

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION**

**25 February 2003
(extract from Book 1)**

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

JOHN LANDY, AC, MBE

The Lieutenant-Governor

Lady SOUTHEY, AM

The Ministry

Premier and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. S. P. Bracks, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Environment, Minister for Water and Minister for Victorian Communities	The Hon. J. W. Thwaites, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Consumer Affairs	The Hon. J. Lenders, MLC
Minister for Education Services and Minister for Employment and Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. M. Allan, MP
Minister for Transport and Minister for Major Projects	The Hon. P. Batchelor, MP
Minister for Local Government and Minister for Housing	The Hon. C. C. Broad, MLC
Treasurer, Minister for Innovation and Minister for State and Regional Development	The Hon. J. M. Brumby, MP
Minister for Agriculture	The Hon. R. G. Cameron, MP
Minister for Planning, Minister for the Arts and Minister for Women's Affairs	The Hon. M. E. Delahunty, MP
Minister for Community Services	The Hon. S. M. Garbutt, MP
Minister for Police and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. A. Haermeyer, MP
Minister for Manufacturing and Export and Minister for Financial Services Industry	The Hon. T. J. Holding, MP
Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Workcover	The Hon. R. J. Hulls, MP
Minister for Aged Care and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs	The Hon. Gavin Jennings, MLC
Minister for Education and Training	The Hon. L. J. Kosky, MP
Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Commonwealth Games	The Hon. J. M. Madden, MLC
Minister for Gaming, Minister for Racing, Minister for Tourism and Minister assisting the Premier on Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. J. Pandazopoulos, MP
Minister for Health	The Hon. B. J. Pike, MP
Minister for Energy Industries and Minister for Resources	The Hon. T. C. Theophanous, MLC
Minister for Small Business and Minister for Information and Communication Technology	The Hon. M. R. Thomson, MLC
Cabinet Secretary	Mr R. W. Wynne, MP

Legislative Council Committees

Privileges Committee — The Honourables W. R. Baxter, Andrew Brideson, H. E. Buckingham and Bill Forwood, and Mr Gavin Jennings, Ms Mikakos and Mr Viney.

Standing Orders Committee — The President, Ms Argondizzo, the Honourables B. W. Bishop and Andrea Coote, Mr Lenders, Ms Romanes and the Hon. E. G. Stoney.

Joint Committees

Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee — (*Council*): The Honourables C. D. Hirsh and S. M. Nguyen.
(*Assembly*): Mr Cooper, Ms Marshall, Mr Maxfield, Dr Sykes and Mr Wells.

Economic Development Committee — (*Council*): The Honourables B. N. Atkinson and R. H. Bowden, and Mr Pullen. (*Assembly*): Mr Delahunty, Mr Jenkins, Ms Morand and Mr Robinson.

Education and Training Committee — (*Council*): The Honourables H. E. Buckingham and P. R. Hall.
(*Assembly*): Ms Eckstein, Mr Herbert, Mr Kotsiras, Ms Munt and Mr Perton.

Environment and Natural Resources Committee — (*Council*): The Honourables Andrea Coote, D. K. Drum, J. G. Hilton and W. A. Lovell. (*Assembly*): Ms Duncan, Ms Lindell and Mr Seitz.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Council*): The Hon. D. McL. Davis and Mr Smith.
(*Assembly*): Ms McTaggart, Ms Neville, Mrs Powell, Mrs Shardey and Mr Wilson.

House Committee — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), the Honourables B. N. Atkinson and Andrew Brideson, Ms Hadden and the Honourables J. M. McQuilten and S. M. Nguyen. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr Cooper, Mr Leighton, Mr Lockwood, Mr Maughan, Mr Savage and Mr Smith.

Law Reform Committee — (*Council*): The Honourables Andrew Brideson and R. Dalla-Riva, and Ms Hadden.
(*Assembly*): Ms Beard, Mr Hudson, Mr Lupton and Mr Maughan.

Library Committee — (*Council*): The President, Ms Argondizzo and the Honourables C. A. Strong, R. Dalla-Riva and Kaye Darveniza. (*Assembly*): The Speaker, Mr Carli, Mrs Powell, Mr Seitz and Mr Thompson.

Outer Suburban/Interface Services and Development Committee — (*Council*): Mr Scheffer and Mr Somyurek.
(*Assembly*): Mr Baillieu, Ms Buchanan, Mr Dixon, Mr Nardella and Mr Smith.

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee — (*Council*): The Honourables W. R. Baxter, Bill Forwood and G. K. Rich-Phillips, and Ms Romanes. (*Assembly*): Ms Campbell, Mr Clark, Mr Donnellan, Ms Green and Mr Merlino.

Road Safety Committee — (*Council*): The Honourables B. W. Bishop, J. H. Eren and E. G. Stoney.
(*Assembly*): Mr Harkness, Mr Langdon, Mr Mulder and Mr Trezise.

Rural and Regional Services and Development Committee — (*Council*): The Honourables J. M. McQuilten and R. G. Mitchell. (*Assembly*): Mr Crutchfield, Mr Hardman, Mr Ingram, Dr Napthine and Mr Walsh.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Council*): Ms Argondizzo and the Hon. A. P. Olexander.
(*Assembly*): Ms D'Ambrosio, Mr Jasper, Mr Leighton, Mr Lockwood, Mr McIntosh, Mr Perera and Mr Thompson.

Heads of Parliamentary Departments

Assembly — Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr R. W. Purdey

Council — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr W. R. Tunnecliffe

Hansard — Chief Reporter: Ms C. J. Williams

Library — Librarian: Ms G. Dunston

Joint Services — Director, Corporate Services: Mr S. N. Aird

Director, Infrastructure Services: Mr G. C. Spurr

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

President: The Hon. M. M. GOULD

Deputy President and Chair of Committees: Ms GLENYYS ROMANES

Temporary Chairs of Committees: The Honourables B. W. Bishop, R. H. Bowden , Andrew Brideson, H. E. Buckingham,
Ms D. G. Hadden, the Honourable J. G. Hilton, Mr R. F. Smith and the Honourable C. A. Strong

Leader of the Government:
Mr J. LENDERS

Deputy Leader of the Government:
Mr GAVIN JENNINGS

Leader of the Opposition:
The Hon. P. R. DAVIS

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:
The Hon. ANDREA COOTE

Leader of the National Party:
The Hon. P. R. HALL

Deputy Leader of the National Party:
The Hon. D. K. DRUM

Member	Province	Party	Member	Province	Party
Argondizzo, Ms Lidia	Templestowe	ALP	Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	Melbourne	ALP
Atkinson, Hon. Bruce Norman	Koonung	LP	Koch, Hon. David	Western	LP
Baxter, Hon. William Robert	North Eastern	NP	Lenders, Mr John	Waverley	ALP
Bishop, Hon. Barry Wilfred	North Western	NP	Lovell, Hon. Wendy Ann	North Eastern	LP
Bowden, Hon. Ronald Henry	South Eastern	LP	McQuilten, Hon. John Martin	Ballarat	ALP
Brideson, Hon. Andrew Ronald	Waverley	LP	Madden, Hon. Justin Mark	Doutta Galla	ALP
Broad, Ms Candy Celeste	Melbourne North	ALP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Jika Jika	ALP
Buckingham, Hon. Helen Elizabeth	Koonung	ALP	Mitchell, Hon. Robert George	Central Highlands	ALP
Carbines, Mrs Elaine Cafferty	Geelong	ALP	Nguyen, Hon. Sang Minh	Melbourne West	ALP
Coote, Hon. Andrea	Monash	LP	Olexander, Hon. Andrew Phillip	Silvan	LP
Dalla-Riva, Hon. Richard	East Yarra	LP	Pullen, Mr Noel Francis	Higinbotham	ALP
Darveniza, Hon. Kaye	Melbourne West	ALP	Rich-Phillips, Hon. Gordon Kenneth	Eumemmerring	LP
Davis, Hon. David McLean	East Yarra	LP	Romanes, Ms Glenyys Dorothy	Melbourne	ALP
Davis, Hon. Philip Rivers	Gippsland	LP	Scheffer, Mr Johan Emiel	Monash	ALP
Drum, Hon. Damian Kevin	North Western	NP	Smith, Mr Robert Frederick	Chelsea	ALP
Eren, Hon. John Hamdi	Geelong	ALP	Somyurek, Mr Adem	Eumemmerring	ALP
Forwood, Hon. Bill	Templestowe	LP	Stoney, Hon. Eadley Graeme	Central Highlands	LP
Gould, Hon. Monica Mary	Doutta Galla	ALP	Strong, Hon. Christopher Arthur	Higinbotham	LP
Hadden, Ms Dianne Gladys	Ballarat	ALP	Theophanous, Hon. Theo Charles	Jika Jika	ALP
Hall, Hon. Peter Ronald	Gippsland	NP	Thomson, Hon. Marsha Rose	Melbourne North	ALP
Hilton, Hon. John Geoffrey	Western Port	ALP	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw	Chelsea	ALP
Hirsh, Hon. Carolyn Dorothy	Silvan	ALP	Vogels, Hon. John Adrian	Western	LP

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Tuesday, 25 February 2003

**OPENING OF PARLIAMENT BY
COMMISSION**

Fifty-fifth Victorian Parliament opened by commission.

Senior Commissioner appointed by the Governor of the state of Victoria for this purpose, the Honourable Mr John Harber Phillips, Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Victoria.

Proceedings commenced 11.02 a.m.

PROCLAMATION

Following proclamation read by Clerk:

I, John Landy, AC, MBE, Governor of the state of Victoria, acting under section 8 and section 20 of the Constitution Act 1975 and all other powers vested in me, fix 25 February 2003 at 11.00 a.m. as the time for the commencement and holding of the first session of the fifty-fifth Parliament of Victoria for the dispatch of business, at the Parliament Houses, Melbourne. The honourable the members of the Legislative Council and the members of the Legislative Assembly are required to attend at that time and place.

Given under my hand and the seal of the state of Victoria, at Melbourne, on
4 February 2003.
John Landy, Governor.

By His Excellency's Command,
S. Bracks, Premier.

Commissioners entered chamber and were conducted to chairs by Usher of Black Rod.

Senior Commissioner directed that attendance of members of Legislative Assembly be requested.

Members of Legislative Assembly appeared at bar.

The SENIOR COMMISSIONER (Justice J. H. Phillips) — Honourable members of the Legislative Council and members of the Legislative Assembly: the Governor, not thinking fit to be present in person, has been pleased to cause a commission to issue under the seal of the state constituting us his commissioners to do in his name all that is necessary to be performed in this Parliament. This will more fully appear from the commission, which will now be read by the Clerk.

Commission authorising commissioners to open Parliament read by Clerk.

The SENIOR COMMISSIONER — Honourable members of the Legislative Council and members of

the Legislative Assembly: I have it in command from the Governor to let you know that later this day the Governor will declare to you in person in this place the reasons for calling this Parliament together; and as it is necessary before you proceed to the dispatch of business that a President of the Legislative Council and a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly be chosen, the Governor requests that you, in your respective chambers, proceed to the choice of proper persons to be such President and Speaker.

Members of the Legislative Assembly retired from chamber.

Commissioner escorted from chamber by Usher of Black Rod.

SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS

Senior Commissioner announced receipt of commission from the Governor to administer oath or affirmation.

Commission read by Clerk.

Clerk announced receipt of return of writ issued by the Governor for election of members to serve for provinces set out below and endorsed to show election of following members:

Province	Member
Ballarat	McQuilten, Hon. John Martin
Central Highlands	Mitchell, Hon. Robert George
Chelsea	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw
Doutta Galla	Gould, Hon. Monica Mary
East Yarra	Davis, Hon. David McLean
Eumemmerring	Somyurek, Mr Adem
Geelong	Eren, Hon. John Hamdi
Gippsland	Hall, Hon. Peter Ronald
Higinbotham	Pullen, Mr Noel Francis
Jika Jika	Theophanous, Hon. Theo Charles
Koonung	Buckingham, Hon. Helen Elizabeth
Melbourne	Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne
Melbourne North	Broad, Ms Candy Celeste
Melbourne West	Nguyen, Hon. Sang Minh
Monash	Scheffer, Mr Johan Emiel
North Eastern	Lovell, Hon. Wendy Ann
North Western	Drum, Hon. Damian Kevin
Silvan	Hirsh, Hon. Carolyn Dorothy
Templestowe	Argondizzo, Hon. Lidia Serafina
Waverley	Lenders, Mr John
Western	Vogels, Hon. John Adrian
Western Port	Hilton, Hon. John Geoffrey

RESIGNATION OF MEMBERS

The CLERK — I have also to announce that on 5 November 2002 Mr President received the following communication from the Governor:

Dear Mr President,

I enclose letters of resignation received by me this day from the Hon. M. A. Birrell, MLC, and the Hon. R. M. Hallam, MLC, resigning their seats of East Yarra and Western respectively in the Legislative Council.

Yours sincerely,
John Landy
Governor

Those letters, both addressed to the Governor, read:

Dear Governor,

I hereby formally tender my resignation as the member for East Yarra Province in the Legislative Council, effective forthwith.

It has been a great pleasure and honour to have represented East Yarra Province since 1983.

I have acted promptly at the same time as the Premier's announcement, to facilitate the holding of a by-election for my seat in conjunction with the general election.

Yours sincerely,
Mark Birrell, MLC

Dear Governor,

I write to tender my resignation as the member for Western Province effective forthwith.

I have acted promptly on the Premier's announcement of the general election date to ensure that a by-election for my seat can be conducted concurrently with the general election, thus avoiding the cost of a separate by-election.

I tender this resignation with mixed emotions as I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as a representative of the electors of western Victoria. Indeed, I regard myself to be extremely fortunate to have been granted the trust which allowed me to follow a chosen career. However, all good things must come to an end and I know that it is time to pass on the baton.

With my very best wishes.

Yours faithfully,
Roger M. Hallam, MLC
Member for Western Province

Clerk announced receipt of return of writs issued by Mr President on 5 November 2002 for the East Yarra and Western provinces set out below:

Province	Member
East Yarra	Dalla-Riva, Hon. Richard
Western	Koch, Hon. David

Recently elected members took and subscribed either oath or affirmation of allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Senior Commissioner withdrew.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Mr LENDERS (Minister for Finance) — I propose that the Honourable Monica Mary Gould take the chair of the Council as President, and I move:

That the Honourable Monica Mary Gould do take the chair of the Council as President.

Mr JENNINGS (Minister for Aged Care) — I second the motion.

Motion agreed to.

Clerk declared Honourable Monica Mary Gould duly elected as President.

Hon. M. M. Gould conducted to chair by proposer and seconder.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. M. M. Gould) — Before taking the chair I desire to express my thanks to honourable members and my acknowledgment of the honour which the house has conferred upon me. I appreciate the confidence which honourable members have placed in me.

The President took the chair and read the prayer.

Mr LENDERS (Minister for Finance) — President, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on your elevation to the position of President of the Legislative Council. It is a great honour for me in a number of ways to congratulate you. Firstly, on the attributes you will bring to the Chair, for those people who have known you for a number of years, which includes a majority of the members of the chamber, they are a sense of impartiality, warmth, and an understanding of who is around you and what makes people tick. I also think you will bring to the Chair attention to detail, and that is very important. Finally, you will bring to the Chair for the first time in 150 years of this chamber and Parliament a female member in the position, representing the 51 per cent of the population who have not been represented before.

For all of those reasons I welcome your appointment and congratulate you on it.

Hon. PHILIP DAVIS (Gippsland) — Madam President, I am delighted to join in offering you my congratulations. While the robustness of parliamentary

life is such that, generally speaking, there is a level of excitement around the Parliament that does not allow us to enjoy the opportunity of congratulating each other on our achievements, the reality is that the position of President is a very high office. It is a significant position in the democratic traditions of the government of Victoria. Parliament is a place where the people of Victoria expect us to behave in a way which reflects the dignity of the decision-making process, and I am sure that you will use your best endeavours to ensure that this chamber behaves with such dignity.

I congratulate you on a personal level because, notwithstanding the fact that you have had a very robust political career to date in this place as Leader of the Opposition, as Leader of the Government and as the holder of ministerial office for three years, I am sure you will take great satisfaction from the role of President, where you become an independent and impartial umpire. We on this side of the house look forward to that impartiality.

On behalf of the opposition I wish you all the very best in your term as President of the Legislative Council.

Hon. P. R. HALL (Gippsland) — President, on behalf of the National Party I, too, congratulate you on your appointment to the very important position of President of this chamber. It goes without saying that the position holds a lot of responsibility, and I am sure that given your experience in the chamber over some years now you will have fully understood those responsibilities and will carry them out well.

The National Party offers you its full cooperation in terms of the administration of this house. As has been said, it is not always easy, but you can be sure we will cooperate in a fair and equitable way in the running of the house and will assist you in chairing the chamber.

Mr JENNINGS (Minister for Aged Care) — President, I take the opportunity to express what a privilege it was for me to second the motion that saw you installed in the Chair. I was a member of the Privileges Committee of the 54th Parliament, but I did not have many privileges in that position because the Privileges Committee never met during the life of the 54th Parliament. Therefore this is indeed an opportunity for me to acknowledge the first and last aspects of your incumbency in the Chair.

The first is that, as was indicated by the Leader of the Government, you are the first woman in the history of the Victorian Parliament to assume the President's role. Indeed, you are likely to be one of the last two members for Doutta Galla Province. I do not want to

anticipate what will happen in Parliament shortly, but with significant parliamentary reform I suggest that the seat of Doutta Galla is unlikely to exist following the next election. You have admirably represented, for nearly 10 years, your constituents as a member for Doutta Galla in this place. You have significant experience of the Parliament itself: you have been a member of the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee, the Law Reform Committee and the Privileges Committee.

As has been indicated, you have been both Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Government in this chamber and had extensive experience as a minister within the last administration.

I would like to reflect on a couple of your attributes that the Leader of the Government has already mentioned. I understand your passion and commitment as a representative of the Labor movement in your roles both as a union official and as a member of the Labor Party in the Victorian Parliament. I recognise the resolve in and commitment that you have demonstrated to the issues that drove you to political life in the first instance. They were to ensure a better working life and a better quality of life for people in Victoria and our nation. You played a significant role in the development of legislation that will finally see the establishment, hopefully within the life of this Parliament, of fair employment conditions, the recognition of the rights of outworkers and fairer child employment conditions. I will be pleased to be a member of this chamber when and if that legislation is passed during this term, a piece of legislation that was unfortunately denied passage in the 54th Parliament. I know you are committed to these causes, and as the leader has indicated, to fairness.

There is one key attribute that will be demonstrated above all others in your role as President. To really know how this Parliament works you have to sit in a minority position. Whether you are in government or opposition you really get to know well how this chamber works by being a member of a minority. You have to negotiate, you have to understand and you have to adopt a method of having productive working relationships to make this place work. If the government is successful in implementing reform of the constitution, it is very unlikely that there will ever be a majority government in this place again after the 55th Parliament. The method we adopt during the course of this Parliament should reflect the fact that we respect one another, and that whether we have a government that has a clear majority, as is the case today, or whether it is a minority government, we need

to be able to work cooperatively in the interests of the Parliament and the people of Victoria.

I believe that because of your well-grounded understanding of this place after sitting in it for the best part of 10 years as part of a minority, you understand how that dynamic could and should work. I look forward to your exercising the obligations of President in a way that reflects your fundamental commitment to fairness.

Hon. ANDREA COOTE (Monash) — President, I should like to add my personal congratulations to you on your appointment. I feel I can say on behalf of 51 per cent of the population of Victoria that as a woman it is very pleasing to see a woman in this very traditional and historical position. I add my congratulations to what has been said today.

As the very first woman President in this place you have an enormous responsibility. You have a responsibility to make certain that a democratic process is followed and that the fairness Mr Jennings has spoken about is relevant to this chamber. I look forward to working with you, and can say, I think, on behalf of the women of Victoria that it is a great step forward. Congratulations!

The PRESIDENT — I thank all honourable members and the leaders of the parties for their congratulations on my becoming President. It is a great honour for me. I have always in the past, as the Deputy Leader of the Government indicated, worked with the parties, and I expect that that cooperative relationship will continue. A lot depends on the leaders. I am sure they will work things out and advise the President of the outcome of those discussions.

I look forward to the next four years in my role as President. I hope it will change the ambience of the chamber. I am sure that my understanding of how this chamber works and my commitment to fairness will show in my rulings.

I remind honourable members that the Governor will be pleased to receive me in the north library at 2.00 p.m. this afternoon. I ask honourable members to meet me in the central library a few minutes before that time in order to accompany me.

Sitting suspended 11.38 a.m. until 2.30 p.m.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Usher of the Black Rod announced approach of the Governor.

The Governor entered chamber accompanied by suite.

Legislative Assembly members, with Speaker, attended in response to the Governor's summons.

The Governor addressed following speech to both houses of Parliament:

Honourable President and honourable members of the Legislative Council:

Honourable Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly:

The 30 November election resulted in the return of the Australian Labor Party with a substantial majority in both houses of Parliament. The leader of the Australian Labor Party, Mr Steve Bracks, was offered and given the commission to govern.

I have called you together today for the first session of the 55th Parliament to outline the policy directions for the second term of the government and the legislation the government will bring before this Parliament.

Before doing so, I would like to reflect on the way the Victorian community has drawn together in response to the tragedies and crises of the past six months.

In the terrible events in Bali — and in the bushfires here at home — we have seen Victorians at their very best.

We have seen acts of true courage and heroism.

We have seen acts of compassion and selflessness.

We have seen people prepared to set aside their own concerns and step forward to help others.

I thank those who played such an important part in responding to the tragedy in Bali: the police, forensic experts, coronial officers, medical officers, doctors, nurses, counsellors and countless others.

I thank the men and women of our firefighting and emergency services, a great many of whom are volunteers and who have turned out day after day, week after week, to save lives, property and entire communities.

I also thank the many Victorians who contributed in other ways to the firefighting effort: from those who provided food and medical assistance to our firefighters to those who rescued and cared for injured wildlife.

It has been an extraordinary community effort, and one of which Victorians can be very proud.

The government — indeed the whole Parliament and the Victorian community — is committed to assisting in the recovery of those parts of the state that have been damaged socially, economically and environmentally by the bushfires and the current drought.

To begin this recovery, the government has established a ministerial task force to support our many bushfire-affected communities and the businesses that sustain them.

And just last week, the government launched the 2003 Victorian Bushfire Recovery Appeal Fund for the collection and distribution of aid for bushfire relief.

Our firefighters will receive practical support through new legislation, giving them protection from civil litigation, and protection from discrimination in employment.

And a new offence will be created with a maximum penalty of 15 years for persons who intentionally or recklessly cause a bushfire.

Over the next four years the government will continue to invest in communities across Victoria — improving the delivery of government services to all Victorians, and continuing to develop the whole of the state.

The government will deliver on its promises to the people of Victoria, including important initiatives in water, the environment, families and children, health, education and community safety.

It will give particular attention to the needs of Victoria's regions and Melbourne's rapidly growing outer suburbs.

These commitments will be underpinned by sound financial management, ensuring that Victoria's financial position remains strong and secure.

The government will continue to listen to the views of all Victorians, and give Victorians every opportunity to have their say in government decisions and policies.

The government fully appreciates the honour and privilege of being given a strong mandate for its policies by the people of Victoria.

The government now intends to meet its commitments to the people of Victoria — and implement that policy agenda.

Over the next four years, the government's priorities will be to:

- improve community safety;

- restore our environment and secure Victoria's future water needs;

- strengthen the Victorian economy and provide good financial management;

- improve our services and community facilities; and

- complete the task of restoring democracy to Victoria by reforming the Parliament, in particular the Legislative Council.

Democracy and reform of the Legislative Council

The government's first action in the first sitting of the new Parliament will be to reintroduce legislation to bring about long-promised parliamentary reforms.

The government's new Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Bill 2003 — will deliver a parliamentary system that is fairer, more accountable and more representative of the views of Victorians.

The bill will implement the recommendations of the Constitution Commission to introduce fixed four-year terms, improve the relationship between Victoria's two houses of Parliament and reform the upper house to make it a more effective house of review and more representative of the diversity of views within the Victorian community.

This legislation represents the most significant reform of Victoria's parliamentary system since it was established in 1856.

The reforms will mean that in future, elections will be held on a fixed date every four years — the last Saturday in November.

Under this legislation the next election will be held on 25 November 2006 — the 150th anniversary of the first meeting of the Victorian Parliament.

At that election, the size of the Legislative Council will be reduced to 40 members, elected by proportional representation from 8 regions with 5 members in each region.

The government has chosen this model because it delivers the highest possible level of representation for country Victoria while still being consistent with the democratic principle of one vote, one value.

The bill also explicitly removes the Legislative Council's power to block supply and provides for a deadlock process to resolve disputes between the houses.

These changes will make the Legislative Council more democratic, more representative of the Victorian community and a much more effective and active house of review.

The bill also gives Victorians a say in their constitution for the first time, by introducing a requirement for a referendum on changes to core provisions in the constitution.

The government will also be moving revised sessional orders to modernise the working of Parliament and adopt practices more in line with the federal Parliament.

These changes will make the Parliament more productive and allow more debate on issues of substance.

In other reforms, the government will legislate to strengthen local government and establish a common election day for all municipalities across Victoria.

Terrorism and community safety

The surge in terrorism around the world, and the devastating explosions in Bali, have heightened our sense of vulnerability.

The government has responded by providing additional resources to Victoria's police and emergency services — and it will now legislate to give law enforcement agencies the powers they need to protect the public — and to implement Victoria's commitment to an effective national framework to combat terrorism.

The government is equally committed to combating major crime, and to improving the safety of the Victorian community as a whole.

Victoria has taken a lead role in negotiations to establish the new Australian Crime Commission, and the government will introduce legislation in this Parliament to enable the confiscation of assets, and other measures targeting major crime.

Gun control is another matter of great community concern, particularly in the wake of the senseless shootings at Monash University last year.

The government will introduce legislation that implements the Council of Australian Government Firearms Trafficking Agreement.

This will include a ban on certain handguns, further restrictions on access to guns and a new buyback program to reduce the number of guns in the community.

The government will pursue a range of other issues requiring law reform through the Parliament and the Law Reform Commission.

Sentencing will be reformed through the establishment of judicial sentencing guidelines, and the government will build two major new prisons and complete its reform of the Victorian corrections system.

The government will further step up the fight against crime by recruiting an additional 600 police and implementing smarter crime fighting approaches, using state of the art forensic techniques.

In addition, the government will build 68 new police stations and develop a new legislative framework for the police force.

The environment and securing Victoria's future water needs

While community safety is the most immediate issue facing the government, the most important long-term challenge for Victoria is preserving a healthy environment and ensuring a secure future water supply.

Victoria must take action now to save our environment from the dangers of salinity, land clearing and climate change.

The government is strongly committed to promoting the sustainable use of Victoria's resources, and to working with the Victorian community to protect our environment and natural assets.

The government has established a new Department of Sustainability and Environment to strengthen and coordinate its focus on these objectives.

In this parliamentary term, the government will legislate to establish the Victorian Water Trust.

The trust will provide long-term funding for major projects aimed at reducing the wastage of water and increasing the environmental flows in our major rivers.

The trust will contribute to projects which include converting open irrigation channels into pipelines, reducing causes of irrigation wastage, promoting water conservation and the use of recycled water and restoring the health of Victoria's rivers.

The government will also introduce legislation to enshrine in the Victorian constitution the public ownership of water authorities, dams and major pipe works.

The government will establish Vicforests as an independent body to manage Victoria's public forests in a sustainable way that balances economic, environmental and social goals.

The Otway Ranges are one of Victoria's most important and unique environments.

Recognising the beauty and environmental value of the Otways, the government will reduce wood chipping and logging in the Otways, leading to a total end to logging and wood chipping in native forests in the Otways by 2008.

A single new Otways National Park will be created, extending from Anglesea to Cape Otway. The park will protect key parts of the Otways, including some of Victoria's most significant rainforest areas.

Legislation will be introduced to establish a Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability, who will report on the state of the environment in Victoria and monitor the effectiveness of environmental programs.

The government will tackle the issue of climate change by joining with other state leaders to convene a national Climate Change Leaders Forum to develop a national approach.

The government will promote sustainability across the board through a wide-ranging program, including the Victorian greenhouse strategy, the development of wind power, better urban design, greater use of public transport and improved waste minimisation.

These significant initiatives demonstrate the government's determination to lead the way in managing Victoria's natural resources wisely and responsibly and laying down the groundwork for a long-term, sustainable future for Victoria.

Economic development

One of the government's key priorities is the improved delivery of community services.

The government recognises this is only possible in a climate of economic growth and prudent financial management.

Sound financial management, continuing budget surpluses and the maintenance of Victoria's AAA rating will remain at the centre of the government's policy objectives — and the government will build on these strong economic fundamentals to continue to drive growth across the state.

The government views innovation as one of the main drivers of economic growth and has invested heavily in innovation, education, science and technology since coming to office.

The government will continue this investment.

It will encourage new regional innovation clusters and build on existing strengths in the key industry sectors, of information and communication technology, design, biotechnology, health, food and agriculture.

Key innovation projects will include the development of the Australian National Synchrotron at Monash and the development of the Bio21 precinct, adjacent to Melbourne University.

Other major projects to be undertaken in the next four years include:

- the new Southern Cross interchange at Spencer Street and the fast rail projects to regional Victoria;

- a number of major road projects including the beginning of construction of the Mitcham to Frankston freeway;

- redevelopment of the Melbourne showgrounds as a year-round event centre;

- further stages of development at Docklands and commencement of developments at the 13 designated transit cities; and

- the Commonwealth Games athletes village and sporting venues associated with the games.

Victorian small business will be supported to grow and thrive in a fair marketplace through the establishment of a Small Business Commissioner.

The government will introduce a range of legislative measures designed to achieve fairness and safety at work balanced with the need to create jobs and secure Victoria's economic future.

This will include legislation to apply the federal awards safety net to all vulnerable Victorian workers, legislation to protect outworkers and payroll tax exemptions for paid maternity and adoption leave.

Health

The government believes a quality, public health care system is a fundamental building block of any decent society.

Over the next four years, the government will continue to rebuild Victoria's hospital system and work to improve the overall health of Victorians through disease prevention and early intervention initiatives.

The government's key objectives are to:

treat 35 000 more hospital patients each year and employ 900 extra nurses and health workers;

treat more elective surgery waiting list patients, by building a dedicated 100-bed elective surgery centre at the Alfred hospital, expand elective surgery capacity at Moorabbin hospital and increase support for rural patients;

build three new super clinics in outer metropolitan Melbourne;

build three new rehabilitation facilities for older people;

complete major hospital developments currently under way; and

commence the expansion or redevelopment of 10 more hospitals across the state.

In addition, the government will meet its commitment to improve maternal and child health care services, expand dental health and mental health services, and increase the range of health and support services for older Victorians.

Education

The government believes that every Victorian should have access to quality education irrespective of where they live.

Over the next four years, the government will make schools more accountable to parents and the community. More information will be available on literacy, numeracy and student performance in years 11 and 12 and the destination of students post-year 12.

Fifteen new schools will be funded, and a major program implemented to replace portables.

Funding will be provided to develop facilities and enable schools to specialise in particular areas. Extra teachers will also be provided to develop these specialisations.

The government will provide extra funding for non-government schools in need, and will work with non-government schools to assist them provide quality education.

New funding for TAFE will be used to develop and deliver more flexible and innovative vocational education and training programs.

The government recognises that one of the greatest challenges facing our community is to engage those young people who do not currently complete year 12 or its equivalent.

The government will continue to support programs designed to improve education and training pathways for young people — and will implement a new On Track program, which will follow up all young Victorians six months after they leave school.

Strong regions

The government will continue to improve the delivery of services and infrastructure to country Victoria to help meet the government's goal of growing Victoria's regions.

The government has renewed the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund and established Regional Development Victoria to generate jobs and economic development in our regions.

Many regional and rural communities will benefit from the extension of natural gas, and local community projects will assist small towns become more self-reliant and attract jobs.

The restoration of regional services will continue, with the government establishing two new Rural Learning campuses and building better health facilities in regional areas.

Transport links will be modernised with the completion of major road projects and regional fast rail lines that will link regional communities to Melbourne — and regional products to global markets.

Funding has been provided to re-open four country rail passenger lines between Melbourne and Mildura, Leongatha, Bairnsdale and Ararat, and for the upgrading of the Warrnambool rail line.

The government has adopted a new population target for regional Victoria, and will provide incentives to attract more skilled and semiskilled migrants into regional centres.

The government will promote sustainable agriculture, and assist the rural sector to recover from the current drought, now entering its sixth year.

Resources for biosecurity will be increased to protect animal herds and crops from imported disease.

Measures will be taken to expand exports and boost the contribution of Victoria's agricultural research institutes to the development of the state's food industry and the government's initiatives in innovation.

Stronger outer suburbs

Melbourne is recognised as the world's most livable city — and the government wants to keep it that way.

The government has released a comprehensive plan, Melbourne 2030, for a more compact and sustainable city and will shortly consider public comment on the details of how to implement this plan.

The government will work with local communities to promote a more sustainable structure for Melbourne, through investment in designated major activity centres.

Green wedge protection legislation will be introduced to protect Melbourne's suburbs from unrestrained growth.

The government is also committed to providing first-class services for Melbourne's growing suburbs, including new schools, hospitals, police stations and other community facilities to keep up with growing demand.

Public transport will be expanded, and infrastructure will keep pace with development.

As part of its continuing commitment to new growth suburbs, the government is upgrading roads through a \$100 million outer metropolitan road fund.

Other major infrastructure projects like the Mitcham–Frankston freeway will link Melbourne's growth corridors, creating new job and investment opportunities.

Many Victorian families are now choosing to live in these growth areas and they need more support and facilities, particularly to assist them care for children.

The government will support local communities to better coordinate services for children, such as maternal and child health centres, immunisation services, child care and kindergartens.

Up to 30 new children's centres will demonstrate how services can work together across a whole region to provide more accessible and responsive support for families and children at critical times in their lives.

Victorian communities

The government has established a new Department for Victorian Communities to advance another of its key objectives — building stronger communities and reducing disadvantage in the community.

The government believes that communities face many complex problems that require different levels of government and community organisations to work together to find solutions.

The government believes this partnership approach will enable it to achieve a number of important objectives, including:

- improved outcomes in health, education and justice for Aboriginal Victorians;

- more accessible services for people with a disability;

- improved services for problem gamblers; and

- increased assistance for newly arrived migrants and the promotion of the value to Victoria of a vibrant multicultural community.

Promoting equal opportunity for women continues to be a major goal for the government.

In this term, the government will implement a work/family balance strategy and introduce \$1000 return-to-work grants for parents who have been out of the work force looking after children.

The government will encourage a vibrant arts sector.

It will support Victoria's major arts institutions — as well as encouraging grassroots community arts programs.

New jobs will be generated in our growing film industry, including the establishment of a new film studio at Docklands.

The government believes that sport and cultural pursuits also play a vital role in promoting a greater sense of community cohesion and pride.

The Department for Victorian Communities will aim to increase participation in sport, especially at the grassroots level.

In three years time, Melbourne will host the 2006 Commonwealth Games — the largest sporting and community event in our state's history.

The government will ensure the Melbourne 2006 games leave a positive legacy for Victoria in the form of new community infrastructure, and a renewed interest in the positive influence of sport on health and general wellbeing.

The Commonwealth Games will be an opportunity for Victoria to showcase itself to the world and to demonstrate that we are putting into practice the games themes of multiculturalism, environmental sustainability and friendship.

Conclusion

Victoria has a great deal to do to be ready for the games — but we also have a great deal to do to secure our future beyond 2006 and into the decades ahead.

Over the next four years, the legislation, budgets and issues that come before this Parliament will shape the way Victoria develops, and lay the framework for a sustainable and prosperous future.

In a time of so much uncertainty abroad, Victorians are fortunate to be able to look forward to a period of stable government, and to reforms that will make our parliamentary democracy even stronger and fairer.

In a time when many people around the world struggle to gain access to the most basic of human requirements, Victorians can look forward to further improvements in vital government services such as education and health care.

Recent events remind us not to be complacent about these things and to continue to work together to ensure Victoria continues to be a safe, supportive and healthy place in which to live, work and raise a family.

The government’s plans over the next four years are directed towards that goal, and to creating a strong, secure and sustainable future for Victoria.

The government will now work towards implementation of these plans, ever mindful of the responsibility to provide good government in the interests of all Victorians.

Condolences for MPs who have recently passed away

Finally, it is with deep regret that I advise Parliament of the deaths of three former members of the Legislative Assembly:

the Honourable Vincent Patrick (known as ‘Vin’) Heffernan, OAM, member for Ivanhoe between

1985 and 1996, who served as Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs;

the Honourable Cyril Thomas (known as ‘Tom’) Edmunds, AM, member for Moonee Ponds, Ascot Vale and then Pascoe Vale between 1967 and 1988 and Speaker of the house for several years; and

Louis Frederick Cornu Garlick, member for Mildura from 1945 to 1947.

I now formally open this Parliament and pray that God may guide your deliberations.

Copies of speech handed to President and Speaker.

The Governor and suite withdrew.

Members of the Legislative Assembly retired from chamber.

Sitting suspended 3.10 p.m. until 5.03 p.m.

The PRESIDENT resumed the chair.

PRESENTATION OF PRESIDENT TO GOVERNOR

The PRESIDENT — Order! I have to report that, accompanied by honourable members, I presented myself to the Governor this day as the choice of the Council for its President, and he was pleased to address me in the following terms:

President,

I have pleasure in congratulating you on your election to the high and distinguished office of President of the Legislative Council.

The able manner in which you have discharged the duties you have undertaken during your parliamentary career and in your capacity as a minister is recognised by the honourable members of the Legislative Council, who in their wisdom have selected you as their President.

I have confidence that you will fulfil the duties of this important office and hold fast to its traditions and customs.

John Landy,
Governor of Victoria.

CONDOLENCES

Hon. Vincent Patrick Heffernan, OAM

Mr LENDERS (Minister for Finance) — I move:

That this house expresses its sincere sorrow at the death, on 15 November 2002, of the Honourable Vincent Patrick

Heffernan, OAM, and places on record its acknowledgement of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as a member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Ivanhoe from 1985 to 1996 and as the Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs from 1992 to 1996.

Today we mark the sad passing of the Honourable Vincent Patrick Heffernan, OAM. He passed away on 15 November 2002 following a short battle with cancer. Vin Heffernan, as he was known to his friends and colleagues, was born on 24 December 1935 in Ivanhoe, with Ivanhoe and its surrounding areas being a focal point for much of his life's work.

He was educated at St Thomas's Christian Brothers College at Clifton Hill and followed through with an automotive engineering course at Richmond TAFE, which led him to soon becoming a self-employed motor engineer. He ran his own motor repair and service station business in his home district. He also developed a keen interest in a building and property development business.

Vin's political career developed from his early years as a small businessman and his love of his local environment at Ivanhoe and the surrounding areas. In 1966 Vin became a councillor for the City of Heidelberg, a position he would hold for 22 years. He also took on the role of mayor for one year — 1979–80.

Vin Heffernan had many other diverse roles throughout his life, which included being a Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works commissioner and being chairperson and founder of the Heidelberg Heritage Museum. Apart from representing on council the concerns of small business owners, Vin took a very special interest in improving the road and traffic problems in the municipality of the City of Heidelberg and the surrounding areas, as well as the major challenge of developing alternatives for dealing with youth issues, particularly issues concerning unemployed youth in Heidelberg. His leadership in developing a local youth employment scheme won him wide praise, and his efforts in this regard were rewarded in 1983 when he received the Medal of the Order of Australia for his work in that area.

Not long afterwards Vin Heffernan was elected to the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Ivanhoe. He held that seat from April 1985 until March 1996. From 1985 to 1988 he served as the assistant on youth affairs to the then Leader of the Opposition. During this same period he was also a member of many Liberal Party parliamentary committees. In 1991–92 he became the shadow Minister for Small Business, and following the 1992 election he was appointed the

Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs — a reflection of his previous work and interest in public life.

Vin continued his work in his local community after he lost the seat of Ivanhoe in 1996. He became a local government commissioner for Nillumbik shire and continued his work on behalf of small business as chairperson of the Small Business Advisory Network from 1998 until 2002. Throughout his parliamentary career Vin was respected by all sides of politics.

On Friday, 22 November 2002, a state funeral mass was held at St Patrick's Cathedral in memory of his life. It was a day which marked his life's work to help small business people, young people and, importantly, the people who lived in his local community of Ivanhoe and Heidelberg. He was a man who commanded wide respect from people from both sides of politics. This was shown at the state funeral mass, which was attended by colleagues from all major parties. Sadly, on 15 November 2002 cancer claimed his life at the age of only 66.

On behalf of the Victorian government and on behalf of the parliamentary Labor Party I offer sincere condolences to the family of Vin Heffernan — his wife, Nancy; his children, Anthony, Jan and Susan; his daughter-in-law, Louise; and his grandchildren, Samantha, Mia and William.

Hon. PHILIP DAVIS (Gippsland) — It is with sadness that I join the condolence motion for Vin Heffernan. Vin was a parliamentary colleague of mine. Indeed, when I came into Parliament he was one of those people who was irreplaceable, and it is such a sad loss to the Victorian community that it behoves me on behalf of the opposition to make some comments, but particularly I would like to make some comments on my own behalf.

While I did not know Vin personally in a detailed way, as we parliamentarians go about our business I had sufficient contact with him to always be inspired by his extraordinary energy. In fact, I would say he was one of the most incredibly industrious and energetic members of Parliament I have ever had contact with. He was a classic A-type personality to those people who knew him. He would never sit still for more than a few minutes at a time; and for him not to be with us now I find sad but, in a sense, incredible because he left such a large impression.

He was very proud of his own links with the community; and indeed he was proud of his heritage. His family settled in the Heidelberg district back in the

1860s, and Vin was very involved in that local community in such a way as to leave such an incredible impression so that he had a very high personal recognition factor. There is no doubt that that was the factor that settled him in terms of his being a successful member of Parliament albeit for a relatively short period of 11 years — long for some but short for others.

Vin was involved in many community activities beyond his work and other enterprises. He was actively involved in working, in particular, with youth and launched the Bernie Geary youth scheme in 1980 to work with unemployed youth. In 1983 he was recognised for that when he was awarded the Order of Australia medal. It was his personal enterprise in doorknocking in the Heidelberg area that raised the funds to maintain that outreach youth work position for several years. Vin, to his credit, was fairly modest about that, but the fact was that his endeavours achieved that outcome.

He was involved in many formal activities in the community in a leadership sense. He was a Heidelberg city councillor for a long period between 1966 and 1984. He was mayor for a term from 1979 to 1980. He was a commissioner on the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works between 1976 and 1979. He was president of the Senior Citizens Welfare Committee from 1976 to 1979. He was a life governor of the West Heidelberg community centre. In 1981 he was the founder and chairperson of the Heidelberg Heritage Committee. He was appointed to the Lower Yarra Authority in 1982. He was a member of the Heidelberg Rotary Club and later on — after he left Parliament — was appointed a commissioner for Nillumbik shire, which lasted from 1996 to 1997. He was also chairman of the Small Business Advisory Network for two periods from 1998.

Vin's political achievements go hand in hand with his business background. It is true that he was a successful small businessman, with a motor engineering background. He went to school at St Thomas Christian Brothers College in Clifton Hill, subsequently studied automotive engineering at TAFE, became very successful with his own small business in the automotive industry and also became involved in property development.

It is clear that Vin's own experience was in contrast to his family heritage. He quite openly admitted that he came from a family of traditional Labor supporters. Notwithstanding this, he was very successful in having a business enterprise, and his family admired him for that. More importantly, when he transplanted his

experience and culture to parliamentary life, again he recognised his family's support for his endeavours.

Vin's maiden speech, which I think sums up his philosophy, was interesting. He raised a large number of issues about the community at large and the way he wished to represent it. He highlighted how much he loved the Ivanhoe area and felt that his role was to represent the electorate and its constituents. In doing that, his commitment to serving the people was foremost. He said:

The most important issue is people.

Vin raised issues of concern for older citizens and society's obligation to support them in their retirement years. He raised issues regarding single-parent families. He was vociferous in commenting on the effects of unemployment on youth. But he took a particular advocacy for small business. This quote sums up his general approach. It was something that he took from Abraham Lincoln:

You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot help the wage-earner by pulling down the wage-payer. You cannot establish sound security on borrowed money alone. You cannot build character and courage by raking away a man's initiative and independence. You cannot help a man by permanently doing for him that which he can and should do for himself.

That was in my view the essence of Vin Heffernan which he brought to Parliament as a philosophy from his own experience in small business. As a consequence of this commitment to youth and business, in 1985 Vin was permitted to assist the opposition leader on youth affairs. He was the shadow minister for small business from 1991 to 1992. He was Minister for Small Business in the first Kennett government, and during that time had responsibility for youth affairs. He said of himself that he was somebody who came into Parliament and became Minister for Small Business. He said:

I am the first small business minister who has ever been in the real world.

That is absolutely typical Vin. He would never take a step backward. That claim was a strong representation of his views.

Vin's role in the government involved providing a great deal of energy and commitment to those two portfolio responsibilities. He saw his role as a minister as he saw the role of the government: to act as a catalyst for small business.

Vin listed his achievements as small business minister as raising the profile of the small business debate, making Workcover fully funded and cutting costs to employers, reducing the number of new regulations and launching the First Place business service. He continued to work for youth as Minister responsible for Youth Affairs.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that inevitably with local members of Parliament various highlights pop out about the issues they are interested in. Reading the local press clippings from Vin's electorate newspapers, it was quite clear that his community profile was powerful. He won the seat of Ivanhoe in 1985 from Tony Sheehan on the basis of a strong personal vote after doorknocking every house in the electorate. Clearly, it was his local community work and his dedication to hard work which made Vin a successful parliamentarian.

He could not let politics alone. Vin had a membership of the Liberal Party of more than 30 years and had been a local branch president before he became an MP. Those of us who knew Vin through the Liberal Party knew he was very committed to the party and to public life. He did seek to come back to the Parliament in 1998 when he unsuccessfully sought preselection to serve in this house. It is a measure of Vin that he never gave up his interest in public work for the community, working for youth and working for the community at large.

To Vin's surviving family, to his wife, Nancy, his children, Anthony, Jan and Susan, his daughter-in-law, Louise, and his grandchildren, Samantha, William and Mia, I, on behalf of the opposition, offer our condolences.

Hon. P. R. HALL (Gippsland) — I and members of the National Party join with the government and the opposition in expressing our sincere condolences at the death of the Honourable Vin Heffernan, OAM.

Vin was an effervescent sort of character. He always had something to say, always had an answer, always had a joke and was always ready to have a crack at something or other — such was the nature of Vin Heffernan. Those jokes or cracks that he made were always in good humour, and that is why I think Vin was so well liked and respected, as the Leader of the Government has said, by members on all sides of this house. He made you smile, and that is a rare sort of commodity, particularly in the field of politics, but such was the character of Vin Heffernan.

Vin loved his sport, and I was pleased to share two sporting passions with him: firstly, his passion for the Carlton Football Club. In fact, Vin and I were both recruited by the same gentleman to the club. Vin was recruited by his father-in-law, the late Jack Wroust, an ardent Carlton supporter who consequently convinced Vin that he too should support the Carlton Football Club, which Vin did with a great deal of passion. Jack Wroust was also the chairman of selectors when I went to Carlton as a raw 18-year-old, so consequently he was the person who dragged me to the club as well. Vin and I, both being keen supporters of the Carlton Football Club, rejoiced and lamented as the fluctuations of the club ebbed and flowed over the period of time in which I knew him.

We also shared a passion for golf, although neither of us, I must say, were all that good at the game. I can recall Vin, as the Minister for Small Business — always a minister who was willing to travel to meet a constituency upon request — travelled to Traralgon at my invitation one day to meet with a group of small business people. I said to Vin prior to his journey, 'Bring your golf clubs because there might be time at the end of the day to have a game'. He was all for that, loving his golf as he did. We played in the twilight at Traralgon, my home course. We played nine holes that particular evening and Vin claimed to have beaten me on that occasion, although I dispute the outcome. Vin felt that he had won that game and he always chided me for being an ordinary golfer if a person like Vin Heffernan could beat me. We had a continuing joke about our lack of prowess in the game of golf.

As has been said by other speakers, Vin Heffernan served 11 years in this Parliament, 4 of which were as the Minister for Small Business and the Minister responsible for Youth Affairs. He had a passion for both of those areas. From a small business background he understood better than probably most such ministers the issues involved with small business. He also had a passion for youth, receiving a Medal of the Order of Australia for recognition of his tireless work with young people statewide and within his electorate. He had an outstanding record of service with community organisations, ranging from local government, sporting clubs, youth organisations and a number of others that have already been mentioned by a previous speaker.

Vinnie, as we called him at the National Party table — he had an affinity with the National Party and we got along pretty well with him — was a great bloke and he will be sadly missed by us all. To his wife Nancy, to his children, Anthony, Jan and Susan, and to his extended family, the National Party expresses its sincere condolences.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Minister for Energy Industries) — May I begin my contribution to this condolence motion by congratulating you, President, on your appointment as President of this chamber and indicate that I am sure you will bring to the chamber impartiality and consistency in the rulings from the chair. Indeed, may I also say that not only is it very good to see that we have a woman in the chair but also that some anachronistic things like the wigs have disappeared from the chamber.

I was shocked to hear of the death of Vin Heffernan. Vinnie was somebody who was friendly across both sides of the chamber. He liked to have a laugh and was somebody who you could talk to and take a light-hearted approach with to what was sometimes very serious business in this house.

The thing that I remember a lot about Vin — I used to call him Vinnie, as a lot of other people did — is that he was the only person in the Parliament to call me Thee. Whenever he would see me he would say, ‘Hello Thee’ and I would say, ‘G’day Vinnie. How’s it going?’, and we would go from there.

What I also remember about him is that he understood that this place is both gladiatorial and cooperative in the way it operates; it has both those elements at the same time. Vin was certainly cooperative when you had to get something done as a minister or there was a constituency that you needed to look after, but he was also gladiatorial. I remember clearly an occasion when he was the shadow Minister for Small Business and I was the Minister for Small Business during the last year of the Kirner government when we had a television debate over our relative small business policies. This was to go to air on *Today Tonight* I think it was or one of those types of programs, and we started off in debate in a fairly gentlemanly manner. We went for 4 or 5 minutes, but the segment was only to be for 2 minutes. By this time the journalist simply stopped us and said, ‘Stop right there, I want you to start again and remember that this is for 2 minutes and I need you to be passionate’. We stopped and redid the whole thing again from the beginning, only this time it was absolutely hammer and tongs for 2 minutes.

The other thing I remember about Vinnie was the time when there was a change of government. I was the outgoing minister and he was coming in as the new Minister for Small Business, and I had to make some decisions in the lead-up to changing office. It was coincidental that the department decided that it would change the carpet in the ministerial office, and it chose a colour that was the most horrible purple that you could possibly imagine. It was, of course, ready and

available for the new minister, and I do not think Vinnie ever believed it was not me who made the decision to choose the colour of that carpet. We used to have a joke about it all the time.

I want to say that Vinnie was somebody who came to this place and made a contribution in the other house. He was to me someone who understood the nature of politics. Although we were opponents and although we participated in debate, there was a human element underlying that, and he certainly participated in that.

I want to extend my condolences to his wife, Nancy, and to his family, and I support this condolence motion.

Hon. BILL FORWOOD (Templestowe) — I also rise to speak on this condolence motion for Vin. It is the second time in recent months that we have dealt with a condolence motion for someone who was not just a colleague and a friend but someone who has died before their time. The other was our colleague Ann Henderson, who unfortunately died last year.

Vin was not just a colleague and a friend to many of us; for me he was a regular golfing partner. We have already heard a golf story from the Leader of the National Party, but Mr McQuilten and Mr Smith would know what a regular golfing partner is. Vin and I had many games of golf over a long period of time. As honourable members would know, the province I have the honour to represent, Templestowe, includes the electoral district of Ivanhoe, which is now held by the government whip but which was Vin’s seat from 1985 to 1996. I worked closely with Vin on many issues. I got to know and like him well. I fully endorse the comments on the way Vin contributed to his community not only of the Leader of the Government and my friend the Minister for Energy Industries but also of the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party.

In a eulogy at Vin’s state funeral Roger Pescott said that Vin was the product of his family and of his time. I think his daughter put it very well in an obituary in the *Herald Sun*, where she wrote:

His early upbringing was influenced by his strongly Catholic and labour-oriented family.

She went on:

He became a self-employed motor engineer, but Vin never forgot his origins. They always inspired him, making strong ideas of social justice, service to others, and common decency characteristic of his life’s work.

As I said, the second aspect Roger Pescott mentioned was that Vin was a product of his time. The speech, as

quoted by the Leader of the Opposition, sums that up very well. Roger said that if you worked hard, preferably in your own small business, opportunities would come your way. But Vin took it the next step, because you did not wait — you got on with it, you did it yourself, you did not wait for someone to look after you. If you succeeded then you had an obligation, a responsibility, to give a hand to others as you went. And this started the process — —

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — He should have been in the Labor Party!

Hon. BILL FORWOOD — He could well have been!

Vin had a really strong work ethic, which he inherited from his father. Helping others as you succeeded was very strong in Vin's life. The fact that he got his OAM before he went into Parliament is instructive. This was a person who had succeeded in his community before he came to Parliament.

A number of people have mentioned the Bernie Geary award. Many people in this chamber know Bernie Geary. He is now the head of Jesuit Social Services. He was a part-time youth worker in West Heidelberg when Vin Heffernan and John Siddons, who was later a Democrat senator and from the Sidchrome company, personally funded the ute that they used to go around the West Heidelberg area in to raise funds to enable Bernie to continue the work of getting unemployed youth employed one day a week with local businesses.

Honourable members in this place know that I was fortunate to chair the Olympic Village Redevelopment Committee in the middle of the 1990s. Vin's influence in that area still existed then. He was also a life governor of the West Heidelberg community health centre; he was always there. People there remember him with affection. They used to contact him a lot. He was a product of the community.

When he went on to the local council in 1996 he was a councillor for the Banyule ward of the Heidelberg City Council. In those days the council had five wards, with three councillors in each ward. Vin was in the Banyule ward and was known as the fourth ward councillor in West Heidelberg because of his commitment to the West Heidelberg area. People still talk about Vin and his service station in Dougharty Road. He is still known for that as well.

Family, community, small business and youth — they were the things that drove Vin. His early energies went into his family and his business, but he was always active in his community. When he was on the council

he was chairman of the parks and gardens committee. People used to say to him, 'Why do you want to be chairman of that committee?' He said, 'Every sporting group, every youth group, every environment group has something to do with parks and gardens and they come to see me'. Not only did he doorknock the electorate to get elected, but he was involved in the community in a hands-on way.

I refer honourable members to a note in the *Heidelberg Leader*, where Sue Course, who is a foundation member of the Darebin Parklands Association, talked about Vin's influence on the establishment of the Darebin Parklands. Bike riders in this place will know that a bike track now goes through that parkland and the olive festival is now held there. That early work was done by Vin and the community, by the community and Vin — either way they were synonymous with the work done in and around that electorate in those days.

He was a mentor to many people; not just to people like Bernie but to members of the Liberal Party. Brian Loughnane, who was recently appointed as the federal director of the Liberal Party, and Peter Clarke, who is currently a metropolitan vice president, were both young men in the area who came under Vin's influence. Peter Clarke was elected to the Heidelberg City Council at the age of 24 with Vin's influence. In some senses Vin was a political fixer in the area. He knew people. He knew how to get things done. He knew how to bring people through. He was forever being involved in his community. The story goes that after he left the council they had to replace his desk because he was known for thumping it in his passion to convince people of the point of view that he wished to convey.

He was one for the telephone, and many of us have been on the receiving end of a call when Vin has rung. He started this early in the days before the mobile phone. Vin was one who communicated a lot, and he was always just organising what might happen this way or that. As Roger Pescott said at the state funeral, people will never know all the things that Vin actually did; probably that is a good thing.

There are very many funny stories about Vin. When he was a commissioner for Nillumbik he got himself involved in a dispute with a person who did not like some of the decisions the commissioners were making, and Vin suggested to this person that their view of the world was narrow and that he had a wider view and was taking a more proactive view of the world. This person wrote Vin a relatively vitriolic letter. Vin responded politely but included in the letter a match, suggesting that the head of the match was about

sufficient space for this person's world view to be written on. A simple way of getting his message across.

When Vin became a minister he used his network to good effect. People are aware of the Visy Centre in Dandenong — an early example of public-private partnerships. Vin used his influence to get Dick Pratt and the Visy Corporation to put funds into that youth facility in Dandenong. He tried hard to cut through red tape.

I understand that the bureaucrats in both the small business and youth affairs departments lived in trepidation of the phone call saying, 'The minister promised', because Vin was one for getting things done and leaving the detail to others. He would say, 'We'll do it', and then he would tell someone else to do it for him!

I was talking to a senior bureaucrat who said he was working in his office one day when Vin was the minister and he looked up and Vin was sitting there. It was not a case of Vin ringing and saying, 'I want to see you — come down' or 'I'm coming up. I'll see you in half an hour. This is the topic'. Vin dropped in and had a discussion about what was happening. This was the way he engaged people: he knew what needed to be done and he got it done.

Vin was a man of huge generosity; a man who made a real difference to very many people's lives. I was proud to have been an official pallbearer at his state funeral along with the Honourable Bill Baxter.

I welcome this additional opportunity to formally farewell a friend. I extend my sincere condolences to Nancy, Anthony, Jan and Susan, and to his mother, Ninoo, and other family members.

Hon. A. P. OLEXANDER (Silvan) — I am saddened today to rise to speak on this condolence motion, but I am also quite proud to have the opportunity to do so. Vin Heffernan I considered to be a friend. I met him back in 1989 when I was working for arguably one of his best friends, Roger Pescott. I happened at that time to be the state president of the Young Liberal movement. Roger said to me one day, 'There's a chap — his name's Vin Heffernan — who's involved in helping Jeff Kennett with youth policy. You have to meet him; you've just been elected. I'll organise it' — and he organised it.

I can remember — I will never forget them — the first words that Vin uttered to me. Vin spoke very loudly and said, 'Right. You're the Young Lib president. I'm doing the youth in the Parliament, so basically here's a list of things you have to do. Sit down'. I sat down and

Vin proceeded to give me the gospel according to Vin Heffernan on what he saw as the key issues for young people. I have to say there was a huge number of truths in what he had to say about young people — a passion of his.

Two hours later that conversation ended, and Vin said, 'Right. You get on with that and I'll come back to you next week to see how you're going' — and he did. In fact, all the way through my presidency, during that whole year of 1989, I had a call at least once a week from Vin Heffernan or I caught up with him at least once a week to see where we were getting with policy, how we were marketing it and how we were getting more young people involved — and to discuss a whole range of issues. He followed through.

Vin was a man who was passionate about his issues and about the place of young people in the community, and he really wanted to see things change. He was not backward in coming forward. If there was somebody Vin thought could actually make a contribution he made sure he made himself known to them, and he left them with absolutely no doubt about what they should be doing about a problem or an issue.

That is exactly the same approach that Vin took in his local community. He considered Heidelberg, Ivanhoe and the surrounds to be his community, and it really was in so many ways. He spent his whole life there. Bill Forwood has already alluded to the fact that Vin was very possessive and very territorial; he cared about his people, as he used to call them, and about his automotive business in Heidelberg, which did become a local icon. People still talk about that business; this is not just a nice thing that we say, it is the absolute truth.

People find it difficult to forget Vin when they have had contact with him because he left such an impression. Vin always gave very genuinely of himself to other people. He felt that his ideas, his opinions and his perspectives on things were so important that everybody else should have the benefit of them — and on occasion he was right! On occasion we had disagreements, but Vin Heffernan certainly did not let that stop him.

Many speakers here today have talked about Vin's long and detailed connection with local council before he came into Parliament. If you knew Vin you would know that he knew virtually every street of his electorate, the people who lived in those streets and to whom they were related and he knew what the issues were that they cared about. He had an incredible brain — an incredible database. He was what I describe as a quintessential local politician — somebody who

came from a community, who got into politics only because of that community and who remained loyal to that community right to the end.

It was during that time of community involvement when his intense involvement with young people began — particularly employment for young people, which of course is a generic and ongoing problem for youth in this state. Vin was passionate about that and took personal action to make sure there were less young people in his patch — the area he considered his — who had employment difficulties and problems than would otherwise have been the case.

The West Heidelberg community centre, through which he worked on youth employment programs, recognised him for his contribution and awarded him a life membership. Even though he received the Order of Australia medal in the Queen's Birthday honours, I think he was prouder of that life membership award. He did not belittle the OAM, but the fact that he was such a local man and such a local politician who cared about his people meant that he thought the West Heidelberg community centre award was better than the other award, and he was much prouder of it and spoke of it much more frequently.

In 1985, with his local knowledge arming him, Vin contested the volatile seat of Ivanhoe. At that time he used every bit of that local knowledge to eventually defeat the ALP's Tony Sheehan, who was no slouch himself and a very good campaigner, but Vin was up to the task.

I learnt a few very important things from Vin in our association over the years. One of them was something he used to say very frequently, which was, 'Don't complain about something unless you're prepared to get in there and try to do something about it'. Vin was not a complainer and he was not a whinger, and he did not like people who complained or whinged. Vin liked people who got on with it, who got in there and tried to do something. That was a very important lesson I learnt from him.

I also learnt that it is not a bad thing to be passionate about an issue. In fact, I learnt that to sustain yourself through your involvement in the political process it is important that you actually believe in something and care about something. Vin was a believer and Vin was a carer.

I lost some contact with Vin after he left Parliament, but still maintained infrequent contact with him when he came in here from time to time, and on those occasions we would catch up on a regular basis. This was after he

finished as a Nillumbik shire commissioner and was doing other things in the community.

Vin was an extremely colourful man, and that was how it seemed to me even in those early days when he said, 'Sit down young man I have 2 hours worth of things to tell you and you're going to listen!'. Even last year when I saw him in here that spark and enthusiasm for what he was doing was not diminished. You can learn from that — that a lifelong commitment to something is really what it is all about.

Vin spoke his mind; he was not afraid of doing so. He cared, he was passionate and he said what he thought. I know he was totally devoted to his wife, Nancy, his three children and his grandchildren, and I extend my deepest sympathies to them on this occasion.

He was one of the most successful politicians because he never forgot what he believed in, and in his untimely passing I know he will remain indelibly in my memory, as he will probably remain in the memories of most who knew him. With those words I commend the motion to the house.

Hon. ANDREA COOTE (Monash) — I too have great honour in speaking about Vincent Patrick Heffernan — Vin. I too called him Vinnie, and it is with honour and sadness that I speak on his condolence motion. Bill Forwood spoke about the eulogy given by a former member of the other place, the Honourable Roger Pescott, at the very moving service held at St Patricks cathedral on 22 November last year. I would like to start in the same way that Roger started and quote from what he said, because it sums up what so many previous speakers have said about Vin. Roger said:

How do you measure a man's life? By his love of his family? By his ability to help and encourage others? By his uncomplicated and unselfish nature? Or by his achievements in the society in which he lived?

I am certain that those of you in this place who had met Vin feel that those elements encapsulate Vin Heffernan.

I first got to know him when he was a minister. He was full of enthusiasm, as other speakers before me have said, and he was always approachable, always professional, and indeed he was always open to any idea or any suggestion. Vin was ready and happy to listen and understand. He had a refreshing approach and that characterised his ministry of small business, and indeed he received a lot of accolades for just that approach.

Others have spoken about his local council involvement, his deep understanding of his area of

Heidelberg and his love and understanding of what went on, including his involvement with the senior citizens and indeed all of his constituents.

You only had to read his adjournment speeches to understand the deep feelings he had for the issues and the people who were affected in his community. He was passionate about what he said about them and was prepared to put in the hard work when something could be done about it.

Today we look at private and government partnerships as something of a reality; something we deal with and something that is to be commended. When Vin started his relationship with the likes of Bernie Geary and Dick Pratt from Visyboard, it was pioneering stuff. We today want an involved private-public partnership with the government, and he started it. He was the pioneer; he got out and did it. Roger Pescott summed it up in his eulogy by saying:

His strong and open free enterprise spirit was tempered with a marvellous strong social conscience. He would fight hard for the underdog. He was contemptuous of the pretenders.

In a personal sense there is one word to sum up Vin and that is enthusiasm. Everything was done at full speed, everything was full on and everything was a lot of fun.

I knew him through the Liberal Party's state strategy committee. He had some brilliant ideas for setting the Liberal Party in a certain direction. The work that he had done and the many ideas he had were very well received.

Many politicians leave this place never to see it or the party to which they belong again. Not so Vin. He was out there with his ideas, his enthusiasm and his willingness to work, and that is something for which all Liberal Party members must be entirely grateful.

I saw him at state council and social events. Towards the end of his life he was involved in building developments in my electorate. He would breeze into my office and say, 'Hi Darl! I've got the best idea for you. This is what you've got to do and this is where you've got to be to do it!'. He had a lot of problems with the local council, but was not afraid to come in and tell me just how I should tell them to shape up or ship out. As I said, he would breeze in with a 'Hi Darl! Have I got an idea for you'. That really was Vin.

I would have to say that the most touching part at his funeral was when one of his granddaughters spoke. She stood there in front of a packed St Patricks cathedral in her school uniform — a poised, loving, caring and obviously very upset young woman. She would have

been no more than 14 and she gave a most touching and beautiful speech in memory of her grandfather. She spoke about how she would sit on his knee when he drove her around and taught her at a very young age how to drive a car. She spoke about the fun they had, how they loved being with him and how he would help clean the swimming pool amongst the other things that she had enjoyed all her life with him. She brought him to life for all of us there. It was a very poignant moment, and I am sure it is something her grandfather would have been very proud to see — his legacy lives on.

Sixty-six is too young to die, and we have lost a dear friend. We have also lost a very fine Victorian. My thoughts are with Nancy and his children and grandchildren. I am sure there is a gaping hole in their lives.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I too wish to be associated with this motion. The Honourable Vincent Patrick Heffernan was, to me, Mr Heffernan. I knew Vin Heffernan before I went to school. I grew up in the Rosanna-Heidelberg area, and Vin Heffernan ran the place you went to — the BP petrol station. I hate to correct Bill Forwood, but it was in Southern Road, West Heidelberg, not Dougharty Road; the latter was run by his brother.

Vin Heffernan was the man at the BP petrol station that everybody went to, especially those from St Martin of Tours parish in Rosanna — of course those around the corner used to call it Macleod! You always went there and got petrol from Mr Heffernan. I know one of Vin's daughters, Susan. We went right through primary school together, and Susan and I used to walk halfway home from school together. We then went to different secondary schools.

Vin was very much associated with the City of Heidelberg, as it was known then, and a very close friend of my father. As other honourable members have said in speaking to the motion today, Vin Heffernan ran a service station, and he was the man who checked my first car. He gave me a roadworthy so I could drive my car. That was a few years ago and there has been a lot of water under the bridge since then.

Vin was very much associated with the Olympic village area. Mr Forwood would know of an organisation my father was involved with, until his move interstate. Vin was very much associated with it also because it was connected with the West Heidelberg area, near the Olympic village. When I first came into Parliament as a new member in 1993, he would always say, 'G'day

Monnie! How are ya? How's Mum and Dad?'. I would say, 'Dad's fine, and they've now moved interstate'.

Vin attended my mother's funeral a year after he had given me the roadworthy on my car. He was someone who, as Andrew Olexander indicated, knew everybody in his street. He knew all the streets and he knew who lived there. He knew where we lived and he knew who our neighbours were, even though they were not associated with the community groups that Vin was associated with. He knew everybody within the City of Heidelberg and helped make it the City of Banyule.

I remember that BP petrol station, and I think of Vin when I drive past it. It is now a block of flats. That is where Vin started his building career — converting that petrol station into a number of flats — and he went on from there.

The Honourable Vin Heffernan was Mr Heffernan to me. He was always helpful, and as my brother reminded me today, we used to get on our pushbikes and ride around to his petrol station to fill up the petrol tin before going home to mow the lawns.

Vin was always there to help out a neighbour if they had car problems. He was committed to the young people in the area and always made sure their cars were safe before they got into them. That commitment followed through into his career in local government and then into this house. As a former Minister for Youth Affairs I know there were many things put in place that are there today, such as the Visy project, that are the result of what Vin did. I want to be part of this motion.

Motion agreed to in silence, honourable members showing unanimous agreement by standing in their places.

Hon. Cyril Thomas Edmunds, AM

Mr LENDERS (Minister for Finance) — I move:

That this house expresses its sincere sorrow at the death, on 3 February 2003, of the Honourable Cyril Thomas Edmunds, AM, and places on record its acknowledgement of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as a member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral districts of Moonee Ponds from 1967 to 1976, Ascot Vale from 1976 to 1985 and Pascoe Vale from 1985 to 1988, and as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly from 1982 to 1988.

The Honourable Tom Edmunds sadly passed away on 3 February 2003 after a long illness. He will be remembered for his considerable service to the electoral districts of Moonee Ponds, Ascot Vale and Pascoe Vale between 1967 and 1988. His contribution to the

Victorian Parliament as a frontbencher in opposition was invaluable. He also contributed to the Parliament as a member of numerous committees and as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly during his 22 years as a representative in that house.

Tom was a devoted family man and an active community member. He excelled in the areas of swimming and sailing and led a very full and rewarding life. Tom was a character in the Parliament and will be remembered for his sharp wit and individual style.

Tom was born in Essendon on 24 October 1925. He was educated at Essendon North State School and Essendon high and technical schools. In 1943 he enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force and served for three years in the Air Sea Rescue Service in the south-west Pacific. On his return he completed his apprenticeship and was employed as a lithographer, later becoming a factory manager of a printing firm.

In 1952 Tom both got married and joined the ALP — two pivotal events in his life taking place in the one year. His contribution to the ALP was both long and enduring. He served as secretary to his local branch for 15 years and treasurer for a further 3 years. He also worked on 19 state, federal and municipal election campaigns, both in and out of the Parliament.

On his election to Parliament in 1967 as the member for Moonee Ponds he was quick to highlight in his inaugural speech issues that were of particular importance to him. The two areas were equitable access to education and housing, and safeguarding the rights and liberties of ordinary citizens. Tom's interest and passion in these areas of policy was recognized in 1972, when he was appointed parliamentary Labor spokesperson for housing and planning, and in 1977, when he was appointed spokesperson for police and emergency services.

His impressive parliamentary career also included being a chair of the House Committee, deputy chair of the Law Revision Committee and a member of the Legislative Assembly Standing Orders Committee. This was capped off by his unanimous appointment to the position of Speaker following the ALP's electoral victory in 1982.

Tom Edmunds remained Speaker until his retirement in 1988, and it was in this role that his wit and individuality shone through the most. He marked his accession to the position by bringing about what at the time seemed like a radical change to the traditions of the Legislative Assembly — he refused to wear the wig of the Speaker, claiming he did not want to replace his

already lost hair with horse hair. He also brought about changes to parliamentary procedures in an effort to maximise the use of Parliament's time. Madam President, I imagine he would have watched with interest what has happened in this chamber today by your discarding of the wig.

On his retirement in 1989 Tom was awarded an AM. Throughout his retirement he continued his tireless work and electoral campaigning for the Labor Party. He was a man committed to political beliefs until his end. He was also a man who tried to help others, and who described this personal trait as one of his passions. It is for this that he will be remembered by members in this place and by people he represented, for all of whom he worked.

On behalf of the government I extend condolences to Tom Edmunds's family: his wife, Vivienne; his children, David, Mark and Penelope; and his brothers, Geoffrey and Bruce.

Hon. PHILIP DAVIS (Gippsland) — Madam President, I join this condolence motion for Tommy Edmunds on behalf of the opposition on the basis not that I knew Tom Edmunds at all but because his contribution to the Victorian community needs to be recognised in the Parliament.

Tom Edmunds died at 77 years of age, having lived what could only be described as a very full life. It is useful to note that he had, like Vin Heffernan, a very strong commitment to his local community.

Perhaps in a contemporary sense today's society is much more footloose. Many people in this place represent areas with which they have not had a lifetime of association. However, it is interesting to note that today we are speaking about two former members of Parliament whose very roots were in their local communities, as we have just heard from the Leader of the Government.

Tom Edmunds made the great claim that he was born and bred in the Essendon area and indeed subsequently strongly represented that broad community, both in public and parliamentary life. He served as a member of the Essendon North State School committee, the Buckley Park High School council, the Essendon District Memorial Hospital board and the Essendon Progress Association. He was chairman of the Essendon Community Centre from 1970 to 1976; a member of the Victorian Institute of Colleges council from 1970 to 1976; a member of the Melbourne College of Printing and Graphics Arts council from 1979 to 1983; a delegate at the Victorian Constitutional

Convention in 1983 and chairman of the Exhibition Building from 1988. He was awarded the Order of Australia in 1989.

Tom Edmunds certainly had an interesting parliamentary career. He was the member for Moonee Ponds from 1967 to 1976, the member for Ascot Vale from 1976 to 1985, and the member for Pascoe Vale from 1985 to 1988. He was very involved in parliamentary life and chose to serve extensively on parliamentary committees. He served on the Printing Committee between 1967 and 1970 and 1982 and 1988. He was on the Statute Law Revision Committee between 1969 and 1982 and deputy chair from 1976 to 1982. He was on the Library Committee from 1970 to 1976 and from 1977 to 1979 and was deputy chair from 1982 to 1988. He was a member of the House Committee for an extraordinarily long time — from 1976 to 1988, and was chairman from 1982 to 1988. Those of us who understand the role of the House Committee can note that it must have been just as much of a challenge in that period as it is today to bring to bear any influence on parliamentarians and the way the Parliament operates. In any event I am sure he gave many people a lot of good advice on his way through. He was also a member of the Standing Orders Committee from 1982 to 1988.

Tom Edmunds's view of his role as a representative in the Parliament was expressed in his maiden speech. He said that the opposition had a responsibility as guardians of the democratic rights of all people not just to criticise but to put positive proposals. In terms of parliamentary party roles, the objective of all parliamentarians is to firstly represent their community but inevitably there is a requirement to serve the team with which we work within this place. Tom was certainly no shirker. He was Legislative Assembly whip from 1976 to 1979 and from 1980 to 1982. He was parliamentary spokesman on housing and planning from 1972 to 1977 and spokesman on police and emergency services from 1977 to 1982.

It was his appointment as Speaker in April 1982 that in the end brought him the greatest satisfaction. He once said that he had aspired to be a minister of the Crown but in fact the highlight of his political career was to be Speaker, because in that role he was the most powerful person in Parliament. Attempting to control 88 members of the other place would not just be a challenge, but if one were in top form it would give a great deal of satisfaction, and obviously it did to Tom Edmunds.

Without further ado I record that the opposition joins the condolence motion for Tom Edmunds, who played

an important role in representing his community and the people of Victoria.

Hon. W. R. BAXTER (North Eastern) — I want to associate the National Party with this condolence motion for our late colleague Tom Edmunds. I was fortunate to have the privilege of serving in the same chamber as Tom Edmunds for a period of three years from 1973 to 1976, so I can say without any hesitation that he was a real character in the Legislative Assembly. He was a really good bloke I think you could say in the vernacular; one who enjoyed widespread friendship right through the chamber with all members and all parties. I consider it an honour that I had the opportunity of being a colleague and seeing him at work in the chamber.

Tom had a great sense of timing with interjections. He was a very good interjector; he could drop an interjection right at the pertinent time. I well remember one occasion when we were debating the advertising of contraceptives, and in the 1970s that was an issue that caused some angst in the community, as well as the backbench of the then Country Party and some members of the Liberal Party. A Liberal backbencher was speaking, and at the right time Tom made an absolutely apposite but hilarious interjection as he could well do. He brought that particular member's speech to a very hasty conclusion! He simply could not go on.

Tom was a person who could persevere. I learnt at his state funeral that he persevered to get into Parliament. He stood three times before he was successful; the first two times he was defeated by the then incumbent Liberal member, but even prior to that he persevered in his attempts to join the Labor Party. It was not as easy as it must be to join some other parties because I understand he was knocked back at the first two branches that he attempted to join!

Maybe the Labor Party was as factionalised in those days as it apparently is now. However, Tom persisted and went on to serve as branch secretary for 15 years.

Hon. M. R. Thomson interjected.

Hon. W. R. BAXTER — The Minister for Small Business has noted by interjection that being secretary of a branch for 15 years is indeed punishment. No doubt Tom was involved in very many federal and state campaigns for candidates and colleagues in those years. He served for quite a long while as a shadow minister, first in the housing and planning area but more particularly, as I recall him, as the shadow minister for police and emergency services. Although he never demonstrated it, it was probably somewhat of a

disappointment that he did not go on to be a cabinet minister in the Cain government in 1982; instead he became the Speaker.

I think he was a very good Speaker for the reasons alluded to by the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition, in the sense that he had the wit and personality to control what might have otherwise been a quite fractious house.

I was pleased to be able to attend Tom Edmunds's state funeral in Essendon earlier this month. I was pleased to see that the Parliament was well represented by both current and former members of all of the parties. The Premier was there, as were two former Premiers in Mr Cain and Mr Thompson. Of particular note was the presence of Liberal backbenchers from Tom Edmunds's time. Aurel Smith and Bill Stephen both travelled considerable distances to be there. It was a mark of the respect felt for Tom Edmunds in this place that these now quite elderly gentlemen made that effort to come to the funeral.

Hon. Andrew Brideson — Jim Ramsay.

Hon. W. R. BAXTER — Jim Ramsay was there, as Mr Brideson has reminded me, as was a former member of this place and former Leader of the National Party, the Honourable Stuart McDonald. It was a very moving and touching state funeral. The eulogy given by Mr Cain was most appropriate, and the family eulogy given by a member of Tom's family was most interesting indeed.

I look back on Tom Edmunds's contribution in the time I knew him and think that I was very fortunate to be able to gain from his wisdom and experience. I am quite sure that the Parliament as a whole, the Labor Party in particular, and the communities he represented in the Essendon area for so long, will greatly miss Tom Edmunds.

Hon. M. R. THOMSON (Minister for Small Business) — I rise on this condolence motion for Tom Edmunds because I was fortunate enough to work for him for a short period of time. When I was thinking about what I would like to say about Tom, I decided I would have to say that he was a great bloke. He genuinely cared about the people he came across, and he always had time to stop and speak to people about their families, how they were travelling and how they were going. He genuinely did care.

I want to spend a little bit of time talking about Tom's contribution to the Labor Party. Sometimes people get a bit taken away with the responsibility of being members of Parliament and disassociate themselves

from the rank and file of the Labor Party and the work done by branch members, but Tom never did. When it came time to hand out how-to-vote cards Tom was always there, whether it was his election or somebody else's.

I went to work for Tom when he became the honourable member for Pascoe Vale. At that time he decided that he should live in the electorate of Pascoe Vale if he was going to represent it. Tom was born in the municipality of Essendon and lived his entire life there, even with the change to Moonee Valley. There was a little snippet of Essendon in the Pascoe Vale electorate, and that is where Tom went to live. He was always true to his Essendon roots and his connection to the Essendon community.

I send my condolences to Tom's wife, Vivienne, who was always there to support him, and to his family. I regret that I was unable to attend Tom's funeral, but there are a couple of things I want to recognise in Tom as Speaker. The Leader of the Government mentioned the issue of the wig. The presiding officers would be pleased to hear that it was Tom's suggestion that presiding officers in the Legislative Assembly be given the opportunity to remove their wigs as Tom had removed his, and they took that opportunity. Tom Edmunds's words, when he said that it was too hot to wear the wigs and presiding officers should have a choice, ring all the truer for the experience we had when it was so hot in the chamber today.

Tom had a genuine care for everyone he came into contact with. The staff here at Parliament would have had a very close relationship with Tom, and he would have looked after them as individuals as well as staff. As a boss he treated me with a great deal of respect. He valued my contribution and always asked about my family and how they were going. I think it is a measure of a man that no matter how much responsibility he holds he can stop and think about others, as Tom always did. To Vivienne and the family, I send my condolences. I hope that they will remember Tom as fondly we do in the knowledge that he contributed a great deal to the constituents he represented.

Ms ROMANES (Melbourne) — I rise to offer my sympathy and condolences to the family of the late Tom Edmunds, a former Presiding Officer of the Victorian Parliament. Tom Edmunds was born in Essendon, an area in my electorate where he lived until his death and with which he was associated throughout his political career. He was educated, as other speakers have said, at Essendon North State School and the Essendon high and technical schools. Later in life he contributed to these schools and other educational

institutions in Essendon by serving on various school committees.

Tom served in the Royal Australian Air Force marine section in the south-west Pacific between 1942 and 1945. On his return he completed his apprenticeship and was employed as a lithographer. He later became factory manager of a printing firm. In 1952 he married Vivienne Amy Ballantyne, a teacher and librarian. They had three children.

As other speakers have said, Tom Edmunds was committed to his community and was involved in many community activities, including the Australian Labor Party. He finally joined the West Essendon branch of the Australian Labor Party in 1952. He held a range of offices in the ALP over many years and in 1967 became the honourable member for Moonee Ponds in the Legislative Assembly. When that seat was abolished in the 1976 redistribution Tom stood for and won the new seat of Ascot Vale, which itself was abolished in the 1984 redistribution. Once again Tom stood for the new seat, this time Pascoe Vale, which he won in 1985. During his time in the Legislative Assembly Tom Edmunds was a member of a number of committees and became Speaker, fulfilling that important role from 1982 to 1988.

There is one responsibility that other speakers have not yet mentioned, and that is Tom's role as chairman of the Exhibition Building. He was appointed chairman in 1988 and, as one of the members of the board who served with him was informing me at his state funeral, Tom Edmunds was instrumental in steering the wonderful work done by that committee to restore the exhibition building to its former glory so it could take centre stage in the centenary of Federation celebrations and to prepare it for submission for world heritage listing.

Tom Edmunds was one of the esteemed elders of the ALP in the Essendon and Moonee Ponds area. He will be sadly missed by his family and members of the ALP.

The PRESIDENT — I too wish to be part of this condolence motion for the late Honourable Cyril Thomas Edmunds — and you were very brave then to be called Tom, not Cyril!

I got to know Tom only just before I came into Parliament because, as the house will see from the various electorates he represented and the fact that he lived in Essendon, the lower house seat of Niddrie borders on my electorate of Doutta Galla. As the Minister for Small Business has indicated, Tom's willingness after leaving Parliament to always get

involved with activities in his party, the Australian Labor Party, was well known and respected. Tom was one of the first who rang me and said, 'Look, I'll take you around the shopping centres on Saturday morning. I'll make sure you go doorknocking in those particular areas'. I did not know Tom well when he was in Parliament, but I got to know him well after he left Parliament. He was very supportive, and in a by-election in my electorate he was out there on election day handing out how-to-vote cards, as he was with any election or by-election — and during that time there were a number of by-elections, especially for Doutta Galla. I know the Leader of the Government is very much aware of that from his involvement in another field at the time — that is, as secretary of the party.

Tom was always there. He was a great supporter of Essendon and a great advocate for that area. I too wish to be part of this motion, and I send my sincere condolences to his family.

Motion agreed to in silence, honourable members showing unanimous agreement by standing in their places.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr LENDERS (Minister for Finance) — I move:

That, as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Honourable Vincent Patrick Heffernan, OAM, and the late Honourable Cyril Thomas Edmunds, AM, the house do now adjourn until tomorrow at 10.00 a.m.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned 6.23 p.m.

