triangle can be reached in approximately an hour's plane travel. That provides an enormous focus for the tourist dollar.

The honourable member for Morwell spoke about Victoria being a small State. Although Victoria does not have an attraction such as Ayers Rock, it has a multitude

of other attractions and it has the capacity to entertain and make welcome hundreds of thousands of tourists. Victoria has the snowfields—if the greenhouse effect does not put them out of business—a \$1 billion industry. Victoria is the State of the “big event.” Recent events have been the VFL grand final, the Caulfield and Melbourne cups, and the Derby. It also has cricket at the magnificent Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The government must take a more realistic approach to tourism than it has in the past three or four years. Its approach so far has been hit-and-miss. It has spent a lot of money and has ridden on the coat-tails of the Australian tourist industry in its advertising. Victoria has actually fallen behind other States. In 1981–82 the Liberal government in Victoria spent \$100 000 on a research document, *Victoria. Ready and Waiting*. That policy was implemented for a couple of years. However, approaches to tourism have gone in different directions because of the different Ministers who have handled the portfolio. I understand that one project to promote Victoria initiated by a Minister was to cost \$7 million or \$8 million. That has not yet been implemented. I understand that some advertising accounts in Japan have not been paid. That omission should be corrected in the future otherwise it will leave an unpleasant taste in the mouths of the Japanese.

The Liberal Party understands the approach needed to market a product. It is important to know how to service tourists. For instance, the Japanese have a different work ethic from Australians. Many Japanese have only a week or a fortnight's holiday at any one time. Because of this they want to pack as much as they can into every day. They start their day at 6 a.m. and go to midnight and virtually go flat out all day with a different project every half-hour.

Another policy that Australia should adopt is the bed and breakfast concept that is so popular overseas. A room in an hotel in Scotland, England, or the United States of America can cost \$A200 to \$A300 a night. In fact, I stayed at a first-class hotel in Edinburgh that cost \$A280. However, these countries have accommodation provided in private homes at a cost of \$A40 or \$A50 to \$A100. I took advantage of that accommodation in England and Scotland and found it an enjoyable experience. The people with whom I stayed were able to tell me of places of interest to visit. That facility is not readily available in Australia.

In the United States of America I met some people who had been to Australia for the America's Cup. They thought the hospitality in Perth was exceptional. Before they returned to America they bought an old car and travelled across Australia to the east coast. They were amazed at the hospitality extended to them. They had never before had the experience of being able to stop in a caravan park and pitch a tent. Australian people even offered them breakfast. They said that it would not be safe to camp in the same way in their country.

Tourism can have its down sides. I read in one of today's newspapers that some young ladies were delayed in leaving Bali. Apparently Garuda Indonesian Airways had changed the flight from a Boeing 747 service to a Douglas 10 service, and the aircraft provided for that flight had 90 fewer seats. This meant that some passengers were off-loaded. Over the past year or so I have received complaints from a number of constituents who have gone to Bali for holidays and have found that, although the accommodation was excellent, the transport was suspect.

Tourists often cannot get the flight home that they wish. Because they are held up they have to continue their holiday for another three or four days. The two people to whom I referred were held up for nine days because the seats they had booked were cancelled. Recently there was also the sad case involving a young man who was flying home accompanying the body of a friend who had drowned as a result of being caught

in a rip. There are many instances of people losing their lives in Bali in such circumstances.

Because of corrupt practices, often it seems involving Garuda Indonesian Airlines, tourists are forced to pay extra to buy tickets to return to Australia—and often they are unable to have the money refunded. It seems that if tourists are able to grease the palms of airport staff they will be looked after. I doubt that that happens anywhere else in the world. Certainly, it seems peculiar to Bali.

A doctor in my electorate had to fork out in that way so his wife and two children could return to Australia—as well as another person who had to return to care for a sick relative. Those people came to me and asked me to write letters to the airline asking for a refund of that money. The Minister for Tourism should address the problems that occur in that area.

In reading through the report from the Fairfield Hospital that was recently tabled in the House, I noted with interest the comments made by Dr Ian Jennens, a Professor of Virology. He said that many people come back from Bali suffering from malaria, gastroenteritis, and other illnesses. The incidence of malaria is of particular concern. Because of the prophylactics available, many people consider that the taking of chloroquine and sulphur pyrimethamine will protect them against catching the disease.

Many strains of malaria, particularly in Thailand and East Africa, have become resistant to those drugs and often people return suffering from malaria, which is a dangerous disease to bring back to Australia. Dr Jennens states:

For example malaria prophylaxis has become more complex with both the emergence of chloroquine and sulphur pyrimethamine-resistant strains of *Falciparum* malaria in parts of Thailand and East Africa, as well as the recognition of potentially fatal side-effects of chemoprophylactic drugs.

In other words, a toxic dose of those drugs would be needed to protect a traveller against malaria! The Minister for Tourism should bring these matters to the attention of the Minister for Health. Potential tourists should be warned of the danger.

Any person who is going overseas should attend the clinics provided by the Fairfield Hospital to receive advice on the dangers of the areas to which they are travelling and the types of drugs they should take to protect them from disease. They take a great risk by not taking any protective measures. Most people who travel overseas return to Australia in good health. Often, they suffer only a bout of travelling sickness; and there are many drugs available to combat that.

The Minister should examine the reasons for the low morale among staff in the Victorian Tourism Commission. Tourism should be supported and a strong infrastructure should be established to maintain the development of the industry. There is a strong base to build on. The government should promote tourism and ensure that adequate resources and training are provided. For example, Frankston TAFE college offers a course in hospitality, which involves the training of chefs and hotel staff. Similar courses exist at the Footscray TAFE college. To ensure that the tourism industry continues to develop, there is a need for further training in areas such as marketing and the provision of services. Tourism is vital to the future health of the economy and the government must ensure that young people are given the training to work within that industry.

A leading article in this morning's *Age* referred to the problem of AIDS, which is a matter of great concern and which will be an ongoing problem into the 21st century. At present, 1000 people in Australia have been classified as group A; and 500 of those have died. In Victoria, 170 people have been classified as group A, of which 60 have succumbed to the disease. The incidence of AIDS will double every ten months. Last year in Victoria approximately \$1.7 million was spent treating AIDS victims; and that

figure is expected to double in the coming year to approximately \$3.8 million. In a couple of years, Victoria is likely to have to spend \$17 million treating AIDS victims; indeed, it is estimated that the expenditure needed for the treatment and care of AIDS patients in 1992 will be in the order of \$160 million.

Australia has one of the highest reported incidences of AIDS in the world. Recently I travelled to an AIDS conference in Toronto, where I learned that many countries are taking heed of the problems which the disease poses. Australia is one of the few countries, apart from the United States of America and Canada, that is providing accurate figures about the incidence of AIDS. In many countries the number of people who are declared AIDS positive is underestimated. Approximately 20 million people died in the Spanish influenza epidemic in 1919. It is estimated that 40 million people will die of AIDS.

I recommend to honourable members the series of programs on the AIDS epidemic which were broadcast on Channel O-28. The program highlighted the fact that in central Africa more than 50 per cent of fertile women are classified as AIDS positive. On average, women in central Africa give birth to seven offspring. If the average is two, in the next decade there will be 21 million orphans in central Africa! Ten million people will die of AIDS in central Africa in the next decade.

By way of comparison, it is estimated that between 20 000 and 80 000 people in Australia will be classified as AIDS carriers by the year 2000. Last year it was estimated that approximately 20 per cent of AIDS carriers will die, yet it is now estimated that up to 50 per cent of those people will die. In the United States of America, it is estimated that approximately 1.5 million people will die of AIDS. In Canada, a country of some 26 million people, it is estimated that 1700 people are classified in group A.

The cost of treating those patients is a grave problem. When I was overseas I was amazed to discover that representatives from Third World countries did not agree that money should be provided to treat AIDS patients with AZT and interferon to help to extend their lives. They argued that such drugs should be provided under a user-pays scheme.

Every week throughout the world 40 000 children die as a result of such simple maladies as measles and gastroenteritis. In Third World countries there is a perceived need for immunisation, rather than devoting so much energy to the problem of AIDS.

The AIDS problem will be an enormous health problem in Australia in the years ahead. All honourable members must recognise, as Parliamentarians, that the cost will be staggering. The health budget is \$2.6 billion and it is estimated that by 1992 approximately \$160 million will be spent just on the treatment of AIDS patients.

The honourable member for Dandenong referred to the continuing problems related to the consumption of alcohol. It has been estimated that costs of \$2 billion a year can be directly related to alcohol consumption and associated diseases. All honourable members will be aware that 25 per cent of all beds in Victorian hospitals are occupied by people who suffer from alcohol-related diseases. Honourable members will also be aware that the television program *Yes Minister* indicated quite correctly that people should not worry about those who suffer from tobacco-related disease because they die quickly; they do not cost the community very much because they get lung cancer and die!

Anyone who has an alcohol-related disease will cost the community a considerable amount and will take a lot longer time to die. All honourable members are aware of the effects of road trauma, especially accidents caused by the consumption of alcohol

and speeding. There are alcohol-associated diseases of enormous dimension—kidney disease and others—which are of paramount concern.

The honourable member for Sunshine has proposed that a tax be put on all advertising and that the revenue raised be directed into research. The government put a tax on tobacco, charging 10 to 15 cents on the wholesale price, and thereby raised \$23 million for research into the problems associated with tobacco smoking.

I suggest a tax of 1 cent per litre could be imposed on alcoholic beverages. A fund could be created for research purposes and for the treatment of alcohol-related disease. Something of the order of \$30 million could be made available for people working in the areas of alcohol and drug-related problems. That is as much money as is required to run a major hospital in this State.

The sitting was suspended at 6.13 p.m. until 8.3 p.m.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Speech by His Excellency the Governor. I pledge the loyalty of the Murray Valley electorate to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and pay credit to the Governor of Victoria. Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your elevation to the position of Speaker of this House. I know you will perform extremely well and with impartiality towards all sides of the House—to all honourable members who try to present the views of the people they represent in Parliament.

I listened with considerable interest to the Governor's Speech. Naturally, he presented the views of the government and often those views were a little clouded as to the policies of the government and their effect on the people of Victoria. Often it is said that if one tells people something often enough and well enough, they will believe it. This is what has happened with this government; it is trying to brainwash Victorians into believing the State is expanding enormously and at a rate faster and better than in any other State in Australia. It tries to convince the people that it is leading the country in economic development.

Members of the government, like the honourable member for Ballarat South, believe this rhetoric and that is the worst aspect! Some members of the backbench of the government party believe the information issued by the government. Unfortunately, Victorians are starting to believe the government is correct. That upsets me. We need to truly and realistically understand what is happening in the State.

Mr F. P. Sheehan interjected.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Ballarat South was lucky to scrape back in as a member of this place. That was probably because of some of the comments made by the Premier, the Treasurer, and other senior members of the government. I am glad the Deputy Premier has returned to the Chamber. He has been delegated the portfolio of Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs. Although some people believe that was a demotion, the National Party does not because it believes that portfolio is one of the most important. I am disappointed the Deputy Premier no longer has responsibility for industry, technology and resources but I understand why that happened. The honourable gentleman will learn much in his travels throughout country Victoria as the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs. He is one of the few Ministers who will probably respond to the problems faced by country Victorians.

The Governor's Speech was interesting. For instance, he said that this government is:

... a government that combines sound management with a strong sense of compassion, a government that will govern in partnership with all of the people of Victoria.

I shall take the government to task on that comment and not the Governor because he is quoting the words written for him by the government.

How can the Governor say that this government will use sound management in the light of what has happened with the Victorian Economic Development Corporation? How much money has gone down the chute through that corporation? Some honourable members suggest that \$30 million has been accepted generally as the amount of money wasted by the government through the VEDC. It is all right for the Treasurer to ask, "What about the success stories," but what about the failures of the government? The government must consider them because they are the result of its bad management.

The Treasurer boasts about sound management and sound business practices. I do not believe he understands what he is talking about. If he had been in business like the honourable member for Warrnambool and me he would have a sound understanding of the difficulties faced in running a small business. The Governor stated that:

Victoria continues to have the lowest rate of unemployment. 270 000 new jobs have been created and for 64 consecutive months Victoria has returned the lowest unemployment figures of any State in Australia.

Honourable Members—Hear, hear!

Mr JASPER—I am interested to hear the Deputy Premier and the honourable member for Ballarat South saying, "Hear, hear". However, they should consider the statistics produced by the Department of Labour.

Mr McNamara—And Ballarat!

Mr JASPER—Ballarat is in the same situation. Since the Labor Party has come to office in Victoria, unemployment has increased by 6 per cent.

Mr F. P. Sheehan—Rubbish!

Mr JASPER—What an absolutely ridiculous interjection! I challenge the honourable member for Ballarat South to examine the figures produced by the Department of Labour. I shall quote the figures because they are important in understanding that not only has the rate of unemployment in Victoria increased in the past six years under a Labor government by 6 per cent but also it has increased by 90 per cent in country areas. Again I challenge members of the government, especially those sitting on the back benches, to ask for the figures produced by the Department of Labour. Their department has produced the figures, which are: total unemployment in Victoria in April 1982, 110 800.

Mr Cunningham interjected.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Derrimut could learn a lot if he listened. The unemployment figure in February 1988—almost six years later—had increased to 138 400.

In April 1982, the unemployment figure for the Melbourne statistical district was 85 700. By February 1988, almost six years later, the figure for that district had increased to 90 600. More importantly, the unemployment figure for areas outside the Melbourne statistical district was 25 100. By February 1988 it had increased to 47 800, a 90 per cent increase.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Ballarat South laughs. I challenge the honourable member for Ballarat South, and the honourable member for Bellarine, to

go to the Papers Office and obtain the reports of the Department of Labour. Those reports speak for themselves.

The Treasurer says *ad infinitum* that Victoria has had the lowest rate of unemployment of any State of Australia for 64 consecutive months. That may be right, but honourable members should examine what has occurred with the increase in unemployment in Victoria. The figures that I have stated reveal the flaw in Labor's employment policies. The Labor government has turned a blind eye to the unemployment situation in country Victoria, which is a catastrophe, and the government must examine its policies immediately.

His Excellency referred to figures supplied by the government, which are misleading the people of Victoria. His Excellency stated that it was the government's aim to reach a target of 520 000 jobs for the decade and achieve an unemployment rate of less than 4 per cent. His Excellency further stated that it was the government's intention to achieve this aim by 1992–93. The figures show that the government's aim of producing 520 000 new jobs in the decade from 1982 to 1992 cannot be achieved. From August 1987 to August 1988 the real increase in employment was 4300. One does not have to be a mathematician to work out that the government's aim will never be achieved if it continues with that rate of employment. The Leader of the National Party, by interjection, says that the government will not even create 40 000 jobs during that period, let alone 520 000 jobs. The government is quick to criticise other State governments of Australia, particularly conservative State governments. The Tasmanian government, in the past twelve months, has created 7200 jobs. The Victorian government has nothing to crow about. It cannot justify the figures that it puts forward.

The National Party wants a realistic plan and a recognition of the enormous problems facing country Victoria. The policies of the National Party, prior to the election, recognised the difficulties facing people seeking employment in country Victoria.

The Cain Labor government believes in centralising the benefits of government to metropolitan Melbourne. Country Victoria does not rate.

Mr Ernst—Not true.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Bellarine says it is not true. I am disappointed that the honourable member has not examined the arguments that I have put forward. The defrocked Minister for Local Government, now the honourable member for Reservoir, also interjects. The honourable member, when he was the Minister for Local Government, had no understanding of country people and did nothing for local government. The honourable member wanted to amalgamate municipalities and form larger municipalities. Fortunately, the honourable member failed with his plans for forced amalgamation of municipalities and I understand why he has taken a more insignificant role in the operation of the government.

The figures that I have given highlight the increase in unemployment in country Victoria in particular and in Victoria as a whole. The Minister for Sport and Recreation is one Minister who does understand the needs of country Victoria. The Minister represents Geelong North and he understands that the people in country Victoria are entitled to a just share of the resources of the State.

The honourable member for Reservoir, who is interjecting, shows a lack of understanding of country Victoria and if he listens he may learn something. The point I make is that funding granted on a \$1 for \$1 basis is far better value in country Victoria because the people in country Victoria are prepared to work on a voluntary

basis. The honourable member for Reservoir, by his interjection, shows that he has no understanding of the problems of country Victoria.

The National Party would increase the funds provided to the Department of Sport and Recreation, which is a cinderella Ministry of the government. More funding directed through the Department of Sport and Recreation would enable more sporting facilities to be provided in country Victoria, especially for younger and older persons. Funding to develop facilities should be spread across the whole of Victoria.

Mr Trezise interjected.

Mr JASPER—I recognise the remarks made by the Minister for Sport and Recreation. Country Victoria has received strong support from him and I hope that will continue. Country people are prepared to raise funds on a \$1 for \$1 basis and they are prepared to work voluntarily to develop facilities for the whole of Victoria, not just for those living in Melbourne.

The National Party is concerned about the reduction of funding for industries operating in country Victoria. It strongly supports decentralisation, which was a policy that was developed by the Honourable Murray Byrne when he was Minister for State Development and Decentralisation and a member of the Upper House. Mr Byrne had an insight into the need for funding for country industry. Over the years increased funding was provided. When the change of government occurred in 1982 approximately \$42 million was being provided in payroll tax rebates to country industry and a further \$8 million in rebates was provided in other decentralisation assistance. With the change of government assistance for country industry was decreased.

The National Party is not opposed to an investigation or a review of funding for country industry but it is concerned about the removal of funding as a right to country industry. The National Party election policy in 1988 addressed this matter because over the past four years the government has phased out assistance specifically earmarked for country industry.

The honourable member for Warrnambool recently highlighted the fact that Fletcher Jones & Staff Pty Ltd, which is an important industry in Warrnambool, is to establish itself in South Australia where it will employ 150 people. Why is this large and successful company establishing itself in South Australia? The honourable member for Warrnambool will clarify this when he makes his contribution to the debate.

Specific assistance is not being provided to country industry by way of payroll tax or other assistance; and until the government addresses this problem not many industries will be established in country areas. Specific assistance should be provided for industries that are prepared to establish themselves in country Victoria. The National Party policy provides for the re-establishment of assistance with an expenditure of \$175 million over four years. It is an important issue that is of concern to country Victoria because industry provides employment. The National Party policy included additional funding being provided for regional development associations in Victoria.

Mr Gavin interjected.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Coburg would not understand this because he does not move beyond the end of the tram tracks. The National Party has a positive policy for the establishment of industry in country Victoria and specific assistance is a priority. The government should offset the disadvantages to industries operating in country areas. Members of the Labor Party should get out into the country and gain a better understanding of the situation.

Mrs Toner—Sit down!

Mr JASPER—The comments made by some members of the Labor Party show their lack of understanding. The defrocked Minister for Community Welfare Services, the honourable member for Greensborough, did visit country Victoria when she was a Minister. I suggest that now, as a backbench member, she should visit country Victoria more to get a balanced view of the situation. The National Party asks that there be a balance of funding and assistance for country industry.

These specific problems were not addressed in the Governor's Speech. One sees many other areas of concern when one examines the disadvantages of living in country Victoria. The government has indicated its support for small businesses but the Small Business Development Corporation is being wound down. Its main objective now is to examine export-oriented industries. The National Party recognises the importance of small business to the economy of Victoria.

Mr Gavin interjected.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Coburg should understand the difficulties and problems of operating a small business in the present economic environment. The National Party has strong policies for small business and it recognises that they play a vital part in Victoria's economy: they produce wealth for Victoria. More than 80 per cent of businesses operating in Victoria are small businesses with fewer than ten employees.

Many other areas need to be addressed by the government such as the difficulties being faced by the Liquor Control Commission under the new Act. That is an area of concern for the liquor industry, as was indicated when the Bill was debated during the last Parliament. The industry has enormous problems in operating under the Act. Those problems were highlighted by the National Party when the measure was being debated in Parliament and its stance has been vindicated.

That will be shown in the coming months. Other areas, such as tourism, need to be addressed. Problems exist within the Victorian Tourism Commission, and I hope a statement will be made by the Minister for Tourism so honourable members will be able to debate the problems that have faced the commission. Honourable members want to debate the performance of a former chairman of the commission, Mr Dunstan, and the previous chairman, Mr Nordlinger, who was sacked by the government. Honourable members may not discover the truth, but I trust that the issue will be debated on many future occasions.

The National Party believes the Governor's Speech does not address the problems currently facing Victoria, particularly country Victoria. Special recognition of those problems needs to be given by the government. I could refer to many other areas of concern. I am unashamedly concerned about the people living outside the metropolitan area. I am aware of the special difficulties and problems of country people and the need for assistance for those living in the rural areas of Victoria.

The debate was interrupted.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

The SPEAKER—Order! Before calling the honourable member for Bentleigh, on behalf of the House, I welcome the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Honourable Joan Child. I thank her for paying us the courtesy of a visit. On a personal note, I thank her for the arrangements she made for other officers of this Parliament and me on the occasion of our visit yesterday to Parliament House, Canberra.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Address-in-Reply

The debate on the motion of Mr Cole (Melbourne) for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech was resumed.

Mrs BARKER (Bentleigh)—Mr Speaker, I firstly extend my congratulations to you, on your appointment as Speaker of this Parliament. As a new member, I look forward to working under your guidance, guidance which I am sure will be just and impartial. I thank His Excellency Dr Davis McCaughey for delivering the address which outlines the Cain government's programs and commitments for this term of Parliament.

The seat of Bentleigh was first won for the Labor Party in 1979 by Gordon Hockley, who, after nine and a half years of service to the people, has now retired. I wish Gordon and his wife, Joyce, a happy and healthy retirement. I congratulate Gordon for achieving what a lot of people thought would never be possible—that is, that the seat of Bentleigh would become a Labor seat. Equally, I know it was thought by the Liberal Party that, come this election, Bentleigh would be back in its hands. However, we had a surprise for them, and I thank the people of the Bentleigh electorate for not only electing me as their representative to State Parliament but also for increasing the margin from 0.1 per cent to 1.4 per cent.

I believe very strongly that the fundamental difference between myself and my opponent was my knowledge of the electorate and the knowledge that the people of Bentleigh had of the candidates and the issues. The people of Bentleigh knew that if elected, I would work to represent them to the best of my ability with vigour, enthusiasm, and honesty. I have now commenced that job.

I am very proud of the Bentleigh electorate and am pleased to say that, despite some sections of the press who purport to know what people are like down Bentleigh way, I have never found it boring. The electorate is diverse in its demography; and is an electorate which is supportive of itself and willing to work for those projects that contribute to the living standards of its community.

A fine example of this is the East Bentleigh Community Health Centre, which is, I feel, the best in the State. The building is innovative in design and was built by the Cain Labor government in 1986. The strength of the centre is in its efficient and caring administration, headed by June Calder, the board of management, chaired by Moira Dwyer, the auxiliary, and the volunteers, who number approximately 135. I pay tribute to them for their untiring efforts and the high standard of care they give to the community.

There has been a requirement for a hydrotherapy pool on the site of the community health centre. The centre did not sit back and ask for funding; it set about making the project a reality and its determination and commitment saw \$500 000 raised. Funding was then sought from the government so that the project could commence. I congratulate the Minister for Health on his decision to commit \$200 000 to the hydrotherapy pool. The highest accolade is awarded to the Hydrotherapy Fundraising Committee for its magnificent effort, and also to the community, business groups, service groups, and the Moorabbin City Council, which supported the committee.

A short distance from the community health centre is the Moorabbin Hospital, which is now the Community Medicine Division of the Monash Medical Centre. I have heard many derisive comments about the Monash Medical Centre, and that constantly astounds me. How can anyone question a government that clearly shows its commitment to health services for the people of Victoria by building and upgrading hospitals where people can have easy access to them? I have also heard on many

occasions Moorabbin Hospital called the “poorer second cousin” of the Clayton campus. I strongly dispute that comment.

I look forward to seeing Moorabbin Hospital refurbished and upgraded to a 210-bed community hospital—a hospital that will be ideally suited to the site and the health needs of the people. I admit that when the announcement of the details of stage 2 were announced earlier this year, there was disappointment that the additional 100 beds were not included in the second stage. I welcomed the decision to spend \$23 million on the refurbishment and upgrading of facilities, and I welcomed the decision that the upgrading would be directed to creating the infrastructure for the future expansion of bed numbers.

However, the timetable for the provision of the additional beds was unclear and created some doubt in the community that the expansion would take place. I was pleased to play a part in providing 25 of those beds in the second stage, and I will be pushing strongly for the further expansion to occur as soon as possible. I point out, however, that I have no doubt that the Cain Labor government is committed to the expansion of the Moorabbin Hospital. Further proof of that commitment can be seen in the announcement by the Minister for Health to establish cancer services at that site.

I note with pleasure the further commitment to our older Victorians, as outlined in the Governor's Speech. I have a great deal of respect and admiration for our older citizens—those people who have enriched our lives by their lives. The expansion of the Home and Community Care program will enable more of our older citizens who wish to stay in their homes, but who require support and assistance, to receive that support.

Equally important is the commitment to expand nursing home beds and older persons units. The building of the eighteen-bed shared accommodation units in Centre Road, East Bentleigh will go a long way towards relieving some of the problems for those people in our community who have become slightly confused in their later years.

I also look forward to working with the Minister for Health to fulfil a dream which we have had for a number of years—that is, to build a nursing home. The commitment to build a 30-bed nursing home in Bentleigh with the provision of \$2.1 million in State capital funding and \$600 000 in recurrent Commonwealth subsidy funding is most welcome. Further negotiations will have to take place, and I have already asked the Minister for Health to ensure that the Moorabbin Community Extended Care Society plays a major role in the negotiations. The society has broad community representation and has already done a considerable amount of preparatory work. I am sure it will provide innovative and fresh ideas on the most appropriate manner in which we should look after those older people who require nursing home care.

Nursing homes, respite care, and supported accommodation are required for those older people who need it. During the election campaign, it was suggested by the media that the Bentleigh electorate contained an ageing population. I suppose that is technically correct as the electorate has a large population of older citizens. I tried to point out to the press, however, that a large section of our senior citizens are extremely active members of the community. The local senior citizens clubs, the Combined Pensioners Association of Victoria, and the Early Planners for Retirement are busy, stimulating groups that would, I feel, leave some of us feeling very tired if we participated in a day of their activities.

I also direct to the attention of honourable members a group in the Bentleigh electorate, which is the first of its kind in Australia, and one in which all honourable

members should take an active interest. That group is Helpmates, and they are a group of intellectually disabled young adults who provide gardening services for 400 older people in the Moorabbin local government area. The scheme provides these young adults with independence, work, social skills, and friendship, and they are a wonderful group. They, in turn, allow 400 of our older citizens to remain in their own homes because they do not have to worry about maintaining their gardens, which are often large and the maintenance of which is probably one of the reasons why they consider selling their homes. I am sure the parents of those young adults are also very pleased that their children, who have a disability, are able to gain work that gives them satisfaction and companionship.

Helpmates is coordinated by an equally wonderful group of people headed by Suzette Gallagher, who was this year awarded the honour of a medal of the Order of Australia for her work in this area, an award which was justly deserved. Having known Suzette for a number of years, I am sure she would be happy for me to take any interested honourable member along to Helpmates to learn about the scheme. I am sure they would leave the premises with such enthusiasm as to initiate similar schemes in their areas.

I listened with interest to the outline by His Excellency the Governor of the future commitment of the Cain Labor government to education. I am a firm believer in the government system, and I challenge anyone to find in the Bentleigh electorate a school, primary or post-primary, that does not have an excellent record in academic learning in a caring environment. Education is not without problems, but I consider this government to be one that has examined the system that existed previously and saw that it did not meet the demands and needs of today and the future. It is not always easy to make changes, but this government has initiated changes that will provide our children and young adults with skills for the future.

The children and young adults whom I have the pleasure of knowing both in my own home and in the community are inquisitive, intelligent, and demanding—and they should be demanding. We live in the electronic age, where, at a young age, television exposes them to the realities of life. The pace of life is faster and our youth need an education system that will not educate them only in literacy and numeracy but also stimulate their interest and equip them with life skills.

I was pleased that Victoria had a government that gave to school councils more responsibility for developing policy that was suited to their own neighbourhoods but which revolved around a central curriculum core. When you visit the schools in the Bentleigh electorate you find that they are individual in character. They reflect the needs of their neighbourhoods, and I welcome this.

I thank the teachers in the schools in the Bentleigh electorate for their commitment to our children and young adults, whom I have found they educate in a positive and caring manner. I equally pay tribute to the parents in the electorate who contribute their time and efforts on parents' clubs and school councils. As past-president of the Ormond Primary School school council, I found my time and efforts at my local school rewarding, interesting, and very fulfilling. I thank the Cain government for the opportunity it has given for parents to be involved in the decision making in their neighbourhood schools.

I also applaud the decision of the government to introduce the education allowance, which will do much to assist parents in what is usually an expensive time of the year, with items such as uniforms and books to purchase. Those families that receive a family allowance will next year receive \$100 for each child aged between four and sixteen years, so that they can begin the school year without incurring financial hardship for the family.

I am also fortunate to have in the Bentleigh electorate the Moorabbin TAFE College, which will shortly embark on a further stage of expansion. Brief notes on the college's ideas and suggestions have been forwarded to me, and I look forward to working with the college to see the project completed.

Before I move away from the subject of education and the youth of Victoria, I place on record my congratulations to the Cain Labor government for initiating the Youth Guarantee Scheme, which is unique in Australia and which has done much to provide our young people with opportunities, counselling, guidance, and support so that they can find careers for themselves. The scheme is not only an investment in our economic future but also gives our young people who have, for whatever reasons, been unable to find employment, the status they deserve as part of our community.

Of course, the Bentleigh electorate is not without its problems. In the transport area, we have seen the completion of the third railway line, but this, in turn, has created some concern for the train travellers of the Bentleigh electorate. I know that it took the Cain Labor government to complete the third line, but I point out to the Minister for Transport that I will be seeking an investigation of the number of trains servicing the five stations within the electorate so as to ensure that my constituents have an efficient and reliable service. I am sure the Minister will offer me his cooperation.

Another area of concern that has been raised with me, and I am sure with all honourable members, is the issue of safety and security. I am disturbed by the perception in the community that nothing has been done in this important area. Recently I spoke at a Neighbourhood Watch meeting and I found it difficult, in the short time that was allotted to me, to outline the initiatives, the programs, and the work that has already been done and will continue in the future.

I refer to the increase in police numbers: there was an increase of 300 last year; 400 this year; and there will be 300 next year. As well, 500 civilians have been employed to do clerical and office work, which, in turn, has released police back to active duty. There have also been significant increases in police resources: 1 in 7 police stations has been rebuilt, 5 new complexes have been commenced, and further construction is planned. The number of police cars has been increased. The Victoria Police were the first in Australia to gain a 38-hour week, and they also have an early retirement scheme. The number of officers in the Drug Squad has also been increased.

Transit police were introduced for public transport, and this program will be expanded. Recommendations for sentences and penalties are to be implemented—such as abolishing automatic remissions and phasing out early release schemes. Air and water support has been expanded, and computers are being installed to streamline work. These are only some of the achievements and further commitments by the government.

The issue of police powers proved to be very interesting during the election campaign, and I was particularly pleased with the response from the people of Bentleigh on this issue. The Police Association of Victoria letterboxed the electorate, and it was heartening to hear from people who questioned the granting of powers to the police that were not fully investigated and explained to the community before they were implemented. We must all be extremely careful and rational when we enter a debate on police powers. Not all persons suspected of a crime are guilty, and we live in a State where we, as citizens, have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Police powers that are designed to help police clear up crime should also take into account the civil rights of innocent people.

The government has also examined closely the area of crime prevention, which to me is the more important issue. The Neighbourhood Watch scheme has not only

made people aware of the need to make their homes secure but also it has taught all of us an important lesson: the need to care for one another. I believe our society had become fairly insular, but I now see neighbours who look out for one another and communicate with one another.

We need to educate our children to recognise and resist bad influences. In some of our schools police officers already talk to classes about good citizenship and the consequences of crime. Fifty additional police officers will be made available so that this positive and constructive work can be expanded. The Rage without Alcohol campaign has been very successful with our young adults and it is a program that I believe is extremely important. I am pleased to note that this work will be further developed.

I also congratulate the government on its introduction of the Good Neighbourhood program, which will emphasise activities for young people; it will provide, for those who need them, constructive programs in which to participate so that they will feel a sense of belonging in the community, which, in turn, will give them a reason for wanting to protect it.

I believe we need to look at the issue of law and order as a whole. We live in a modern age and need a modern Police Force which has the resources and power to carry out its job efficiently. We should also look around us and see what we can do for families and neighbours to create a safer environment. As citizens, we have a responsibility to the community in which we live, and the government has a responsibility to provide the resources and equipment to enjoy a safer environment. The Cain government has begun that process in a rational and sensible manner and will continue to do so.

I am pleased to note in the Governor's Speech the commitment of the government to women by providing them with greater opportunity through the choice and opportunity plan. The role of women in the home and the contribution they make to our community cannot be measured by any scale. The skills that are required to run a home and raise children are often not recognised by employers when women choose to return to the work force after a period of time at home. It is pleasing to me, as a woman who has been in that situation, to be part of a government that will provide women with the recognised training and education they need to return to the work force. I am also pleased that we will continue to support and expand the Neighbourhood House program which provides many women at home with support, interests, and the opportunity to learn new skills and make new friends.

I look forward to the introduction of a Bill to establish a reserve power on prices to underpin the prices peg program. A great deal of noise has been made by the Opposition about prices, taxes and charges, and the need to ease the financial burden on families. The success of the prices peg legislation in 1987 is well known. Therefore, I assume that the passage of the proposed legislation through both Houses will be speedy. Families will then once again pay reasonable prices for goods at supermarkets.

Before concluding my inaugural speech, I thank the many people who worked for me during the recent election campaign. I especially thank my campaign director, Andrew Hockley, who performed his duties in an efficient and imaginative manner. My special thanks go to John Halloran and Koula Alexiadis with whom I have worked for the past two and a half years and who worked very closely with me during the campaign. Their friendship, support, and assistance greatly assisted me.

I pay tribute to my former employer, the Honourable Joan Child, Speaker of the House of Representatives and the member for Henty. Joan is an astute and caring politician and is respected and admired by all who know her. Her advice,

encouragement, and guidance is something which I value above all else, and I thank her for all she has done for me.

None of this would have been possible without the support of my family. To my extended family, I say, "Thank you". To my husband, Jim, and my children, Michael and Kirsty, I pay a very special tribute. They have always encouraged, supported, and assisted me in a loving and caring manner. Words could never really express my thanks to them.

Mr Speaker, I thank all honourable members for hearing me in silence this evening. I understand that it will be the first and last time. I look forward with much pleasure and enthusiasm to working with the Cain government in this historic third term of government.

Mr HONEYWOOD (Warrandyte)—Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your election as Speaker and assure you of my respect for your position. Having experienced a week in the Chamber, I have already come to appreciate the challenge that your position entails.

I express my loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and congratulate His Excellency, Dr Davis McCaughey, Governor of Victoria, on his competent performance as Her Majesty's representative in this State.

It is with some apprehension and humility that I address the House. I am fully aware that I do not have the experience of the more senior members of this place, but I bring with me a great deal of enthusiasm and energy, and I hope in time I shall gain both experience and wisdom.

I have the distinction of representing the electorate of Warrandyte, a seat which has been served since 1982 by Mr Lou Hill. I know that Mr Hill was well regarded by honourable members on both sides of the House, and I wish him well in his future career.

It is interesting to note that Warrandyte was the only seat to change between the two major parties at the recent State election. To understand the reasons for this change, I shall draw a parallel to a previous Federal administration, the Whitlam government. I believe the Whitlam experience to be a good parallel to make, not only because of its link with the problems of today, but also because it was the Whitlam government that caused me to become a committed Liberal. The parallel can be drawn in three distinct areas. The first area relates to my initial exposure to politics as a twelve-year-old student at a government high school in the town of Gosford, New South Wales. It was 1972, a time which many government members would no doubt remember with some lingering nostalgia.

The "It's time" campaign encouraged many of my teachers to throw caution to the wind and become vocal proponents of a Labor government. As the son of a small businessman, I can remember asking my teachers what the Labor Party would do for small business. The question has remained unanswered for the past sixteen years. During that period I observed my parents and others being forced to cope with the introduction of a bewildering array of new regulations, many of which served no particular purpose other than to glue my parents to the dining room table for many evenings filling out government forms. Since 1972, the situation has worsened.

During the recent election campaign, people throughout the Warrandyte electorate were complaining constantly about the regulations imposed by governments. Their message was clear; governments of whatever political persuasion cannot continue to burden private enterprise with increasing legislation and regulations. The paper chase has to be brought to an end!

The second parallel I draw with the Federal Labor administration of 1972 relates to the provision of basic services, whether they be sewerage pipes, footpaths, kerbing and guttering, and the like. As I recall, Gough Whitlam's electorate was an expanding urban growth area on the outskirts of Sydney. Indeed, Mr Whitlam probably distinguished himself at the time as being the first Prime Minister to put sewerage pipes, along with a few other items, on the national agenda. The 1972 campaign placed great weight on the need for governments to plan ahead and, more importantly, to deliver proper services to Australia's rapidly expanding suburbia. Again, the situation has worsened since that time.

Over the past six and a half years of State Labor administration, the electorate of Warrandyte has experienced one of the highest urban growth rates in the metropolitan area. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that those moving into the electorate have, in the main, been young families with limited means of purchasing their first homes. One has only to drive to Croydon and Mooroolbark to encounter row upon row of new three-bedroom homes on a quarter of an acre or less land in new housing estates.

When many of the residents of these estates moved into the electorate, they were told by the government planners, the bureaucrats and, in some cases, their local members, that basic services, such as sewerage, footpaths, and decent roads, would soon follow. Many residents waited patiently as the months and the years passed by, and gradually they began to realise that they had been led down the garden path.

Finally the constituents of Warrandyte began to question why. Why did they have one of the highest birth rates in the State yet had no maternity ward available at the local hospital? Why were they forced to pay increased petrol prices when State taxes on that petrol did not go to where it was supposed—in funding the roads? Why were youngsters left roaming the streets because of inadequate youth facilities?

It was the lack of answers from the government to these questions that led to its loss of the seat of Warrandyte at the recent election. One has only to examine the swings against the government not only in the wealthy area polling booths, but also in the traditional Labor booths. It is my belief that in four years there will be many more Warrandytes for the government to contend with, and not all in the eastern suburbs.

Although we all acknowledge the difficulties encountered in funding urban growth, the lesson for future governments is to effectively plan for urban development and to submit to potential residents of newly developing areas a program indicating when services will be provided. If the program becomes unattainable the government should be honest enough to admit there are funding difficulties instead of offering bureaucratic excuses for the problems.

The third and final parallel I wish to draw with the Federal Labor administration of 1972 relates to youth issues. Prior to its election to power, Gough Whitlam's Labor Party excited many of Australia's young people. A new Australian idealism seemed to be on the horizon. To some extent the Whitlam administration managed to channel the energy of Australian youth into politics. Many young people joined issue groups and enunciated their newfound ideals.

After the "me" decade of the 1970s and after the "give me" decade of the 1980s, many young Australians are beginning to feel uncomfortable with the unbridled pursuit of their private interests and are looking for ways to channel their energies into something else.

From what do they have to choose? If they turn to either of the major parties they will be encouraged by those party organisations to join single issue groups, whether they be young liberal or young labor oriented. Many of the associations and

organisations at best only permit their members to debate seemingly weighty matters. What if young people actually want to do something? If they turn today to voluntary organisations they find that most of those groups are suffering from low morale, whether it be the State Emergency Service, volunteer hospital groups, or even justices of the peace—all have had their voluntary efforts either not recognised or positively discouraged by current Labor administrations.

While volunteerism is only one area where young people could be encouraged to direct their energies, it is nonetheless an important example where Victoria's young people could be encouraged to do something to participate in their communities. Certainly the young people of the Warrandyte electorate need encouragement. They are isolated from the bright lights of Melbourne; they lack public transport to get around the electorate or to visit friends. Effectively, they are away from it all.

As the member for Warrandyte, it will be my goal for many years to come to strive in the three parallels to the Whitlam Administration that I have drawn, to ensure that small businesses in my electorate and in the wider State area are encouraged to fulfil their free enterprise ideals with a minimum of interference from government.

It is my goal—and I shall constantly pursue the ideal, if you like—to provide good basic services to the electors of Warrandyte. It is my goal to ensure that not only in my electorate but also throughout the State young people have adequate facilities to keep them off the streets, to give them something for which they can strive, whether it be a voluntary organisation or a sporting organisation and to provide them with the channels for their energies rather than have them daubing graffiti on trains and creating some of the law and order problems experienced throughout the outer suburbs.

I thank my party for having the faith to preselect a younger person for a marginal seat. The Liberal Party has an excellent tradition of preselecting people from a wide range of backgrounds and a wide diversity of viewpoints. That is why I am a member of the Liberal Party.

I also thank my electorate committee, many of whom are here tonight. What distinguished the Liberal campaign in the Warrandyte electorate was the mixture of young and old. It was representative of the community that I was seeking to be elected by. That mixture was not only the people handing out leaflets at shopping centres on Saturday mornings, the young and old at the railway stations at 6.30 a.m. telling people why they should vote for Phil Honeywood and the Liberal Party, but also the young and old who were there day in, day out for so many days. At many polling booths young and old stood side by side handing out how-to-vote tickets.

I thank my electorate committee for their faith in me and for their consistent support. Importantly, I thank one very special lady who is present tonight—my wife, Gabrielle; also, my first child, Katherine Louise, who was born last Saturday. My daughter experienced the whole of the electoral campaign in Warrandyte; she was carried throughout the campaign to shopping centres and, whatever her aspirations may be, already she has been weaned on politics in the State arena.

I thank honourable members from both sides of the House for their courtesy in hearing me tonight, and also for their courtesy during my first week in the House. They showed the new members around the House, indicating where we should be, where we should sit, and everything else that was necessary. It is a nice atmosphere to come into a House where cordiality reigns supreme.

Mr LEIGHTON (Preston)—I welcome the opportunity of making my first speech in the debate for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech.

The Cain Labor government's program as outlined in the address by His Excellency the Governor is one of reform and vision and one that is based on the principles of social justice. The program for the next four years recognises the need for continued economic growth, cooperation with the trade union movement, and targeting of government services to the disadvantaged, unemployed, and low-income earners. The government's commitment to and achievement of these goals is why Victorians have been prepared to return successive Labor governments.

I am proud to be entering this House from the trade union movement. The history of the Australian Labor Party is inextricably linked with that of the trade union movement. Indeed, the ALP was founded as the political wing of that movement. In the aftermath of the great strikes of the 1890s, working people recognised the need to organise politically as well as industrially. The establishment of the Labor Party was so successful that Australia saw the world's first democratically elected government in Queensland in 1899.

The relationship between the political and industrial wings of the Labor movement remains as vital 100 years later. The fundamental difference between the Labor Party and other democratic socialist parties is the formal and special relationship between the party and the trade unions. That is why, even in the 1980s, in a period of economic restraint, Labor governments have been elected and re-elected throughout Australia.

Nationally, this special relationship made possible the accord. The trade union movement has delivered in terms of wage restraint. The Federal government in carrying out its commitment to maintenance of real living standards must ensure that in any wages-tax trade-off that priority is given to taxation cuts for low and middle-income earners.

In Victoria, the industrial relations record of the Cain Labor government is one of its strengths. It has a record that can be readily tested against that of its predecessor. Prior to 1982, Victoria experienced a level of industrial disputation 50 per cent above the rest of Australia. Not surprisingly, business sought only too often to transfer its operations interstate.

Since 1982 the level of industrial disputes in Victoria has dropped by approximately 80 per cent. For example, the number of working days lost in 1981—when the last Liberal government was in office—was 1·235 million, a figure that is similar to the previous two years. By contrast, that number dropped to 368 000 working days lost in 1982—the first year of the Cain Labor government. The number of working days lost has remained consistently low during the past five years. The figure for 1987 was 289 000, well below the final three years of the previous government when that figure was far in excess of one million days in each year. Also by comparison, in 1981 the number of working days lost per 1000 employees was 865. That dropped to 260 in 1982 and remains consistently low, with the 1987 figure being 164. This record is no accident. The Cain Labor government replaced its predecessor's fragmented and confrontationist approach by consultation and co-operation with the trade union movement.

Whereas previously the role of the Department of Labour was merely to monitor industrial disputes, under the Labor government it has a positive role as an agent of change; particularly through the establishment of the Industrial Relations Task Force and the appointment of industrial liaison officers. The prevention and early settlement of industrial disputes has been of benefit to the entire community.

However, that is only part of the story. The State government has had a strong commitment to the maintenance of real wages and living standards, as is borne out by the early application in Victoria of the last national wage decision. An aspect of the

accord that has not received enough recognition is the social wage. The introduction of Medicare is a leading example of the social wage. In Victoria, the government's family Budget pledge is particularly welcome when viewed in the context of the social wage.

Other important initiatives aimed at making the workplace safer are the occupational health and safety legislation and WorkCare. WorkCare is an important reform because it places emphasis on rehabilitation and return to work. Under the previous system only the seriously injured could hope for large sums; less badly injured people could not expect similar compensation, and the compensation awarded to women was discriminatory.

Another initiative is industrial democracy. This has been achieved in the public sector through technological change agreements, agreements relating to structural change, and the establishment of various consultative councils and forums. These provide employees with consultation while change is in the contemplative stage and, hence, a real opportunity to effect the decision-making process. However, I stress that these agreements should not be seen as the end of the matter; rather they are merely a vehicle for promoting consultation between employer and employee. Consultation is as much dependent as much on the attitudes of commitment and good faith between the parties as it is on the written word of the agreement.

In concluding my comments on industrial relations, I express my sense of privilege in serving in a particular trade union prior to coming to this place. The union I refer to is the Hospital Employees Federation of Australia Victorian No. 2 Branch. Over the past ten years the federation has established itself as a modern and effective union. In addition to bettering the conditions of its members employed in psychiatric services, intellectual disability services, alcohol and drug services, and public health, the federation is respected as an advocate for the patients and clients its members serve. I hope to demonstrate this a little later in my speech.

The Hospital Employees Federation of Australia Victorian No. 2 Branch is an industrial union that represents virtually all employees in a specific industry rather than a class of employees across a range of industries. I am an unabashed supporter of industry unionism, and look forward to union amalgamations promoting this. I see my role in Parliament as strengthening the relationship between the trade union movement and the Labor Party in government.

I shall now deal with social justice but, before I do, I congratulate the Speaker on his election to that office. A number of honourable members have referred to the Speaker's commitment to and knowledge of the Parliamentary process. Having had the opportunity of reading the report on his Commonwealth Parliamentary Association study tour, I am confident that that is so. In addition, having previously served with the Speaker on the Australian Labor Party's social justice strategy committee, I know the commitment to social justice that he brings to this place. Mr Deputy Speaker, I also congratulate you on your election to the Deputy Speakership.

As I said at the commencement of my speech, the Cain Labor government's program for the next four years is based on the principles of social justice. The commitment to a fairer and more just society is the very basis of the Australian Labor Party. The ALP stands for social justice. The four principles of social justice are equity, access, participation, and protecting people's rights.

Social justice objectives, based on these principles, are: to reduce the disadvantage caused by unequal access; to increase access to essential goods and services according to need; to expand opportunities for genuine participation by all Victorians in decisions that affect their lives; and to protect, extend, and ensure the effective exercise of equal

rights. In line with these objectives, six areas have been selected as priorities by the government. They are children in poverty, long-term unemployment, dignity and security for older people, protecting people's rights, Victoria's Aboriginal people, and people with disabilities.

My background, before coming to this place, has been in the human services industry, professionally as well as industrially. It is my intention now to focus on psychiatric services and intellectual disability services. However, before doing so, I shall make several general observations. The first is that philosophically I prefer the expression "human services" as a generic one encompassing a range of health and community services. This recognises the relationship between the various services that make up human services. It recognises that during the course of an individual's life, or at any particular time, that person may require the services of a number of different agencies. To go the other way is to draw an arbitrary line between health and community services. That is artificial and can compartmentalise services, deny services to an individual whose needs are not seen to fit neatly within one agency, reinforce the institutional nature of larger services, and prevent their reaching out to the community. The concept of human services also recognises that no one agency should have whole-of-life responsibility for an individual. Finally, this concept promotes the need for cross-portfolio coordination, which I believe will be one of the benefits of developing a social justice strategy.

My second general comment on human services is that a critical aspect of the administration of the government is the setting of priorities and the allocation of resources. This is particularly so in human services. Unfortunately, government has to bear the brunt of competing demands for high technology equipment, access to surgery, intensive care, and quality nursing care for the aged and disabled, and so on. I do not profess to have any easy solutions, but I would like to see a longer term debate taking place in the setting of priorities. Ultimately the community as a whole must accept that it has a responsibility in this area.

My third general comment is directed towards the nursing profession. In the past few years nursing has come a long way and has achieved the status of a profession in its own right, rather than one that is subservient to, or lesser than, other health professions. Whereas the equal pay cases of the 1970s awarded men and women equal pay for equal work, it can be argued that because nursing was predominantly a female occupation the worth of nursing work was undervalued compared with other professions. Recent decisions have gone a long way towards correcting this inequity. The transfer of basic nurse education from hospitals to tertiary education facilities is seen as enhancing the status of the profession as well as being appropriate and educationally sound.

However, I urge two notes of caution on the nursing profession. Firstly, that in transferring basic education and training, there remains close correlation between theory and clinical experience—indeed, that there is sufficient clinical experience to ensure that the graduate nurse is competent to practise at first level. The second caution is that nurses, in attaining professional status, do not become merely managers or technicians and surrender their direct care role with the patient. If this happens, somebody else will certainly assume the role of the nurse. Already sections of the medical profession have advocated the employment of nurse assistants as a quick fix.

I now turn to psychiatric services. The progressive redevelopment of psychiatric services in Victoria is undoubtedly one of the success stories of the Cain Labor government. Although I do not believe it has received sufficient public and media attention, the fact that, unlike New South Wales, it did not become an election issue, except in a positive sense, illustrates the soundness of the direction and the commitment of the State government. Historically in this country mental health services have been

a direct responsibility of State governments. Whereas public hospitals evolved from a charitable function, asylums were placed in the same basket as prisons and not so many decades ago both were the responsibility of the then Chief Secretary's Department.

To many people, it did not matter whether one was mad or bad; the stigma attached to persons suffering from mental illness was enormous. The discovery of psychotropic drugs in the 1950s and 1960s created a revolution in the treatment of the psychiatrically ill. No longer was it necessary for a psychiatrically ill person to spend the rest of his or her life in an institution—these people could return to the community.

However, many governments throughout the Western World have not supported these developments in psychiatry and the move back into the community. Professing support for deinstitutionalisation, they have taken the opportunity of opting out of their financial responsibility by reducing bed numbers in psychiatric hospitals and allowing the psychiatrically ill to fend for themselves in the community.

Not surprisingly, we have seen the revolving door syndrome, where the psychiatrically ill relapse, either through discontinuing their medication or suffering some stress through not having the appropriate community supports in place. They are then readmitted to hospital time and again.

Taken to its worst extreme, in several States in the United States of America, wholesale closure of psychiatric hospitals without the development of alternative and appropriate community support has resulted in charitable organisations hiring factories and warehouses and converting them into hostels. The mentally ill and other homeless people come in off the streets at night, are given a meal, and are then turned out in the morning.

Mental health services were not supported in Victoria during the 1960s and 1970s. The physical fabric of psychiatric hospitals was allowed to deteriorate. Insufficient psychiatric nurses were trained to meet the wastage rates of those decades, let alone the needs of the hospitals in the 1980s. Little, in the way of alternative services, was developed in the community.

Those community psychiatric nursing services and community mental health clinics which were provided were as a direct result of the community health initiatives of the Whitlam government. Since 1982 that situation has changed. The Cain Labor government has embarked on a program of service redevelopment. Hospital resources that have been freed up through bed reductions have been ploughed back into the community.

Substantial additional funds have been committed. For example, in the financial year 1981–82 the recurrent allocation was \$115 million. By the financial year 1988–89 the recurrent expenditure was \$223 million. Also, by way of contrast, in the financial year 1981–82 the capital allocation for psychiatric services was a paltry \$7.5 million. In the financial year 1988–89 the capital allocation has increased threefold to \$36.3 million.

The Cain government's redevelopment of mental health services is best exemplified by its approach to the decommissioning of the Willsmere Hospital. Originally constructed as the Kew mental asylum in the 1860s and 1870s, it was based on a design of an antiquated English asylum built in the previous century. By the time of its opening it was considered unsuitable for use and had been condemned by the turn of the century. However, successive governments found the problem too difficult to deal with. I stress that throughout this period staff, often with limited training and insufficient numbers, strived to give quality care.

Despite a fire in 1968 at Willsmere Hospital, which resulted in the loss of six patients' lives, and a Metropolitan Fire Brigade report which labelled the hospital as a fire risk, the previous Liberal government did not act. It eventually took the resolve of the Cain government to act.

The vehicle for this action was the Parliamentary Social Development Committee, which reported to Parliament in November 1985 and recommended that the hospital be closed and replaced by alternative services. Throughout 1986 the State government undertook extensive consultation with community organisations and staff. The commitment given was that nineteen new and replacement services would be built at a cost of \$28 million, and that they would be built and commissioned over the following two years, and that Willsmere Hospital would not be decommissioned until such time as this had been achieved. It will be achieved by the end of this year.

It has been suggested in another place that some money is left over from the Willsmere Hospital. That is not the case. As I said, the cost of these services is \$28 million. The sale of land is estimated to be worth approximately \$29 million or \$30 million.

What is important is that the government has committed the money up front. An examination of the new services being developed from Willsmere Hospital, demonstrates how psychiatric services should be redeveloped. They are community-based, accessible, and designed to meet the needs of clients who use them. They range from acute psychiatric services at Maroondah Hospital, to cluster houses in Seaford and East Bentleigh, to purpose-built psychiatric nursing homes in suburbs as diverse as Sunshine, Broadmeadows, and Forest Hill.

One exciting new development is a 24-bed hostel in the inner eastern area. It will provide for the progressive transition of psychiatric patients from hospitals through to hostels, and then to flats, and back into the community.

Too often in the past, there has been nothing between hospital and the community. Willsmere Hospital, as well as exemplifying how psychiatric services should be redeveloped, is important because of several other aspects. Firstly, it meets several of the criteria in the social justice strategy; dignity and security for older people and people with disabilities. Secondly, it is a real industrial democracy model. The government recognises that the staff have much to contribute in terms of expertise and commitment to the services. The negotiations that took place with the appropriate union provided that agreement would be reached on the new services and provided a redeployment package prior to any decision being made by government, and prior to any action being implemented.

Other major initiatives in psychiatric services include, firstly, the Mental Health Act 1986, which is taking a lead in this country. It provides for a regular review of involuntary patients and it also enables mental health workers to work alongside staff in general hospitals.

The second initiative has been the establishment by the government of the Office of Psychiatric Services, and it was to the distress of all concerned with psychiatric services that the Opposition advocated the elimination of the Office of Psychiatric Services. That office has been a strong advocate for the psychiatrically ill in this State.

The third important initiative in psychiatric services is the training of psychiatric nurses. The Cain government, unlike other governments in this country, has recognised the need to train and maintain the specialist work force for caring for the psychiatrically ill, and it is with pleasure that psychiatric nurses welcome the transfer of their basic course of training to tertiary education institutions as from next year.

The next area I wish to address is intellectual disability services. If psychiatric services have been the poor cousin of general health services, the same could be said of the relationship between intellectual disability services and psychiatric services. Reforms certainly have been made in intellectual disability services over the past four years during the life of the Cain government, such as the implementation of the Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act, the real funding increases, government commitment to train direct care second-level workers, and a move away from the medical model. However, it is important to stress that the intellectually disabled are not in any way sick. The care provided should be educationally based and based on a developmental model.

Following its transfer to the Department of Community Services, the Office of Intellectual Disability Services is now considering its future direction. The traditional model of congregated care in training centres providing whole-of-life care has been supplemented by community residential units being built out in the community.

In considering the ten-year plan, the government must, firstly, approach this with care and, secondly, have regard to whether a ten-year timetable is too ambitious. It must also recognise that a range of services between larger institutions and the community is required.

The government must also recognise, in examining the future of training centres, such as the Sunbury Training Centre, which has had much publicity recently, that a lot can be learnt about psychiatric services from the Willsmere Hospital model.

I should like to conclude by making a few comments about my electorate of Preston. In doing so I pay tribute to Mr Carl Kirkwood, the previous member for Preston, a hardworking member who is respected throughout Preston both for his eighteen years of service to this House and his service from 1963 to 1974 on the Preston City Council, including a term as mayor. Carl's name is synonymous with Preston and, having read his first speech in this House, I can understand why. I wish Carl and his wife, Helen, well in retirement.

Preston is a proud working-class electorate in the north-eastern metropolitan area. It is based largely on the municipalities of Preston and Heidelberg and is a culturally diverse electorate. I have enjoyed the contact I have had so far with the local ethnic communities.

The Preston community is well serviced with public transport, hospitals, health centres, and retail centres, including a market, and it has a manufacturing base. Issues I shall be pursuing locally and on behalf of the electorate of Preston are, firstly, the need for the development of a regional economic strategy, given the shrinking metals, textiles, clothing, and footwear base and the resultant loss of employment opportunities. Secondly, I shall also be pursuing the expansion of health services, including capital funding for the Preston and Northcote Community Hospital and approval for the Reservoir community health care centre, which is needed both to serve the needs of Reservoir and to take the pressure off the East Preston community health centre.

A third issue is the need for a road transport plan, including the go-ahead for the R5 bypass road to reduce unacceptable traffic volumes in the electorate, especially in the retail centres. A fourth area is an expansion of human services, especially to older people, as the population of the electorate is ageing.

In concluding, comments have been made about the loss of support to Labor among its traditional base. I am pleased to advise the House that Preston, which is part of the Labor heartland, recorded an increased majority for Labor at the election on 1 October. I am conscious of the trust the people of Preston have placed in me. I shall serve them as vigorously as I did my previous constituency in the trade union movement.

The SPEAKER—Order! Before calling the honourable member for Balwyn, I again remind honourable members that it is the custom of this House to hear inaugural speeches in complete silence. There was a lot of audible conversation during the speech made by the honourable member for Preston. I ask honourable members on all sides of the House to extend the customary courtesy to honourable members giving their inaugural speeches and to the honourable member for Balwyn, whom I now call.

Mr CLARK (Balwyn)—In speaking to the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, I express my loyalty and the loyalty of the constituents of the electorate of Balwyn to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II who is represented in Victoria by His Excellency, Dr Davis McCaughey.

I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Speaker and I express my appreciation of the firm and fair way you have presided in the House since your election. I also congratulate your deputy upon his election.

I also wish to acknowledge the record of my predecessor, the Honourable James Halford Ramsay. Jim Ramsay was the member for Balwyn from May 1973 until the recent election. He was Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet from 1976 until 1978. He was the Minister of Labour and Industry and Minister of Consumer Affairs from 1978 until 1981, and he was Minister for Economic Development and Minister of Labour and Industry from 1981 until April 1982.

In his career to date, Jim Ramsay has made a significant contribution to the economic development of Victoria, a contribution which I understand he now plans to continue in the private sector. He is well known in the electorate of Balwyn, as I believe he is in this Parliament, as a man of principle and integrity and as a man who is kind, thoughtful, and generous to all. If any of us could even half live up to Jim Ramsay's standards in those regards, we would be doing very well indeed.

I place on record my personal debt of gratitude to the generous support that Jim Ramsay and his wife, Dorothy, have shown to me and my wife, Karin, since I was chosen by the Liberal Party as the candidate for Balwyn. I am sure all honourable members would wish Jim Ramsay well in his new career.

I have been elected by the people of Balwyn to represent them in contributing to the good government of this State. In this, my first speech to the House, I want to set out what I believe to be some of the fundamental objects of good government and the principles by which government should be conducted. In doing this I will apply some of those principles to certain actions of the present government. Some of these actions are referred to in His Excellency's Speech and some, for understandable reasons, are not.

It seems to me that there are three ultimate objects of government: firstly, to make and enforce laws to govern the relations between persons within its jurisdiction; secondly, to provide or procure the provision of services to those persons; and, thirdly, to defend those persons from external aggression. Of course, this House is not concerned with the third of these objects because the naval and military defence of Victoria is the responsibility of the Commonwealth. However, the other two objects are certainly our concern.

In pursuit of its objects, government must perform certain other functions, the most notable of which are protecting itself from subversion, regulating its own structure, and providing itself with the resources to achieve its objects. The whole of politics consists of deciding questions of how to pursue and achieve the objects of government and how government should carry out its other functions.

In grappling with such political questions over the course of history, human beings have evolved and are continuing to evolve principles which experience has shown are necessary or desirable for good government. Some of these principles are almost universally recognised and I hope that no honourable member would dissent from them. Nonetheless, I would like to mention some of them because it is easy to forget them in the heat of the moment.

The first principle I would mention is the rule of law, namely, that the State should establish and enforce laws which define the freedoms and rights of individuals. Furthermore, such laws should be enforced fairly and with natural justice. This requires the separation and independence of the judiciary from other areas of government. It also requires that laws should not be changed with retrospective effect to the detriment of individuals.

The second principle is freedom of the person, that is, the freedom of the person from physical assault, except for actions which are permitted to prevent or remedy a breach of the law or to carry out sanctions which the law prescribes. The third principle is freedom of religion. That is, the freedom of each individual to seek God in the manner he or she thinks fit, without sanction or discrimination by the State for so doing.

The fourth principle is freedom of speech. That is, the freedom to argue whatever propositions an individual wishes to argue, without sanction or discrimination by the State, so long as the individual does not argue such propositions in a manner which is insulting or abusive or which is likely to lead others to illegal acts.

The fifth principle is freedom of marriage. Marriage should be permitted by the State and the parties to a marriage should not be subject to any discrimination by the State by reason of their marriage. The sixth principle I would mention is the ownership of property. I say this with some hesitation, but I am mindful that honourable members opposite say that they have renounced the socialisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange as one of their objectives, and I think even honourable members opposite would agree that individuals should be permitted to have the control of certain material objects to consume and enjoy. It follows from the right of ownership of property that a person should not be deprived of property by the State, except as authorised by law and on just terms.

The seventh principle is that it is a duty of government to help those in need to the extent and in the manner in which government can help, and it is a duty of individuals to contribute fairly to the provision of that help if called upon. The eighth principle is constitutional democracy. In other words, the institutions of government and the powers of those institutions should be defined under a constitution, whether or not written, which provides for legislative and executive decisions to be made by persons chosen under a system which is calculated to give representation to the wishes of the people.

The ninth and final generally accepted principle which I wish to mention is that of non-discrimination, namely, that the State should not govern or make laws with the intention of adversely affecting individuals by reason of their race, ethnic or cultural background, parentage, or gender.

These are principles to which all honourable members subscribe. They are principles which unite us in support of the system of government under which we live, and they are principles that honourable members should always bear in mind when making political decisions. However, even within these principles there remains a great deal of room for debate about how a government should achieve its objectives. Therefore, I shall consider some further principles, which, although they may not command general support, are similar in importance to the principles I have just described.

The first of those principles is that of individual liberty and free enterprise. By individual liberty I mean that an individual should have complete freedom of action, subject to the principles to which I have referred and within a set of efficient property, contract and competition laws. This freedom of action should be constrained only for an individual's own good where their actions would be otherwise likely to result in their death or to put them in need of either the voluntary assistance of others or the assistance of the State.

The second principle to which I shall refer is that of limited government. Government should assist individuals only where those individuals are in need, and only if their need cannot be met by the commercial or voluntary actions of others. Government should provide services to the public only if the benefits derived from the service outweigh the cost of provision, and not if it is practicable to provide the service on a user-pays basis. A user-pays basis will be impracticable in the sense to which I refer if the costs of collecting a charge from those who use a service outweigh the greater efficiency that would be obtained from so charging, or if the benefit of the service is derived by people who cannot be deprived of the benefit if they do not pay the charge.

The third and final principle I want to mention is that of fair taxation—namely, that a taxation system should aim to impose an equal, subjective burden on everyone; and that burden should not vary depending on what the individual does. The only exceptions to this approach should be that taxation penalties can be applied for things which the State is entitled to prohibit or compel, and that taxation incentives or relief can be applied for things which the State is entitled to procure, and can be given to people to whom the State is entitled to provide assistance.

Since these latter three principles may not be readily accepted by all honourable members opposite, I shall spend some time discussing the rationale of these principles and applying them to various actions of the government. The rationale for individual liberty and free enterprise is that human experience shows that the well-being of everyone is promoted if individuals are permitted to do things for themselves, and to trade freely and to enter transactions, subject to the principles that I have mentioned, within an efficient set of property, contract, and competition laws.

There are three interlinked reasons why individual freedom is desirable. The first reason is that human beings tend to give first attention to their own needs and the needs of their families; and in the long term humans will work more productively if they act to meet those needs. That is because humans attach a higher value to their own needs and the needs of their families than they attach to the needs of others. That may be wrong, and perhaps we should try not to act in that way. However, it is a fact that, whatever governments may decree, humans will continue to give preference to their own needs and the needs of their families, and any society that tries to build a utopia on Earth, assuming a universal and long-term dedication to the common good, will fail. The experience of the entire Eastern Bloc is evidence of that proposition.

The second reason why individual freedom is desirable concerns information. Usually we know our own needs and preferences better than others know them; and each of us tends to know the world in our vicinity better than it is known by those who are more remote. Even if we all had as much regard for the well-being of others as we have for our own well-being, generally we cannot make decisions about what suits other people as well as those people can make those decisions for themselves.

If decisions are imposed on people about what goods and services they can or cannot consume or about what things they can or cannot do, those decisions are likely to be less satisfactory than decisions made by individuals themselves from the options available under the system of free enterprise. Likewise, beyond a certain point, central direction of an enterprise is likely to be less efficient than more local direction; and

free enterprise will best determine the optimum level of central direction based on what is most profitable. In addition, free enterprise establishes markets and prices which are better transmitters of information about demands and resources than a non-price system.

The third argument for the benefits of liberty and free enterprise is that humans welcome opportunities and challenges and the freedom to determine their own actions. Humans work harder and better to meet goals they have set themselves than to meet goals set by others which they have not endorsed. Freedom of spirit and freedom of action are responsible for creativity in life, which in turn is responsible for art, literature, philosophy, and science, and for all the other achievements of human history.

These are the three reasons why individual freedom is a driving force that benefits humanity; but those reasons do not give a full explanation of that benefit. This driving force will work productively only if it is channelled by laws that direct it to beneficial ends. If there were no property rights, so that objects could be either seized or destroyed at will, if there were no contract laws, so that no arrangement or representation need ever be honoured, or if there were no competition laws, so that collusions could operate unchecked, then free enterprise and individual freedom would be more destructive than constructive.

Most of the apparent failings of the free enterprise system are not failings of the free enterprise system but of the law which channels free enterprise. The failings are our failings, not the failings of the private sector. There are three reasons for those failings. The first reason is that our economic understanding, which has developed greatly over the past 200 years, is still developing.

A major area where it is becoming apparent that our laws are defective is that of public property and externalities. For many years we have allowed our public property, such as our rivers and lakes, our coastlines, our oceans and our atmosphere, to be the dumping place for the noxious by-products of private activity. Those by-products have also affected both the property and personal health of individuals. Sir Rupert Hamer's Liberal government was the first government to begin to tackle those problems seriously, and we must continue to develop laws that prevent the true cost of private activity being inflicted on others.

The second reason why our laws fail to channel free enterprise properly is that Parliament is prevailed upon to pass laws that benefit some people at the expense of others. Private statutory monopolies and many labour laws are prime examples of this. To overcome this problem, honourable members must always be on their guard to ensure that they do not simply accept the reasons for legislation put forward by particular lobby groups, and thus overlook the public interest, for which no-one is lobbying.

The third reason why our laws can fail to channel free enterprise properly is that the government of the day may get the idea into its head that it can win popular support by enacting a law that attacks some aspect of the free enterprise system. The so-called prices peg legislation, which the government regrettably foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, is a clear example of that. Contrary to what was said by the honourable member for Bentleigh, such legislation is at best useless in holding down prices, and is an administrative burden on businesses. At worst, such legislation will lead to business bankruptcies and a shortage of goods. The supporters of such legislation fail to realise that price increases in a competitive industry are not due to the whim of an individual but are the result of either a sudden increase in demand or cost pressures on the industry. In the case of grocery price increases, the cost pressures are obvious—namely, the tax burden imposed by the government, which has increased by approximately 31 per cent in real per capita terms since it came to power, and the

large wage increase which has been granted in the retail sector and which was supported by the government.

Having explained the importance of free enterprise and individual liberty, and having explained the laws that should channel it, I should rule out any misconception honourable members may have that I am arguing that free enterprise and liberty should be the start and finish of our way of life in Victoria. I am not saying that. There are many aspects of good government to which the principles of free enterprise cannot apply. Free enterprise cannot be the ultimate enforcer of the law. Free enterprise cannot be the final determinant of either the extent or the type of help necessary for those in need, nor can it practicably be the ultimate provider of a number of valuable services which the State provides. However, in its place the free enterprise system has proved to be the engine of development and prosperity, not only in this State but also throughout the world.

The corollary of free enterprise and individual freedom is that governments should not provide those services which individuals can provide for themselves or for each other. In part this is because free enterprise is better for the reasons I have mentioned and in part it is because democratic government suffers some particular handicaps in providing services.

The first handicap democratic government suffers is that there is an emphasis on following due procedure and this emphasis creates a bias which penalises mistakes more than it rewards successful achievements. This applies to governments as a whole and it also applies to individual public servants. The bias, in turn, leads to the avoidance of risk, even where the value of the outcome from taking the risk is expected to be greater than the value of not taking the risk.

I am aware that attempts are being made to deal with the problem by setting goals against which public sector performance can be measured, but setting such goals is made difficult because there is no universal measure of performance in the public sector, such as profit in the private sector.

Furthermore, because it is difficult to set performance targets and because governments are expected to account to the public in an objectively verifiable manner for the due spending of taxpayers' money, it is difficult for governments to make staffing decisions—to fire or to promote people—based on performance against targets. Therefore, good performance by public servants cannot be adequately rewarded and people employed by government tend to seek the entitlements of due process more than the rewards of good performance.

The only factors which encourage a good rather than a mediocre performance are a sense of duty or the desire for job satisfaction, and experience shows that, with a number of exceptions, these factors alone are not good enough motivators to produce a result as successful as the result in the private sector.

One illustration of the poor—indeed deteriorating—performance of the State public sector in Victoria is the aggregate level of employment in that sector. Since 1982 State public sector employment has increased by 18 per cent, equal to about 50 000 people. This is in a period when the State's population has grown by only 8 per cent.

If the government could point to some increase in the level of services we receive in this State, such a massive increase might be explained, but in almost any area of services one cares to nominate—be it police, hospitals, or education—there has been no significant improvement in the quality of service provided. The only possible conclusion that can be drawn is that the massive increase in numbers has been accompanied by a significant deterioration in the overall productivity of the State public sector.

A further illustration of the unfortunate consequences of the emphasis on due procedure in the public sector comes from my own electorate of Balwyn. His Excellency the Governor referred in his Speech to the government's open space conservation program. In the suburb of Surrey Hills there is a small open space called the Lorne Parade reserve. As part of the government's assets sale program, this piece of land is for sale. It is zoned as public open space and, as one might expect, there is not a great deal of competition to buy public open space. However, the Box Hill City Council has expressed interest in acquiring the land. Quite understandably, the council is not prepared to pay a great deal for the land as its ratepayers have maintained the land as a park for 75 years and the council does not have lot of money to spare. However, it is, as I said, willing to acquire it. In those circumstances, one might expect that the government, which wanted to sell the land, and the Box Hill City Council, which wanted to acquire it, could negotiate a sale at a modest price and the situation could be resolved satisfactorily. But this is where due process comes in.

Government policy is that such asset sales must be at the Valuer-General's valuation. That is fair enough. However, the Valuer-General insists on valuing the land at a price related to residential values, even though there is no question at this stage of the land being used for residences. What is the reason for the Valuer-General's approach? The reason is that there is a court case in which it was held that, where the government compulsorily acquires land from a council and the council can replace that land only through residential purchases, residential prices should be taken into account in valuing the land acquired. That is fair enough too.

However, the absurdity is that this case of compulsory purchase, where the aim was to compensate a body that was losing its land against its will, is now being applied to a situation of a voluntary sale where the aim should be to assess the price that would fairly be payable for the land on the open market. As a result of this misguided emphasis on due process, the government has not been able to sell its land, a great deal of administrative time has been wasted, the future of the open space has not been safeguarded, and the local residents are understandably angry and frustrated.

If government cannot handle effectively a simple task such as disposing of a small piece of land, honourable members will understand why I contend that governments should stay out of service provision wherever possible.

Due process is not the only handicap faced by governments in the provision of services. The second handicap is that governments can fall back on the bottomless pit of the public purse to fund or cover their mistakes. The prospects of bankruptcy cannot be a spur to performance and, since the public is ignorant of the precise operation of any government enterprise, public reaction may be even less adverse if taxes increase to cover a mistake than if the mistake is acknowledged and corrected.

The final handicap that governments face in the provision of services is that they have two conflicts of interest. The first conflict is the temptation to use the law either to give an advantage to a government enterprise over its competitors or to help it cover mistakes. The Victorian Economic Development Corporation is a classic illustration of the latter. From all accounts, if the VEDC were a private sector company the directors would now have to be seriously considering whether they could legally continue to carry on business, since private sector directors are prohibited from carrying on business unless they have a reasonable expectation that their company can pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Indeed, if the VEDC were a private sector company, it may well be that the liquidator would have been called in already. Yet because the VEDC is in the public sector, these are not concerns faced by it, since the government can bail it out. This is, of course, what appears to have happened. The government has merged the VEDC with the

Rural Finance Corporation and I doubt if honourable members will ever know whether the VEDC has in fact gone bust.

The second conflict of interest faced by government is the temptation to use government enterprise to benefit the members of the government. I do not necessarily mean this in a personal pecuniary sense, because due process and public accountability are designed to prevent such an occurrence, but I do mean that the enterprise can be used for purposes such as winning elections, where the improper use is almost impossible to detect. For all of these reasons, government is not an appropriate provider of services except where there is no practicable alternative.

The third contentious principle to which I referred was fair taxation. This is something of an impossible goal in practice. The best that can be done is to aim for a system of progressive taxation which imposes a greater burden on those more able to bear it, but not a burden which systematically causes greater distress to people in one type of circumstance than to people in another.

It is also almost impossible to achieve a type of taxation which does not vary with the activities of the individual. It is made even more difficult by the constitutional limitation under which we operate. I do not envy any Treasurer who tries to design an equitable and efficient taxation system for this State. Nonetheless, the structure of the taxation system has deteriorated under the present government.

Again, I illustrate the point with an example drawn from my electorate of Balwyn. Five years ago, in 1983, the average house purchased in the City of Camberwell, which takes in most of my electorate, sold for \$77 500. The stamp duty payable on that house was \$1705, a rate of duty of 2.2 per cent. Today the average house purchased in the City of Camberwell is estimated to sell for about \$225 000. The stamp duty payable on this amount is \$9700, which is a rate of duty of 4.3 per cent.

Two points follow from this. The first and most obvious is that the government's stamp duty burden on the average home has increased by 460 per cent in the City of Camberwell over the past five years. That is a massive increase in anyone's terms.

The second point is that the rate of duty has virtually doubled, from 2.2 per cent to 4.3 per cent. What is worse, the marginal rate of duty—that is, the extra duty for each further dollar of increase in price—is now 6 per cent. That is an enormous handicap on efficiency in the housing market. It hinders everyone who wants to buy a house—the first home buyer, the growing family, and the elderly couple seeking a more suitable home for their retirement. It forces people to live in houses that do not suit them and, therefore, means that the housing stock is not being put to efficient use.

Regardless of the over-all level of taxation, which has increased enormously under the present government, transaction taxes such as stamp duty must not be allowed to reach a level where they have a serious effect on the efficiency of the market.

In conclusion, I have spent some time in this speech discussing at length the objectives and principles of government, often in rather abstract terms. Nonetheless, I contend it should always be possible for each of us to justify our actions and decisions on the basis of the first principles which we hold. I have tried in this, my first speech in the House, to set forth in detail some of the key principles which I intend to apply in future to matters that arise for decision.

Mr PERRIN (Bulleen)—I have pleasure in taking part in the debate on the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor on the opening of Parliament. I congratulate the previous speaker, the honourable member for Balwyn, on his excellent speech. I pledge my loyalty and the loyalty of my constituents in Bulleen to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. We understand that Her

Majesty is the Queen of Australia and we support her in every possible way. I shall not concentrate on the Governor's Speech, because I understand that was written by the government. I shall discuss the government's policies and their effects on the City of Doncaster and Templestowe.

Before doing so, I take this opportunity of thanking the people in the Bulleen electorate for voting for me to again represent them in this place. It is my honour to do exactly that and I shall try in every possible way to represent their interests in this Chamber. The people of the City of Doncaster and Templestowe are angry with the Cain government. This was evident in the result of the election in the Bulleen electorate where, for the first time, the Liberal Party won in eleven out of eleven booths. That is a record. It won in booths that have never been won by the Liberal Party until the 1988 election.

The Liberal Party was able to clean out representatives of the Labor Party in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. No fewer than three Labor Party members of Parliament were defeated at the last election; the losses were in the electorates of Templestowe Province and Warrandyte and in the Nunawading Province. I am pleased that the Labor Party does not have a State or Federal representative in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. They have all been cleaned out!

The reason that has happened is that the electorate I represent has been singled out and discriminated against by the policies of the government. One of the most significant areas of failure by this government in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe has been its inability to reduce crime. Crime has run rampant in that area. Bank robberies, house burglaries and other forms of crime have increased in a city of approximately 100 000 people.

The City of Doncaster and Templestowe is in police district "Q". The latest crime statistics released by the police are for 1986–87. Overall crime in that year increased by 26.6 per cent compared with the previous year. The statistics show that homicides have increased by 93.3 per cent, robberies by 40.6 per cent, burglaries by 20.6 per cent, theft by 33.3 per cent, and sex offences by 110.2 per cent. That is all in one year!

Is it any wonder that the people of the City of Doncaster and Templestowe resoundingly rejected the Cain government at the last election? They did not want anything to do with a government under which the crime rate has soared. Police district "Q" covers Heidelberg, Greensborough, and Preston. One would suspect that the crime rates in those areas have also increased by identical amounts. Obviously, the people of the City of Doncaster and Templestowe wanted a strong party that presents a law and order policy. That is exactly what the Liberal Party did. The results at every polling booth in the Bulleen electorate, where the Labor Party candidate was cleaned out, are a clear indication of the rejection of this government's policy on law and order.

The City of Doncaster and Templestowe is on the receiving end of some nasty taxes. One in every seven houses in the city attracts land tax. Is there any doubt that the promise of the Liberal Party to abolish land tax on the family home was popular? In the area that I represent the families are trying to cope and they cannot afford land tax. It is more than that. Now the government is increasing the charges for gas, water, and electricity. My constituents strongly resent those charges on basic services.

They question the policies of the government when the State tax on fuel is 4 cents for every litre of petrol. The people were not conned by the lie espoused by the Labor Party about its supposed family pledge. The lie was that people would not pay \$1 more for the basic services. The people of the City of Doncaster and Templestowe appear to be well educated because they did not buy that pledge; they understood that

it was a lie and recognised it as a con trick. They did not want a bar of it. I support them. All Victorians will understand the lie put out by the Labor Party when Board of Works rates or other government charges are again increased.

Another reason the Labor Party was rejected in the Bulleen electorate was the per capita grant to the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. The grants allocated by the Victoria Grants Commission for the year 1988–89 have been announced. They are surprising; for example, Doncaster–Templestowe, which has approximately 100 000 residents, will receive approximately \$20.66 per head of population. When one considers the grants made to some other municipalities, one questions the political motives of the Labor Party. For example, Footscray will receive \$51.72 per head of population; Brunswick, \$47.77 per head; Northcote, \$47.60 per head; Sunshine, \$46.04 per head; Werribee, \$45.18 per head; and Coburg, \$41.37 per head.

When one questions why those areas receive larger grants, one must ascertain whether they have a common denominator. One soon recognises that they have and that is that they are all located in the Labor Party heartland! Their representatives are members of the Labor Party. Those municipalities have been receiving more than double the grants per head of population received by growing municipalities like the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. The municipalities of Box Hill and Waverley have also been discriminated against. They will receive less than half the per capita grants allocated to municipalities in the Labor Party electorates.

I place on record that that form of political favouritism is about to stop because it will be exposed wherever I can expose it. When Victorians understand the discriminations in favour of Labor Party areas, they will make the appropriate choice at the next State election.

Another area in which the people of the City of Doncaster and Templestowe made a clear choice between the Liberal and Labor parties was on the extension of the Eastern Freeway. That freeway is vital to the eastern suburbs but it stops in the electorate of Bulleen. As a result much of the traffic congestion affects my constituents. In both the evening and morning peak hours the traffic is banked up for kilometres, especially at the intersection of the Eastern Freeway and Doncaster Road. The quality of life of my constituents is being affected because the Eastern Freeway extension has not proceeded.

The extension of the Eastern Freeway has not proceeded for one basic reason—because the Labor government is opposed to freeways. The Labor government wants to build more arterial roads, but that will put enormous traffic volumes through a sensitive environmental area such as the Koonung Valley. The Eastern Freeway should be extended so that traffic flows through the valley without stopping, without causing the congestion, the carbon monoxide build-up, and the pollution.

The extension of the freeway would be the best environmental solution for the City of Doncaster and Templestowe, and I support that proposition strongly. The ratepayers of the City of Doncaster and Templestowe want a better quality of life and do not want the morning and evening peak hour traffic going through their streets causing traffic congestion.

The people of Doncaster and Templestowe are angry about the road system. The city has been starved of funds and receives approximately 10 cents for each road dollar collected as road taxes. The city has the largest number of cars of any municipality in the eastern suburbs and its citizens pay a large amount of taxation through taxes on petrol. As a consequence of the reduced road funding the city suffers from a major backlog in the upgrading of roads. Some roads in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe have been the cause of road accidents and driver fatalities because of

their poor condition. The blame for those poor roads can be laid at the feet of the government.

When the Cain Labor government was elected in 1982 road funding for the City of Doncaster and Templestowe was significantly reduced. Although there was a small increase in road funding prior to the last election—the government was trying to save the Labor Party representatives in that area, which did not work—the people of Doncaster and Templestowe know that the road system can be corrected only by a Liberal government, through its well structured transport policy.

The people of Doncaster and Templestowe also rely on the bus system and Liberal Party policies give a high priority to improving the quality of the transport system throughout metropolitan Melbourne. They are the reasons why the voters in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe turned against the three Labor members of Parliament representing that area.

The Cain Labor government has had a policy of selling every parcel of government-owned land that it can. This is the government that is supposedly the supporter of the State school system, yet it has sold off many millions of dollars worth of government land set aside for State school purposes.

In the City of Doncaster and Templestowe the government, in 1985, sold off 6.1 hectares of land set aside for a secondary school in King and Taunton streets, East Doncaster, for \$1.2 million. In 1987, the government sold 5 hectares of land in Porter Street, Templestowe, set aside for a State secondary school, for \$3.2 million. In 1987 the government sold 1 hectare of land in Smiths Road, Templestowe, set aside for a primary school, for \$1.7 million. In 1988 the government sold 5.8 hectares of land in Pleasant Road, Bulleen, set aside for a secondary school, for \$6.5 million. In 1984 the government sold 0.4 hectares of land in Blackburn Road, East Doncaster for \$200 000.

The government is actually planning to bulldoze a State school situated in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe—that proves it does not care about the State school system—and 1.3 hectares of land that is part of the Ayr Primary School is to be subdivided into an housing estate by the Urban Land Authority. Honourable members should be aware that all those parcels of land that I have mentioned were originally purchased as proposed sites for primary and secondary schools by the previous Liberal government, which had in mind the future generations of people living in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. Only one small parcel of land, required for education purposes, is left in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe, but I believe the Cain government will soon sell that parcel.

Since 1982, the Cain Labor government has sold more than \$30 million worth of government-owned land in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. That is why the voters in the Doncaster and Templestowe area were more than happy to throw out the Labor Party representatives.

The government has broken its election promises to extend the parkland in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. Honourable members will know that one of the boundaries of the city is the Yarra River. It is bordered by a magnificent park controlled by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. The metropolitan park system was developed on land purchased by previous Liberal governments and the Labor government has not extended that park system. In fact, all the parks in the Doncaster and Templestowe area, including the Warrandyte State Park and other bush parks, are situated on land purchased by previous Liberal governments.

The government has had opportunities of purchasing land and extending parkland in the Doncaster and Templestowe area. Hoyts Corporation Pty Ltd recently sold an area of land on which it had established a drive-in theatre in Bulleen Road, Bulleen.

The Cain government had given a commitment to purchase the land to extend the parkland. That promise was broken and the land was never purchased. This precious area of land abutting the Yarra River has been lost to the parkland system. Our children will curse the Cain Labor government for missing the opportunity of purchasing the land.

The government also promised to purchase an area of land known as White's land in Bulleen Road, Bulleen, which consists of 6 hectares. The government gave that commitment in 1982, prior to the election of the Labor government. The first thing the Labor government did, upon its election to office in 1982, was to renege on its promise to purchase White's land. That land has now been subdivided into housing estates that are situated closer to the Yarra River than any other housing estate developed in the metropolitan area over the past six years.

I have indicated the values and hopes of the people who live within the City of Doncaster and Templestowe, but they see only broken promises.

The other reason that the Labor Party representatives for the Doncaster and Templestowe region were not re-elected was the government's residential development policy. That policy allows housing estates to be developed on house blocks that are half the size of normal residential house blocks. It is a policy of congested living, similar to that which exists in Fitzroy and Carlton—Labor strongholds. The Labor government wants to introduce that policy into Doncaster and Templestowe and would assist in the development of new housing estates on blocks of land that would be half the normal size of residential blocks. On environmental grounds alone, intensive living with people living on top of one another on the banks of the Yarra River, does not make sense.

It is a hilly area. With drainage running into the Yarra River one can imagine the increased pollution caused by increased housing. The government wanted to introduce the residential development provisions in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe but the people rejected the government's policy and they rejected the system of dual occupancy.

The new honourable member for Warrandyte can attest to the fact that dual occupancy was a key issue that caused the Labor Party to lose the seat he now holds. The people of Warrandyte did not want dual occupancy; they did not want two houses on one house block. They moved to the beautiful parkland area of the Yarra River because they wanted trees and grass, not bricks and mortar with houses one on top of another. The people in the electorate of Warrandyte rejected the Labor Party.

When one examines the record of the Labor Party one notes that it has not had an effect upon the environment in the Yarra River area. The people of the City of Doncaster and Templestowe understood the issues whether they were crime, environment, taxes, or roads and freeways. The people wanted a party with a vision for the future and that party was the Liberal Party. That party presented a strong policy on these issues and was given a resounding vote. In my electorate my vote increased by 2 per cent. The Liberal Party also had a magnificent result in the seat of Warrandyte.

In an article in the *Latrobe Valley Express* of 11 October, Mr Peter Manins, a CSIRO scientist and the former Latrobe Valley Airshed Study project director, indicated his belief that acid rain had fallen in the Latrobe Valley. That view should concern every citizen not only of my electorate but also of Victoria. The view expressed by Mr Manins that acid rain had fallen in this State was the first indication that I have had of that occurrence. Honourable members are aware that acid rain has fallen in Germany and is destroying the Black Forest. We have now been told that acid rain

has fallen in Victoria and that it has had an effect on Mount Tasmania and the Strzelecki Ranges, which are a valuable part of the ecological environment of Victoria.

The policy of the government must be questioned because it is committed to proceeding with the Loy Yang B power station. I do not know which honourable members support Loy Yang B, but, if there is an indication that power generation in the Latrobe Valley will contribute to the fall of acid rain, then we must all rethink the situation. Mr Long in another place has similar views to mine and he has asked for a major inquiry into the cause of this reported acid rain. Mr Manins believes the acid rain was caused by weather conditions and that, because of circumstances originating in Melbourne, acid rain has fallen in the Latrobe Valley.

I do not know whether that is true but Mr Manins has excellent credentials and the House should take note of what he has said. If there has been acid rain in the State we should do everything possible to deal with the problem. The greenhouse effect has now become a matter of public debate and the report that acid rain has fallen in this State would be news to Victorians. It is time the government examined its policy and reviewed the circumstances of its power generation.

The honourable member for Forest Hill indicated there may be a need for nuclear power generation in Victoria. I do not know whether that is the case, but I know that the majority of Victorians will never accept acid rain as a normal part of the environmental effect in this State.

It is clear that, at the last election, the government did not receive a mandate; it did not receive the majority of the vote as the conservative parties outpolled the Labor Party. The government did not gain control of the Upper House where the conservative parties were given a strong mandate.

Two out of four seats that the conservative parties won came from the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. Nunawading Province and Templestowe Province were taken from the Labor Party because of the effect of its deceptive policies on the eastern suburbs. The people of Victoria will throw out the government when they realise that the pledge to Victorian families of "not \$1 more" was a lie.

The people of Victoria will throw out the government when they understand that law and order is out of control with a 26 per cent increase in crime in one year in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. I intend, as the representative of that electorate—as I am sure all other honourable members in this place do—to ensure that the government keeps its promises and that our constituents are not adversely affected by the government's lies or broken promises. I will do everything possible to keep the government honest but the results of the government's policies will be clear at the next election when the government is thrown out and the Liberal Party is elected to govern.

On the motion of Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs), the debate was adjourned.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Public liability of volunteers—Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd—Motor car registration payments—State Emergency Service funding—Cobram rail service—Snapper netting in Port Phillip Bay—Use of Merrett rifle range, Williamstown—Location of traffic sign in Racecourse Road, Flemington—Frankston Hospital—Double booking on country trains

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs)—I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr LIEBERMAN (Benambra)—I direct to the attention of the Attorney-General the fact that prior to the last election the former Attorney-General, now the Minister for Transport, agreed that an inquiry should be undertaken by the Legal and Constitutional Committee into the public liability of volunteers. Volunteers throughout Victoria have been under increasing pressure because of a rise in the number of claims against them for negligence due to accidents suffered by people at functions organised by volunteers.

Prior to the election the Legal and Constitutional Committee was undertaking that inquiry and I had the privilege of chairing the committee. Unfortunately, when the election was called, the committee's work was ended although the inquiry had not been completed. However, the concern of people involved in the volunteer movement throughout Victoria continues unabated. If this State loses the contribution of volunteers to community life and to advancing the interests of the disadvantaged in our community, we will all be worse off.

We are into the 51st Parliament and the formation of the new Parliamentary committees is undoubtedly imminent. Therefore, the decisions of the Cain government as to the inquiries to be referred to those committees are about to be made. I ask that the Attorney-General request the Legal and Constitutional Committee to resume its work and complete the inquiry so that its report can be made available to Parliament and the community and so that the committee can identify areas where volunteers in the community can be assisted and encouraged to continue their work.

Mr STEGGALL (Swan Hill)—In the absence of the Minister responsible for Aboriginal affairs, I direct to the attention of the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, who is at the table, the sensitive matter relating to the Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd at Robinvale. Prior to the last State election being called, some members of the cooperative approached me to ascertain whether some equity and justice could be achieved within the workings of the cooperative. Members of that organisation had previously asked the then Minister responsible for Aboriginal affairs, the Ombudsman, and the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs for help to clear up some concerns in the Robinvale community. They received either no response or ineffective responses from those people.

The administrative responsibility for the cooperative falls within two areas: the Attorney-General's Department through the Registrar of Cooperative Societies, and the Minister responsible for Aboriginal affairs. Neither Minister, nor their departments, has fulfilled his responsibilities. They are too timid and have run away from their responsibilities relating to the operation and management of the cooperative. The administration is in a shambles, and it appears that the Registrar of Cooperative Societies is simply turning his back on the problem.

I ask the Attorney-General to take steps to correct any problems so far as the accounts and the operation of the cooperative are concerned. I also ask the Minister responsible for Aboriginal affairs to ascertain whether the responsible department will make available to the cooperative a person with administrative skills to help it through this period and to examine its future administration. Unfortunately, people are thrust into administrative positions without the skills necessary to handle the huge sums of money that are entrusted to them.

The Robinvale community is in a sensitive frame of mind on this issue, which is not easy to deal with. The Minister responsible for Aboriginal affairs—and, through him, also the Attorney-General and the Registrar of Cooperative Societies—must

ensure that the cooperative operates in a just and proper manner, and that proper accounts for program expenditures and grant moneys are kept.

There seems to be significant overexpenditure with no apparent control by the cooperative. The situation in Robinvale is deteriorating and the cooperative needs help and guidance, which I am sure the Minister's officers will provide when the problem is pointed out to them and they investigate the matter.

The Aboriginal community needs the organisation to be operated efficiently, so that the proper advancement of the whole community, not just part of it, can be achieved through the operations of the Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd.

Mrs WILSON (Dandenong North)—The matter I raise for the attention of the Minister for Transport relates to a situation that was recently brought to my notice by a constituent when he sought my advice regarding his motor vehicle registration fee. This constituent had received a bill for the sum of \$263, which comprised the motor vehicle registration fee plus transport accident costs.

The man in question had had serious health problems, he had had a marriage breakdown, and he had lost his job. To find himself confronted with a bill for \$263, which he was required to pay all at once, was something with which he could not cope. He asked me if there was any provision within the Ministry of Transport that would enable him to pay the fee by instalments.

Having telephoned the Minister's office as well as the Road Traffic Authority, I was most surprised, as was my constituent, to find that there was no such provision. In all other areas of government administration there appears to be some easy-payment plan, such as within the Gas and Fuel Corporation and the State Electricity Commission, where the accounts and the amounts to be paid can be tailored to suit the income and the circumstances of the person concerned.

I ask the Minister, with his well-known commitment to social justice and to the needs of people on low incomes, to consider implementing some form of payment by instalments for motor registration fees. I understand that, as an initiative of the government, motor registration charges will be dropped next year, but the transport accident component will still be required to be paid. That will obviously involve an amount in excess of \$250 for each driver. A provision for payment by instalments would be of tremendous assistance to low-income families and I believe it would also have the added advantage of removing from our roads many of the unregistered vehicles that are being driven at present.

Mr BILDSTIEN (Mildura)—I raise for the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services a matter of great concern to State Emergency Service units in my electorate: the lack of funding for this vital volunteer service.

The Minister will be aware that men and women who join the service are very loyal and dedicated to the task they are asked to perform. They make a commitment to be on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Their concern is that the government is not recognising their commitment. State Emergency Service units in the Mildura electorate inform me that the current level of funding is inadequate to meet their needs. As expressed in a letter from the deputy controller of the Ouyen unit of the State Emergency Service, Ms Judy Parker:

This means the volunteers have to go to their community to receive financial assistance to purchase equipment which should be provided by the government, who say we are necessary but leave us to support ourselves.

The State Emergency Services members have to go out and sell chocolate bars to raise money to raise the necessary funds to purchase the equipment they need. They rightly

ask whether the government believes they are a necessary service and, if so, why they have to fund themselves.

I used the illustration in my maiden speech that the Ouyen SES spends in one month its annual subsidy on fuel. Tomorrow I shall present a petition in this place signed by 478 people in a small community expressing their concern and frustration. Will the Minister for Police and Emergency Services give urgent consideration to this matter and provide additional funds to enable the SES to safely and efficiently carry out its functions?

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I direct to the attention of the Minister for Transport comments that were made during the election campaign that some country passenger rail services may be curtailed or closed. I refer particularly to the passenger rail service from Melbourne through Seymour to Shepparton and on to Cobram. The Minister will be aware that prior to the change of government in 1982 the closure of some country rail services was announced—in particular, the rail service from Melbourne via Seymour, Shepparton and Cobram. The train terminated at Shepparton and, finally, the rail link was closed at Numurkah. At that time a number of representations were made. I made representations to the previous Liberal government without success, but the former Minister for Transport, Mr Crabb, when in opposition, supported the representations I was making at that time. He indicated that when the then Opposition was in government, the rail line would be reopened through to Cobram.

True to his word, when the Cain government was elected in 1982, the former Minister for Transport, now the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, refurbished the line and the service was reopened.

The present Minister for Transport will be aware that patronage on the passenger rail service has increased by approximately 23 per cent annually, and that rail service is an excellent one. What is the view of the government in relation to that passenger rail service? That service is supplemented by a bus which operates once a day from Cobram through Numurkah, Shepparton and on to Melbourne. The passenger rail service which leaves Cobram in the morning and returns in the evening is adequate but that is not to say it cannot be improved and upgraded.

I seek an assurance from the Minister that the service will be retained and tied in with the service to Melbourne. It has been suggested that the Strathmerton passenger railway station may be closed and removed and replaced by a shelter. Will the Minister safeguard the future of the passenger rail service and ensure that V/Line consults with the local people and organisations at Strathmerton and the Shire of Numurkah and that these discussions, if the station is to be replaced, are held before any action is taken?

Mr SANDON (Carrum)—Last week I directed to the attention of the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands the need to extend the prohibition of snapper netting in Port Phillip Bay. Tonight I shall go one step further and suggest that it is time the government examined netting in Port Phillip Bay per se.

Last week a professional fisherperson in my electorate netted, between the hours of 3 a.m. and 5 a.m., some 80 boxes of fish; each box contained 35 kilograms, a total of 2800 kilograms. That is an enormous amount by any stretch of the imagination.

The government should examine what should be done in Port Phillip Bay in relation to commercial fishing vis-à-vis recreational fishing. The government should examine whether it is appropriate to continue netting in Port Phillip Bay.

The State would benefit in terms of economic benefits by ensuring that Port Phillip Bay was used only for recreational purposes, when one takes into account the sale of

boats, fishing tackle, and clothing. Recreational fishing as opposed to commercial fishing should be encouraged.

The matter concerns me. Commercial fisherpersons can net any amount and it is time for the government to decide on the outright prohibition of netting. Further, a proper economic study on the viability of commercial versus recreational fishing in Port Phillip Bay should be undertaken.

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn)—The matter I raise for the attention of the Minister for Sport and Recreation relates to the concern of the Victorian Rifle Association which is seeking to use the Merrett rifle range at Williamstown between 9 and 14 March 1989 for the 114th annual Queen's Prize meeting of that organisation.

That association has made application to the Urban Land Authority. Discussions with the authority some time ago indicated that there would be no problem in using the range at that time because the development plans had not advanced to the stage where any difficulty would be experienced.

However, the Victorian Rifle Association recently received a communication from the Urban Land Authority suggesting that there will be some difficulty in about February, although no firm plans are fixed. The letter I have received from the association states:

The ULA have advised the association that no decision has been undertaken yet but that works may start on the range in mid February and therefore the range will be unavailable for all shooting.

The Minister would be aware that this will create difficulties for the association in seeking to conduct what is a major sporting event. It will be an important event for Victoria and will have a significant tourism impact. More than 600 Australian shooters will visit Victoria, thereby generating thousands of dollars into the community. It is a significant event that must be properly catered for.

The Victorian Rifle Association needs an absolutely final commitment with respect to use of the Merrett rifle range no later than 24 November 1988 because of the deadlines on promotional commitments, including advertising.

I ask the Minister for Sport and Recreation to raise the matter with his absent colleague, the Minister for Local Government, who has responsibility for the Urban Land Authority, so that arrangements can be made. If the month of March is definitely out—and it appears to be not definite—perhaps the authority could quickly communicate with the Victorian Rifle Association to negotiate another date so that the association can stage the event early next year.

Mr COLE (Melbourne)—I raise for the attention of the Minister for Transport the introduction of a green arrow sign in my electorate at the intersection of Racecourse Road and Stubbs Street.

That sign was introduced at the behest of the Melbourne City Council in cooperation with the Road Traffic Authority. Unfortunately, in the process of installing the sign, designed to improve the traffic flow for trams and cars in Racecourse Road and to alleviate traffic congestion in Macaulay Road, a problem has arisen in relation to the safety zone area for trams. The safety zone has had to be moved from the west side to the east side of Stubbs Street.

The result is that people who live on the Ministry of Housing and Construction estate are unable to turn left with ease and it is almost impossible to turn right into Racecourse Road. It is also virtually impossible to do a right-hand turn into the

Debneys Park estate. The resolution of this problem would be to realign the driveway of the estate directly opposite Stubbs Street, making it easy——

Mr Gude interjected.

Mr COLE—The Minister is over there, if the honourable member would only look!

It would be easy for people to turn left or right if that driveway were realigned. The problem is that the Melbourne City Council has proposed a scheme costing \$60 000 to achieve the realignment. That \$60 000 is small in terms of road construction costs but the property affected is owned by the Ministry of Housing and Construction. The residents of the estate are concerned because if the works are paid for by the Ministry the funds may come out of the estate's improvement program. It would be detrimental to the welfare of the residents if that were done, and they believe the work should be undertaken by the Road Traffic Authority.

The Melbourne City Council has refused to pay for the works, so I ask the Minister to investigate the matter and ascertain whether the RTA can overcome the bureaucratic difficulties involved in this small but important road realignment.

Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston South)—I raise a matter with the Minister for Planning and Environment, who is the representative in this House of the Minister for Health. During the last State election campaign the Premier and the Minister for Health came to the electorate I represent to open 100 beds and claimed that they would increase the capacity of the Frankston Hospital by a further 100 beds. The reality is that 64 beds in the midwifery section have been closed because of asbestos discovered in the roof of the building, and that section had to move into the main hospital building. Another 17 beds in the children's ward were taken out of commission because of refurbishment requirements. Therefore, instead of the hospital's beds increasing from 205 to 305, the hospital is working on an operative 224 beds.

I understand the beds involved in the refurbishment of the children's ward and other wards in the hospital will be available by May next year. The Labor Party claimed that the Frankston Hospital would receive an additional 100 beds and that this would significantly improve the hospital's waiting list, but that has not been the case.

The hospital commenced an appeal for \$2.5 million, but it appears that it has raised only \$500 000, leaving a \$2 million shortfall. These funds are required to refurbish the major part of the hospital, and without the additional \$2 million there will be no refurbishment of those wards. I ask the Minister for Health to consider the possibility of lending the hospital \$2 million, or of providing it with the capacity to take out an overdraft loan so that it can reduce the waiting list of more than 1000 people.

I understand that \$400 a person has been promised to assist in reducing the number of people on the waiting list and that more than \$100 000 is still to be provided by the government to the Frankston Hospital. I ask the Minister where that money has gone and how it has been used. The Frankston community has been told that the 100 new beds will assist in taking many people off the waiting list, but on the past three Mondays since the election not one person has been admitted to the hospital for elective surgery. It is important to note that up until 1 October everybody who needed to get into the hospital for surgery was able to enter on the Monday of any week. Since the election no-one has been able to get onto the surgery list. I ask the Minister to see his way clear to providing \$2 million by loan, or by some other means, so that people living on the Mornington Peninsula can receive the service that they have been promised and so that the capacity of the Frankston Hospital can increase from 205 to 305 beds.

Mr WALLACE (Gippsland South)—The matter I raise with the Minister for Transport relates to the double booking that is taking place on the train to Gippsland.

Over the long weekend another honourable member and I found that the train was overcrowded and could take no more passengers. I wonder how many patrons we are losing on the train for that reason.

When the honourable member for Gippsland East and I were travelling home last Friday night, we found that we were unable to get a seat on that train, so we caught an electric train to Warragul. When we reached Warragul, we expected to be able to get a seat on the other train, but three people got off and five people got on and, once again, it became extremely difficult.

There are certainly many problems with double booking, and I should like the Minister to address the situation. However, I commend the railway staff because they were very courteous and looked after the people who were having considerable trouble at that time.

At that stage the honourable member for Gippsland East and I decided to go into the dining room and have something to eat. We ended up having a pie and sauce, but the important thing is that the staff were courteous. They had the decency to give us one of the milk crates from under the seat to sit on while eating our pies, and, at that stage, I was wondering to myself what the Minister was doing while we were sitting on a crate eating our pies!

I hope the Minister will address this serious problem and I direct to his attention the fact that the opportunity exists for better patronage on that train. I am hopeful the Minister will address the problem. During the holiday period an extra carriage or two are required on the train and, with today's modern technology, the problem of double booking should be easily resolved so that this problem no longer occurs.

Mr KENNAN (Minister for Transport)—The honourable member for Dandenong North referred to the payment of motor registration or transport accident costs—TAC charges—falling in instalments. That is a matter the government is examining. Of course, some administrative cost is associated with this arrangement. Part of the issue the government will be addressing concerns whether the system can be introduced without any substantial administrative cost. I understand the complaint is that some people consider there is an anomaly with registration and TAC charges not being able to be paid by instalment and yet other government charges can be.

However, the Road Traffic Authority has done an enormous amount in terms of cost efficiencies by reforming its administrative procedures and having those procedures effected less frequently rather than more frequently, moving to longer term licences, and so on. These changes have meant enormous administrative savings.

We are looking towards fewer repetitive procedures and further savings rather than more administrative procedures, but the government will certainly examine, as a matter of social justice, the matter raised by the honourable member.

The honourable member for Murray Valley raised the first of two interesting coalition matters in relation to country lines. I congratulate the members of the corner party for their enthusiastic support of passenger rail services. The government will be maintaining its commitment to keeping those lines open in the country.

The Labor government is a government for all Victorians—not just for the metropolitan area, like the Liberal Party. The railways will not be privatised, either.

The honourable member also wanted to ensure that dialogue took place between V/Line and the people of Strathmerton in relation to any proposed changes. I shall take up that matter with V/Line and ensure that that happens. I shall be interested to visit Strathmerton on my next and much longed-for visit to the electorate represented by the honourable member.

The honourable member for Melbourne raised a difficult traffic management issue relating to a green arrow at the Racecourse Road and Stubbs Street intersection. I shall look into that issue. It causes me concern, both from what the honourable member said and my understanding of the inconvenience that is being caused to the Ministry of Housing and Construction tenants in that area.

The honourable member for Gippsland South raised another supportive coalition matter! An interesting strain is developing whereby V/Line is so successful that the trains are becoming overcrowded. Fortunately, the government recognises that and in the Budget that has just been passed is an allocation of approximately \$3.5 million for extra carriages. V/Line trains are so overcrowded that more passenger carriages are needed, and extra carriages are being renovated at the moment. The government is also working on a design for a new rail car that might serve some lines such as Leongatha.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr KENNAN—Double-decker buses are being considered on the Ringwood line and they may be an option in the future for the Pakenham line. V/Line is carrying more passengers now than have been carried since the mid-1950s and more carriages are needed, not just on the line mentioned but on other lines such as Geelong, Melton, and Sunbury. The honourable member for Murray Valley would be aware that his area is also being considered. I shall also take up with V/Line the issue of double booking.

Mr TREZISE (Minister for Sport and Recreation)—The honourable member for Hawthorn raised the proposed shooting championship in March of next year on an area of land that is under the auspices of the Urban Land Authority. I shall pass on that issue to the Minister for Housing and Construction.

Mrs SETCHES (Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands)—The honourable member for Carrum raised a matter that he raised last week, but with more vigour, today. He suggested that restrictions should be placed on netting in Port Phillip Bay. He cited the case of a commercial fisherperson who took 80 boxes of fish last week. The honourable member for Carrum believes that type of catch has too great an impact on Port Phillip Bay. As mentioned when the matter was raised last week, it is government policy to conduct a full study into fishing in Port Phillip Bay. I take on board the renewed call by the honourable member for Carrum and I shall get back to him on the issue.

The honourable member for Benambra raised for the attention of the Attorney-General a matter that was considered by the Legal and Constitutional Committee prior to the election: the public liability of volunteers who are subject to accidents while being volunteers.

The honourable member cited instances where volunteers who were working in that capacity have had accidents. I shall refer the matter to the Attorney-General, and I shall ask him to continue the reference so that a final report can be completed on which the government can take action.

The honourable member for Swan Hill raised a matter for the attention of the Minister responsible for Aboriginal affairs concerning the Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd at Robinvale. He referred to requests that have been made by members of the cooperative for justice within the workings of the cooperative; and he said it was a sensitive matter. Even though members of the cooperative have approached a number of people, including the Ombudsman, in order to resolve the problem, the honourable member said the problem had not been resolved. I shall refer the matter

to the Minister so that he can take up the matter on behalf of the honourable member for Swan Hill.

The honourable member for Mildura raised a matter for the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, concerning representations that he had received from State Emergency Service workers and volunteers in the Mildura area. He suggested that the current level of funding allocated to the SES was insufficient. The honourable member may not be aware that, prior to the election, the government announced an increase in funding for the SES throughout Victoria. I shall refer the matter to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services as a matter of urgency.

The honourable member for Frankston South raised a matter for the attention of the Minister representing the Minister for Health in another place concerning the Frankston Hospital. He said that although 100 new beds had been funded and constructed prior to the election, bed closures had occurred in the hospital because of the need for redevelopment; he also mentioned the problem of asbestos in the midwifery section. He said that a fundraising effort for the refurbishment of the hospital had fallen short of its target. I shall refer the matter to the Minister who is the representative of the Minister for Health in another place.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.7 p.m.

Thursday, 3 November 1988

The **SPEAKER** (the Hon. Ken Coghill) took the chair at 10.33 a.m. and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—I direct a question to the Treasurer. Is it a fact that just prior to the recent State election Corpivic (No. 31) Pty Ltd had receivers and managers appointed to it by the Victorian Economic Development Corporation? Can the Treasurer inform the House of the extent of the VEDC involvement in the company? Can he also confirm that a director and major shareholder in Corpivic (No. 31) Pty Ltd was the Australian Labor Party candidate for the seat of Mildura in the State elections of 1982, 1985, and 1988?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I have stated on numerous occasions that I do not intend to go into the details of any particular account of the VEDC. I have made that crystal clear and I shall continue to maintain that position.

In order to ensure maximum opportunity for protecting the money made available by the VEDC, there have been occasions when organisations have been placed in receivership. That is obviously the appropriate thing to do in certain situations.

Yesterday I indicated that Horticultural Holdings Ltd is in receivership. That is not the case. The company in receivership has a similar name and is called Horticultural Machinery Pty Ltd. It is, in any event, a matter of public record that that company is in receivership.

The VEDC, through its newly appointed general manager, Mr Jim Studebaker, will be taking whatever action is necessary to provide maximum protection for any funds made available by the VEDC. That, too, is the appropriate course of action to follow.

Honourable members will recognise that there is no question that the financial year 1987–88 has been a difficult year for many companies operating throughout Australia. Consequently, many companies have been adversely affected financially.

It is also a fact of life that the VEDC is a development finance organisation, making funds available to organisations when they have difficulty in obtaining finance from normal lending institutions. That is part of the role played by the VEDC, just as it was part of the role played by the former Victorian Development Corporation. It is also a role spelt out directly in respect of the Commonwealth Development Bank of Australia. It is a role common to organisations in Australia and throughout the Western World because it is recognised that, with imperfections in the capital market, it is necessary for modern industrialised States and economies to establish an organisation that provides development finance.

As I have said, the VEDC has made a positive contribution to the Victorian economy. More than 40 000 jobs have been created as a result of its establishment. I have also indicated that the VEDC has 800 clients, and only a small number of those accounts have been subject to criticism.

Mr W. D. McGRATH (Lowan)—I direct a question to the Treasurer in his capacity as the Minister in this House responsible for the Victorian Economic Development

Corporation. I refer the Treasurer to a Portland firm that recently borrowed several million dollars from the VEDC to establish a storage depot at Portland, with the intention of exporting grain, and particularly bagged peas to India. Is it a fact that, in assessing the application, the VEDC presumed that contracts with the Grain Elevators Board and the Indian importing company on which the development was reliant were secure? Is it a fact also that the VEDC did not bother to check those contracts?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I have stated on several occasions that it is always the full board of the VEDC that makes decisions about particular loan applications. I have also indicated that members of the Liberal Party and the National Party made and continue to make representations to the VEDC about particular loans in the interests of country Victoria.

The Liberal Party and the National Party choose to ignore a number of success stories. Yesterday I referred to the success of Moldflow Pty Ltd, which won a major export award. There are many other success stories.

The procedures followed by the VEDC with particular loan applications are clear. They are put forward as a result of recommendations by either——

Mr W. D. McGrath interjected.

Mr JOLLY—Neither the honourable member nor I have ever attended a VEDC board meeting, so he will not know the details of what took place at a meeting. I do not know the details of what took place in 1986–87.

It is the responsibility of the VEDC board to make decisions based on assessments. I indicate again that it was the full board of the VEDC that made the decision about the Portland organisation to which the honourable member for Lowan has referred.

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS INTO MELBOURNE AIRPORT

Mr DOLLIS (Richmond)—Can the Minister for Tourism outline the recent discussions he has held with Qantas Airways Ltd and others to increase the number of direct international flights into Melbourne Airport?

Mr CRABB (Minister for Tourism)—The most recent discussion I have had with Qantas was with its chairman on the radio this morning. No doubt we will hold a few more of those discussions before this matter is finished. About three-quarters of the flights to Australia land at Sydney Airport, yet approximately one-third of the visitor nights are spent in New South Wales. Therefore, Sydney Airport receives approximately double the number of flights that are warranted by the consumer preference.

For example, more than 80 per cent of all American tourists land in Sydney but only approximately 30 per cent spend time in Sydney hotels. Melbourne gets a lousy 6 per cent of direct flights from Japan, yet it provides accommodation for 25 per cent of all Japanese visitors to Australia. Sydney Airport is hopelessly overcrowded. Honourable members who have passed through that airport either willingly or unwillingly will testify that a singularly unpleasant way to start a trip from Australia or end a trip to Australia is to stand in a queue for the toilet for 2 hours at Sydney Airport prior to boarding a plane for Melbourne.

The obvious immediate answer to relieving the overcrowding at Sydney Airport is for Qantas to stop hijacking Melbourne people to Sydney when they do not wish to go to Sydney. The Victorian government has made submission after submission to Qantas and to the Federal government. It is necessary to point out that the Federal government relies on the advice of Qantas in matters concerning bilateral agreements with countries that have direct flights to Australia because only Qantas seems to understand the

Byzantine arrangements in those treaties. This ground is tailor-made for the Sir Humphreys of this world to confuse everyone.

The government has made dozens of representations to Qantas and, by being polite and approaching the matter according to the rules of the Sir Humphreys, very little has been achieved either by this government or by its predecessors. I should expect this House would adopt a trilateral approach to the issue. I also hope all honourable members are supportive of the position taken by this government. The problem caused by Qantas is recognised not only in Melbourne by the Victorian government but also by other State governments in South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, and Queensland. They are all equally disturbed by the bias applied by Qantas to Sydney.

The Chairman of the Australian Travel Industry Association, Sir Frank Moore, said as much on behalf of the whole Australian travel industry yesterday. Qantas is a national airline and not a New South Wales airline. The Victorian government will be taking as many steps as it can creatively dream up to ensure that Victoria receives its fair share of direct international flights to Melbourne. I shall expect the support of all parties in the House for those steps.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr PERRIN (Bulleen)—I refer the Treasurer to a children's clothing manufacturer in Moe originally known as Valentine Lee Pty Ltd. Did the Victorian Economic Development Corporation extend a mortgage to Valentine Lee Pty Ltd, which went into receivership in 1983; then to the new owner of the business, Valentine Lee and Staff Pty Ltd, which the corporation put into receivership in 1985-86; and after that to the final owner of the business, Kratner Pty Ltd, which went into voluntary liquidation in October last year? In the light of the fact that the business is now defunct, at the cost of at least 40 jobs in Moe, is this another example of the way the VEDC has created thousands of jobs?

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Bulleen is out of order in asking the Treasurer for an opinion. I invite the Treasurer to respond to the question in so far as it sought information.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I am not sure that the question sought much information. As I have stated previously, many organisations have been assisted by the Victorian Economic Development Corporation.

Members of Parliament have made representations to the VEDC in support of loan applications. A number of those loan applications would have been successful. I repeat: regardless of the representations made by individual members of Parliament, the full board of the VEDC ensures that it makes the decision whether to approve a loan application.

I shall give the House an example of an organisation that has made a positive contribution to the economic development of the State and to the creation of jobs in country Victoria. I refer to Monsbent Pty Ltd. The Leader of the Opposition laughs. The Leader of the National Party does not laugh because he knows that this firm is located in Benalla. Monsbent Pty Ltd is a particle board manufacturer; it directly employs 60 people in Benalla and altogether creates 90 jobs. It is a positive example of what is occurring throughout Victoria. I do not know whether the Leader of the National Party made representations on behalf of that company, but I do know that he was at the opening of that successful organisation.

I also point out that the VEDC has 800 clients, many of whom are successful, but because of the denigration that has been poured on the VEDC and its clients, many of the highly successful organisations are reluctant to make their positions public. Many companies may be adversely affected because of the slur cast on the VEDC and its clients by the Opposition.

The Opposition does not give a continental whether a firm goes down the chute. In fact, there is almost glee if the Opposition discovers a company that is in receivership or liquidation. That should not cause glee to anyone. Many of those companies have been started by entrepreneurs who are concerned about creating jobs in country Victoria and boosting the economic performance of the State. They take risks because they are investing in jobs for the future of Victoria and, inevitably, some will fail, but many companies are successful.

The Opposition does not care about success stories, although many members of the Opposition like to have their photographs appearing in their local newspapers when they attend an opening of companies in their electorates. Many honourable members opposite make representations to the VEDC. Many of them take the view: no care, no responsibility.

The Victorian Economic Development Corporation has made a significant contribution to country Victoria. I have given the House just one example, Monsbent Pty Ltd, a company which I understand is strongly supported by the Leader of the National Party.

EAST GIPPSLAND PULP AND PAPER MILL

Mr EVANS (Gippsland East)—I direct a question to the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands relating to the invitation by the government for expressions of interest in the development of a pulp and paper mill in East Gippsland and to the creation of jobs and investment in country Victoria. In view of the concern expressed at the delay in announcing the successful applicant, will the Minister indicate which applicant has been successful and, if that is not possible, the date on which the announcement of the successful applicant will be made?

Mrs SETCHES (Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands)—Expressions of interest in undertaking detailed feasibility studies for the development of a pulp and paper mill in Victoria were lodged with the government in February 1988. Submissions were received from Harris-Daishowa (Aust.) Pty Ltd, North Broken Hill Holdings Ltd, Amcor Ltd, and Bowater-Scott Ltd. The government is currently assessing those submissions.

A high-level project team has been set up for that assessment involving representatives from the Ministry for Planning and Environment, the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands, the Ministry of Transport, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Management and Budget, and the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources.

The decision about which company or companies might be invited to proceed with detailed feasibility studies will be based on a number of considerations, including infrastructure costs, environmental matters, water and energy supply, transport and export port requirements, siting conditions, and preliminary financial and cost analyses. Another important consideration is which of those companies will be able to satisfy the imperatives of the government's economic, conservation, and social justice strategies.

That is the difference between the government's approach and the approach of the Liberal Party when it was in government. The government has a process for long-term planning and that is why it has been so successful. The government takes into consideration what will be best for the region and for Victoria. The government does not consult only with a small group but it takes into consideration all of these matters and consequently it is successful.

The government has a process in place to enable it to make a decision regarding the company which will ultimately develop the pulp and paper mill, if it is decided to proceed with the project. The government will be addressing this matter shortly. I am sure the honourable member for Gippsland East will be waiting with bated breath for the outcome.

1996 OLYMPIC GAMES

Mr LEIGHTON (Preston)—Will the Premier indicate what advice he has received about the implications for Melbourne's bid for the Olympic Games, in the light of the success of this week's spring racing carnival?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—The honourable member for Preston shows a genuine concern, which the government shares, about the factors that will have some impact upon the decision that is to be made on 17 November as to which city should present the Australian bid.

In discussions I have had during the past few days with the hardworking and enthusiastic group of people who make up the committee, the view has been expressed that Melbourne has demonstrated its capacity to involve people in events such as the Melbourne Cup and the VFL grand final. That great strength is why Melbourne can present the 1996 Olympic Games better than any other city in Australia, and that is why the 1956 Olympic Games were so successful that they were called the "friendly games."

There is no city in Australia or in the world where there is more enthusiasm about attending and participating in sporting events. Even though Melbourne has a smaller population than Sydney it has more people attending significant sporting events. The Melbourne Cup meeting demonstrates the way people involve themselves. New betting records were established across the country. It was an outstanding success.

I take this opportunity, as I did on Monday night in Queen's Hall, of congratulating the Victoria Racing Club and those associated with racing for the manner in which they presented this major racing event across all the clubs in such a sophisticated and professional way. There is no real measure of the impact the Melbourne Cup has on accommodation, retail sales, and so on, but it has a huge impact.

Mr Weideman—Why don't you know what it is?

Mr CAIN—I cannot quantify it, although I can quantify the betting turnover. On Tuesday the Totalizator Agency Board held more than \$22.8 million for the day, with \$11 million on the Melbourne Cup. That is not bad. In addition, the bookmakers and oncourse tote held a further \$5.5 million on the Melbourne Cup. That demonstrates the enormous interest in the Melbourne Cup.

The favourite won the Melbourne Cup; the people's choice got up and won, just as it did in the State election. Picking winners is a bit like politics; one must check the form over a long period and look at those horses and jockeys that are continual losers. The Leader of the Opposition was going to be a sprinter; he was going to win by fifteen lengths, but he lost by four. Racing is not unlike politics; some people involved in it cannot go the distance.

The Melbourne Cup makes an impact in other States as well. The betting turnover is considerable, and that emphasises the fact that no other sporting event attracts national and international interest in this country in the way the Melbourne Cup does, with one potential exception—the Olympic Games.

If Melbourne can succeed in its bid to host the 1996 Olympic Games, they will be the best games staged anywhere at any time. The demonstrable enthusiasm that exists across the State will make those games the success they were in 1956, and they will be an even greater achievement in 1996. The government will see that Melbourne hosts those games.

VICTORIAN TOURISM COMMISSION FORMER CHAIRMAN

Mr JOHN (Bendigo East)—I refer the Minister for Tourism to the Premier's previous undertaking to make a Ministerial statement about the dismissal of Mr Bob Nordlinger, the former Chairman of the Victorian Tourism Commission. When will the Minister make such a statement, and has it been delayed by further discussions between the government and Mr Nordlinger or his representatives regarding payment of any moneys to Mr Nordlinger?

Mr CRABB (Minister for Tourism)—I should have thought that for his maiden question the honourable member for Bendigo East would have done something a little more positive than that. It was a fairly crude fishing expedition; there was really no question.

I said privately to the honourable member for Bendigo East that I would make a Ministerial statement on the matter in due course and that I would give him notice before I did so, as is the proper procedure. Honourable members will appreciate that a matter such as this requires some time for digestion and reflection, especially for a Minister in a new portfolio. I shall give a little more time to consider this matter than the honourable member for Bennettswood gave it before he raised the matter in such an extravagant way in this House.

GREENHOUSE EFFECT

Mr HAMILTON (Morwell)—My question is of importance to all honourable members. Can the Minister for Planning and Environment outline to the House the specific steps the government is taking to address the growing community concern about the impact of the greenhouse effect on the environment?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—I thank the honourable member for his question; he has demonstrated a concern over many years about environmental issues, particularly in the Latrobe Valley. There is serious scientific and community concern about the growing realisation of the greenhouse effect and the impact it will have on increases in temperatures throughout the world, rises in ocean levels, and changes in the climate.

Mr RICHARDSON (Forest Hill)—I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker: I put it to you that the question is inadmissible. I direct your attention to the Notice Paper for today, which lists at page 5, as Government Business, Order of the Day, No. 8, the second reading of the Environment Protection (Ozone Layer) Bill. I put it to you, Sir, that the question is out of order and is inadmissible on the ground of anticipation.

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—On the point of order, Mr Speaker, this is really not the time for a scientific explanation to the honourable member for Forest Hill. However, if he understood these matters—and I shall explain

them to all honourable members later—the ozone-depleting substances, although they make a very minor contribution to the greenhouse effect, make a very significant and total contribution to the reduction in the world's ozone layer. I look forward to the honourable member for Forest Hill being present in the Chamber when I discuss the ozone layer later this afternoon. There is quite a difference between the greenhouse effect and the ozone layer.

Mr EVANS (Gippsland East)—On a further point of order, Mr Speaker: I submit to you: that the question should also be ruled out of order on the ground that it is a very wide-ranging issue and it is a matter that should more appropriately be addressed in a Ministerial statement, which would be open to debate by honourable members on both sides of the House, than by the government using the device of questions without notice to enable the Minister to make a statement without his remarks being open to debate.

The SPEAKER—Order! I listened to the question by the honourable member for Morwell and the specificity included in it and also the Minister's comment on the relationship between the Bill and the matter that has been raised in the question. I do not uphold the point of order, but I ask the Minister to observe the normal practices of the House and not to stray into debate on the Bill listed on the Notice Paper.

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—I certainly would not think of doing so, Mr Speaker. There are many contributors to the greenhouse effect, the chief of which—as honourable members will be aware—is carbon dioxide. This issue requires international, national, and local action, and there is a need to ensure that the community understands the matters involved in what is probably the major environmental issue facing the world. It is for that reason that the State government is co-sponsoring the Greenhouse 88 Conference, which is opening today and will run today, tomorrow, and Saturday.

A number of government Ministers and officials of various departments will take part in what is an important conference. Both government and private programs need to be initiated and undertaken to modify the greenhouse effect and to reduce the speed at which it will affect our climate over the next 50 to 100 years. One can anticipate the response of the community from its response already to the use of aerosol sprays, where a significant change in community attitude has taken place. Everybody should work together in the area of energy resources.

The honourable member for Mornington, who is interjecting, does not care about this matter, but when the oceans rise his electorate will be somewhat smaller than it is currently, although he will have long since ceased to represent it.

The government is participating in the Australian Environment Council development of a national research agenda and, in doing so, is working with both Liberal and National Party Ministers. That is a far broader issue than simple political matters.

The government is funding a study with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation on the likely climatic changes in Victoria. Some \$100 000 is to be made available for modelling work to examine the way in which the changes will affect Victoria. Obviously, major changes in climate and rainfall will occur that will significantly affect agriculture and a whole range of other vital economic and social factors in the community.

The government is also working with other planning Ministries to develop guidelines, particularly for coastal waters, as the sea level is expected to rise by as much as 1.5 metres. That clearly will have a significant effect on Australia's coastline. Our shorelines will change and temporary flooding will occur. Significant saltwater intrusion will

affect coastal groundwater systems. Inundation of canal and beach estates will occur and there will be a large loss of recreational beaches which may not be replaced by the formation of other beaches.

In a planning sense, over the next decade we must carefully work through the economic, social, and environmental impact of the greenhouse effect. At the same time, we, as a community, must examine ways in which we can reduce the contribution we make to the greenhouse effect. Both the government and individuals can do a number of things. For instance, the Leader of the National Party, who is interjecting, can reduce his energy output and energy use; he could drop back to the possum.

The government is concerned about the issue and I am sure all honourable members will be supportive of the greenhouse conference that is currently under way.

PETITION

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

State Emergency Service funding

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 their great concern at the lack of funding provided by the State government for the volunteer units of the Victoria State Emergency Service.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the Parliament will give urgent attention to providing additional funding for the volunteer units of the Victoria State Emergency Service so as to enable them to efficiently and safely carry out the statutory functions delegated to them under the Victoria State Emergency Service Act 1987.

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

By **Mr Bildstien** (478 signatures)

It was ordered that the petition 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:

Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works—Report for the year 1987–88.

Mental Health Review Board and Psychosurgery Review Board—Report and Statement of Accounts for the year 1987–88.

Patriotic Funds Council—Report for the year 1987.

State Board of Education—Report for the year 1987–88.

Victorian Institute of Forensic Pathology—Report for the year 1987–88.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs)—By leave, I move the following motions in relation to the appointment of committees:

House Committee

That Mr Dickinson, Mr McGrath (Lowan), Mr Mathews, Mr Norris and Mr Weideman be members of the House Committee; and that the committee have leave to sit on days on which the House does not meet.

Library Committee

That Mr Speaker, Mr Dickinson, Mr McGrath (Lowan), Mr Mathews, and Mr Norris be members of the Library Committee; and that the committee have leave to sit on days on which the House does not meet.

Printing Committee

That (a) Mr Speaker, Mr McGrath (Lowan), Mr Mathews, Mr Norris, Mr Plowman and Mr Smith (Glen Waverley) be members of the Printing Committee; (b) the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records and to sit on days on which the House does not meet; (c) three to be the quorum; and (d) the committee have power to confer with the Printing Committee of the Legislative Council and to jointly report thereon to the House.

Privileges Committee

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon complaints of breach of privilege referred to it by the House; such committee to consist of Mr Evans, Mr Lieberman, Mr McDonald, Mr Mathews, Mr Perton, Mr Sheehan (Northcote) and Dr Vaughan; and that the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records; to sit on days on which the House does not meet and to move from place to place; four to be the quorum.

Standing Orders Committee

That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the Standing Orders of the House, such committee to consist of Mr Speaker, Mr Andrianopoulos, Mr Cunningham, Mr Evans, Mr Jasper, Mr Norris, Mr Plowman, Mr Richardson and Dr Vaughan; and that the committee have leave to sit on days on which the House does not meet; five to be the quorum.

Economic and Budget Review Committee

That Mr Baker, Mr Clark, Mr Cole, Mr Gavin, Mrs Gleeson, Mr Honeywood, Mr Sheehan (Ballarat South) and Mr Steggall be appointed members of the Economic and Budget Review Committee.

Legal and Constitutional Committee

That Mr Jasper, Mr Lea, Mr Maclellan, Mr Thomson, Mrs Toner and Mr Smith (Glen Waverley) be appointed members of the Legal and Constitutional Committee.

Natural Resources and Environment Committee

That Mrs Hill, Mr McDonald, Mr McGrath (Warrnambool), Mr Reynolds, Mr Sheehan (Northcote) and Mr Tanner be appointed members of the Natural Resources and Environment Committee.

Public Bodies Review Committee

That Mr Andrianopoulos, Mr Cunningham, Mr Delzoppo, Mr Dollis, Mr Evans, Mr Harrowfield, Mr Perrin, Mr Seitz and Mr Sercombe be appointed members of the Public Bodies Review Committee.

Social Development Committee

That Mr Leighton, Mr Micallef, Dr Napthine, Mr Perton, Mrs Ray, Mr Sandon, Dr Vaughan and Mr Wallace be appointed members of the Social Development Committee.

Parliament has a long and proud tradition of standing committees; this motion is in accordance with those arrangements.

In broad terms, two forms of committees exist. Firstly, the joint standing committees—the Economic and Budget Review Committee, the Legal and Constitutional Committee, the Natural Resources and Environment Committee, the Public Bodies Review Committee, and the Social Development Committee. Those committees have had references referred to them and play an important part in the operations of Parliament, with representation from both Houses. Discussions with representatives from the relevant parties have resulted in accord to proceed with the appointment of the committees.

In addition is a range of what might be described as in-house Parliamentary committees dealing with the operation of Parliament, namely the House Committee, Library Committee, and the Printing Committee, as well as a Standing Orders Committee and a Privileges Committee. Honourable members no doubt hope that the Privileges Committee, which is virtually on stand-by, will not necessarily be called upon during the operation of this Parliament. As to the Standing Orders Committee, all honourable members have the general view that a number of issues legitimately may be considered by that committee. I look forward to you, Mr Speaker, addressing the issues with the honourable members who have been proposed.

As to the House Committee, Library Committee, and Printing Committee, it is an initiative that you, Mr Speaker, have taken in conjunction with the President of the Legislative Council in an endeavour to bring together the functions of those bodies. The membership will have the opportunity of considering those important issues.

A further committee, namely the Estimates Committee, will be appointed. That has arisen as a result of representations and discussions involving all parties. I give an undertaking to proceed with the appointment of that committee on the next day of sitting.

I thank my counterparts from the other parties, the Leaders of the House for both the Liberal and National parties, for their cooperation in bringing this motion before the House today. I look forward to its speedy passage.

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—I thank the Deputy Premier for moving the motion. I think there has been an error, either in communications or perhaps from my office, and I am not apportioning blame.

Mr Maclellan has been included in the membership of the Legal and Constitutional Committee whereas, as I understand it, it was to be Mr Perton, and Mr Maclellan was to remain on the Social Development Committee. Perhaps the Deputy Premier may agree to that amendment. If I later discover, after I contact Mr Maclellan, that I was wrong, I may need to change it again.

The SPEAKER—Order! I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that it may be simpler to do that by way of formal amendment.

Mr KENNETT—If I do that by leave, that those names be transposed in accordance with what I have just said, that should cover it.

The SPEAKER—Order! A motion is before the House which the honourable member is proposing should be amended. It would be simpler if he would formally move an amendment along the lines he has proposed.

Mr KENNETT—I move:

That, in respect of the Legal and Constitutional Committee, the words “Mr Maclellan” be omitted with the view of inserting in place thereof the words “Mr Perton”.

Therefore, the members of the Legal and Constitutional Committee would be: Mr Jasper, Mr Lea, Mr Perton, Mr E. R. Smith, Mr Thomson, and Mrs Toner.

I further move:

That, in respect of the Social Development Committee, the words "Mr Perton" be omitted with the view of inserting in place thereof the words "Mr Maclellan".

This would mean that the members of the Social Development Committee would be: Mr Leighton, Mr Maclellan, Mr Micallef, Dr Napthine, Mrs Ray, Mr Sandon, Dr Vaughan, and Mr Wallace.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs)—I have no difficulty with the amendments proposed by the Leader of the Opposition. From time to time changes in the membership of the committees will occur, for one reason or another. The House has always been prepared to facilitate decisions made by individual parties; it is clearly their prerogative on that issue and others. I support the amendments.

Mr McNAMARA (Leader of the National Party)—I understand that the Deputy Leaders of the three parties are still engaged in discussions about the chairmanship of the committees and other matters. I foreshadow that the nominees proposed by the National Party will be on an interim basis and that a number of minor changes could be made at a later date.

The amendments were agreed to, and the motions, as amended, were adopted.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs)—I move:

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, November 15.

The motion was agreed to.

VICTORIAN ARTS CENTRE (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make further provision in relation to the powers of certain public bodies and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

MAGISTRATES (SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS) (SHERIFF) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make provision for the execution of certain warrants by the sheriff, to amend the Magistrates (Summary Proceedings) Act 1975 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

HOUSE CONTRACTS GUARANTEE (AMENDMENT) BILL

For **Mr WALSH** (Minister for Property and Services) **Mr Fordham** (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the House Contracts Guarantee Act 1987, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs Act 1973 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

VISITS BY OVERSEAS WARSHIPS

Mr KENNETT (Leader of the Opposition)—I move:

That this House endorses the commitment of the Federal government to permit warships of friendly nations to berth, and, if necessary, undertake basic repairs in the port of Melbourne or other suitable Victorian ports, as part of Australia's obligations under treaty relationships.

The reason for the motion is the recent shame brought upon all Victorians because of the refusal of the Seamen's Union of Australia to allow HMS *Ark Royal* to berth in the port of Melbourne. One might ask: why is this a disgrace? The answer is very simple: it is a disgrace because HMS *Ark Royal* is a ship of a valued ally of this country. It came to Melbourne at the invitation of the Australian government. It is a further disgrace because it came as part of the bicentennial celebrations for our great land—bicentennial celebrations that the Premier said would reflect the character and style of our State.

All that has been revealed by the refusal to allow HMS *Ark Royal* to berth is the churlishness of the Seamen's Union of Australia; the impotence of the Victorian Labor government, because it has become the pawn of the socialist left; and the shame of all Victorians at this act of rudeness to one of our invited guests, particularly at a time when many Victorians, including the Premier, were doing all in their power to attract as many bicentennial activities as possible to Victoria rather than having them centred in New South Wales. What should have been a magnificent spectacle for all Victorians was ruined because of the actions of a militant union; a union which the Premier's colleague, the Federal Minister for Defence, Mr Beazley, labelled "ingrates"; a union that wants to have it both ways—to go to the Federal government and say, "Protect our jobs", and to demand the right not to assist ships wanting to visit our ports.

Even the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, attacked the actions of the Seamen's Union of Australia. But in Victoria there was absolute silence. That silence should come as no surprise to any member of this House. The Cain government showed itself to be a pawn of the socialist left on nuclear ships as early as 1982, when it attempted to usurp the rights of the Commonwealth government and to ban all nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed ships from Victorian ports. It refused to listen to its Federal colleagues on that occasion. It embarrassed the Federal Labor Party then as it does now. It refused to heed the words of Gough Whitlam, who warned about the folly of trying to determine which ships are nuclear-powered. In 1976 Mr Whitlam said in Federal Parliament:

There is a difference between nuclear-armed ships and nuclear-powered ships. Nuclear-armed ships—presumably only nuclear-armed naval ships—have come to Australia for very many years. They have come from several powers. Successive governments have accepted that naval ships these days are quite likely to be nuclear armed. It is impossible to expect the navies of the other countries to specify for public consumption which of their ships are nuclear armed and which are not so that any country which is host to those ships may require that only those which are non-nuclear armed can come to the ports.

The Cain government ignored this warning, and, instead, issued instructions to the port authorities that they should refuse facilities to nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed ships. The *Age* newspaper described the banning of nuclear ships as the "Cain government's first major folly." It was folly then and it is folly now. The Premier was warned then, and he should be warned now, that these actions could have grave and far-reaching implications for Australia's defence and its relationship with its allies. Why should this government turn a day of celebration, or in this case a number of days of celebration, into a period of disgrace for the reputation of this State and this

country by turning away ships of our friends and allies? There is one obvious answer: the influence of the socialist left in Victoria. This is the first case of the influence of this faction on the government—shame and disgrace.

Mr Micallef interjected.

Mr KENNETT—That is what is behind the impotence and inaction of the Cain Labor government. The government is beholden to the socialist left, and it is willing to pay any price, even the shame of the Victorian people and the embarrassment of the Federal Labor government, because of its obligation to this left-wing clique which now so obviously controls the Victorian government. Victorians have paid, and will continue to pay, the price of this unholy alliance in the years ahead. Because of the socialist left, there can never be any meaningful reform of our transport, education, or health systems. It is the faction that has preserved the place of Peter Batchelor in spite of his activities in the Nunawading Province re-election in 1985. It is the faction that prevents our Police Force from having the powers it needs in the fight against crime. Only yesterday this was starkly brought to our attention again when a person suspected of being involved in the brutal deaths of two policemen refused the police the time they needed to continue their investigations. The police do not have these powers because of the influence of the socialist left in Victoria.

Other States had no problem in ensuring that the ships of friendly allies were safely berthed in their harbours throughout the bicentennial celebrations. Other States willingly and happily welcomed the ships of our allies entering their waters in a gesture of international goodwill as part of our nation's bicentennial celebrations. Other States accepted this visit for what it was—a gesture of goodwill, not an aggressive naval exercise.

The Premier has disgraced himself and all Victorians in a great display of two-faced rudeness. Two years ago, in announcing Victoria's bicentennial themes and events, the Premier said:

The bicentennial celebrations are being organised for all Australians and in Victoria they will reflect the character and style of our State.

At that time Victorians would have assumed that the Premier would have intended such character and style to at least include hospitality and friendship for our long-time allies. Even very young people learn that gracious hospitality is always extended to relatives and friends who want to congratulate someone or bring good wishes in times of celebration. That is the general character and style of the people of our State and nation. In one single inaction, the Premier has reflected a character and style that is, without doubt, unfriendly, inhospitable, and downright hostile. Is this the character and style that Victorians want projected to the rest of the world? Obviously, the answer is, "No." But this is the character and style of a Premier who allows a small group of out-of-touch militant unionists to spoil the celebrations of all Victorians.

Victorians of all age groups recognised that the ships were the invited guests of the people of Australia, and they received them with the courtesy and hospitality due to all invited guests. The Cain government could have done something. It could have given a moral lead to all Victorians by expressing solidarity with Labor's official defence policy. It could have shown its own goodwill towards the visitors. But it did neither—it was conspicuously silent.

The socialist left mates of the Cain government were not so reticent. John Halfpenny and the Victorian Trades Hall Council endorsed and encouraged the actions of the Seamen's Union of Australia, and imposed on all of us their own unrepresentative version of Victorian hospitality. That tells the story of the real power in the Victorian

Labor Party. John Halfpenny speaks, but the other John—the Premier—remains silent, and the result is the shame of our fair State!

It is not the first time the Premier has remained silent. In December 1982 he did nothing to stop his socialist left Minister, the Minister for Community Services, from speaking at the opening of the Libyan Cultural Centre in South Melbourne. The Premier has no problems allowing his government to welcome an organisation which backs the Irish Republican Army, and Arab and Nicaraguan terrorists.

This is the same Premier who is quick enough to ban beer at cricket matches held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Malcolm Fraser was right when he said in 1982 that Mr Cain's attempt to ban nuclear ships from Victorian waters was a threat to our alliance system. Six years later, the Premier's silence and inaction about HMS *Ark Royal* shows that he is still willing to jeopardise our country's national defence by being unwilling and unable to stand up to the unions and the socialist left.

The Premier is a puppet of his party's financial backers and a traitor to the spirit of Australia. The role of the Premier has shrunk so that it now fits his own personality. He is a shrink-wrap Premier—wrinkled, dimpled, and part frozen. We all know what happens to something that is part frozen—it goes off very quickly indeed! The Premier is now like a Surprise pea, but all the surprise has been squeezed out of him. The truth is that real peace can be achieved only through strength and not through weakness.

The Premier is playing out his masters' orders by weakening our alliances. This is a serious charge, but it is objectively true. I moved the motion today so that such shame is not brought down upon the people of Victoria again.

Mr McNAMARA (Leader of the National Party)—The incident concerning HMS *Ark Royal* and its supply ship—*Fort Grange*—was probably the saddest and sorriest event of our bicentennial year. A ridiculous situation occurred with approximately 2000 sailors and other naval personnel sailing unnecessarily around Port Philip Bay for three days. We are speaking about ships that came to Australia to join us in our bicentennial celebrations; ships that travelled some 11 000 miles from the other side of the world to join in our birthday party.

The ships and the people on them were not received like welcome guests. They were not treated as one would expect anyone who has been invited to join us in a party should be treated; instead, they were spurned and treated worse than anyone has ever been treated in this State. It is an absolute disgrace. The government was silent. It did not respond to try to resolve the unfortunate situation.

The government was responsible for the invitation to these guests. Victoria's bicentennial naval salute was to be one of the major events in Victoria's participation in our bicentenary. Other States were more involved in the bicentennial celebrations than Victoria but, with the arrival of the ships, we had a real opportunity of extending a warm Victorian welcome.

Only a matter of minutes ago the Premier described events for which Victoria is famous—the reasons why the 1996 Olympic Games should be held in Victoria. He said it is because we have a tradition of friendliness, of welcoming people from around the world to our shores. The 1956 Olympic Games were heralded as the “friendly games.” I do not think anyone around the world who read the press reports of how our allies were recently received would hold that view now. The action of the Seamen's Union of Australia was despicable, but far more despicable was the silence of the government.

The government is not prepared to buck anything endorsed by the Trades Hall Council. It allows the bully boys and thugs of Lygon Street to run the affairs of the

government. The government was not prepared to show any backbone or principle; it was prepared to jump onto the easy issues and run with them. When the hard issues came up it shied away from them.

Many people were disappointed because they were not able to meet with guests from our allied countries and their navies. Many people wanted to issue warm welcomes to our friends from the United Kingdom; they would have been able to spend several days here. The arranged functions had to be cancelled; it was an absolute farce and everyone lost out, even Victorian business.

It is estimated that Victorian business lost approximately \$1 million. That is a fairly accurate figure given that, when the fleet stopped in Hong Kong for four days, \$2 million was spent. Therefore, everyone lost. The President of the State Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Victoria, Mr Michael Pointer, said that the economic impact on Melbourne was significant. The government is so concerned about the economic vitality of the State—this government which talks about getting us on the road to economic recovery—that when it was asked what to do it said it could do absolutely nothing; it said not one word.

A different tune was sung, when, for instance, Victoria had a transport strike. Immediate action occurred in that instance, and the government took steps to resolve the industrial dispute. The government has taken action on other occasions to resolve industrial matters; the prime example is the case of the dairy farmers when the government invoked the Essential Services Act. In fact, the Premier went so far as to accuse Victorian dairy farmers of being thugs. What did he say about the wildcat industrial action by the Seamen's Union of Australia, which was endorsed by the Trades Hall Council? Not one damn thing! Not one utterance was made by the Premier to condemn what must be the most shameful event in the bicentennial year!

The Premier stood absolutely mute; he is a sycophant of the Trades Hall Council—the thugs of Lygon Street. He did nothing to condemn the union and, by his silence, he endorsed its actions.

The Victorian community wanted to welcome its allies from the United States of America and the United Kingdom; they have contributed much to our heritage and traditions. But, the government stood idly by doing absolutely nothing to resolve matters. The Premier has shown himself to be an obsequious parasite. He did not stand up to the more radical elements in the trade union movement. It is a disgrace when the Premier of the State describes law-abiding farmers, who want a reasonable return from their labour, as thugs, but goes on a holiday when he is asked to do something about the thuggery of the Lygon Street mob.

When a naval officer in Victoria, Commodore Jim Dickson, asked the Premier whether he could do anything about the situation, the Premier replied, "I can't do anything." The Premier washed his hands of the matter. The naval officers then went to see the Deputy Premier and he also washed his hands of the matter, and said, "I can't do anything."

However, if a transport strike occurs, the government is racing around trying to get the situation resolved. If dairy farmers take industrial action, they are regarded by the government as thugs and the Essential Services Act is invoked at short notice.

It is the prime responsibility of any government to ensure that the citizens of the area being governed are protected. This government has neglected that responsibility on all fronts. It has neglected the protection of the citizens of Victoria both while they are within the State and while they are outside Victoria.

Some people have short memories. Australia has received assistance from its allies in the United Kingdom and the United States of America in the past.

Mr Micallef interjected.

Mr McNAMARA—I do not know what the honourable member for Springvale thinks about our allies at the moment although I can make a guess because I know he is involved with the Lygon Street mafia, those thugs who seem to dominate the government.

It is important that we remember the assistance given in the South Pacific by our traditional allies. Had it not been for that assistance we might have been speaking a different language today. The government does not seem to think we should keep up out external military alliances or that we should give our Police Force adequate power to protect our citizens from the lawlessness that is becoming endemic in this State.

Police in Victoria are not given powers that are available in other States. The police are able to obtain the name and address of a person driving a motor car but cannot ask the name and address of a person leaving the scene of a crime who is suspected of being involved in that crime. That is a blinkered view by a government that is dominated by the thugs of Lygon Street.

I acknowledge that people in a democratic society have a right to protest and to put forward their points of view. However, there is an acceptable way to present a protest. That was not demonstrated by the people who spat at, hurled abuse and all sorts of vegetable matter at sailors who recently visited Victoria.

Mr Jasper—Where was the Premier?

Mr McNAMARA—The Premier went away. He washed his hands of the incident. He said that it was not his responsibility.

Mr Kennett—He cancelled the press conference.

Mr McNAMARA—The Premier cancelled the press conference. He is always anxious for publicity when the occasion suits him, but he is quick to run away from a hard issue. The reception given to the sailors who recently visited our shores was a repeat of the reception given to the British Prime Minister a matter of weeks before. That, too, was an absolute disgrace.

Mr Robert Burrowes and others said they were sorry about that disgraceful reception. No apology was given by the Premier. In fact, the Deputy Premier said that no apology would be given. Even some of the more radical elements involved in the protest said they were horrified by the people who took the matter too far. However, no apology was made by the government.

People have a right to comment on nuclear power issues and other issues about which they are concerned. The Minister for Planning and Environment this morning spoke of his concerns about the greenhouse effect. I am sure all honourable members have concerns about that. It is interesting to note that Senator Richardson, the Federal Minister for the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories, is reported in today's *Sun* as saying that nuclear power may save us. The article states:

Nuclear power would have to be reconsidered as an energy source because of the greenhouse effect, the Federal Environment Minister, Senator Richardson, said yesterday.

The prime motivation for the recent protest was the involvement of nuclear power. However, it is important that we consider all forms of energy in the future. In considering the greenhouse effect, it is important to consider technology in the past.

The introduction of electricity and the motor car had problems in the initial stages. Many of those problems were resolved and the technology involved was made safer. I wonder what the response would have been when the first motor cars were produced in the world if the citizens at that time had been told that in 60 to 70 years' time in Australia more than 3000 people would be killed and 30 000 to 40 000 people permanently maimed each year. Would those citizens have regarded that as a responsible technology to introduce into Australia? I am sure the idea would have been condemned.

Nuclear power technology continues to improve. It is ridiculous for any government to rule out, out of hand, its future development. Disasters have occurred at Chernobyl and other places, but the world is learning from those disasters and introducing safer technology for the future. Senator Richardson is saying that nuclear power must be considered, not only by the Australian Labor Party but also by all Australians. I should be interested to hear a response from the Premier about the comments made this morning by Senator Richardson.

The Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956 were called the "friendly games." Australians have always had a reputation of being hospitable to visitors from all over the world. Following the reception given recently to our bicentennial guests, overseas people must now wonder about our hospitality. Crew members of the USS *Ingersoll* and the French ship *Colbert* were jostled, shouted at, and spat upon. Those actions demand an apology by the government.

The Prime Minister said that the Federal government would purchase Royal Navy tugs as a matter of urgency to deal with any further situations but that they would not be provided from any additional defence Budget but would come out of the existing Budget allocation. That decision will directly affect the Puckapunyal Army base situated within the electorate I represent because funds that were to be made available for Leopard tanks and other equipment will be diverted to the purchase of those tugs. It will also affect the resources available for this country to defend itself in the future. Docking facilities, tugs, and other facilities that are already available should be provided for all ships that visit our shores, whether they are military or civilian ships.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke about the comments of the Premier on the character and style of Victoria. If anything were to blacken Victoria's name in the world arena, the recent protest did. The effects of that protest could have been softened by the government taking the positive action of invoking the essential services legislation to ensure that facilities were made available to allow the ships of our allies to be docked.

That protest was the biggest fiasco of the bicentennial year and one upon which we will look back in shame. At the very least, an apology should have been sent to the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The fact that the Deputy Premier said that no apology would be given, the fact that the Premier shirked the press conference, and the fact that no display of regret for the incident was forthcoming all contribute to the total condemnation of the government. Until a reasonable response is forthcoming from the Premier, the people of Victoria will continue to hang their heads in shame about the behaviour of its citizens in receiving guests invited to join us for a birthday party.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—When I saw the motion on the Notice Paper I expected that a sophisticated and thoughtful case would be mounted in support of it. That did not happen, and I regret it. One thing has become predictable in the House: if there is a complex issue that requires some degree of thought one can rest assured that the Leader of the Opposition will take a simplistic approach to it, as will the Leader of the

National Party. The other thing that is entirely predictable is that if there is an election the Leader of the Opposition will lose it!

I regret that the debate has taken the tone it has taken. I do not believe this matter should generate the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition about me and about the other matters to which he referred. When I look at the new members on the Opposition back bench I hope that, as honourable members on this side of the House have done, they will acquire wisdom and judgment as they become more experienced and better at their jobs. The reverse is true of the Leader of the Opposition. He becomes worse; he goes downhill each day.

Mr Perrin interjected.

Mr CAIN—I am not descending to the gutter. The honourable member was not here to hear the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. He should read what he had to say. This is a complex issue.

Mr Kennett interjected.

Mr CAIN—I listened to the Leader of the Opposition in silence. Obviously he has no intention of repaying that courtesy, something that I expected.

This is a complex issue, one about which people have strong feelings. The government's position is clear: since it came to office—and indeed, while the Labor Party was in opposition—it has expressed its concern about the nuclear issue. The government's position is understood by the electorate. That position was endorsed in 1982, re-endorsed in 1985, and, again, in 1988.

In 1983, the Minister for Health in another place introduced the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Bill. The Bill was passed in the Upper House, firstly, and, as I read *Hansard*, members of the Liberal Party voted for it. The members of the National Party, four in all—the Honourable W. R. Baxter, the Honourable B. P. Dunn, the Honourable D. M. Evans, and the Honourable K. I. M. Wright—voted against it.

When the Bill was transmitted to this House, the honourable member for Benambra was the only speaker for the Liberal Party, and he spoke very briefly. The Bill was passed on the voices. At that time the Liberal Party acknowledged that the government had a mandate to introduce the Bill and supported the Bill's passage through Parliament. Honourable members opposite may disagree with me, but the facts speak for themselves. The Act imposes certain obligations upon both the government and various agencies concerning those materials that are defined in the Act as being nuclear, or nuclear capable. The objects of the Act are expressed clearly in section 3.

If the Leader of the Opposition believes the Act is a brainchild of only one faction of the Labor Party, he is a bigger fool than I take him to be. The nuclear issue is bigger than any of us! If the Leader of the Opposition believes concern about the nuclear issue is confined to one particular political party, he is wrong again. The Australian Democrats are more outspoken about the issue than is the government. A wide range of people in the Liberal Party are concerned about the issue as well, particularly women.

The Leader of the Opposition claims that he moves around a bit. I move around a bit, too. During an election campaign, if there is one thing that women and young people express their concerns about it is nuclear energy and the uses of uranium. They feel strongly about it. I agree with their concerns; and the government agrees with them, too.

The Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Bill was passed by Parliament—although it seems that six and a half years later the Opposition has decided that it does not like it.

The Act imposes obligations on government and other agencies. I have said repeatedly that the government will do what it can to enforce the provisions of the Act. The government recognises that, so far as defence and treaty matters are concerned, the Commonwealth government has primacy: the Constitution gives the Commonwealth government exclusive powers in respect of those matters. If the Commonwealth government wishes to continue to both promote and support the visits of vessels that are characterised as being nuclear capable, nuclear armed, and nuclear powered, the government cannot stop those visits, yet the government has an obligation under the Act to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the people of the State.

I have been corresponding with the Commonwealth about this issue for many years. I have asked the Commonwealth government to take responsibility for the care, health, and welfare of the people of the State—especially concerning the prevention of incidents which, if they were to occur, would require remedial action, something which all honourable members hope will not occur. In short, I have asked the Commonwealth government to take responsibility for the visits of such ships.

The government welcomes the visit of such ships. We have provided port facilities for the ships of friendly nations. The government is pleased to extend its hospitality to the crews of those ships and to provide whatever assistance is necessary. Yet the government is concerned about the secrecy that surrounds the visits of nuclear-armed and nuclear-powered vessels. The issues raised by the goodwill visits of such ships could be resolved by a declaration of the nuclear capabilities of those ships. So long as the government does not know, it will take whatever steps within its power that are necessary to protect the people of the State.

Mr Stockdale interjected.

Mr CAIN—The lawyer from Brighton knows that governments have an obligation to enforce the provisions of an Act. The Act prevents the possession, use, sale, transport, storage, and disposal of any nuclear material. The honourable member for Brighton should have some regard for the obligations imposed by an Act of Parliament. He should examine the provisions of the Act to discover the obligations imposed on the government. The government must enforce the law; and I do not believe the Opposition has argued against that. The government must enforce the law to the limits of its capacity to do so. I acknowledge that the government does not have the capacity—

Mr Kennett interjected.

Mr CAIN—The Leader of the Opposition giggles and laughs. That shows that he cannot listen. He has become worse during the past twelve years. I do not know how long members of the Opposition will put up with him. I see some members of the Liberal Party backbench smiling. I do not know how long they will put up with him. He is a dead-set loser, and they know it! He is a loser because he cannot listen.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—Opposition members have expressed their concern about the matter; yet I did not hear that concern expressed when the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Bill was before the House. At that time, they sat in silence. The honourable member for Benambra was the only honourable member opposite who had anything to say. He said:

I do not believe I can add to the argument in any way.

He accepted the mandate that the government had received.

If members of the Opposition believe that a populist jingoistic approach is the way to go about rescuing their political fortunes, they should follow that path. If they

believe they can achieve an improvement by jumping on that raft, they should do just that.

Once again, Opposition members have demonstrated that they are bereft of any strategy or policies. For eight days honourable members have had question time determined by the first edition of the Melbourne *Herald*; now there is a motion before the House—on a day of the week when private members' business is dealt with—prompted by an attempt to gain the popularist vote.

Members of the Opposition should go out and talk to the people of this State about uranium and the nuclear industry. They should talk to people who are members of the Liberal Party—and to members of the Australian Democrats as well—and even to some members of the National Party. In particular, they should talk to the women and young people of this State to discover what they think about the issue.

Do honourable members opposite know why the people of Victoria are concerned about the nuclear industry? If Opposition members cared to ask, the people of Victoria would tell them why they are concerned. Members of Parliament make laws that affect us all—that is our responsibility. If we want to muck up our lives, we can do it. The nuclear industry causes people concern because it is something over which the present generation has no control. We cannot control the effects of the nuclear industry on future generations, even if they are six or seven generations away. They could be affected and their lives could be destroyed by this industry.

That is why I differ from the Leader of the Opposition. This generation has an obligation not to impose something upon future generations that we and they cannot control. The government front and back benches of this House include members of all the factions that have been mentioned and all those factions are absolutely united in their stand on the nuclear industry.

I could go outside now and talk to people in Bourke Street. They will not be members of the Labor Party and they probably did not even vote for the government.

Mr McNamara—Nobody supports Graham Richardson!

Mr CAIN—It is no wonder that the honourable member for Shepparton shows concern about the Leader of the National Party. He may not have agreed with the view of the current Leader of his party when he was Leader, but that is the new Leader's style.

Members of the Opposition may consider it a popular call in a bicentennial year to attack the Seamen's Union of Australia and to wave the flag. It may be that the Opposition will lift its stocks one day, but I doubt it. The Opposition needs to understand the depths of feeling on the issue, which is not something that comes off the top of the head.

The Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party demonstrates that he is no better than the Leader of the Liberal Party. Honourable members opposite can laugh and giggle as much as they like—that is all they are good for. If there is an issue that requires thought and transcends the mundane, the Opposition will not do anything about it.

The new members of the Opposition are now realising what the Opposition is. Those new members understand that there are some issues to which some thought should be given. They are younger people and they appreciate the importance of this issue. I am not an orphan in this, as are not the other members of the government.

Members of the Opposition should walk out and talk to the people in Bourke Street about the nuclear industry; then they will know how the people of Victoria feel about it. Members of the Opposition can say what they like on any other issue but this

matter transcends all political barriers. If members of the Opposition obtained honest answers from the people in their own parties, they would feel the same way. They should speak particularly to the young people.

I make the position of the government very clear: it has been unequivocal on the nuclear industry, although it has recognised the limitations placed on it. We will continue to endeavour to do what is in the long-term best interests of the people of Victoria. We will continue to ask the Commonwealth government—as we have repeatedly done—to put in place a set of safety policies and to establish a situation that is satisfactory in terms of liability for any damage that is done. A satisfactory arrangement is not yet in place. Unlike honourable members opposite, who make glib statements, the government will continue to consider seriously this issue, which cannot be addressed by the kinds of speeches honourable members have heard today.

I hope that honourable members will read and analyse the speeches delivered today. It is disgraceful that the Leader of the National Party has run the industrial trenches issue. Again, he has resorted to the populist issue. The Leader of the National Party believes he can wave a flag and try to kick the life out of the trade unions and so obtain some support. It may be that he will obtain some support, just as he did when it was proposed to lend money to Monsbent Pty Ltd. The Leader of the National Party is selective in his support. He should speak to some of the young people in Bourke Street when he leaves this place to learn what they think about the issue.

Mr McNamara—You talk to Graham Richardson!

Mr CAIN—I shall talk to whom I choose. People right across this country and right across the world——

Mr McNamara—Are they saying, “Ban ships”?

Mr CAIN—Yes. There is a range of movements across the world which reflect the concerns expressed in the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Act. The government will enforce the law.

I regret the approach of the Opposition to this issue. As I said, the Opposition's stand is predictable. I shall not be moved by the attack, as the new members on the Opposition back benches are not moved. Those new members are embarrassed. The motion speaks volumes about the sincerity and depth of understanding of members of the Opposition!

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—I add support to the comments of the Leader of the Opposition and introduce new information to the debate. It sounded to me very much as if the Premier was about to launch the Victorian navy again to defend Victorians from those who might threaten our State.

The information I seek to present to the House is that there are people on the government benches who obviously do not support the stand taken by the Premier. I am prepared, if required, to produce a statutory declaration to support what I am about to say.

On 14 October I had the privilege of being invited by the Consul of the United States of America to have lunch on board the USS *Ingersoll*, which is a United States Navy destroyer with the capacity to carry nuclear weapons. I refer to those who attended the lunch as many honourable members, particularly those on the government side, will be interested to hear who attended. Present at lunch was the new Consul-General of the United States of America to Victoria, Mr Peter Higgins; I was present as a member of Parliament; and also present was none other than the honourable member for Coburg! The honourable member for Coburg was a little late arriving at the ship but he was on board by 1 p.m. We had an enjoyable lunch and the honourable

member drank the New South Wales wines that were supplied by the United States Navy.

After lunch, we were conducted on a tour of the naval vessel. We were taken to the control centre and to where nuclear missiles are stored. Numerous other guests, the honourable member for Coburg and I—there were no other politicians on that occasion—were interested in the activities in which the vessel took part. In answer to one question, the captain said that he did not believe the Kremlin was worried about where the USS *Ingersoll* was because the vessel was not big enough. The captain did not say whether nuclear weapons were on board that day.

I recall that the honourable member for Coburg also asked the captain whether the ship was carrying any weapons. He was advised that any weapons aboard were unarmed and safe and there was no possibility of a mishap. I can imagine what will be said to the honourable member for Coburg at the next caucus meeting. Perhaps an administrative committee meeting will be called to meet with him. No doubt he will be asked whether he has a copy of Australian Labor Party policies. If he does not, perhaps he will have to explain to caucus why he, as a member of the government party, has broken the policy decision espoused by the Premier a few minutes ago. The fact is the USS *Ingersoll* arrived in port under its own steam.

Mr Micallef—He is a spy for the KGB!

Mr LEIGH—Perhaps the honourable member for Coburg will seek a retraction of that statement. The interjection by the honourable member for Springvale illustrates that the supposed coalitions in the Liberal Party are nothing compared with those of the Labor Party!

As I said, at the next caucus meeting the honourable member for Coburg will be asked whether he has a copy of the ALP policy. If not, he will probably be asked to buy one. No doubt, in two or three weeks he will be asked to sit a written examination on ALP policy as he does not seem to understand it at present. After having listened to the address by the Premier today, he may be asked back to his office!

The honourable member has two options: firstly, he can plead insanity, that he did not know what he was doing; or, secondly, he can claim that he is a man of great courage and conviction who is prepared to stand up against the Labor Party machine. If he addresses the motion and explains why he broke ALP policy, he will plead insanity. If he does not, the Opposition will understand his position.

I can just imagine the situation after the caucus meeting; the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet will distribute a questionnaire to all backbench members of the government asking whether they boarded the French nuclear-armed ship or other nuclear ships; and whether they were involved with the Kremlin, which is possible, according to the honourable member for Springvale. No doubt, even you, Mr Deputy Speaker, will receive a questionnaire on your activities that day.

The Premier's party does not support him. His activities have set Victoria up to look a fool in the eyes of the international community. Many thousands of people visited those ships, to which the Premier was opposed. Only a handful were demonstrating against the ships being in port and no doubt they are on unemployment benefits, so that they can protest and travel from Perth to Melbourne at the taxpayers' expense. One of the Premier's backbench members broke his policy. The Opposition would like to know what the Premier will do about the honourable member. As the Labor Party has a majority in this place of only four members, the Premier cannot afford to sack him.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Norris)—Order! I call the honourable member for Ivanhoe.

Mr A. J. SHEEHAN (Northcote)—Mr Deputy Speaker, I am now the honourable member for Northcote.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I apologise to the honourable member; I call the honourable member for Northcote.

Mr A. J. SHEEHAN—Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am reassured by the fact that the current honourable member for Ivanhoe shares the views of the Labor Party on the nuclear issue and uranium. Perhaps that accounts for his absence from the Chamber at present.

Honourable members have witnessed an extraordinarily weak attack by the Opposition today. It is disappointing that the Leader of the National Party did not remain in the Chamber to defend his attack on the trade union movement.

Mr Perrin—He is here.

Mr A. J. SHEEHAN—He is out of his place in the House and out of his place being in the House. The attack by the Opposition has been extraordinarily weak, as I said, and did not go to the heart of the real issues. The Leader of the Opposition meandered around the issue of Victoriana and mentioned gracious hospitality. He blamed the socialist left faction for everything from late trains to the Walsh Street killings yet he refused to try to come to grips with the real issue embodied in the motion he moved. He is completely out of step with the Victorian community and with many members of his party.

Many countries in the world do not permit nuclear-powered ships into their ports. Some are New Zealand, Malta, and Scandinavia.

Mr Kennett—We do!

Mr A. J. SHEEHAN—That is right, Victoria does. The cities of Boston and New York do not allow nuclear-powered vessels or vessels carrying nuclear weapons into their ports.

Mr Kennett—But we do.

Mr A. J. SHEEHAN—The Leader of the Opposition is right; however, our allies are prepared to send nuclear vessels into Australia's ports when some of the major cities in the United States of America do not permit the same ships into their ports. What happened in Melbourne is not unusual.

It was disappointing that the Opposition did not go to the nub of the real issue. It did not deal with the nature of the alliance with the United States of America or with the costs and benefits of the alliance. The Opposition did not argue whether the treaties are unequal or whether the notion of nuclear weapons and nuclear-powered ships should be endorsed. Surely those matters are at the heart of the issue, which is the existence and use of nuclear-armed and powered vessels in our ports. The Opposition failed to address that argument.

Mr Perrin—They are our allies. You have heard about allies?

Mr A. J. SHEEHAN—I should think the cities of New York and Boston fall within that ambit yet they prevent those vessels from entering their ports.

The policy of neither confirming nor denying the existence of nuclear weapons on ships is extraordinary. Honourable members can go to the Parliamentary Library and obtain a list of the vessels from the United Kingdom or the United States of America

that are carrying nuclear weapons. There is no substance to the interjection of the honourable member for Malvern.

Many examples exist of nuclear accidents occurring in ports and harbours. As the Premier stated, the effects of those accidents are not short-term. The fall-out from a nuclear accident in a Victorian port will impact on generations to come in Melbourne and throughout Victoria. It is not for today's politicians to say "We are prepared to take the risk." These decisions are not solely the decisions of today's generation. The government is not at liberty to take that risk on behalf of future generations.

The Opposition is blasé about that risk and is prepared to take it. As I stated earlier, the government is not prepared to take that risk on behalf of future generations.

Mr. W. D. McGrath—What was the risk?

Mr A. J. SHEEHAN—The honourable member for Lowan could not have been listening; I shall explain it to him later. The costs of a nuclear accident are extremely high. The nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union was raised by other honourable members and then dismissed, but the consequences of that accident are comparatively small compared with the potential risk of an accident to a nuclear-powered ship or one carrying nuclear weapons in Port Phillip Bay. If the Opposition is prepared to take that risk it should tell the people of Victoria, but the Opposition is quiet about that matter.

Honourable members opposite would benefit from reading various articles in the newspapers. I refer to honourable members a report in the *Age* of 26 June 1986 which refers to a Mr Michael Lynch, a retired Lieutenant-Commander with the Royal Australian Navy. Mr Lynch was responsible for overseeing visits by United States of America navy ships and submarines to Cockburn Sound in Western Australia between 1978 and 1981. My Lynch was reported as stating:

There is no strategic reason for Australia to accept visits by nuclear-armed and nuclear-powered ships. We are hosting these visits for a good time for American sailors, not to defend Australia.

We are living in 1986, not 1942. In 1942 the battle of the Coral Sea was on and the US saved our bacon, but things have changed.

Mr Lynch went on to say:

... those who pushed for strategic defence of Australia in cooperation with US nuclear-armed ships were 44 years out of date.

Mr Lynch could well have added that they are also ten years in opposition, which is only the beginning and little wonder.

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—Honourable members should be clear on what the motion is about. It is about an invitation that was officially extended by the Commonwealth Labor government to our friends and long-term allies to visit this nation and this State to assist Australia in celebrating its bicentennial. What a proud occasion this year should be for all Australians, whether they are born here or whether they have been welcomed here, become naturalised as citizens of Australia and accepted as such unequivocally, as is the case with some honourable members.

What an embarrassment to the nation to have a government in Victoria that espouses its concern about the State and its citizens and yet has the effrontery not only not to welcome those guests, but also to take positive steps to ensure that they do not set foot on our soil, after invitation by the Commonwealth government. That is an outrage, a scandal, and an affront to the citizens of Victoria.

Most people were saddened when our friends and allies were made to steam around Port Phillip Bay because of a storm which made it impossible for those ships to berth

without the assistance of tugboats. Those ships could not obtain that assistance from those tugboats because of a ban by a left wing union that is affiliated with the government in Victoria. What an outrage that was for the citizens of Victoria and what an extreme embarrassment. However, it is even more embarrassing to hear the Premier align himself so completely with that unsavoury action.

It is a matter of regret to me personally that the Premier, who has been returned as the Leader of the government for a period between now and the next election, defends the banning of our friends and allies from using the port facilities. Our visitors were forced to go to a neighbouring Labor State to berth. It is not just a matter of regret, it is pathetic for the Premier to defend a policy of the looney left that controls the Labor Party in this State.

The concern for the future of the State and the nation does not just rest with the Labor Party. The Premier put forward some ideological claptrap about the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Act, introduced some years ago, that received the support of the Liberal Party at that time. The Liberal Party is equally concerned about the future of the nation and the State and every citizen who resides in it.

I, the Leader of the Opposition, and other honourable members on this side of the Chamber, who have young children, are vitally concerned for their children and would have no part in encouraging any unreasonable, unwarranted, or unsavoury nuclear action of any type. What an outrage and a scandal to suggest that by making our friends and allies steam around the bay in ships that may or may not be nuclear armed—just prior to the Falkland Islands confrontation one ship was almost purchased by the Federal government—that in some way it will contribute to world peace or turn around the nuclear debate. What a sick joke!

I cannot believe, having known the Premier for approximately ten years, that he truthfully and genuinely believes what he says is in fact reality.

Ms Kirner—You're wrong.

Mr BROWN—I am not wrong. The statement by the Premier is simply about votes in the electorate. The Premier is trying to give the impression that the Australian Labor Party is concerned about nuclear activity around the world.

The Premier referred to young men and women. Again I say that concern for these young people does not rest only on the government side of the House but is spread across both sides of the House.

The Opposition has more concern for the future of the nation than does the government. The reality is that, as in the social justice area, all the government does with its ideological troglodytes is to sit in smoke-filled back rooms with its boffins deciding what will be appealing to those left-wing minority groups to whom the government has pandered for the past six and a half years. The government's attitude is: what is the next matter that will appeal about which we can legislate?

The government is idiotic enough to believe a majority of Victorians support the action it took when it banned our friends and allies from entering the port of Melbourne a few weeks ago after the HMS *Ark Royal* had been invited by the Federal Labor government. The majority of Victorians were outraged by the government's support of that action. Not one person has approached me to say that he or she supported the government's action or the attitude of the left-wing Seamen's Union of Australia in banning the berthing of that ship with the result that no sailor from that ship was able to set foot on our shores. People who know that I am the Deputy Leader of the

Opposition have made their views known to me. Persons who are of British birth or of British extraction are in fact——

Mr Micallef—What are you trying to say?

Mr BROWN—Those people think you stink. I am not saying it. Those people believe the government stinks and that the government's actions stink in dealing with this issue.

Mr MICALLEF (Springvale)—On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask for a withdrawal of that statement. I know some people in this place are on the nose but I resent those sorts of comments being made in the debate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Norris)—Order! The honourable member for Springvale has asked for a withdrawal as he found the comments of the honourable member for Gippsland West offensive.

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—I will withdraw if I am informed what words offended the honourable member for Springvale.

Mr MICALLEF (Springvale)—I ask for a withdrawal.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! Will the honourable member for Gippsland West withdraw?

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—The honourable member for Springvale asks me to withdraw what?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The words that particularly offended the honourable member for Springvale.

Mr MICALLEF (Springvale)—The words I ask to be withdrawn are, "You stink".

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—Because the honourable member for Springvale finds those words offensive I withdraw, but he asked me by interjection what I was saying about the people of British extraction or British birth who have recently made known to me that they were outraged that a ship from Great Britain could not birth because of the policy of the Seamen's Union and because the government decided to back the union. Those people were outraged and the rage does not end with those people of British extraction or birth and their sons, daughters, and grandchildren, because the majority of Victorians were equally outraged, no matter which country they originated from or whether they are Australian citizens by nationality or birth.

It is deplorable that, to gain votes, the government's policy was, "Yes, our friends and allies can go to hell; we won't let them in." The government would be the first to get down on bended knees and beg our allies to come and save us if our nation were ever involved in conflict. If ever there should be conflict, does the government honestly believe Australia would be able to defend itself alone? It would only be with the assistance of our allies that Australia would be saved from attack, and the government would be the first to ask that our allies come to our rescue.

The protestors are, no doubt, well known to government members; and in many instances they are probably close personal friends. It was extremely embarrassing that the protestors spat and threw objects at the sailors from allied nations as they walked down the gangplank and along our piers.

The fools on the government benches believe the majority of Victorians support them in that view. Most Victorians watch television at night and saw the American and British sailors being spat upon, but government members are stupid enough to believe Australians, who are decent people, accept that as being okay. My colleagues and every person to whom I have spoken disagrees with that view. The government is

isolated with a stupid, idiotic minority who have small-minded attitudes and policies and, as with the social justice strategy the government espouses, the people do not believe in it.

It was a sad day for Victoria when this event took place. It was an even sadder day when the Premier from his own mouth said that he supported what happened and that that policy could continue for evermore under his leadership. On that basis I am glad that he is the Leader of the Labor Party and not from the Liberal Party because, if a Leader under whom I worked took that view, I would not be prepared to back him or stand with him.

The honorable member for Coburg was one of the few—I praise him for it—who were prepared to do the right thing. No doubt in the electorate of Coburg the majority of people supported the visit of a ship from a friendly nation, especially as the ship had been invited by the Prime Minister, who is well known in Coburg.

Mr Reynolds—He is the local member.

Mr BROWN—A handful of Labor members take the view that it was reasonable, fair, and proper that the ship was not only invited but should also have been able to berth. The point needs to be made that it was at the behest of the Federal Labor government that that ship was invited to visit. In fact, the ship went on to another Labor-led State where it was able to berth without any protests. This shows up these ideological troglodytes for what they are.

It was not a matter of the government hiding behind closed doors because it pandered to this garbage in the misguided belief that votes would be gained.

Mr A. J. Sheehan—We got the score on the votes!

Mr BROWN—The government got the score on the votes but yet the honourable member who interjects, the former member for Ivanhoe, lost his seat in an earlier election. He worked hard to lose that seat. The honourable member contributed to the debate by interjection saying, "It is a good thing." I suggest that the honourable member should visit the Returned Services League of Australia clubs in his electorate and ask their members what they believe.

Mr A. J. Sheehan interjected.

Mr BROWN—The honourable member for Northcote should ask RSL members whether they were happy that HMS *Ark Royal* was banned from berthing in this port. I cannot believe the RSL members in his electorate would be happy about that.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr BROWN—I cannot believe it. Perhaps the RSL clubs in the electorate of Northcote will become aware of this debate and perhaps they will take it up with the honourable member.

Mr A. J. Sheehan—You are 40 years behind.

Mr BROWN—I do not believe for one moment that the RSL clubs in the electorate of Northcote back the government for effectively banning the ship by not ensuring that the decision of the Seamen's Union of Australia was overridden.

I have no doubt that, in his heart of hearts—as my Leader would say—the Premier does not believe what he put forward today on behalf of those ideological left-wing lunatics, and that is the only term I can use in this case. The union banned an allied ship from the port of Melbourne, thus causing it to steam around Port Phillip Bay in stormy conditions. Part of the garbage put forward in defence of the action was that people are concerned about mishaps involving nuclear capable ships. If they had any

worries about a mishap, they would not want a nuclear capable vessel steaming around in stormy conditions with other large vessels coming in and out of the port during the day and night creating extreme hazards. The safest action that could have been taken was to berth the ship as soon as possible.

The Premier has been shown up in this debate for what he is. The majority of Victorians—in fact almost all Victorians—support unequivocally the invitation having been extended to our allies and the fact that the ships should have been able to berth. Victorians will join with the Opposition in condemning the Premier and the government for allowing such a scandalous and outrageous state of affairs to take place in Victoria in this day and age.

I refer again to the interjection of the honourable member for Northcote, who claimed that I was 40 years behind. I am proud to be an Australian; I am proud to have been born in this country, and I value dearly my freedom and the democracy in which I live. My mind frequently goes back to the sacrifice our naval and Army personnel made in both world wars. There is no equivocation about where I stand. I will proudly go back 40 years. I do not forget; I will leave no stone unturned to ensure in future that ships of our allies are welcome in this State so that at such time as lunatics like some of those in the government get control of nations and push us to the brink of war, one hopes our allies will remember us long after the Labor Party is gone.

Mr EVANS (Gippsland East)—In his arguments against the motion, the Premier relied on the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Act, which was passed by Parliament in 1983. He referred to some of the discussion that took place at that time, but he did not refer to the comments I made in which I compared the legislation with an Act passed by the House of Commons in 1876. That Act required that every vehicle propelled by an internal combustion engine travelling along a public highway had to be preceded by a man on foot waving a red flag. That legislation was obviously borne out of fear of the unknown. I suggest that, if anyone wants to draw comparisons between the development of the internal combustion engine and nuclear energy, they will be able to do so.

The internal combustion engine has, through misuse, brought about the greatest misery possible to contemplate. It was a material instrument in the fighting of the two world wars, which led to the deaths of millions of people. Prior to the advent of the internal combustion engine, wars were fought by soldiers on foot and on horseback. The internal combustion engine allowed the development of tanks, aeroplanes, and all the modern developments in armaments. Without those weapons, the world would have been a safer place in which to live. However, the internal combustion engine brought in its wake tremendous advantages to us all. Who of us would like to be without a car? One has only to incur the displeasure of the courts and have one's licence taken away to realise how much one depends on the development of the internal combustion engine.

Improving technology is increasing the uses to which the engine can be put. I suggest that all technological advances of this century have come with a price. It is apparent that nuclear energy has the potential to be of tremendous advantage to our society. One need quote no better authority than the former Labor Premier of New South Wales and the present Chairman of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Mr Neville Wran. In giving the opening address earlier this month at the National Conference of the Australian Conservation Foundation, Mr Wran said, in relation to the burning of fossil fuels:

We may all be pushed to the point of asking ourselves whether we go on burning fossil fuels or, in the absence of practical alternatives, will we be forced to rely on nuclear energy? Some authorities have even been saying that before 50 years are out we will be praying for nuclear energy.

Mr Wran's opinions need to be given some weight. Earlier this morning the problems of the greenhouse effect were discussed. I fully endorse the comments of the Premier when he said that we should be careful about passing on problems for future generations to contend with. I suggest that the problems confronting future generations from the greenhouse effect far outweigh the problems in respect of the development of nuclear power and nuclear energy. I am not alone in that thought, and I shall quote the views of another person.

Mr Micallef—Who? Senator Richardson? Never heard of him!

Mr EVANS—If that is the case, I suggest that it is high time the honourable member for Springvale made his acquaintance with the Senator and started to learn a little from his comments.

An article in today's *Herald* by Susan Peak states:

The greenhouse effect could cause the deaths of more than one million people and is the greatest problem facing mankind this century, according to the Environment Minister, Senator Richardson.

"I take it more seriously than I take any other predictions about any other event on the planet," he said. "The warming of the global climate would change the lifestyles of everyone on the planet," he said.

Mr McNamara—Is he a Labor Minister?

Mr EVANS—He is a Minister in a Labor government, but one wonders whether he is really reflecting Labor Party policy.

Governments have a greater role to play than simply responding to what they believe are the opinions of the majority. They have even more responsibility to endeavour to lead the majority or all the people that they represent along the right track in regard to developments in the future. The average person is not always in a position to be able to have at his disposal the information and the facts on which to make decisions that are in his best interests and in the best interests of future generations.

I endorse the comments made by Senator Richardson. I believe the greenhouse effect is a problem that needs to be tackled here and now. Indeed, I sometimes wonder whether we have not left our run somewhat too late. The scientists are fairly firm in their predictions about the world's climate warming up in the foreseeable future. It will present problems, which perhaps I may not see, but I venture to suggest that I have at least as much—if not more—fear about the matter as most honourable members on the government benches who claim they are very concerned for the future.

It was once said to me that one should live one's life as though one were going to die tomorrow but that one should legislate as though one were going to live forever. That is not bad advice for anybody in this place to take. I am concerned for future generations and the difficulties with which they will be faced as a result of our failure to deal with the problems we are creating today; they are so affecting the environment of this planet that future generations will not be able to enjoy the lifestyle and conditions that we have enjoyed.

I believe it can be demonstrated that, although we may not have been aware of their long-term effects, the policies of the National Party that I have pursued have been the right ones. We have long argued that it is wrong for human beings, particularly in a country like Australia, to congregate in massive metropolitan areas, because that is the major cause of pollution. When a country person is unfortunate enough to become caught up in traffic jams that city people accept every day of their lives, he or she wonders about the logic of people who choose to live in the city.

The National Party's policies over the years have been directed towards the concept of decentralisation. They have been directed towards minimising the unnecessary use of energy and emphasising that, when energy is used, it should be used in a productive way rather than in the unproductive way in which it is apparently being used in big cities.

The other aspect of this question, which has been dealt with by earlier speakers, relates to the courtesy extended to guests invited to this country. As was mentioned by the Leader of the National Party, the situation that occurred recently was akin to inviting people to a birthday party and then allowing the children to abuse them when they got there, and not bringing the children into line but allowing them to continue to spit at them and abuse them in every possible way. I do not believe that is the way of the average Australian citizen.

I refer to vessels that were invited here by the Commonwealth government. Part of the intent was undoubtedly to maintain friendly relations with allies on whom—and I hope this will not occur—we may need to call in future years. In that regard, I believe the world is becoming a better place and the chances of having to call upon allies in the future are becoming more remote.

The problem, as I see it, is not with the development of the technology of nuclear energy but, rather, with the lack of development of human relations on an international scale. This occurs even here, in this small segment of human relationships, where there is a complete failure on the part of some honourable members to understand anyone else's point of view. They believe they are right about everything. They will not accept alternative points of view. In fact, they will not even argue the issue; they simply turn around and resort to personal abuse rather than defending the position they have adopted.

I am sure the motion would be supported by the great majority of Victorian citizens if they had the opportunity of expressing their opinions about it. It is imperative that the government pulls its head out of the sand and begins to understand all the implications for the future of the development of a clean source of energy that will not pollute the atmosphere for everybody. Admittedly, the concept has its problems, but that is a question for another debate. When that day comes, I shall welcome the opportunity of discussing the proper development of nuclear energy and its use in our society.

I strongly support the terms of the motion, which I believe the people of Victoria would also support.

Mr MATHEWS (Oakleigh)—The Opposition does itself no service by trivialising the nuclear debate with the sort of issue under discussion here today and the sort of ranting speech that was delivered by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this debate. That, in itself, is not important. The self-destructive tendencies of the Opposition in this State are a matter of record and are well known. However, in serving themselves poorly, members of the Opposition also serve poorly this Parliament, to which the people of the State are entitled to look for leadership on an issue of the importance of the place of the nuclear cycle in our society.

The fact is that, like it or not as the Opposition may, the nuclear issue looms largest of all in the minds of the community and, most particularly, in the minds of the younger members and the women of the community who have a concern for the future. Quite frankly, I believe it was a tragedy to hear the honourable member for Gippsland East a few moments ago saying that nuclear matters were the subject for a debate on another occasion, and that he regretted it had not already occurred.

The fact is that the Opposition has had innumerable opportunities to raise the nuclear issue in Parliament in a proper manner. It has never taken the opportunity of addressing those issues seriously; rather, it chose to drag them in through the back door in a form such as that now before the House, which can only have the effect of trivialising the discussion and bringing into contempt the Parliament that chooses to tackle it on this trivial basis. It is the right of this community to expect that an issue of the enormity and the far-reaching consequences of what is encapsulated in the motion will be tackled with proper seriousness.

In accordance with Sessional Orders, the debate was interrupted.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Ray)—Order! I will resume the chair at 2 p.m., when Government Business will take precedence. The honourable member for Oakleigh will have the opportunity of continuing his remarks when the motion is next before the House.

The sitting was suspended at 1 p.m. until 2.3 p.m.

COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr CRABB (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The principal purpose of the Bill is to remove any doubt that the Country Fire Authority may design and build firefighting and rescue vehicles and similar equipment, and that it may, with Ministerial approval, enter into contracts to supply these items throughout Australia.

Honourable members may recall that the Country Fire Authority recently tendered successfully in open competition to supply 90 firefighting tanker units to the South Australian Country Fire Service. This contract, which is valued at more than \$3 million, together with a number of other external contracts into which the authority has entered, will enable the authority's Ballarat vehicle building workshops to employ an additional ten tradespeople and five ancillary staff, and to retain the services of eleven existing staff in 1988–89.

Since the date of the tender announcement, however, some doubts have been expressed whether the authority is empowered to build or sell firefighting vehicles and equipment, either for its own use, or on behalf of other agencies. It is obviously essential that any such doubts be removed as rapidly as possible.

I am confident that all honourable members will warmly support the Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr COOPER (Mornington), the debate was adjourned.

Mr CRABB (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—I move:

That the debate be adjourned until Tuesday week.

Mr COOPER (Mornington)—On the question of time, I ask that the government amend its motion to Thursday week. The Opposition requires time to consider proposed legislation and Tuesday week does not give the opposition parties that time. We are seeking to have adequate time to examine all the proposed legislation and it is doubtful that the Bill could be dealt with on Tuesday week.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs)—The normal arrangement over the years has been the standard two weeks, being deemed to be Tuesday week following the introduction of a Bill. As Leader of the House, I am

prepared to give an assurance to the Opposition that if the person handling the Bill is not ready on Tuesday week it can be held over to the Thursday, two days later, if that is of assistance.

The reason I am seeking Tuesday week is to give flexibility to both the government and the opposition parties in the order of business for the next week of sitting. Sufficient business is listed for Tuesday and Wednesday to keep the Legislative Assembly occupied. It may suit the Opposition for some of the Bills to be dealt with later in the week rather than earlier instead of the prospect of sitting also on the Friday of that week. It gives flexibility for the Opposition and the government, and it is eminently sensible. I assure the opposition parties that if they are not ready, the matter could proceed on the Thursday.

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—I regret that the offer is not acceptable to the Opposition. We have a procedure in place where the Opposition requires a minimum of two weeks for all Bills to lie over to enable the Opposition to give what can only reasonably be described as the absolute minimum of time to alert the community to the proposals before Parliament. In recent times, proposed legislation has been rushed through where flaws have become evident subsequent to the passage of such legislation. The Opposition takes the view that two weeks is the minimum time necessary to get the material in the mail to a large number of interest groups, organisations, and individuals.

For anything that is deemed urgent—no doubt from time to time that will arise where a Bill should be considered as urgent—less time would receive the support of the Opposition. The Opposition would be prepared to consider such Bills on their merits.

Opposition policy is that no proposed legislation should be introduced into this House and voted through before a minimum expiration time of two weeks. Accordingly, the Opposition is not prepared to agree to Tuesday week and requires Thursday week as a minimum.

By leave, the motion was withdrawn, and it was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

BUSINESS FRANCHISE ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill is virtually the same as the Bill which was introduced into Parliament on 2 August 1988 and which lapsed when Parliament was dissolved. The most important changes relate to a later date of 1 December 1988 for the introduction of the proposed new scheme.

The purpose of the Bill is to remedy some technical deficiencies in the business franchise legislation which were identified by a recent High Court decision concerning the importation of tobacco from Queensland by Victorian retailers. In that decision a majority of four out of seven judges found that the Victorian legislation offended against section 92 of the Constitution. In the majority view the legislation discriminated against Victorian retailers who purchased from Queensland wholesalers, in the course of interstate trade.

Victorian retailers had to pay the ad valorem tobacco licence fee of 30 per cent if they purchased from interstate wholesalers, whereas if they purchased tobacco from licensed Victorian wholesalers, they did not. However, a retailer who purchased from

a licensed Victorian wholesaler had the licence fee passed on to him in the wholesale price. That is, the retailer would pay the 30 per cent either directly or indirectly and should, therefore, not prefer Victorian wholesalers over Queensland wholesalers on the grounds of the fee.

Nevertheless, in view of the High Court decision it is necessary to amend the legislation to ensure that there is no discriminatory aspect regarding the imposition of licence fees in the form as well as the substance of the legislation.

It is, of course, essential to protect Victoria's business franchise revenues which amount to approximately \$350 million annually. Tobacco franchise fees have been levied in Victoria since 1974 and business franchise fees are now levied in all jurisdictions except Queensland, which will itself introduce a tobacco franchise fee from 1 January 1989.

The existence of a tobacco franchise fee in Queensland will make the Victorian legislation easier to enforce, but it will not alter the requirement to amend the legislation to ensure that it is constitutionally sound.

Under the amended legislation it will not be necessary for wholesalers to be licensed. However, if they elect to be licensed they submit to the provisions of the legislation and must comply with the various requirements regarding such matters as the keeping of records, production of invoices on sales, and assessment provisions.

Unlike the existing legislation, the amended legislation will apply to all wholesalers inside and outside Victoria who sell tobacco or petroleum products for resale or consumption in this State. The ad valorem fees for tobacco and petroleum licences are unaltered.

To ensure that licensed wholesalers' operations are not unnecessarily disrupted, the amendments provide that the commissioner must not refuse to issue a licence to a wholesaler if the sole point of dispute about the appropriate licence fee centres on whether the wholesaler knew or believed the product sold to a retailer was for resale or consumption outside Victoria.

The value of any product resold or consumed outside Victoria may of course be excluded from the calculation of licence fees. Also, provision has been made to enable wholesalers to exclude the value of product which a retailer has advised, prior to the relevant licence period, that has been resold outside Victoria. The only exception to this is if a retailer makes a false statement and the wholesaler knows it to be false.

Under the amendments a retailer must be licensed to carry on a retailing business and will pay the relevant ad valorem licence fee if purchases are made from unlicensed wholesalers. However, this provision is not discriminatory even in form. The amended legislation will apply to all wholesalers whether within or outside Victoria.

Substantial penalties have been introduced or have replaced existing lesser fines to reflect the government's determination that cheating under the business franchise legislation will not be tolerated. Evasion not only undermines revenue but it cripples the trade of honest competitors.

The search warrant and seizure provisions of the legislation have been extended to include the searching of and seizure of products from trucks and other vehicles which bring tobacco or petroleum products from another jurisdiction. These powers are needed because it remains possible to purchase these goods in other jurisdictions at prices which do not reflect the franchise fees payable thereby declaring that the goods are for resale in another State, and subsequently to evade the Victorian franchise fee. The power of seizure will, of course, only be used where there is clear evidence of evasion.

To further assist in the enforcement of the legislation this Bill makes appropriate amendments to extend the existing averment provisions of the Act such as those in section 19E (1) to accommodate the new scheme. The government is determined that as in the past there will be vigorous enforcement of the amended legislation and a crackdown on deliberate schemes to avoid or evade business franchise fees.

Clauses 27 and 38 of the Bill ensure that any tobacco or petroleum products purchased from unlicensed wholesalers in the period between the High Court decision on 7 June 1988 and the commencement of the new scheme on 1 December 1988 will attract the relevant ad valorem licence fee. This is in accordance with the government's intention as announced in press releases and as made widely known in the tobacco and petroleum products trades. There is, of course, no new charge involved. The provisions simply make collectable the fee imposed by the then existing legislation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr COOPER (Mornington), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

BORROWING AND INVESTMENT POWERS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Honourable members will recall that at the time of passage last year of the Borrowing and Investment Powers Act, an undertaking was given by the government to refer the matter of the debt limits of the commercial trading authorities to the Economic and Budget Review Committee.

The Bill, now before the House, implements one of the main recommendations of the committee's report which was presented in May of this year.

Although the committee strongly supported the removal of statutory debt limits and reliance on market discipline to ensure the efficient operation of the commercial trading authorities, the government is mindful of Parliament's interest in seeking to retain ultimate responsibility for the States' public authorities. For this reason, the government has chosen the compromise recommended by the committee and proposes that the debt limits be set by regulation, but that the regulations themselves be subject to disallowance by Parliament.

The implementation of this process will ensure that valuable Parliamentary time is no longer regularly taken up with legislation to provide for changes in authority debt limits while retaining Parliamentary control over those limits.

The Bill also makes provision for transitional borrowing limits to apply to the authorities pending the introduction of the regulations. This is necessary, since the existing debt limits are repealed as a consequential amendment of this Bill.

Honourable members will recall that the present limits were intended as a temporary measure and as being sufficient to provide the authorities with sufficient flexibility to undertake their 1987-88 borrowing programs only. It is a measure of the restraint exercised by the authorities and of the efficient debt management policies of the present government that now, several months after the existing limits were expected to be reached, only one authority, the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria, is in a position where an increase needs to be made to its debt limit. This increase is incorporated in the transitional limit provided for that authority.

The final change proposed by the Bill relates to the extension of the coverage of the borrowing and investment powers legislation to the Totalizator Agency Board. It is the government's ultimate aim to bring all semi-government authorities with borrowing and investment powers within the Act's ambit. A number have already sought inclusion. The TAB is one of those organisations and warrants inclusion at this time. As with the original proposal, the inclusion of the TAB does not contemplate any marked expansion in the powers of that body. The Bill merely clarifies and modernises existing powers. The Bill provides for further development and refinement in the supervision of the State's semi-government authorities.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr COOPER (Mornington), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

LIQUOR CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Since the proclamation of the Liquor Control Act in May of this year, and the operation of the transitional provisions for various licences and permits under the 1968 Act, the Liquor Licensing Commission has become aware of concerns expressed by unlicensed clubs regarding the consumption of BYO liquor on their club premises.

Many small sporting clubs do not wish to sell liquor but wish to allow members to bring liquor onto the premises for their own consumption. This practice has been widespread—and permitted—under provisions contained in the 1968 Liquor Act in operation from 1968 until repealed in May this year. Under section 135 (2) (c) of the Liquor Control Act 1987, consumption of alcohol on premises occupied by a club that does not hold a licence is not permitted.

Although the Liquor Control Act 1987 does not contain provisions for a BYO liquor only permit for clubs, the Liquor Licensing Commission took the view that the unlicensed club permits issued under the repealed 1968 Act should have effect until 31 December 1988. Clubs which, at 3 May 1988, held such a permit were advised that the permits would continue to have effect until 31 December 1988. After consultation with various clubs and the Police Force, it is considered essential to overcome the potential hardship that will be experienced by clubs when their permits expire on 31 December 1988. The amendment proposed to the Act will do this.

By ensuring that unlicensed club permits issued under the repealed Act will have effect via transitional provisions, in clause 4 (k) of the Bill as BYO permits, clubs holding unlicensed club permits will automatically be issued BYO permits subject to the payment of the prescribed annual fee. Such clubs will, therefore, not be required to apply for BYO permits.

Clause 4 (f) makes an amendment to include a reference to the new BYO permit in section 73 (1) of the Act. This section provides that the commission may exempt an applicant from requirements in the Act that certain information be supplied to the commission with the application. This exemption is necessary to ensure that a small club that does not currently hold an unlicensed club permit under the repealed Act is not subject to lengthy, costly, and inappropriate application procedures.

The amendment to section 128 of the Liquor Control Act 1987 provides that, with the approval of the Liquor Licensing Commission, clubs, including those with BYO permits, will be able to have persons under the age of eighteen years on their premises.

This amendment also addresses a difficulty experienced by some current licensees where minors are on parts of the licensed premises where liquor is served, but where liquor is not being served to, consumed or purchased by, the minors. Sporting clubs, artistic, and cultural organisations have identified circumstances where it is appropriate for minors to be present on those parts of licensed premises which would, under the current provisions of the Liquor Control Act, constitute an offence. The amendment in clause 5 provides the opportunity for the commission to approve and endorse licences or permits according to circumstances under which the Liquor Licensing Commission considers persons under the age of eighteen years may be present in areas where liquor is served, but not in the company of a parent or guardian.

The government remains committed to its goal of further attacking problems of alcohol abuse and misuse, particularly among young people. The offence provisions of the 1987 Act clearly identify that commitment. Although the amendments will authorise additional circumstances where persons under the age of eighteen years may be on licensed premises for specific activities, consumption of liquor will still be prohibited. The government reiterates its concern about alcohol abuse in the community, particularly among young people. The government reiterates its expectation that licensees, employees, and the community will acknowledge those provisions of the Act which assist in the reduction of alcohol abuse and misuse.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr COOPER (Mornington), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

SHOP TRADING (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The main purpose of the Bill is to give further encouragement and support to Victorian business, as part of the government's overall policies of regulation review and reform, by reducing unnecessary paperwork and red tape. Under these policies, the government has been able to abolish numerous redundant licence requirements and to reduce the licence fees payable in other areas.

The 1988–89 Budget announced the removal of shop and factory registration fees from 1 January 1989. The measures contained in the Bill complement the abolition of fees for shop registration by removing the paperwork burden—the actual requirement to fill in and lodge a registration form each year. A commitment to do this was given to Victorian business during the recent election campaign.

In its licence simplification program, the government has already moved to abolish several categories of superfluous licensing in the retail industry. The measures contained in the Bill will benefit the entire retail sector, as they remove the annual shop registration requirement from every one of the State's 50 000 shopkeepers.

The requirement to register shops is a longstanding one under Victorian law. In fact, it dates from the Factories and Shops Act 1885. The purpose of shop registration at that time was to help in regulating the standard of shop premises, and possibly to provide a statistical base on shops and workers for reporting to Parliament.

Since that time, there have been major developments in planning requirements, in industrial relations, in occupational health and safety, the WorkCare system, and the range of statistical information available on the retail industry. The government has reviewed the requirement to register shops in the light of these developments and has

concluded that there is no overriding useful purpose in maintaining the registration system. Its original objectives are met very effectively by other means.

I should point out that the Bill does not introduce any changes to shop hours or other major policy matters. The legislation will still classify shops as exempt or not exempt, according to its schedule. Exempt shops will still be able to open at any times, while shops which are not exempt will continue to be required to close at certain times, mainly on Sundays and public holidays.

The provisions of the Bill will remove the concept of registration and the requirement to register shops, together with machinery provisions relating to the registration system, from the Shop Trading Act.

The government is heartened by the support it has received from the business community for its regulation review and licence simplification programs. We have had particular support from the retail industry for the measures contained in this Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr GUDE (Hawthorn), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

TRUSTEE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

OBJECTS OF THE BILL

The Trustee Companies (Amendment) Bill will amend the Trustee Companies Act 1984. That Act regulates the trustee companies industry in this State.

The Trustee Companies Act 1984 was an amendment and re-enactment of the Trustee Companies Act 1958 following a review of the original Act as a result of the collapse of the Trustee Executors and Agency Co. Ltd. The 1984 Act saw substantial changes to the prudential requirements in the legislation. The government has now had an opportunity of assessing how the amendments made in 1984 have operated in practice. The Bill seeks to amend some of the prudential requirements to take into account changes in the industry which were not foreseen in 1984, and to make various other amendments consequent upon changes in the industry. I should add that the Bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly earlier this year but lapsed when Parliament was prorogued.

CHANGES IN THE INDUSTRY

One of the most dramatic changes to occur in the industry has been the growth of common funds. These are funds in which members of the public can invest deposits, like cash management funds. In December 1984 moneys on deposit in common funds administered by Victorian trustee companies amounted to about \$296 million. In December 1987 these funds had reached \$2572 million and have continued to grow at a substantial rate since that time. On the other hand, the value of the trust estates administered has remained relatively stable. In December 1984 some \$1096 million of estates were administered by Victorian trustee companies, and by December 1987, that figure had fallen to \$1041 million. Some of that fall is attributable to the decrease in value of investments held in some estates, because of the share market collapse.

PROPOSED NEW ARRANGEMENTS

The Bill before the House amends the Trustee Companies Act to take into account the changes which have occurred in the industry. The Bill makes the following amendments:

Contributions to Reserve Fund—The requirement to contribute to the reserve fund established by the Act has been altered. The alteration will allow for differing rates of contribution to the reserve fund by trust estates and the various types of common funds administered by a trustee company.

It is intended that, for those trustee-administered common funds in which a deposit qualifies as an authorised trustee investment under section 4 (1) of the Trustee Act 1958, there will be a lower prescribed contribution rate. This amendment acknowledged the unforeseen and significant growth in the value of common funds administered by trustee companies and the relative security of the types of investment to which those funds are restricted.

Subordinate Loans—Coupled with this amendment is a change to the prohibition on external borrowing by trustee companies, to allow them to use a subordinated loan from their parent company for the purpose of meeting the reserve fund requirements. A subordinated loan is a loan under which the lender agrees that in the event of the borrower's liquidation, repayment of the loan will be deferred until all other creditors of the company have been satisfied. Such loans are generally regarded by the commercial world as being equivalent to equity capital but are a more flexible method of financing. This amendment provides a degree of flexibility for trustee companies when raising money to meet the reserve fund requirement, yet does not disadvantage beneficiaries of estates administered by the trustee company, or its external creditors.

Trust Estate Investment—An additional amendment will see a degree of flexibility for trustee companies when administering estates. The Bill relaxes the prohibition against an estate's money being invested in a company related to the trustee company, so that regulations can prescribe appropriate circumstances in which such an investment may be made. This amendment acknowledges that in many cases companies related to authorised trustee companies may themselves provide good investments for the estates under the control of a trustee company.

Discretion to Impose Conditions on New Entrants—There are, at present, eleven authorised trustee companies, and a number of inquiries have been received from other interested parties concerning entry into the industry. The Bill provides the Attorney-General with a greater degree of flexibility when approving new entrants into the industry, by enabling the imposition of conditions on the authorisation. This will have the advantage of widening the opportunity for new entrants to the industry, yet at the same time ensuring that adequate safeguards can be imposed so that those dealing with such new entrants are adequately protected.

Clarification of Right to Commission—A trustee company's right to charge commission based on the gross value of an estate, at the time of its distribution, has been clarified. Without this amendment trustee companies whose administration of an estate leads to a significant increase in the capital value of an estate would be deprived of the ability to charge a commission based on the value of the estate at the date of its distribution. In many cases this would see them performing their duties at a loss.

Other Amendments—A small number of drafting changes are also effected by the Bill.

CONCLUSION

Industry representatives have advised the government that they are working towards a proposal for uniform prudential requirements in all States. The rationalisation of the regulation of trustee companies throughout Australia is a goal which the government supports. Until more significant progress has been made towards that goal, these amendments are essential to ensure that the prudential requirements upon the industry do not unduly stifle its activities in the State.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mrs WADE (Kew), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

BUILDING CONTROL (PLUMBERS, GASFITTERS AND DRAINERS) (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr CRABB (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The objective of the Bill is to amend section 4 of the Building Control (Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainers) Act 1985. The section is concerned with exemption of metal workers from the requirement to register or be licensed with the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainers Registration Board when they work on industrial pipework.

Honourable members may recall that in the 1988 Autumn sitting a Bill with similar objectives was introduced. The Bill lapsed due to the dissolution of Parliament. The Bill before the House is the result of further deliberation by the major parties affected by the proposed legislation.

As with the earlier Bill there is an intention to clarify the intended implementation of section 85 (2) of the Building Control Act. This section has the potential for inconsistent application throughout the State. The Bill aims to remedy the situation by applying the exemption to all industrial pipework, rather than the case previously, which limited the exemption only to pipework not under the jurisdiction of a prescribed authority or any other authority.

It is intended that the Act and its regulations operate in an even-handed way between metal trades employees on the one hand, and plumbers and gasfitters on the other. In particular, the government is concerned to ensure that each time a contentious matter is raised involving industrial pipework, the parties need not enter into a litigious process to resolve the matter.

To accommodate this approach the jurisdiction of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainers Registration Board is recognised to ensure that all pipework within the prescribed classes of plumbing work is performed only by registered plumbers.

Provision is made under subsection (3) for a prescribed authority or any other authority to require that industrial pipework may still be carried out by a registered person should it consider it desirable to do so.

In addition, alterations have been made to section 85 (2) (C) of the Building Control Act to make the wording consistent with section 85 (2) (A).

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 Thursday, November 17.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (OZONE LAYER) BILL

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Bill is to amend the Environment Protection Act 1970 so that it adequately controls the manufacture, sale, disposal, and emission of chemical substances which destroy ozone in the stratosphere.

BACKGROUND

Ozone is a gas that in the stratosphere forms a protective shield around the earth, filtering out harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun. Without the ozone layer life as we know it could not exist.

Scientists have found a trend in depletion of the ozone layer, which at its most dramatic results in a “hole” over the Antarctic in spring, which closes again in early summer.

If nothing is done to reverse the thinning out of the ozone layer we can expect:

- an increase in skin cancers—Australia already has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world;
- a decline in agricultural productivity;
- an increase in eye damage and immune suppression diseases; and
- a significant impact on marine micro-organisms which are the basic food in marine ecosystems.

Two classes of chemicals in particular have been implicated in the depletion of ozone in the stratosphere. They are chlorofluorocarbons—CFCs—and halons. As a result of their relative inertness and safeness for human consumption, they have gained wide application as aerosol propellants; refrigerant gases in air conditioners and refrigerators; solvents in dry cleaning, electronics and industrial applications; blowing agents in the manufacture of some plastic foams; and as fire extinguishing agents.

CFCs are also greenhouse gases. While carbon dioxide is the main culprit, CFCs contribute up to 20 per cent to the greenhouse effect. Thus our action to control ozone depleting substances will also have a beneficial effect on greenhouse climate changes.

Worldwide concern over depletion of the ozone layer culminated in an international agreement known as the Montreal Protocol. The protocol requires signatories to reduce their consumption of CFCs—using 1986 as a baseline—to 20 per cent by 1993 and to 50 per cent by 1998. Halons are to be frozen at 1986 consumption levels by 1993.

Australia became a signatory to the protocol in June 1988, but ratification requires legislation to be passed implementing the target set out in the treaty. The Commonwealth has stated its intention to legislate in the current session of Parliament, which should fulfil the precondition for ratification of the Montreal Protocol.

Even if we took effective action today to limit CFC and halon consumption the benefits would not be seen for many years. Because of their stability these chemicals

can remain in the atmosphere for more than 100 years. Fortunately the damage to the ozone layer is not irreversible. Once controls on CFCs and halons become effective the natural chemical processes of the upper atmosphere which create ozone will eventually restore it to normal level.

Recent scientific evidence including discovery of the Antarctic "hole" has indicated that the targets set by the protocol are inadequate to halt the degradation of ozone in the stratosphere, let alone reverse the trend. Australia has a major stake in ensuring that a stronger international treaty is passed as we are closer to the Antarctic "hole" and have the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Therefore, while Commonwealth legislation will reduce consumption of CFCs and halons to the targets stipulated in the protocol, it is necessary for us to reduce use and emission of these substances further, which can be done through end use regulation.

Some end use controls will be introduced by the Commonwealth government. However, State regulation is best suited to control industrial emission and controls at point of sale. Commonwealth powers cannot control the activities of non-corporate entities within States, and they lack an existing structure to effectively enforce end use and emission controls.

It is important that Victoria regulates in these areas because regulation of polluting emissions to the atmosphere being traditionally a State responsibility has produced a proven and effective system of environmental controls which can easily be applied to CFCs and halons. The States also have the personnel to enforce regulations, which the Commonwealth does not.

If we are to tackle this problem effectively, a national approach is essential. Only if the States and Commonwealth work in concert, with complementary controls being applied, will Australia be seen as responding responsibly to this major global pollution problem. The Victorian government has sought to encourage this view with the Commonwealth and other State and Territory governments.

Commonwealth controls over ozone depleting substances will be substantially through regulation, which will be implemented progressively. This Bill amends the Environment Protection Act to provide a framework within which State controls may also be implemented progressively, while taking into account the Commonwealth controls and any gaps that may exist in those controls.

The provisions of the Bill will address the problem in two ways. Firstly, they will enable the emissions of ozone depleting substances to be included in the offence of air pollution. The offence carries maximum penalties of \$10 000 or \$500 000 and five years' gaol for aggravated pollution.

Secondly, they will provide additional powers to make regulations to control end uses. These will include labelling provisions, the ability to ban use of certain substances for particular applications, and the prohibition or regulation of manufacture, sale, or disposal of goods or equipment using ozone depleting substances. In addition existing discharges of CFCs from manufacturing processes will be stringently controlled through the Environment Protection Authority's existing licensing system. As already indicated, these regulatory controls will complement those of the Commonwealth.

In addition to introducing statutory end use controls in Victoria, the government is setting an example by investigating means of reducing CFC and halon usage to a bare minimum. To this end an inventory of all government departments has been conducted to identify where reductions can be made. The fire services are developing a policy to reduce halon usage, and these chemicals are no longer used in training. Plans are also underway to reduce CFC emissions from air conditioners in public transport. Industry

is operating a national recycling scheme for CFC refrigerants, and has agreed to phase out aerosols except for essential, mainly medical uses by the end of next year.

The depletion of the ozone layer is a major environmental problem which has profound worldwide significance and ramifications. Proper controls of ozone depleting substances is not only in the interest of all Victorians, but it is in the interest of every living thing on this fragile planet. This legislation, together with controls being applied by the Commonwealth government, will ensure that Australia will provide a lead to the world and encourage others to adopt more stringent controls than those contained in the Montreal Protocol. This is necessary because scientific evidence is starting to come to light that indicates that the current international treaty is inadequate if we are to allow the ozone layer to repair itself.

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 Thursday, November 17.

THE CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT (ELECTORAL REFORM) BILL

Mr WALSH (Minister for Property and Services)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Bill is to introduce amendments to The Constitution Act Amendment Act 1958. It contains two major reforms. The first is to replace the Chief Electoral Officer with an independent Electoral Commissioner. The second provides that only approved how-to-vote cards can be distributed near polling places on polling day. A similar Bill was introduced by the government in the last Parliament. That Bill passed the Legislative Assembly on 11 November 1987. The Bill was read a first time in the Legislative Council on 12 November, and debate on the Bill was then adjourned.

On 10 March 1988, the Legislative Council resolved to establish a Select Committee to review both the Bill and the Nunawading Province re-election of 17 August 1985. The Select Committee held its first meeting on 23 March 1988, and its report was tabled in Parliament on 2 August 1988. Let me say that the government has noted the report of the Select Committee. In general, the committee's recommendations have been adopted by the government and incorporated in the Bill now before the House. I now propose to outline the Bill and to indicate the positive way in which the government has responded to the committee's recommendations.

AN INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

The government wishes Victoria's senior electoral official to have both the appearance and reality of independence. The integrity of the electoral process has been scrupulously protected by this government but this reform places the independence of the senior electoral official beyond doubt.

The Bill provides that the office of Chief Electoral Officer will be replaced by the office of Electoral Commissioner. The commissioner will have the powers of a chief administrator, and will have the same independent status as that enjoyed by the Auditor-General, the Director of Public Prosecutions, and the Chairman of the Public Service Board. The Bill provides for a Deputy Electoral Commissioner to allow full delegation of authority to an equally independent officer. The commissioner will report direct to Parliament following each election, including by-elections, and will

have power to appoint returning officers and polling places. These duties and responsibilities will be carried out without reference to a Minister.

In its report, the Legislative Council Select Committee states that it “is satisfied that the independence of the Electoral Commissioner as proposed through the Bill can be achieved.” However, the committee recommended three measures to reinforce the commissioner’s independence. All have been incorporated in the Bill.

Firstly, the committee recommended that the commissioner be appointed until retirement, or for a fixed long term. The Bill provides for both the commissioner and deputy to be appointed for a period of ten years, with reappointments possible thereafter for terms up to ten years.

Secondly, the committee recommended “a provision barring the appointment of a person as commissioner who is or has been a member of a registered political party within five years prior to the date of appointment.” Such a provision has been incorporated in the Bill with regard to both the commissioner and deputy.

Thirdly, the committee recommended that the Electoral Commissioner, rather than the Governor in Council, have power “to prescribe such matters as are necessary for the conduct of elections in this State.” The thrust of this recommendation has been incorporated in the Bill which provides for the Governor in Council to make regulations on the recommendation of the Electoral Commissioner.

HOW-TO-VOTE CARDS

The government is committed to introducing a reform to ensure that electors are not handed misleading or deceptive how-to-vote cards on polling day. The Legislative Council Select Committee states in its report that it is satisfied that there is a need for a system of registration and approval of how-to-vote cards. However, the committee noted practical problems with the earlier Bill proposed by the government. These problems have been addressed in the Bill now before the House.

The earlier Bill proposed a centralised model for the approval of how-to-vote cards: all cards were to be submitted to the Electoral Commissioner for consideration. Because of the Select Committee’s recommendations, the Bill now incorporates a decentralised process by which individual returning officers consider how-to-vote cards, and, if appropriate, provisionally approve them, and then later, register them. Cards that are likely to mislead or deceive an elector in relation to the casting of the vote of the elector, or which contain offensive or obscene material, will not be approved.

The committee recommended that there should be appeals to the Electoral Commissioner from decisions of individual returning officers, and that the decision of the commissioner should be final. The government does not support this approach, and the Bill retains appeals to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal from decisions of the commissioner. Retention of appeals to the AAT is considered an important safeguard. Those aggrieved by a decision of the commissioner should have a forum in which to air their views and make submissions before a final decision is made. The AAT is an appropriate forum to hear argument and determine such matters. Decisions by the commissioner will be made solely on the basis of an examination of proposed how-to-vote material, and without the benefit of competing views being presented and argued. In the circumstances, the government considers it important to retain appeals to the AAT from decisions of the commissioner.

Although the Bill proposes a decentralised model for the approval of how-to-vote cards, it also includes a “fast track” method for possible use by the registered political parties. If it chooses, a registered political party may submit a “format how-to-vote card” to the Electoral Commissioner for provisional approval. This is to streamline

the approval process when a party wishes to use essentially the same card—but with minor modifications—across the State. It is important to emphasise that the how-to-vote card provisions apply only to how-to-vote cards handed out on polling day. Distribution of non-approved cards on polling day in the vicinity of a polling place will be an offence.

CONCLUSION

The measures I have outlined are designed to improve the State's electoral process. The measures have been reviewed by an all-party Select Committee, and the recommendations of that committee have generally been incorporated in the Bill now before the House.

The Bill deserves the support of all honourable members. I commend it to the House.

On the motion of Mr LIEBERMAN (Benambra), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

ABORIGINAL LAND (NORTHCOTE LAND) BILL

Mrs SETCHES (Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to authorise the granting of the freehold of land in the City of Northcote to the Aborigines Advancement League. In 1974 the former rubbish tip site on the corner of St Georges Road and Watt Street, Thornbury, was reserved for public recreation purposes and the City of Northcote was appointed the committee of management.

Following representation by the league in 1981 and, with the support of the City of Northcote, the government agreed to excise a part of the land and to appoint the league as the committee of management. This enabled the league to construct the Aboriginal community centre and league headquarters. In 1982 the freehold of the land was granted to the league under powers contained in the Aboriginal Lands (Aborigines' Advancement League) (Watt Street, Northcote) Act 1982. In 1984 the Aborigines Advancement League was appointed the committee of management over the remainder of the public recreation reserve. With the support of the City of Northcote, the league has carried out significant improvements to the reserve, established a sporting and recreation oval, change rooms, enclosures, and extensive landscaping.

The government now proposes to grant the freehold of the land, known as the Sir Douglas Nicholls Recreation Reserve, to the Aborigines Advancement League. Such action is a tangible recognition of the efforts of the league, and will enable the league to undertake long-term planning and programs which will further the interests of its members and Aborigines in Victoria generally. The land to be granted is shown hatched on the plan in the Schedule to the Bill.

The freehold of the land will be granted on a similar basis to that which is set out in the Aboriginal Lands (Aborigines' Advancement League) (Watt Street, Northcote) Act 1982.

The grant of the land will be subject to the condition that the land is to be used for Aboriginal cultural and recreational purposes. The Bill provides that a lease, licence, permit, or other authority under the Mines Act 1958, Extractive Industries Act 1966, and the Petroleum Act 1958 shall not be granted except with the consent of the league

and subject to such terms and conditions as it determines. However, it should be said that mining or extractive industry is most unlikely on the former tip site.

As honourable members are aware, the recreation reserve is named after a leading Aboriginal Australian, Sir Douglas Nicholls. His passing away on 4 June this year was a great loss to all Australians. A man of drive and vision, he worked relentlessly for social justice and the advancement of his people which, in earlier years, must have seemed to be against insurmountable odds. Yet the former Director of the league and pastor of the Gore Street church in Fitzroy, to use the words of his son, Ralph, at the State funeral service for Pastor Sir Doug, "had a great love for all people."

Born on the Cummergunja Mission in 1906, against a background of disadvantage and discrimination, Pastor Sir Doug showed what the human spirit can achieve despite these setbacks. As a sportsman he played football for Northcote in the Victorian Football Association and later played with Fitzroy in the Victorian Football League, and was selected for the State several times. He was also a fine athlete.

As an Aborigine, Pastor Sir Doug had a number of firsts to his name: he was awarded the MBE in 1957, appointed a justice of the peace in 1963, received a knighthood in 1972, and became the State Governor of South Australia in 1976.

As this reserve is named after a great Australian, the granting of the freehold of the land to the Aborigines Advancement League has special significance. This government is pleased to be initiating the granting of a title to the Aborigines Advancement League.

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 Thursday, November 17.

STATE CASUAL EMPLOYEES SUPERANNUATION BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Over the past two years the government has restructured superannuation for public sector employees. The reforms have been in response to both the recommendations of the 1984 report of the Parliamentary Economic and Budget Review Committee and the employer contribution of 3 per cent of earnings awarded for superannuation purposes in the 1986 national wage case.

Superannuation is now provided on a consistent basis for regular full-time or part-time public sector employees through nine "industry" schemes. Previous gaps in coverage have largely been eliminated.

The revised Hospitals Superannuation Fund was specifically designed to include the large number of employees in the hospitals sector who do not work regular hours. The other restructured funds provide defined benefits suited to the majority of career employees and are not readily extended to casual employees.

There are casual employees in many public sector agencies. Two major groups are emergency teachers and casual staff of the Totalizator Agency Board. Under the 1986 national wage case decision they are entitled, like other employees, to claim a superannuation contribution of 3 per cent of ordinary time earnings.

The Bill is designed to establish a tenth public sector superannuation fund to cover casual employees who are not otherwise eligible for superannuation. The benefits, except on death or disability, will be simply an accumulation with investment earnings

of 3 per cent employer contributions after allowance for costs of providing appropriate death and disability benefits and the proposed Commonwealth tax on superannuation funds.

In order not to increase unnecessarily the number of operating superannuation schemes in the public sector, the State Casual Employees Superannuation Fund will absorb the existing superannuation lump sum fund originally established for married women employees when they were excluded from membership of the State Superannuation Fund. The lump sum fund, which operates on an accumulation basis, has been closed to new members since 1984 and now covers just over 100 contributors.

Present lump sum fund contributors will be able to maintain their existing entitlements as a special class of members in the reconstituted fund, or to elect to transfer to the State Superannuation Fund with appropriate credits for accrued benefits from past years of membership.

The Bill provides for a board comprising two elected members, two members representing management, and an independent President to administer the State Casual Employees Superannuation Fund. The board can either employ staff to manage the fund or appoint managers from the private or public sector to administer benefits and make investments on behalf of the fund.

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 Thursday, November 17.

STATE INSURANCE OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill seeks to amend the State Insurance Office Act 1984 in relation to membership of the State Insurance Office board, conduct of life insurance business, and borrowing and investment powers.

The State Insurance Office board currently consists of five persons, four of whom are appointed by the Governor in Council and one from the Department of Management and Budget nominated by the Treasurer. The establishment of the board in 1984 was central to the reforms of the structure and function of the State Insurance Office, which took place at that time and which were designed to place the office on a more competitive basis in the insurance industry.

The State Insurance Office has since made substantial progress in new areas of business and has successfully met the challenges and increased demands that this has created. To continue this progress it is essential that the State Insurance Office board maintain the flexibility to respond to new issues.

The Bill provides for an additional two members to be appointed to the State Insurance Office board, allowing a greater diversity of backgrounds and further specialised skills to be represented on the board. This will significantly enhance the ability of the board to fulfil its duties and to continue the development of the State Insurance Office.

The amendments in relation to the State Insurance Office's life insurance operations arise from provisions of the State Insurance Office Act 1984 and the Commonwealth Life Insurance Act 1945.

Under its legislation the State Insurance Office is obliged to observe the provisions of Commonwealth legislation relating to insurance. This provision is intended to ensure, so far as possible, that the State Insurance Office operates on an equal footing with private insurers conducting similar business and does not obtain unfair advantage over such insurers by virtue of its position as a State-owned office.

In this context the Commonwealth Life Insurance Act 1945 provides that insurers should establish separate funds for the purposes of their life insurance business, putting into effect the longstanding principle that moneys relating to life insurance should be held separate from other accounts. However, the State Insurance Office Act 1984 provides that a single fund should be established for all the office's business, thus creating a conflict between two provisions of the State Insurance Act.

The Bill provides for the State Insurance Office to establish one or more separate funds for its life insurance operations, to eliminate the conflict between provisions of the Act and to allow the State Insurance Office to conform to the Commonwealth legislation and to operate on an equal basis to other life insurers.

Under existing legislation the State insurance fund is invested in such manner as is approved by the Treasurer. The Bill provides that both the State insurance fund and life insurance funds will be subject to the Borrowing and Investment Powers Act 1987.

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 Thursday, November 17.

SUPERANNUATION (PORTABILITY) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Superannuation Benefits Act 1977 has for several years made provision for employees who have been required to move from one superannuation scheme to another when they change employment within the public sector.

Those employees have been able to avoid loss of their accrued superannuation rights by requesting deferred benefits from their old superannuation schemes. The deferred benefits, which have been lump sums or pensions, depending on the structure of the old superannuation scheme, have become payable in addition to the benefits from the new superannuation scheme on eventual retirement, death, or disability. Any employee who made more than one job change within the public sector could ultimately receive more than one deferred benefit.

The deferred benefits granted in these circumstances have represented the total benefits accrued from both employee and employer during membership of the old superannuation scheme. Benefits have been granted in deferred form partly to avoid technical problems but mainly because not all public sector superannuation schemes are funded. In many cases, therefore, no funds have been available to provide a cash transfer to the new superannuation scheme.

The Bill is to repeal the Superannuation Benefits Act 1977 and to replace it with more modern legislation. The main objective is to recognise the structure of the new

industry superannuation schemes now in place across the public sector. In particular, the formula for deferred benefits must be able to be applied to superannuation schemes that allow employees a number of contribution options and the right to switch from one rate of contribution to another during their careers. Deferred benefits must now recognise the different levels of contribution actually paid rather than being a simple calculation based on completed years of service.

Although the concept of a preserved accrued benefit is straightforward, the legislation must still cover the wide range of benefits under closed public sector superannuation schemes and also the adjustments required if, in due course, members prefer to collect benefits from an early retirement age such as 55 years rather than their normal retirement age.

In addition to specifying more adequately the methods for calculation of preserved benefits, the Bill clarifies that deferred benefits may also be granted, subject to approval by the Governor in Council, when an employee moves to employment with an authority of the Commonwealth or another State.

Provision is also made for public sector employees moving between superannuation schemes to carry with them any favourable medical classification in relation to death and disability benefits. In the past many employees have been disadvantaged in mid-career by the discovery of medical impairments on entry to a new superannuation scheme following a change of jobs.

The Bill also provides that service with various public sector authorities will be aggregated for the purpose of calculating resignation benefits on the new scales which, following the recent reform of public sector schemes, are generally graduated according to length of service. A public sector employee who resigns will not, therefore, be disadvantaged by having moved within the public sector during his career.

Because a number of public sector superannuation schemes are constituted by regulations or trust deeds rather than by Acts of Parliament, the Superannuation Benefits Act 1977 included provisions which required all public sector superannuation schemes to integrate WorkCare weekly payments and superannuation disability pensions so as to avoid double dipping by employees. These provisions have been carried over to the new Bill without alteration.

The Bill may be seen as a final stage in the government's reform of public sector superannuation schemes. The system of preserved and deferred benefits, coupled with the design of the new schemes, should ensure that, if an employee has one or more changes between industry schemes in the course of a career, the total ultimate retirement benefit will be little different from the one which would have been payable had his or her whole service been with the original employer.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

ROAD SAFETY (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS) BILL

Mr KENNAN (Minister for Transport)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

In the autumn sittings a Bill was introduced to implement the legislative components of a package of measures announced on 29 March 1988 to further reduce Victoria's road toll. Since then a number of developments have taken place which make it

desirable to add to those measures contained in the previous Bill, which has lapsed and is now replaced by the present Bill.

The main purposes of the Bill are to amend the Road Safety Act 1986 to provide new measures to combat drink-driving and to curb excessive speed. The opportunity is also being taken of making some miscellaneous amendments to the Act.

DRINK-DRIVING CHANGES

The Bill provides a streamlined procedure for dealing with first offenders, that is persons who have not been previously convicted in Australia of any kind of drink-driving offence. If the blood alcohol reading is below $\cdot 15$, police will have the ability to issue a drink-driving infringement notice. The individual will then have the option of giving the police an objection notice requesting that the matter be dealt with by a court or of paying the on-the-spot fine and accepting a period of licence disqualification.

If an objection notice is given within 28 days after the infringement notice has been issued, the police will proceed against the individual on summons and the matter will be heard in court as at present. If an objection notice is not received within the 28 days, the infringement notice will take effect as a conviction. The infringement notice will have recorded on it the blood alcohol reading of the individual and this will fix the licence disqualification period in accordance with the mandatory scale already contained in the Act for court purposes.

The amount of the on-the-spot fines will be fixed by the regulations to take into account the level of fines normally imposed by the courts for a first offence of this kind. Present indications are that the levels are likely to be set at at least \$200 for a zero blood alcohol content—BAC—offence up to $\cdot 05$, \$250 for any offence over $\cdot 05$ and up to $\cdot 1$, and \$350 above $\cdot 1$ but below $\cdot 15$. If the person is a probationary driver and the reading is not over $\cdot 05$, the licence will be automatically suspended for one month and the probation period extended by seven months.

The Bill does not affect the power of the courts to release offenders on bond without recording a conviction. This discretion is exercisable where a first offender's reading does not exceed $\cdot 1$. It is proposed that the discretion be retained and that its effect on the new infringement notice system be monitored.

The new procedures will not apply where the blood alcohol level is $\cdot 15$ or above. In these cases the licence is suspended immediately the charge is laid and the driver must be dealt with in court.

The benefits of the changes are that punishment for drink-driving offences will be swift and certain. The police will not be required to take undefended matters to court and this will maximise the time available for on-road enforcement.

The government is yet to consider the reports of the Social Development Committee inquiry into the management of drink-drivers apprehended with high blood alcohol levels, the second report having been tabled as recently as 25 October.

Consideration of the reports will be expedited with a view to the introduction as soon as possible of any further amendments arising from the committee's recommendations.

EXCESSIVE SPEED

At present the Road Safety Act requires the courts to suspend a driver's licence for at least one month if the driver exceeds the speed limit by 30 kilometres an hour or more. About 13 000 such cases are dealt with each year in the Magistrates Court.

It is proposed that the traffic infringement notice system be adapted to enable these excessive speeding cases to be dealt with under procedures similar to those proposed for drink-driving infringements. The behaviour of some drivers in the new 110 kilometres an hour speed zones is such that an additional deterrent is needed. The Bill, therefore, extends the mandatory licence suspension requirement to any case where a driver is detected at a speed of 130 kilometres an hour or more.

In cases involving very high speeds it is considered that the minimum licence suspension period should be increased. The Bill, therefore, provides a minimum suspension period of four months for driving at from 40 to less than 50 kilometres an hour over the limit, and six months for driving at 50 kilometres an hour or more over the limit.

OTHER MATTERS

The Bill also makes a number of other changes aimed at improving the effectiveness of various provisions of the Act. Included in these are the following:

- the section relating to the obtaining of various documents by false pretences is being extended to include logbooks and also to include dishonest means such as cheating at licence examinations;

- the reference to the grounds or precincts of a police station in the section dealing with the operation of breathalysers is being broadened to take account of the way in which "booze buses" operate;

- the hospital blood test section will be expressed to apply whether or not the accident occurred in Victoria, to close potential loopholes in border areas; in addition, blood samples taken in the grounds or precincts of a hospital will be declared valid, that is, it will not be necessary to take the sample only when the patient is actually inside the building;

- a further amendment will enable hospital blood samples to be analysed for drugs at the request of the coroner;

- the twelve months' transitional exemption under which persons without heavy vehicle licence endorsements can drive certain trucks over 4.5 tonnes gross but under 3 tonnes tare is being extended to three years because of difficulties faced by certain truck operators; and

- evidence of drinking alcohol after an accident will be admissible in cases where the court is satisfied there was no blood alcohol present at the time of driving. However, the onus will be on the defendant to satisfy the court of this.

As mentioned earlier the legislative measures form part of a package aimed at further reducing the road toll. The other measures which have been announced include:

- a new \$1 million public education campaign to hasten changes in public attitudes towards drink-driving;

- an increase of at least 50 per cent in the level of random breath testing;

- a significant increase in funds to further eradicate accident blackspots;

- safety treatment of unprotected embankments, bridges, and culverts; and

- an urgent reference to the Social Development Committee to inquire into improved methods of vehicle occupant protection.

Taken together these measures deal with the main elements in the road safety equation, namely, the driver, the vehicle, and the road environment.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr BROWN (Gippsland West), the debate was adjourned.

Mr KENNAN (Minister for Transport)—I move:

That the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—On the question of time, Mr Acting Speaker, I indicate very clearly that the Opposition will require a full briefing on the issues encompassed in the Bill as it affects every Victorian.

Prior to the appointment of the present Minister for Transport, the Opposition received full cooperation in obtaining briefings, but on this Bill I requested a briefing six months ago; staff were made available and were to see me with the information required on the basis that the Bill initially would have been debated in the last Parliament. I made three approaches to the Minister's staff and to higher levels in the government, but was unable to obtain the information requested.

The government cannot expect cooperation from the Opposition when it displays that lack of cooperation. Road safety matters, while I have been the shadow Minister of this portfolio, have always been approached in a bipartisan manner.

I signal to the Minister that if the debate is adjourned for a two-week period, it would be the expectation of the Opposition that it would have full access to staff for briefings and, if there is obstruction, as has been the case, the Opposition will not cooperate.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

CONSTITUTION (DECLARATION OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill was originally introduced last May, but lapsed when the Legislative Assembly was dissolved for the election. The purpose of the Bill is to incorporate into Victoria's statute law a detailed statement of the individual rights and fundamental freedoms recognised in our community. This statement is to take the form of a Declaration of Rights and Freedoms. The content of the declaration is modelled on widely-accepted international instruments, most particularly the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

In bringing forward this landmark legislation in the field of human rights, the government has accepted the key recommendations of the Parliamentary Legal and Constitutional Committee's Report on Human Rights, published in April 1987. This step was foreshadowed in the government's social justice strategy statement, "People and Opportunities", released in August 1987.

As the chairman of the committee, the former honourable member for Mildura noted in his introduction to the report:

Human rights is a subject of enormous importance to all Victorians. However it is a matter which has, on occasions, caused considerable division within the community.

The achievement of the Legal and Constitutional Committee—an all-party committee—was to produce a near-unanimous report in this sensitive area. The committee undertook extensive inquiries and consultations, and satisfied itself that a

clear legislative recognition of human rights values would assist in ensuring greater understanding in the Victorian community of the need to respect an individual's rights.

Unlike a Bill of Rights, this declaration is not to be enforceable through the courts. The declaration will not present an opportunity for endless litigation or constitute a challenge to the authority of the democratically-elected Parliament. As the deputy chairman of the committee, the former honourable member for Warrandyte noted in his summary to the report:

On the contrary, the declaration would act as a beacon to Parliament in terms of the rights and freedoms which it should seek to protect, and would remind Parliament of its responsibilities in this regard.

While the Bill implements the key recommendations of the committee, the government has not accepted the second part of the committee's proposals to the effect that "watchdog" powers be conferred on a Parliamentary committee, so as to ensure that Bills introduced into Parliament are scrutinised as to their compliance with the human rights standards set out in the declaration. The difficulty that the government has with the relevant recommendations relates to their practicality. The government's capacity to manage its legislative program would be reduced if it were necessary for all Bills first to be considered by a Parliamentary committee before being able to progress any further after the second-reading stage. The government is, of course, concerned to ensure that legislation does reflect human rights standards, and new legislation will be closely monitored to ensure that it meets the standards set down in the declaration. In rejecting these recommendations, the government also felt that it was not appropriate for there to be a further expansion of the functions of Parliamentary committees. The Legal and Constitutional Committee already has a sizeable staff and a number of major references.

The committee's recommendations also included two numbers—1 and 6—which called for administrative action on the part of the government designed to ensure greater respect for the protection of human rights. Recommendation 1 had three parts. The first called on the government to take steps to ensure that non-English speakers are not disadvantaged when dealing with the police, the courts, and government departments.

The second called for multilingual publicity of any statement of human rights. The third called for a review of legal aid resources especially as they affected Aborigines, non-English speakers, and those in country areas. That review is currently being undertaken by the Attorney-General's Department. Multilingual publicity of the declaration will be coordinated by the Attorney-General's Department in conjunction with the Equal Opportunity Office.

In the case of the problems that non-English speakers have in dealing with officialdom, the government is currently reviewing the adequacy of government language services and is developing a comprehensive policy for the provision of language services in Victoria. That work, which is not yet completed, embraces the concerns expressed by the Legal and Constitutional Committee. Moreover, specific legal rights to interpreters are included in the Crimes (Custody and Investigation) Act 1988, and two Bills to be reintroduced in this Parliament, the Magistrates' Court Bill and the Children and Young Persons Bill.

Recommendation 6 encourages the government to support the introduction of public education programs on human rights and to ensure that a human rights component is included in primary and secondary schools programs. The Ministry of Education is contributing considerably to increased understanding of these issues through the development of curriculum materials and promotion of programs which address disadvantages of various groups related to basic human rights. The wider

issue of public education programs will be taken up by the Attorney-General's Department in liaison with the Equal Opportunity Office and the Ministry of Education.

Finally, I refer briefly to the contents of the proposed Declaration of Rights and Freedoms. The declaration deals with a wide range of human rights. Those that can be broadly classified as personal rights are those relating to: life, liberty, security, and property, paragraph (a); equality before the law, paragraph (b); freedom of thought, conscience, religion, expression, and opinion, paragraph (c); privacy, paragraph (f); the right to marry and found a family, paragraph (g); and the right not to be subjected to cruel or unusual punishment or to medical or scientific experimentation, paragraph (m). Those that can be broadly classified as political participation rights are: freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of association, paragraph (d); and the right to vote and to participate in democratic elections, paragraph (e). The remaining rights can be broadly classified as legal process rights: freedom from arbitrary arrest and from unreasonable search and seizure, paragraph (h); the right to be treated in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice at all stages of the criminal justice process, paragraph (i); fair, public and impartial hearing of criminal charges or legal actions, paragraph (j); no retroactivity in the operation of criminal laws and no double jeopardy, paragraph (k); and the right, if deprived of liberty, to be treated with inherent dignity, paragraph (l).

The Bill represents a first step along the path to a better appreciation by Victorians of the importance of human rights. The declaration will provide a new standard by which Parliament and the community can measure the adequacy of laws, the adequacy of government action, and the adequacy of standards of behaviour generally in the community.

As I noted earlier, the Bill was first introduced into the Parliament in May this year. It has been available for public comment in that time and has received a favourable response. I hope, therefore, that it will enjoy a speedy passage. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mrs WADE (Kew), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

CRIMES (FAMILY VIOLENCE) (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill is substantially the same as that introduced in the last sittings of the previous Parliament.

The Crimes (Family Violence) Act came into operation on 1 December 1987. The Act is designed to provide ongoing protection to victims of violence in the home. It empowers magistrates to make intervention orders in cases of family violence. As at the end of September, approximately 2025 orders had been made, a statistic which highlights the prevalence of family violence in our community.

The intended scope of the Act in addressing family violence has been limited by a Supreme Court decision in the case of *Fisher v. Fisher*. In that case, Mr Justice Nathan ruled that the Act's provisions do not allow police prosecutors to represent civilian complainants in applications for intervention orders. The court also questioned the appropriateness of police prosecutors representing police complainants in such applications. The court argued that it is not appropriate to have a police officer appearing as a partisan advocate in a civil dispute.

The concern identified by Mr Justice Nathan is one that the government recognises. However, it was the government's intention in introducing the Act to make a special exception because of the unique circumstances which surround family violence situations. The government regards it as essential that police who attend a family violence incident have every assistance in bringing applications for intervention orders on behalf of victims. That assistance must include access to the services of police prosecutors.

It is unrealistic to expect those police complainants who are unskilled in courtroom procedures to personally prosecute a complaint. This Bill, therefore, makes it clear that police prosecutors have standing to represent a police complainant on an application for an intervention order and on an application for the variation, extension, or revocation of such an order.

The possibility that police officers acting in intervention order proceedings may be civilly liable for the conduct of those proceedings was raised in the Fisher judgment. To counter any such suggestion, the Bill provides in clause 4 that a police officer acting in good faith and in the normal course of duty in a hearing for an intervention order will not be liable in any civil action arising out of the conduct of the hearing.

In line with the warrant provisions in the Magistrates' Court Bill, clause 5 of this Bill provides that a member of the Police Force may arrest, pursuant to a warrant under the Crimes (Family Violence) Act, even though the warrant is not in the possession of the member at the time the arrest is made.

The final clause of the Bill, clause 6, deals with costs. The general rule concerning costs in civil cases is that the successful litigant is entitled to his or her costs. Such a rule is not appropriate in intervention order proceedings, where a police officer will often be one of the parties. It is not the government's intention that police should be liable for the other party's costs if they have acted properly, in good faith, and in the normal course of their duty. The Bill provides that each party must bear his or her own costs, unless the court decides that exceptional circumstances warrant it ordering otherwise. This rule is also in line with that applicable to family law actions under the Family Law Act.

The government is committed to ensuring that the problem of family violence in the Victorian community is speedily and effectively addressed. The intervention order proceedings have become, after less than a year's experience, a vital element in protecting victims—almost always, women and children—from further violence. The Supreme Court's restrictive interpretation of the Act placed at risk the value of the mechanism. The Bill removes the impediment that that interpretation created for police making complaints.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mrs WADE (Kew), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

CREDIT (ADMINISTRATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr ROPER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill was before Parliament before the 1 October State election, and it gives effect to the government's commitment to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of market regulation mechanisms to achieve fair trading objectives.

The essence of the Bill is to provide greater certainty and consistency in two jurisdictions of critical importance for both consumers and traders. The first of these concerns the conditions under which determinations of the Credit Licensing Authority are subject to appeal and the corrective action that flows from such appeals. The second creates a separate credit tribunal to adjudicate disputes relating to regulated credit contracts.

Honourable members will be aware of the vital work of both the Credit Licensing Authority and the Credit Division of the Small Claims Tribunal in defining the nature of responsible contracts between credit providers and their customers. Indeed, the Victorian bodies have taken on a pathfinding role in relation to the uniform credit laws, which have been so important for both industry and consumers in a society which seems increasingly to rely on credit.

The Bill will enhance the existing arrangements. It makes clear the powers of the licensing authority and the tribunal. Under the Bill, any appeal from a decision of the Credit Licensing Authority to the Supreme Court will be a true appeal—based on a review of the facts and the application of the law in light of those facts—and not a rehearing. This is of fundamental importance in achieving the speedy determination of licensing applications envisaged by the Credit Act, and recognises that business must have certainty in the application of the law.

The other major change encompassed by the Bill is to restructure the Small Claims Tribunal when it is hearing disputes between consumers and traders in the credit area. At present all applications are heard by a referee sitting alone. It is proposed to establish a credit tribunal made up of a chairperson, a person representing consumers, and a person representing the credit industry. This will apply only in relation to two sections of the Act. These sections are: section 74, relief of hardship provisions; and section 85, applications by credit providers to reduce the civil penalty. This is an important initiative in ensuring that justice is done and is seen to be done.

The matters covered in the Bill are of priority concern. They will make for a more effective and transparently independent process of licensing and adjudication in the area of consumer credit transactions. All honourable members will recognise the importance of this for the achievement of social justice objectives to which society as a whole subscribes.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr LEIGH (Malvern), the debate was adjourned.

Mr ROPER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—I move:

That the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—I seek an assurance from the Minister that he will grant additional time, if necessary.

Mr ROPER (Minister for Consumer Affairs) (*By leave*)—The Bill, or a Bill similar to it, has been before the House for six months, but additional time will be granted if necessary.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

LICENSING AUTHORITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr ROPER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to rationalise the operation of all of the licensing arrangements within the consumer affairs umbrella.

The Credit (Administration) Act 1984, the Travel Agents Act 1986, and the Motor Car Traders Act 1986 established licensing authorities which regulate the activities of credit providers, travel agents, and motor car traders. The Bill amends the powers of the Credit Licensing Authority to ensure that, so far as practicable, the powers of the licensing authorities are consistent with each other. This will assist in a consistent approach to the licensing of credit providers, travel agents, and motor car traders. This consistency will also assist to streamline the administration of the licensing authorities.

The Bill also amends the powers of the licensing authorities to overcome operational difficulties that have become apparent over time. The amendments to the powers and responsibilities of the licensing authorities include the following:

- (i) that there is an express right in each Act ensuring that a party to proceedings before a licensing authority may call evidence and examine, cross-examine, and re-examine witnesses;
- (ii) that each licensing authority have the powers to refer a question of law to the Supreme Court for determination;
- (iii) that each Act contain a general prohibition against a person making false or misleading statements in relation to a licensing hearing;
- (iv) that each licensing authority have an express authority to conduct directions hearings for the purpose of ensuring that license hearings are able to be conducted as expeditiously and fairly as possible; and
- (v) express provisions allowing the licensing authorities to extend time limits, fix the time and place for hearings, waive fees payable to the licensing authority, and retain and copy records produced before it.

The amendments made to the licensing Acts by the Bill will ensure that not only is licensing carried out more efficiently but also that parties before the licensing authority are ensured a fair and proper hearing.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr LEIGH (Malvern), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

TRANSFER OF LAND (COMPUTER REGISTER) BILL

Mr WALSH (Minister for Property and Services)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Honourable members will recall that this Bill was first introduced during sittings of the previous Parliament. The major purpose of the Bill is to effect a number of amendments to the Transfer of Land Act 1958 to facilitate the development of a computer register for land titles in Victoria and prepare the way for a one-stop shop for land services. The Bill also introduces three minor administrative reforms which are designed to speed up the processing of dealings by the Land Titles Office.

The Land Titles Office's principal function is to maintain a register of the legal ownership of all privately owned land in Victoria—apart from the 5 per cent of private land still under the general law. Land transactions are recorded in the register book, which consists of Crown grants and certificates of title on which instruments are notified or registered.

The records that comprise the current register are paper-based. In round figures there are two million "live" titles showing current proprietorship information, one

million "cancelled" titles showing historic information, and thirteen million instruments showing the detail of current endorsements on titles. In recent years the Land Titles Office has registered more than 500 000 dealings a year. The records occupy some 5200 linear metres of shelving over five floors of a strongroom built in 1885.

The traditional problems associated with large paper-based record systems are apparent. These include record deterioration, storage problems, labour-intensive access requirements, and a lack of compatibility with other record systems.

The provisions of the Bill are consistent with the government's aim of establishing a single computerised land registration system for the State. The current provisions of the Transfer of Land Act 1958 limit the records to a paper-based system.

The Bill provides for the register to be kept in any suitable form or medium. This non-specific approach will cater for the automated register while allowing for the adoption of future technology without the need for further legislative change.

Automation of land titles will add a new dimension to the availability of land information. Immediate benefits will include:

- (1) instant access to the register with provision for title searches and administrative information;
- (2) dealing with registration will be significantly faster; and,
- (3) immediate issue of certificates of title following registration.

Automation also offers the possibility of significant improvement in customer services. Ultimately, when land information is fully computerised, title searches and administrative information about land will be available from one shopfront.

A secondary purpose of the Bill is the introduction of three minor administrative reforms to speed up the processing of dealings by the Land Titles Office. These provide for the registrar to register dealings out of strict lodging order, where appropriate, and register one or more dealings by a single entry in the register and correct patent errors in documents.

Provision has also been made in the Bill to empower the Registrar of Titles to approve forms to serve purposes of Acts other than the Transfer of Land Act. The registrar will be able to include in an approved transfer form information required by other government agencies. This paves the way for computerised information to be provided by the LANDATA system.

Since this Bill was first introduced it has been changed only in respect of consequential amendments to the Subdivision Act 1988 to remove references to the paper-based title system. Schedule 2 of the Bill, which provides for consequential amendments to more than 100 Acts, now includes the Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987 and the Environment Protection Act 1970.

The initiatives contained in this Bill will ensure that Victorians benefit from a modern and efficient Land Titles Office.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr LIEBERMAN (Benambra), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, November 17.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Address-in-Reply

The debate (adjourned from the previous day) on the motion of Mr Cole (Melbourne) for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech was resumed.

Mr SHELL (Geelong)—It is with pleasure that I join the debate on the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. First of all, I advise the House of the loyalty and allegiance of the constituents of Geelong to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen of Australia.

It may be appropriate also to inform honourable members opposite of my reason for choosing to take an affirmation to express my allegiance to the Crown, as some of them may not be aware of it. As a practising Christian, I do not believe it is appropriate for one to take an oath. The Scriptures clearly indicate that the swearing on anything on this earth, or even on the top of one's head, is not appropriate; that one's "Yes" should be "Yes", and that one's "No" should be "No". That instruction given by Christ is an example of which I believe all politicians should take note.

Politicians have the worst reputation of all the professions in regard to honesty. They are generally regarded as a fairly sleazy lot.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr SHELL—Unfortunately, that is the general view of the public with whom I have come into contact. People do not really regard politicians very highly. In fact, I believe they do not rank much higher than car salesmen—and honourable members know the reputation that car salesmen have!

Mr Coleman—Like postmasters?

Mr SHELL—I believe postmasters and post office workers generally have a higher reputation than politicians.

Mr Coleman—You had better have a look in the mirror.

Mr SHELL—I should like also to pay tribute to the work that His Excellency the Governor of this State has done during his term of office. He has performed his functions extremely well. He has been travelling around and meeting with the ordinary people of this State. He has been well received, and he has returned that respect. I look forward to the annual tennis match between Parliament House and Government House, which I hope will occur in March next year. I thank His Excellency the Reverend Dr Davis McCaughey for the hospitality he provides at Government House.

I refer the House also to the work of Mrs McCaughey, who is a person in her own right and is not merely the wife of the Governor. Mrs McCaughey has her own list of accomplishments, and I refer to the book she has written, *A Bit of a Struggle*. The book has been based on research relating to the population in Geelong. Some of the subheadings in the book are: "Low-income two-parent families" and the problems they have; "Low-income one-parent families"; "Immigrant families"; "Families of the unemployed"; and "Better-off families". The book represents a true account of what occurs in Geelong and probably throughout the State. The sorts of problems that Mrs McCaughey describes in her book are fairly indicative of the sorts of problems about which members of Parliament hear in their electorate offices.

In his Speech, the Governor acknowledged the record of the Cain government since it came to office in 1982. At that time, the Victorian economy was on the way down; it was sinking to its depths. It was the Cain government that was able to turn the situation around and promote economic growth.

The private sector in Geelong has taken up the challenge and, with the assistance of the government, there has been considerable development of buildings in the area, such as the Commonwealth Trading Bank, Cheetham Salt Ltd, the Pyramid Building Society, and the Capital Building Society. All these organisations are prospering under the Labor government and, in turn, that has improved the employment situation in Geelong. In 1981–82 the rate of employment was approximately 13 per cent or 14 per cent, whereas it is now some 16·7 per cent. The low unemployment rate in Geelong is a good indicator of the level of economic activity in Geelong, and that is a reflection of the Cain administration and its economic strategy.

The Governor's Speech contains the government's target of creating 520 000 new jobs for the decade and achieving an unemployment rate of less than 4 per cent. The government has always had a policy of full employment, and is working towards that end. Full employment eliminates a number of problems in society, such as the need for the government to provide housing for those who have no income other than their pensions. If those on unemployment pensions are able to get into the work force, it eliminates the need for the government to provide their incomes and their employment assists in providing health services. It is a far better prospect to have people working than receiving the dole. Both sides of the House will agree that we should restore that initiative, progression, and development among our young people, and also the older people in our society, and help them to seek employment.

I refer to the family budget pledge. It is the government's intention to keep gas, electricity, water, and public transport costs below the level of inflation. That will assist the family home and will enable the family budget to go further. It will enable people to lift their living standards once again. The education expense allowance of \$100 a child will assist families. It is an allowance that has not been previously given and families will receive the benefit of it now.

It is disappointing to me that the prices peg legislation failed on its second introduction. The government wanted to extend that legislation for a further term. The measure, which was introduced for a twelve-month period, contained a sunset clause. During that twelve months prices in supermarkets were contained to an average increase of 6 to 7 per cent. The consumers benefited from that measure and it is a pity that the Opposition and the National Party deliberately decided not to extend the sunset clause; consequently supermarket prices during the ensuing twelve months have increased by approximately 12 to 14 per cent. That is an extra expense the community has to bear, and the Opposition and the National Party must share the blame for that.

The assistance given to business includes a 100 per cent payroll tax rebate for exports, and that rebate will be increased in 1988–89 to 150 per cent. In addition, the 150 per cent rebate will be extended to real increases in expenditure on research and development. It is disappointing that Australia does not spend more on research and development. Australia lags behind the United States of America and Japan, and unless Australians think as quickly and as smartly as those competing countries it will not survive in the export business. Export is a growth area and it must be promoted.

In the industrial relations area, the government has worked to eliminate and reduce the number of strikes in Victoria. The loss of working hours through industrial action has been reduced by the hard work of the various Ministers involved in industrial relations matters and on subcommittees. A lot of work has been carried out to reduce the number of strikes in Victoria and in Geelong. The negotiation attitude, as distinct from the confrontation attitude of the Opposition, has worked well.

The government supports Melbourne's application for the Olympic Games to be held in this city in 1996. I trust, if Melbourne holds the Olympic Games, some of that

hard work will have a spin-off effect in Geelong. Geelong is an excellent venue and could provide for the sailing events on Corio Bay. It is a sheltered bay; it is accessible to Melbourne; it is a good location; and it has excellent amenities.

The government is committed to ensuring that older people remain independent and self-sufficient. To do that, the government has increased expenditure on the successful Home and Community Care program, district nursing and so on, that is required to support older people in their homes. It is far better for an individual to stay in his or her own environment rather than having to move into an institution where he or she is often separated from friends and family.

The government supports the Do Care program and the work of other volunteer agencies which help maintain personal contact between the older people and their own communities. Country travel concessions will be expanded to include all retired people, not just pensioners who are over 60 years of age, to further assist in their mobility and to keep their costs down.

Geelong has a strong ethnic community which has its own council. Many of the various ethnic communities meet regularly each month. They also provide entertainment for the people of Geelong with their dancing and cultural activities. The ethnic community is a vibrant one. The council is seeking to provide an hostel for those in the ethnic community who cannot remain in their homes. The council is looking for a 30 to 40-bed hostel and will seek State and Commonwealth government assistance.

It is often said that to lodge an ethnic person in an hostel with his or her own nationality is a detrimental step. When people reach the age of 80 years or more, they sometimes go back to their childhood and to their customs. It is more suitable to provide an hostel for those people where they will feel comfortable, will be able to relate to their neighbours, and will be able to enjoy the foods to which they are accustomed but which cannot always be provided by the normal hostel establishments in Victoria. I support that application and trust that in the next twelve to eighteen months it will come to fruition.

Victoria is blessed with an excellent education system in the way it has been restructured. The government has moved the administration and management of the education system from the Rialto building in Melbourne to the local regions. There is also more involvement of school councils and communities in education management than there ever has been. They have been given the power and resources. It is important when decisions are made that they reflect the needs of the schools and the environment. The number of volunteer hours put in by a community to a school council is appreciated by the government.

I commend the teachers in the State government schools for their work. Teachers in the local schools in Geelong put in a lot of hours. They give time beyond their set hours. They attend extra meetings that are called by the school councils. They attend parent meetings; help with local fetes to raise money; and they give up their own time to visit students who may be having some trouble with their subjects. Victorian schoolteachers should be commended for their loyalty and their work. They are a dedicated profession.

In respect of health services, Geelong Hospital has been operating most efficiently under the leadership of Mrs Patricia Heath, and under a lean and efficient budget. It meets its contracts and provides an excellent service. While it is one of the largest hospitals in Victoria, it does not receive appropriate funds. I hope additional funding will be made in recognition of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Geelong Hospital where waiting lists have been reduced and the turnover increased. Geelong Hospital

will be used as the renal dialysis satellite centre and a radiotherapy unit will be established in Geelong in 1991.

The Cain government has performed a revolution in public transport in Victoria, which, of course, includes Geelong. Gone are the red rattlers on the country railway lines, gone are the bad timetables that were so common on V/Line. Only occasionally does a train run late. There are modern, up-to-date, air-conditioned, carpeted carriages on the Melbourne to Geelong line which compete favourably with the motor car. The number of travellers on that line has increased by approximately 10 per cent a year, to the extent that the overcrowding problem now evident on that service is an indication of its popularity. That problem needs to be addressed and I am pleased that \$3.5 million has been allocated in the Budget for more country rail carriages. Timetabling of services on the Geelong railway line has been improved. Passengers are not always aware of the problems associated with a signalling system. Every time it rained the former signals became defective, forcing passengers to wait on stationary trains. A more efficient signalling system is now in operation.

Mention was made in the Budget debate of the Geelong transit system. Bus travel in Geelong has been revolutionised. Patronage increased in the first year by about 30 per cent because of the provision of more buses and cheaper fares. People are now often forced to stand while travelling on buses that were previously almost empty. It is a credit not only to the government for introducing the flat fare system but also to the private bus operators who have cooperated with the government to initiate the system from which all have benefited.

On the subject of police and justice, I am pleased to advise the House that the Corio police station has been completed. The police staff are most happy with the conditions in what is the most modern station in Geelong. However, the Geelong police station in the centre of the city has yet to be rebuilt, but it is expected that construction will occur during the term of this government.

Funds have been allocated in the Budget for the establishment of a new courts complex in Geelong—a facility that has been lacking for decades.

In the Governor's Speech mention was made of the deaths of several former members of Parliament, including the Honourable Don Ferguson who was Minister for Transport in the 1953–55 Cain government. As I said during the condolence motion at the time, Don Ferguson was my mentor when I was elected to Parliament in 1982. I very much valued his advice.

It has been a pleasure to speak to the government's program. The Governor has performed his functions extremely well and I conclude by again pledging my allegiance to our Sovereign Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia.

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—I have pleasure in joining this debate and, on behalf of myself and the electors of Brighton, I pledge continued loyalty to the Crown, to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and to the office of Governor in the State of Victoria. May I congratulate you, Mr Acting Speaker, on your election to that important position.

I thank the electors of Brighton for the confidence they have shown in me in re-electing me to represent them in this place. I regard it as an honour to have imposed upon me the responsibility to effectively advance the interests not only of the electors of Brighton but also the electors of Victoria.

As the honourable member for Geelong has indicated, by trying to out-govern the Governor, the Governor's Speech sets out traditionally the program of the existing, and in this case the re-elected, government. In reading that long and somewhat tedious speech it was clear that the government was promising simply more of the same; that

Victorians were faced with a tired government, one lacking in vision and entirely devoid of any capacity to face up to, let alone solve, the problems created by six and a half years of Labor waste and mismanagement in Victoria.

It is often argued that a conversion of the policies of the major political parties in Australia is evident. Certainly it is true that for decades until the 1970s, the Australian Labor Party virtually disqualified itself from office in Australia. Over many decades it was so out of step with the basic values and aspirations of the Australian community at both the Federal level and in most States that it simply did not represent a credible alternative government.

The current modern form of the Labor Party has been to dupe the electorate by adopting the rhetoric of those on the Liberal side of politics. Victorians and Australians hear, for example, the Premier and the Treasurer in this place, and the Prime Minister, the Treasurer, and the Minister for Finance in the Federal Parliament using the rhetoric that they seek greater freedom for the individual, less intervention by government in business, smaller government, less wasteful government, and more efficient government. They are the sorts of catchcrys heard from Labor politicians.

The reality is a far cry, indeed. At both the Federal and State levels the Labor governments have presided over massive increases in government expenditure and massive diversion of the community's resources to the public sector—particularly by inflation-geared taxation which ensures that taxation receipts rise even more rapidly than inflation and rise more rapidly than the income of ordinary Australians and Victorians. This results in resources being increasingly diverted into the public sector.

Some productive utilisation of resources does occur in the public sector but it is clear to anyone who has made a study of the performances of governments that almost inevitably they tend to use resources on the whole less effectively than private enterprise.

As the honourable member for Balwyn said in his maiden speech yesterday, it is scarcely surprising that that is the case. Axiomatic to the Liberal philosophy is the belief that people themselves are best equipped to deal with their own affairs, that when government appropriates their resources and appropriates unto itself the powers over the earnings and resources of individuals, it caters for their interests less effectively than they themselves would do.

There is a clash of ideas in the community that is disguised by the Labor Party's theft of the rhetoric of the Liberal side of politics. The reality is far different. Although the government bleats about restraint, State debt and State taxation have more than doubled in the time the government has been in power. Although the government makes much of having taken on the Builders Labourers Federation and having been part of the deregistration of that union, it ignores two things. Firstly, that when the Cain government came to power in 1982, one of its first administrative acts was to withdraw from the BLF registration proceedings then being conducted in the Federal Court. Had the Labor government not done that, the BLF would be more effectively deregistered, and would have been deregistered long before the time when the Labor government finally acted.

Secondly, the government tries to gloss over the myriad powers of unions, and in particular the power of union officials as a result of its actions. I can quote no more clear-cut example of the subtle extension of union power than that the government provided two public sector unions with the names and addresses of all employees—more than 200 000 people—in the public sector. Why was that access or power given to these unions? For no reason other than to facilitate employees being pressured, against their wills, to join unions.

There are fundamental differences in the way political parties see the world. The Labor perception of the nature of human beings flies in the face of human experience. It is assumed that an all-seeing, all-powerful government will define the interests of people, will lay down codes of behaviour to achieve the desired results, and that people will see the wisdom of what this government, which has this great insight, will bestow upon them to fulfil their needs. Having laid down those objectives and codes of behaviour, the government believes people will “do the right thing”; people will respond to the prescience of the government and will suspend their own values and beliefs and adopt those of the government, simply because the government defines them. This is what I call the wish and hope theory of government.

Human experience over thousands of years demonstrates that people do not respond in that way. People respond to external stimulus and tend to act in their own interests. They are being sensible not selfish when they act in that way. It is appropriate for people to study the circumstances confronting them and to act according to their best interests. We have developed sophisticated values underpinning the nature of government in our society. We have developed a series of checks and balances that take account of the fact that people will act in their own interests. These checks and balances are designed to do two things. Firstly, they maximise the powers of individuals and families over their own lives on the grounds that not only is it good that people should be free to act in their own interests but also, by so acting, they will maximise the public good. Therefore, the sum of achievements of society is measured only by the extent to which individuals are able to achieve their own potential. The freedom of individuals is one of the objectives of these checks and balances, which provide a bicameral Parliament in Victoria.

It is equally important to recognise that the checks and balances are designed to restrain the governors—the executive government in particular in this modern age—restrain the majority party as expressed in Parliament, and restrain the power of the majority represented by the government of the day. It is accurately assumed, as human experience demonstrates, that, equally, the governors will act in their own interests. They will seek to use the power they have to maximise the achievements in their own interests at the expense of the governed.

Again, for that reason, we have developed a bicameral system of government. We have installed checks and balances, such as the separation of powers, to ensure that the executive government is not free to impose its will in all cases over individuals and the minority in society.

There can be no clearer example of the failure of the Labor Party's anticipation of the way human beings behave than the financial disaster of WorkCare and other compulsory monopoly government insurance schemes. People simply do not respond by forgoing financial incentives and acting in the public good, as the government perceives it. These people carefully examine the system. It is scarcely surprising that a multitude of people are prepared to take advantage of the incentives set up by behaving in a certain way, such as staying away from work after being injured because they are financially better off than if they return to work.

The Liberal philosophy recognises the need to provide incentives to people to act in their own interests, thereby advancing the common good. The government has not been involved in an altruistic pursuit to find additional objectives. There have been struggles to free the human spirit so that individuals can exercise the maximum power over their lives, consistent with every other citizen having the same power. Indeed, the international trade union movement, and the Australian Labor movement, has an important part in attaining these freedoms. The world would be a much less happy place and many ordinary Victorians would be worse off today, in material and non-material terms, if they did not have a trade union movement. But the reality is,

although laws were needed in the nineteenth century to protect the fledgling union movement and to recognise the interests of individuals who constituted organised labour, the wheel has now turned 180 degrees.

There is now a need for the power of the union movement to be checked by restraints that give individuals the opportunity of exercising their rights against the interests of powerful vested organisations. There can be no more compelling example of that than the fact that large sections of the work force representing hundreds of thousands of Victorian citizens are subject to compulsory unionism. In many cases they are robbed by the combination of the union and the employer of the very freedom that is spelt out in one Bill that was read for a second time today. The freedom of assembly or association is being denied to hundreds of thousands of people in this State because vested interests have captured power in the community and are wielding that power against the rights of individual citizens who would otherwise choose not to be members of unions. The Liberal Party objects to that and is committed to removing such a provision when it is in government.

I turn to the nature of the role of State government because a number of ridiculous claims have been made in this debate and in the Budget debate in recent days. One after another, government members in this House have claimed that the performance of the Victorian economy is an achievement of the glorious socialist revolution, and that everything that happens in Victoria is due to the policies and pronouncements of Ministers of the Cain Labor government. Nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed, in one of his more rational moments, the Victorian Treasurer conceded that the activities and policies of the State government have added no more than 0.5 per cent to the growth rate of the State. The reality is that the instruments of macro-economic policy are simply not under the control of State governments. State governments do not control the money supply. They do not have a significant control over wages policy. They do not control fiscal policy, even with their own expenditure, because they are subject to the overwhelming power of the Commonwealth government in allocating resources.

The reality is that these and all other factors involving macro-economics are largely out of the hands of State governments. The Premiers Conference and the Australian Loan Council meetings held every year serve to emphasise the impotence of the States in macro-economic areas. Governments of all political flavours have clearly learnt that from the Commonwealth government. State governments are structured in that way. Most honourable members will recognise that it is in the public interest that we should have a national perspective in these macro-economic matters.

Macro-economic outcomes owe little to the performance or policies of the State government. What are important and illustrative of the role of State government are the services delivered by the State government itself and by its agencies.

In the final analysis these things are equally important to the everyday lives of Victorians, to families, to individuals, and to other households. This is the failure of the Cain Labor government.

The Australian Labor Party claims to be the party of the weak and the disadvantaged. Nothing could be further from the truth. The reality is that the people who have suffered most under Labor governments, and particularly under State Labor governments, and most of all under the Cain government, have been the weak, the poor, and the disadvantaged.

They are the people, the highest proportion of whose income is being consumed by State taxes and charges and whose livelihood and family security is being eroded by a host of failures. Their living standards are being crushed not only by the failures of

the macro-economic policies of the Federal Labor government; they are being directly assaulted by the failure of policies, by the failure of delivery and mismanagement, and by the weight of the State Labor government.

Recently, I was doorknocking a large number of housing commission flats in the suburb of Highett, which is within the electorate I represent. No-one in any of the flats had been home for approximately the first three-quarters of an hour I spent doorknocking. Finally I knocked on a door where a lady was home. It was a housing commission house, which she and her husband were renting. When she opened the door I could see into the lounge room of the house and it was clear that this woman was looking after children from the surrounding houses while their mothers and fathers were working. She provided a service by looking after those children. As well as that, she had mountains of washing and ironing to do and it was clear that she was taking in the washing and ironing of people in the surrounding houses. She was not only supplementing her own budget by performing these menial tasks, she was helping surrounding families by freeing up the spouses in those families so that the husbands and wives were free of their menial tasks and able to go out to work.

I spent a lot of time speaking with that lady. At the beginning of the discussion she told me that I was wasting my time talking to her because she was a Labor voter. She did not think she could ever be persuaded to vote any other way. Her family was Labor; her father had been Labor, as had her grandfather. They were the paradigm case of the Labor voter. She considered herself working class. During the discussion she painted the picture of her family. She had a number of children in secondary school and some at primary school. Her husband had been in and out of work but prided himself on holding a job. He was not content to be on the dole. She was not rorting WorkCare, she was not rorting the third-party insurance system, and she was not rorting Medicare. She was probably the most common form of family unit in this society; she was a battler who safeguarded, as a matter of personal pride and satisfaction, something involving her human dignity—her family stood on its own feet and provided for itself.

Given that family history, let us examine some of the points I discussed with that lady. I think I can claim the credit for having raised in her mind, for the first time, the impact on her family of high taxing Labor governments. First of all, I asked her what she thought she received from government, and she said, "Not very much." She was especially concerned about the State education system. She said that if she had the money her most cherished ambition would have been to take her children out of the State education system because she thought that the disadvantage she had been born with was being passed onto her children by an inadequate education system which had not only failed, but which was worsening.

She was disturbed about the fact that her eldest daughter who, in her words, "was a bright kid", was not being given an educational opportunity because her mother and father could afford to send her to a State school only. She was concerned that a number of dedicated teachers taught her child, but that during her school life in both primary and secondary school a number of teachers simply were not motivated at all, thereby depriving the child of the real value to be gained from the year to which that teacher was assigned to that student.

The same thing could happen in a non-government school. No doubt poorly motivated teachers exist in that system also but she, and most of the people to whom I have spoken, believe it is simply less likely to happen in the private school system.

So there is an example of a lady who saw education as the only real prospect for her children to break out of the cycle of poverty and yet, confined to the State education

system, she considered that their opportunities were not good and that they were receiving less and less all the time.

We spoke about health care, and she remembered back in the 1970s when her parents had been able to go to public hospitals to obtain free health care. They were treated free in public hospitals because they could never pay the bills. Therefore, they were never actually charged.

They could not afford private health insurance, but they received care because the public health system was available to the disadvantaged and the poor. Today, who are the people on the end of the 25 000-long queue for public health care in this State? They are not the rich; they are not the people who can afford private health insurance or the people who, even without private health insurance, can afford to pay \$120 a day to go into public hospitals as private patients. Rather, they are the poor and disadvantaged; the ones standing at the end of the queue and, in some cases, they stand for years at the end of the queue for pain relieving surgery.

I refer to the advertisements run by the private health funds which ask people what they will say to their children when they ask: "Why am I waiting in pain?" They show that it is the poor who have been most disadvantaged in health care by the failure of Medicare and by the failure of the administration of the State Labor government.

I spoke about housing. Here was a battling family with pride and dignity, providing for itself. They were consigned forever to renting public housing and to living in the sort of environment where people simply do not care because the property is not theirs. What was this lady's future? She was locked out of buying the house because the government does not believe in giving people in public housing the opportunity of buying the properties they rent.

If she were fortunate enough to purchase a home she would face stamp duty, which is the highest in Australia. She would face a first home buyer's scheme, if she could ever overcome the high interest rates and low income to get around the problem of a deposit. She would face horrific dependency and income tests which might deny her the opportunity of ever qualifying for the first home buyer's scheme. She would face interest rates which have been significantly aggravated by the high debt policies of State and Federal Labor governments.

She would face the monopoly tendency of the Urban Land Authority; instead of selling land to be effectively developed by private housing developers, the authority insists on socialising its neck of the woods in the private housing market.

If ever this woman moved into the private rental market, she would be faced with having to pay land tax. It is not paid merely by the wealthy alone, as the Treasurer tried to project. It is not just the people in the Golden Mile who pay land tax; the people who rent property from investors pay because the investment property attracts land tax. That land tax is ultimately passed on to the private tenants so the tenants are bearing the iniquitous tax on housing.

She did not have the advantage of the Liberal housing policy, which would have given her the opportunity, under the number of schemes spelled out, of actually gaining a home that her family could have had the dignity of calling their own.

In the area of law and order, even Ministry of Housing and Construction tenants are frightened to leave their homes at night. They are afraid every time they come home that their houses will have been burgled while they were away.

The most important problem of all is the impact of high taxes on low-income families. These people are paying taxes to Mr Keating but, in addition, on almost everything they purchase in the shops they are paying hidden taxes to the State Labor

government. In almost every respect the Victorian government is the highest taxing government in Australia.

Not only are they paying the highest rates of payroll tax, land tax, and stamp duty and hidden taxes on cigarettes, liquor, petrol, and all those things that families must purchase or want to purchase, but they are also paying hidden taxes on the very basic necessities of life: on gas to warm the bottles for their babies; on the water they drink, shower in, and wash their dishes with; and on electricity every time they turn on a light or every time a child does his or her homework at night. Those are basic household necessities on which they are paying taxes to the government—and those taxes have increased more than four times since the government came to office.

On whom do those taxes impact the most? It is true that people living on the Golden Mile in the electorate of Brighton use more gas, more water, and more electricity. However, if one analyses the proportion of income of the battling family in Highett and the proportion of income of the people on the Golden Mile, one finds the impact of those hidden taxes imposed by the government are more severe on the low-income family. In practice State taxation is regressive because it imposes a higher proportion of the burden on those least capable of bearing it.

What about other elements of human dignity? What about the capture of the Labor government by the vested interests of the union movement? Political power is about access to decision makers. It is not the poor and the disadvantaged who have power under the Labor government, it is the friends of the Australian Labor Party, the friends in big business who are now kicking in 50 per cent of their political contributions to the ALP, and with whom this government continues to boast it has a good relationship, but it is really about the true Premiers of Victoria, the John Halfpennys of this world, and the union officials who have captured political power in this State. They are the people who are robbing the people of Highett of any dignity or power over their own lives.

Nobody suggests that markets operate perfectly. Nobody suggests that market power is not captured by powerful vested interests. However, when the people about whom I speak, such as the lady in Highett, go to the shops and exercise choice about the products they buy, when they are surveyed in consumer surveys and express preferences, when they exercise the market power that they have, they are exercising real power. It may be that their judgment does not reflect the judgment of the Deputy Premier, who is at the table. It may be that they do not do what he thinks would be best for them, but they are exercising their limited power by using their resources in the way they choose. I stand for protecting those people.

Their freedom is being eroded by high taxing and highly interventionist governments. Their personal security is being eroded because the government appropriates a higher proportion of their earnings, hence their family security is eroded more than that of the people who live on the Golden Mile. Their living standards have been eroded by the failure of policies of Federal and State Labor governments.

Resources are being less efficiently used and, because they are being less efficiently used than they would be if they were left in the private sector, the overall wealth—the slice of the cake—that is to be shared out is being diminished by the policies of Labor governments.

The Labor touchstones to which so many Labor speakers have referred—progressive taxation and looking after the poor and disadvantaged—are unmasked as shallow rhetoric when one considers the high taxes, high debts, and high statutory charges that this government has imposed in its six and a half years of vicious assault on the Victorian community.

What are the factors that undermine the interests of the poor and disadvantaged? It is they who are dependent on government services, government housing, government health, government education, and law and order. It is they who are being denied reasonable standards because the government has diverted its resources and because of the concentration on macro-economic outcomes over which the government has little influence. It is they whose living standards are being depressed by high taxes and it is they against whom union power most directly strikes.

It is their children who will pay for this generation's inequities of high debt and deferred liabilities. It is they who are robbed by the Victorian Economic Development Corporation because resources have been diverted and, most of all, it is they who are locked, in the Premier's words, in the cycle of poverty. They are the Premier's new poor. Honourable members do not have to take my word for that because the Premier has talked in this House about the new poor since Labor came to office. The new poor are the lady in Highett and those like her who do not have access to political power.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

On the motion of Mr EVANS (Gippsland East), the debate was adjourned.

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

ADJOURNMENT

**Asbestos in public housing—Wilkur South school site—St Albans railway crossing—
Chemical residues—Mosquito plague in Ninety Mile Beach and Loch Sport areas—
Toxic waste disposal—Willsmere Hospital—Media freedom**

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs)—I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr JOHN (Bendigo East)—I raise for the attention of the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Housing and Construction in another place, the important issue of asbestos in tenanted Ministry homes in the Bendigo region. Following a request of mine under the Freedom of Information Act, I received a letter from the freedom of information officer of the Ministry of Housing and Construction stating that of 1788 units or homes tenanted in the Bendigo area, 1628 contain asbestos or asbestos-based products. That represents approximately 90 per cent of the homes surveyed in the Bendigo region. The letter from the freedom of information officer, Mr J. Catalano, was dated 29 September 1988. It states:

In response to your request, I advise that information obtained from computer based data, collected several years ago through a housing condition survey, indicates that of 1788 units surveyed 1628 contain asbestos . . .

It should be noted that the asbestos figure refers to units which contain an asbestos based product whether it is a minor or major component of the main building or its outer structures such as carport, garage, garden shed etc.

The letter further states:

However, in general terms, a random examination of maintenance cards held on each unit suggests that units likely to contain asbestos based products, are in the main between 10 and 40 years old.

I am not raising this matter in a confrontationist way. I hope it will be seen as a responsible way of raising an important health issue that should be of concern to all honourable members.

Mr Catalano attached a cement asbestos information bulletin to the letter, which refers to cement-based products. Asbestos products contained in Ministry buildings

include asbestos cement, fibro-corrugated roofing and walling, flat sheet wall and eaves lining, and some piping products. As honourable members know, asbestos products were removed from the Treasury building; and employees were cleared from the area while the asbestos was removed. Health risks are involved when asbestos is being handled, because if the fibres are let loose into the atmosphere they can cause lung-related injuries or disease. I do not wish to be alarmist; I do not wish to panic Ministry tenants who may fear that they are now living in an environment that is dangerous to their health.

Our knowledge of the health risks associated with asbestos products is greater now than it was. The trade union movement regards it as an important issue that must be addressed because of likely injuries to workers in Public Service buildings. I ask the Minister to investigate the matter and to ascertain the health risks that are involved. As I understand it, a major health risk occurs when asbestos products are disturbed, touched, or drilled. I do not foresee that, in the vast majority of cases, there would be an immediate health risk to the tenants in Ministry houses.

It is a matter that should be addressed, and I ask the Minister to examine the matter to ensure that the health of Ministry tenants is not put at risk.

Mr W. D. McGRATH (Lowan)—I direct a matter to the attention of the Minister for Education. Although she is not in the House at the moment, I am sure she is tuned into the address system.

The matter I raise relates to the proposed disposal of a school site. I have copies of original documentation relating to a gift of land to the government in 1918 by the parental grandmother of the present adjacent landowner to the Wilkur South school site. The present landowner occupies land on three sides of the school site, which is located in the block he owns. The side to which he does not have direct access is the one along which the road travels.

The original documentation discloses that the transfer of land took place on 23 November 1918 and a Mr R. J. Larnach of Wilkur South furnished a report on the establishment of a school at Wilkur. The report contained the recommendation that the site of 3 acres offered by Mrs Woods be accepted.

I have a copy of a letter signed by Mrs Mary Woods on 22 November 1918, in which she says:

I hereby give permission to the Board of Land and Works or their officers to enter, build upon and take possession of the piece of land delineated and coloured red on the plan at the foot hereof, and further undertake to sign any documents necessary for the transfer of the said land to the Minister of Public Instruction as the Crown Solicitor shall direct.

As I said, Mrs Woods was the parental grandmother of the present owner and occupier of the land bordering three sides of that piece of land.

Apparently the land to which I refer is listed for disposal as an unused school site at a public auction to be conducted on 18 November by Elders Pastoral. The grandson of the person who originally gifted the land to the State of Victoria believes he should be able to negotiate with the Ministry of Education and not have to face a public auction. He is interested in making the purchase and because the land was gifted by his parental grandmother he believes he should not have to bid in the open market to recover the land.

I understand there is a precedent for this: an arrangement was made to the north of Wilkur South when it was demonstrated that the land concerned was gifted. The family of the donor was able to pay the transfer fee and associated costs and resume ownership of the land.

I ask the Minister for Education to give consideration to taking this site off the open market so that discussions can be undertaken with Mr Bill Woods—the grandson of Mrs Mary Woods—who gifted the land to the State in 1918.

Mr ANDRIANOPOULOS (St Albans)—The matter I direct to the attention of the Minister for Transport concerns the St Albans railway crossing; this is one of the most irksome issues that affects my electorate. It is situated near the railway at Main Road East. I see the Speaker is nodding his head in agreement because he has traversed that area on many occasions and understands the problems that arise. That is the only east–west crossing over the Melbourne to Sunbury line in the electorate. The stretch of railway line from St Albans station to Sydenham station is approximately 7 kilometres.

The problem at the crossing is further exacerbated by the fact that five separate roads intersect at that location. Although in the past couple of years signals have been placed at the crossing, the adoption of the Metplan recommendations to the government for the electrification of the St Albans railway line to Sydenham station will bring additional pressure to bear on the crossing because the assumption is that the trains will run to Sydenham as they are now run to St Albans. This will mean that an additional 50 trains will pass through that crossing each day thus adding to the traffic congestion at that intersection, which is located in the main St Albans shopping centre.

I have made numerous representations to the Minister for Transport on this issue, as have the two local government authorities involved, the cities of Keilor and Sunshine. It was a struggle to initiate a study to find a solution to the problem. The two local authorities could not reach an amicable arrangement on the funding of the study, and the Minister was convinced that the study should be funded by the Road Traffic Authority. I understand that the study was undertaken in May this year.

I ask the Minister to ensure that the study is finalised quickly so my constituents will not have to bear the unnecessary delays in crossing from east to west and vice versa when travelling through the electorate.

Mr AUSTIN (Ripon)—This is the first time I have raised a matter with the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs since he took over responsibility for that portfolio, so I am sure that he will give the matter his utmost attention. It relates to the problem of chemical residues, which are a matter of serious concern throughout country Victoria. I am sure the Minister is aware of the field trials that have been carried out by Professor John Waid of the La Trobe University. His work concerns the use of fungi that can be used to destroy wood; in this case they are being used to destroy organochlorines.

If the trials are successful it will mean the micro-organisms that result can compete in the multimillion dollar market for waste disposal. This has tremendous possibilities on the world scene and could involve a tremendous amount of money. The testing program has the support of and is funded by United States of America interests involved in the trials. However, all the efforts of the university and Professor Waid to attract funding from the Victorian government and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs have failed. When the chemical residues problem became acute in the middle of last year, Professor Waid thought the trials, which had been programed, could be of considerable significance to Victoria so he made representations to the government.

Professor Waid tried to obtain a meeting with the former Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs, but could arrange a meeting only with one of the Minister's advisers. I cannot speak for the present adviser of the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs,

but honourable members are aware that Ministerial advisers have not always been that cooperative and, in many cases, do not even want to know about the problem.

Because Professor Waid received no support or funding from the government, he has applied to the government of New South Wales in the hope that it may fund some trials in Victoria. If the results of those trials are successful, they will benefit the whole of Australia.

The program is important and has far-reaching ramifications. Even if the results of the trials were successful, I do not suggest they would overcome the problems relating to chemical residues on broad acres throughout Victoria. However, the program may be effective in assisting the so-called "hot spots" which the government has hidden from the public, and which are a concern in some areas, particularly on the Bellarine Peninsula. If it had not been for the "hot spots" on Mr Earle's farm on the Bellarine Peninsula he would not be selling his farm and stud cattle.

I hope the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs will treat this matter seriously and have discussions with Professor John Waid so that Victoria can be in a position to benefit from the trials that may be conducted.

Mr WALLACE (Gippsland South)—The matter I raise for the attention of the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands relates to the mosquito plague along the Ninety Mile Beach and Loch Sport areas. I want an assurance from the Minister that officers from the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands will work closely with the Shire of Rosedale in baiting the area to break the cycle of the mosquito plague.

I am sure that the Minister and honourable members are aware of the health problems that may arise with mosquitoes. During the past few weeks many school children in the area have found it impossible to play outside in the schoolyards. The parents of those school children are so concerned that they are considering removing their children from the schools. That would be disastrous, especially when so many of the children are facing examinations.

The Minister may wish to discuss the matter with the Minister for Health, because it is a health problem. The cycle that occurs in producing mosquitoes can be broken within a few days, and mosquito numbers quickly fall once that cycle is broken.

The problem can be resolved without the use of spraying, but it requires the full cooperation of the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands and the Shire of Rosedale.

Mr NORRIS (Dandenong)—I address my remarks to the Minister for Planning and Environment, and I ask the Minister for Property and Services to convey those remarks to the Minister.

Honourable members will know that there are two offensive industry zones in the greater Melbourne Metropolitan area as defined by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. One zone is in Laverton and another zone is in my electorate in Dandenong South.

The term "offensive industry zone" does put the fear of God into the average resident. When the zone was established in the mid-1960s, Dandenong South was sparsely populated. In the interim there has been a massive growth in the area and houses are now within 1.5 kilometres of the zone.

My concern began when Mediwaste Australia Pty Ltd began its operations in that zone because it was rumoured that the incineration of medical waste was sending into the atmosphere AIDS, Hepatitis B, the plague—you name it. Hysteria hit the area. I

addressed a large gathering along with representatives of the Minister for Health and Environment Protection Authority, and we managed to hose down the fears of the population because that company is operating the most pollution-free premises in Australia.

This alarm alerted the residents, many of whom settled in the area after the zoning as an offensive industry zone. When the toxic waste treatment plant in the Melton area was not to be proceeded with, the story got around in my electorate that the plant was to be established in the offensive industry zone in Dandenong South.

In an endeavour to reassure the residents in the area, I ask that the Minister make a statement that the government has no intention of establishing a toxic waste facility in the offensive industry zone in Dandenong South. A fine body of people have established a pressure group called RAIP—Residents Against Industrial Pollution. They have genuine concerns, many of which I agree with, particularly those concerning odours. I ask the Minister to convey the message that the government has no intention of establishing a toxic waste facility in the offensive industry zone in Dandenong South.

Mrs WADE (Kew)—I direct to the attention of the Treasurer, who represents the Minister responsible for major projects in another place, the future use of the buildings and grounds of the Willsmere Hospital. I am particularly concerned about the failure of the government to consider any alternative public use for the magnificent site and historic buildings of Willsmere Hospital.

The government has rushed to put Willsmere on its fire sale list. The government's only concern is to raise money which, if the past is any guide, will be squandered on poor investments, loans, and trendy projects for its supporters. The Willsmere Hospital—formerly the Kew Lunatic Asylum—overlooks the Yarra Valley and is a familiar landmark to motorists using the Eastern Freeway. The building was recognised as unsuitable for psychiatric patients even before it opened in 1872.

In 1985, the Social Development Committee received a reference from the Governor in Council to consider and report to Parliament on whether Willsmere Hospital should continue to provide psychiatric services. Not surprisingly, the committee reported that it should not. As a result of that report Health Department Victoria has been progressively moving patients to other hospitals.

I have no criticism of the government for its decision to decommission Willsmere Hospital but there is considerable concern, particularly in my electorate, about the government's decision to put Willsmere on its fire sale list.

Willsmere Hospital has been classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and it is on the Historic Buildings Register, but, so far as the government is concerned, it is just another asset to be sold.

The National Trust citation on Willsmere Hospital states:

Distant views of the Kew Asylum, with its impressive towers emerging from a dark canopy of trees in a parkland setting, are well known to almost all Melburnians, and with the exception of Government House, there are no real parallels. The complex is to the native vegetation of Yarra Bend Park as Government House is to the exotic planting of the Domain and Botanic Gardens.

The SPEAKER—Order! I advise the honourable member for Kew that the debate on the motion for the adjournment of the sitting is an opportunity for raising a matter for the attention of a Minister. I ask the honourable member to come to the matter about which she wants action to be taken.

Mrs WADE—The government has placed Willsmere Hospital under the responsibility of the Victorian Government Major Projects Unit, which has instructions

to sell Willsmere and achieve the maximum return. It is currently proposed that much of the extensive parkland surrounding Willsmere will be subdivided for residential building.

Mrs HIRSH (Wantirna)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the honourable member for Kew has not asked a Minister to investigate any matter. She is giving an interesting account of the wonderful job that was done in decommissioning Willsmere Hospital, but that is not relevant to the debate on the motion for the adjournment of the sitting.

The SPEAKER—Order! I uphold the point of order. I ask the honourable member for Kew to come to the action she is asking the Minister to take.

Mrs WADE (Kew)—I am asking the Minister to take the proposal regarding Willsmere Hospital back to the Cabinet so that alternative public uses for the hospital can be considered. A number of suggestions have been made for alternative uses, one being that it could be used as a major tourist project. It has been suggested that an Australian version of Kew Gardens could be a possible use. That may be expensive, and I am not advocating that, but it is a use that could be considered.

Those and other questions relating to the future of Willsmere Hospital were put to the Minister responsible for major projects at a recent meeting in Kew. That led to the formation of the Yarra Park and Willsmere Coalition, which represents local residents and organisations. In answer to a question about alternative public uses, the Minister said that they were considered by the Social Development Committee. That, however, is plainly untrue. The committee's terms of reference did not include any reference to alternative uses of the site. At page 84 of its report, the committee specifically stated that it had not considered alternative uses.

I repeat my request that the Minister take the issue of the future of Willsmere Hospital back to the Cabinet so that alternative proposals can be considered in the interests of preserving Willsmere as a major public asset for the people of Victoria.

Mr BAKER (Sunshine)—I direct to the attention of the Attorney-General a grave and vexatious matter relating to media freedom. The matter is so grave and vexatious that I understand only this day the International Press Institute has issued a strong note of condemnation of recent developments as a consequence of court decisions at two levels in Australia. I refer to decisions that affect the way professional, working journalists will be able to go about doing their work. I refer in particular to the decisions of the Victorian Supreme Court and the High Court compelling journalists to declare their sources in certain circumstances.

Mr MACLELLAN (Berwick)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, in view of what the honourable member for Sunshine is raising and the way in which he is putting the matter to the House and to you, Sir, I believe he may need your assistance in avoiding criticising the courts because Standing Orders do not allow criticism of the courts except by direct motion.

Mr BAKER (Sunshine)—On the point of order, Mr Speaker, I intended to qualify my remarks. I intend no reflection upon the judiciary. In particular, I intend no reflection on Sir James Gobbo of the Supreme Court, who, I hasten to say, is a jurist of great distinction and intellectual eminence. This case is not a reflection upon His Honour because he is interpreting the law rather than making the law. As I understand it, this place is where the law is made in regard to this matter.

The SPEAKER—Order! On the point of order, I rule at this stage that there is no point of order, but I ask the honourable member to observe the conventions of the House.

Mr BAKER—Thank you, Mr Speaker. In particular, I refer to the consequences that will flow from the decision that will require or compel three *Herald* journalists to reveal their sources before a case comes to trial. The consequences of this decision for working, professional journalists—and I am sure the House is well aware that I was one for more than twenty years, hence my primary interest in this matter—are grave. No protections for journalists are built into our structure of government to handle this situation.

I, therefore, ask the Attorney-General to join me in discussions with the Australian Journalists Association in an attempt to find some resolution to this question.

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General)—The honourable member for Bendigo East raised a question for the attention of the Minister for Housing and Construction in another place concerning the presence of asbestos in Ministry of Housing and Construction dwellings. I understand that the Ministry has an asbestos management unit that is aware of the presence of asbestos materials, such as cement sheeting and so on, in Ministry units. I am sure there would be many thousands of such dwellings in Victoria, because many of them were built in the era when asbestos was a common building material. I shall refer the matter to the Minister for Housing and Construction, who will respond to the honourable member in due course.

The honourable member for Sunshine raised the question of the decisions of the Victorian Supreme Court and the High Court which have required journalists to reveal their sources of information in the preparation and presentation of their reports. The honourable member has asked whether I will meet the Australian Journalists Association with him; I am happy to say that I will do that, and we will then determine how the matter can be handled.

Ms KIRNER (Minister for Education)—The honourable member for Lowan asked whether I would consider the possibility of a school site, which was formerly gifted to the State by a Mrs Woods, being offered on a first offer basis to Mrs Woods's grandson, Mr Bill Woods, rather than being auctioned. I appreciate the honourable member's concern and the concern of the Woods family. I shall undertake urgently to seek the advice of my Ministry on this matter and provide a response to the honourable member before the due auction date of 17 November.

Mr KENNAN (Minister for Transport)—The honourable member for St Albans raised with me the matter of railway crossings. I am very much aware of the problems relating to traffic delays and congestion in Main Road East, St Albans, and also of the keen interest he has taken in this issue. The honourable member has seen me, as Minister for Transport, on a number of occasions about this matter as well as arranging and attending with me an inspection at the site.

This is a particularly difficult issue, and the survey and study to which he has referred has been undertaken as a result of his efforts. A report that will outline both the short-term and longer-term treatments will be completed by the end of next month. I shall make that report available to the honourable member, the relevant municipalities—the cities of Keilor and Sunshine—and other interested parties when it comes to hand.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs)—The honourable member for Ripon raised with me the issue of chemical residues in this State. From general reading, I have been aware for some time of the significance of this issue, but I must say that since having the responsibility for this portfolio it has certainly been brought to my attention both within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and also through a number of specific rural interests.

I concur with the honourable member about the significance of this matter, now and into the future for agriculture in Victoria. Professor Waid of La Trobe University

has undertaken a number of trials, and I should be pleased to discuss the issue with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and, if necessary, with Professor Waid. I shall reply to the honourable member as soon as possible.

Mrs SETCHES (Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands)—The honourable member for Gippsland South raised the matter of the plague of mosquitoes affecting people around Loch Sport and, in particular, how that plague of mosquitoes is affecting the children attending the school. The local school community was to decide whether the children should be withdrawn from school. As of today, that decision has not been made.

I contacted the Central Gippsland region of my department and was advised that seasonal conditions have been perfect for this particular plague. An early rainfall and a warm October has produced massive numbers of mosquitoes.

The department contacted the Shire of Rosedale and is working closely with the shire to ensure that the matter is addressed as quickly as possible. The region is assisting by providing more staff. Slashing has been undertaken in proximity to the school and the Minister for Education has received a letter from the school council on the subject. The matter is being pursued. The Minister for Health will be contacted on the health issues.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—The honourable member for Kew seems to be completely confused about the process with regard to Willsmere Hospital. She acknowledged that the Liberal Party neglected Willsmere Hospital for many years. In fact, it should have been decommissioned many years ago because it was a disgrace.

On the conservation issue of Willsmere Hospital, I assure the honourable member that a detailed consultative process has been put in place by the government, through the Minister responsible for major projects in another place, to ensure that the conservation area is protected and that the standing of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) classification of the building is left untouched.

The honourable member is confused about whether that can occur with private ownership as well as public ownership. I am amazed that the honourable member for Kew, who has a reputation in the Liberal Party for trying to cut expenditure, has outlined a public use, vaguely defined, for Willsmere Hospital just to spend money in her electorate. That is not the way in which good government should be managed.

It is clear that the government is not conducting a fire sale in its sale of assets policy. I have made it clear that the government sells assets that are under-utilised and are no longer required for social policy purposes. The money raised is used in the works and services sector of the Budget primarily for capital works expenditure. I assure the honourable member that the government is aware that Willsmere Hospital has great value from a conservation point of view. The National Trust classification is important and will be preserved regardless of the outcome, that is, whether the hospital ends up in the public sector or in the private sector. That is the overriding factor that needs to be taken into account, and the honourable member for Kew should have been aware of that.

Mr WALSH (Minister for Property and Services)—The honourable member for Dandenong directed a matter of concern about the publicly-owned waste treatment facility in the Dandenong offensive industry zone and what is being done to reduce the waste at the point of production. The Minister for Planning and Environment has given a commitment that there is no need for an additional major publicly-owned waste treatment facility to be located in the Dandenong offensive industry zone. The honourable member for Dandenong will be pleased to hear that. I shall inform the

Minister for Planning and Environment about the matter raised by the honourable member.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.25 p.m. until Tuesday, November 15.