VICTORIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

FORTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
THIRD SESSION (1972-73)

Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly

VOL. CCCXII.

[From March 27, 1973, to April 12, 1973.]

MELBOURNE: C. H. RIXON, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.
The Governor

The Lieutenant-Governor
The Honorable Sir Henry Arthur Winneke, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., Q.C.

The Ministry
Premier, Treasurer, and Minister of the Arts
Minister of Education
Minister of Agriculture
Attorney-General
Chief Secretary, and Minister of Forests
Minister for Fuel and Power, and Minister of Mines
Minister of Health
Minister of Transport
Minister of Housing, and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Minister for Conservation, Minister of Lands, and Minister of Soldier Settlement
Minister of Labour and Industry
Minister for State Development and Decentralization, Minister for Tourism, and Minister of Immigration
*Minister for Social Welfare, and Minister for Youth and Recreation
Minister of Water Supply, and Minister of Public Works
Minister for Local Government
Minister without Portfolio
Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet: The Hon. W. V. Houghton, M.L.C.

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Sir Gilbert Chandler, K.B.E., C.M.G., M.L.C.
Sir George Reid, Q.C., M.P.
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W. A. Borthwick, M.P.
J. A. Rafferty, M.P.
Murray Byrne, M.L.C.
I. W. Smith, M.P.
R. C. Dunstan, D.S.O., M.P.
A. J. Hunt, M.L.C.
A. H. Scanlan, M.P.

* Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation from December 19, 1972.
## List of Members of Parliament

**Forty-fifth Parliament—Third Session (1972-73)**

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*Elected, June 9, 1972.*

**President:** THE HON. R. W. GARRETT, A.F.C., A.E.A.

**Chairman of Committees:** THE HON. G. J. NICOL.

**Temporary Chairmen of Committees:** THE HONORABLES A. K. BRADBURY, W. G. FRY, K. S. GROSS, AND A. W. KNIGHT.
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* Elected, October 7, 1972.  
† Resigned, August 24, 1972.

Speaker: The Hon. Sir Vernon Christie.

Chairman of Committees: Sir Edgar Tanner, C.B.E., E.D.

Temporary Chairmen of Committees: Mr. Edmunds, Mr. A. T. Evans, Mr. Gifiner, Mr. Jona, Mr. Lind, Mr. R. S. L. McDonald, Mr. McLaren, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Stokes, Mr. Suggett, Mr. A. W. Taylor, Mr. Trewin, Mr. Wheeler, and Mr. Wiltshire.

Leader of the Liberal Party: The Hon. R. J. Hamer, E.D.


Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Leader of the Opposition: Mr. A. C. Holding.

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Mr. F. N. Wilkes.

Leader of the Country Party: Mr. Peter Ross-Edwards.

Deputy Leader of the Country Party: Mr. M. S. Whiting.
HEADS OF PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS

_Council_— Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr. A. R. B. McDonnell.

_Assembly_— Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr. J. H. Campbell.

_Hansard_— Chief Reporter: Mr. R. G. Stuart, E.D.

_Library_— Librarian: Miss J. McGovern.

_House_— Secretary: Mr. R. M. Duguid.
pleasant experience, throughout Victoria, and also slaughter houses, because they are strictly in a different category from abattoirs. Members of the committee also travelled interstate and to New Zealand. We visited dozens of these establishments, of all shapes and sizes, and in various conditions of cleanliness. From our visits, one thing slowly but surely emerged, and that was that the sooner any immediate pressure was removed from the officer responsible for inspecting meat in any area—I mean by that, without any fear or apology, council, shire or municipal pressure—the better it would be for the meat industry in general throughout the State. I do not say that this was evident in every case of an inspection made by the Meat Industry Committee, because it was not, but there was enough of it to worry the members of the committee, and that must be stated.

How important is meat as an industry to Victoria and Australia? During our visits, one of the subjects uppermost in our minds was the eradication of salmonella from abattoirs, which can vary from ordinary diarrhoea to typhoid, and members of the committee were worried about it. When we travelled to areas 60 or 70 miles distant from Melbourne we were amazed and disgusted to see meat covered with blowflies hanging in slaughter houses. That was not just in one or two isolated cases. We also found in some abattoirs, so called, that there was floor preparation of meat which should have been abandoned many years ago.

One of the main arguments raised by people who have been opposed to this Bill has been, “Why alter something that has operated fairly well up to date?” However, I do not agree that that is the position. From the investigations of the Meat Industry Committee—I am sure other members of the committee will agree with me—it was found conclusively that in abattoirs an examination of animals should be made before they are slaughtered so that in the event of any disease being detected, or any restlessness which might on closer examination be discovered to be a disease, it can be traced quickly back to the source, and that there should be not only pre-slaughter examination but also post-mortem examination. It might be suggested that this situation would not crop up to any extent and that most of the troubles could be eradicated. However, if action is not taken, slowly but surely the efficiency of the meat industry will be adversely affected to the extent that it will cost untold millions of dollars in export earnings and also slowly but surely it is seeping through to the public of Victoria that at the prices they are paying for meat they are entitled to demand a product in A-I condition.

This Bill will not eradicate the small abattoir, and it will not even do away with the slaughter house. However, surely, abattoirs and slaughter houses throughout Victoria should be hygienic in every sense of the word. This does not mean that they all have to be upgraded to export standard. I can remember ample evidence being presented to the Meat Industry Committee that it is feasible to erect an abattoir for a cost as low as $53,000, to provide a whole area with efficiently killed, well-cleaned and hygienic meat. Some of the slaughter houses did not have a regular water supply. They had to rely on tank water, and the effluent was slung down a drop to an area 10 or 15 feet below the tank and fed to pigs at the bottom. There is much to be ashamed of in this State on the standard of our abattoirs. A cursory examination of the New South Wales system, even though it has been expensive to install, indicates quite clearly that the whole approach has been far more pragmatic and realistic than in Victoria. In Victoria there has been an inclination for development to occur on a laissez-faire basis. It has been left too much to private enterprise. Private enterprise has done a magnificent job in the export trade, but there is not one good service
Abattoirs in Melbourne that is available to small as well as medium operators in the export trade. The only way to export is through recognized abattoirs which in this State are solely owned by private enterprise, with the exception of the Victorian Inland Meat Authority at Bendigo and Ballarat. I am not certain whether the farmers and graziers co-operative has kept its abattoirs up to the export standard—perhaps honorable members can advise me—but I do not think it has. I think the association is selling purely for local trade.

It has gone past a joke. At Newmarket—whether it stays there or is moved somewhere else—there is a throughput potential which indicates the need for city or Government-controlled abattoirs somewhere within the metropolitan area. It need not necessarily be at Newmarket, but it would be very costly to move it from Newmarket in the foreseeable future. At Homebush in New South Wales the system is operating most efficiently in the interests of a multitude of processors from very small operators up to very big enterprises. They should receive full marks for the presentation of their services, the sophistication of their handling of offal and their live-weight scales. At the time I was there scales were handling 10 per cent of the throughput; they are now handling almost 90 per cent. The New South Wales abattoirs are a wonder to behold. Their time and motion study on the handling of cattle leaves very little to be desired. They have seen fit in the interests of the people and of good meat to set up a stock-selling centre, a processing centre and a wholesaling centre, which is a great success, for the benefit of consumers of meat in the Sydney area. It is so well thought of that meat cannot be brought into Sydney now unless it is approved by the meat authority in New South Wales for entry into the metropolitan zone.

Therefore, I say quite unashamedly that those who would utter criticism against this legislation on the ground that it would enable big business to take over the meat industry are way off the beam. They have been "got at" by the health surveyors and health officers who are worried about their future. I should like the comment of the Minister on the protection of the rights of people within the Department of Health who will be transferred to the Department of Agriculture. Will their rates of pay and superannuation entitlements be carried with them? I am sure this will be so—I should be amazed if it were not—but I think it should be studied by the Minister.

I should also like to know what the Minister has in mind on the rating of meat inspectors so that married men will have some chance of progress and regularity of employment in zones. This would also minimize their travelling time. The State should be co-operating with the Department of Primary Industry on inspection of meat for export so that there can be an interchange of inspection through the standardization of inspection procedures. This would mean that there would be no wastage or duplication of meat inspection services at any abattoirs in Victoria. I think these are reasonable questions to ask.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE.—I thought Mr. Elliot would consider that principle when he was talking about country members in the debate recently to introduce one-vote-one-value.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—Mr. Swinburne is about to sing for the Chamber Little Grey Home in the West, but we will leave that to him. Even though he made a cruel statement I am sure he did it in a kindly fashion because he adopts a fatherly attitude towards me.

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. R. W. Garrett).—Mr. Elliot should continue with a kindly attitude towards the Bill.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—All these recommendations came after an astounding amount of evidence was
taken by the Meat Industry Committee. One could not have gone to more abattoirs or called more witnesses in the study of a requirement than the committee did. I can speak for the members of the committee, with whom I have had many pleasant years of association. I can speak frankly on this, and that is why I resent any imputation that there was any siding with big business or other business. While I was associated with the committee every decision was unanimous, even that on the Newmarket abattoirs. However, that decision was ignored by the Government much to the sorrow and chagrin of the chairman, Mr. Gleeson—a worthy Liberal if ever there was one.

Justifiably, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations have continued to emphasize that ante-mortem inspection is fundamental in any safe system of meat control and that the veterinarian must play the major role in this inspection. This is already recognized in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia and is about to be recognized in Tasmania. So it is not as if Victoria is the odd one out. We are just “joining the gang” in a logical move that should apply to the whole of the country. Similarly, with post-mortem inspection of meat. This is essentially the application of principles of veterinary pathology whereby the nature of disease lesions that may be present are determined and judgments made on the condemnation or acceptance of meat and carcasses because of the presence of disease.

Most people have heard of the incidence of brucellosis and tuberculosis in Australia. If not checked, these diseases could cost us our export meat industry. If we let that happen we should be horse-whipped. We will not let it happen because the introduction of this Bill is one of the moves that will help to eradicate brucellosis and tuberculosis.

The Hon. S. R. McDonald.—Has Mr. Elliot a pecuniary interest in that?

The Hon. D. G. Elliot.—Mr. McDonald has made a barbed statement. Anyone interested in the production of beef would have a pecuniary interest in keeping it clean and hygienic. My beef interests are in New South Wales and Tasmania, not in Victoria, but I still want the beef to be first class.

The Abattoir and Meat Inspection Authority will eventually have to bring about meat grading. Even though I was not a member of the meat industry committee at the time, I was invited to its meeting with Professor Yeates and I saw the carcasses being graded and it was a sight to behold. If people are paying $1.30 or $1.40 a pound for steak they are entitled to know with reasonable certainty the quality of the meat they are buying. This may occur in the future.

The proposal in the Bill is that the control of meat by meat inspectors from the Department of Agriculture will terminate upon delivery of the meat to the retail shop outlets. That is where the Department of Health steps in. I do not know why the Department of Health is concerned because it will still have control of the shops. It will still be able to ensure that certain standards are maintained in the presentation of the meat, that flies are eradicated and there is no danger of salmonella infection. All it is worried about is whether it receives a piece of the cake. It is not looking at the broader aspect, which is the survival of the meat industry in Victoria.

The Hon. K. S. Gross.—It is a piece of the cake it was not looking after before.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot.—It was doing the best it could, but it is not good enough because this type of inspection should come under adequate control. A veterinarian should know more about an animal carcass than a doctor of medicine. This is as logical as night following
day, but it is hard to convince people. I am sure you, Mr. President, have said that something is black and have been certain that it was black and someone who was prejudiced has maintained that it was white.

The authority would have a chairman and a deputy chairman. I understand that Dr. Flynn will be the first chairman. He is a forthright man who will speak right from the shoulder and will tell the Minister the truth. He is not a yes man, and I am sure the Leader of the House knows that. The authority will have a representative from the Department of Health. That means the Department of Health will still have an interest in meat inspection. The Local Government Department will also be represented and there will be two representatives from primary producer organizations. I presume they will be from the Graziers Association of Victoria and the Victorian Farmers Union. Members will be appointed for a maximum of three years and will be eligible for reappointment after a term not exceeding three years.

Because of a technicality in that an appropriation would be necessary from the Consolidated Fund, I cannot suggest that an additional member should be appointed to the authority. However, I can suggest to the Government that an alternative appointment should be made and I believe so keenly in this that at the Committee stage I shall move an amendment to that effect. The person I have in mind is the type of man who is available through the trade union movement and one wonders how the Government would not go out of its way to seek his services on the authority. He is consulted frequently by the Titans of the industry. The person I refer to is Mr. George Seelaf of the butchers’ union. He has been associated with the union since 1947.

I shall give the House this man’s record and honorable members can gauge how he has contributed to the meat industry in this country. His experience in establishing conditions of employment in abattoirs is recognized throughout Australia and beyond. His papers have been read extensively overseas. He has visited all abattoirs of any reasonable size throughout Australia, and not only in Victoria. He is forthright; that may be a reason why he has not been invited on to the authority. He is an advocate of new marketing techniques, and his work in Asia and in the Communist countries and his forecasting the inevitability of Australia trading in meat with these countries has now been confirmed by the effluxion of time. His work on smoked mutton for the Japanese trade has been outstanding. His work on cuts of meat so that they would be attractive to overseas markets has been heralded by some of the largest meat companies in the industry.

Mr. Seelaf was the founder of the trade union clinic, which has done more to help workers suffering from deafness and other complaints than any other similar organization in this country. It has been financed out of deductions and union participation and is a wonderfully efficient organization. The trade union clinic was the brain child of Mr. George Seelaf.

The Hon. H. R. WARD.—Is there any guarantee that he would be selected by the trade union movement?

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—As a boss’s man he would make a fortune. He has had attractive offers. He has considerable knowledge of imports and exports and of general conditions in the meat industry. He is one of the outstanding meat experts in Australia. He is respected by others in the industry. Journalists refer to him on almost every matter relating to the meat industry. He has even written papers on pasture improvement as it applies to animal husbandry. He is an outstanding man and his selection would be almost automatic by the Trades Hall Council. He is the type of man who should be on the authority. I will formally move an amendment during the Committee stage, but I appeal to the Government to have second thoughts about appointing a
representative from the Victorian Trades Hall Council because there are many men from the trade union movement who are engaged in the processing side of the meat industry. They thoroughly understand the management of a processing plant and have experience on sheep chains and beef chains and in every phase of beef production. Some of the old-time slaughter men could dress a carcass fully. It is a work of art to see them in operation from the release of the captive bolt to the finished product. They are excellent tradesmen of whom we should be proud. George Seelaf has had to do business with these virile men who comprise part of a virile industry, and there are thousands of them throughout the industry. Men of this quality are entitled to have representation. I make that appeal most enthusiastically.

There is nothing more to add except, on behalf of the Labor Party, to approve of this measure. It will be a fine day for Victoria when it is passed. I am sure the Minister of Agriculture will be pleased that he has succeeded in getting this Bill through both Houses before his retirement. I know that the honorable gentleman has had a lot of interest in this subject during the years, apart from many other problems which have been placed on his desk, but this is one which he will be grateful has reached a successful conclusion.

I ask the Minister to give a definite statement on superannuation entitlements, on maintenance of seniority and on the carrying over of employees’ rights to the Department of Agriculture. Apart from that and my foreshadowed amendment, the Labor Party has nothing but praise for the Bill.

The Hon. S. R. McDonald (Northern Province).—It is pleasing to hear a member of the Labor Party make a contribution in this House which indicates that some members of that party at least have some understanding and knowledge of primary industry and primary producers. Recently honorable members have heard other members of the Labor Party who appear to be mainly concerned with trees, jackasses and haystacks in the rural areas. It is a pleasant change to hear the first-class contribution by Mr. Elliot on this subject.

The Bill before the House, as pointed out by the Minister of Agriculture and Mr. Elliot, is the result of investigation and recommendation by the all-party Parliamentary Meat Industry Committee. The committee examined many aspects of the industry in Australia and New Zealand and the recommendations can be summed up in this manner: Firstly, that meat consumed in Victoria should be subject to meat inspection and that a co-ordinated meat inspection service should be established; secondly, that it was necessary to develop a system where there was veterinary supervision of meat inspection; thirdly, that the control of abattoirs and meat inspection generally should be transferred from the Department of Health to the Department of Agriculture; and finally, that changes should be made concerning the pet food industry and knackeries.

The Bill provides machinery by which the recommendations of the Meat Industry Committee will be put into effect. In Part I., clause 2 contains a lengthy list of interpretations. Clause 3 gives the Minister the power to grant exemptions from the operation of the Act. Part II. provides for the setting up of a Victorian Abattoir and Meat Inspection Authority. Part III. provides for the Director of Agriculture to set up and establish a meat inspection service. Part IV. refers to the licensing of meat establishments and introduces an important concept to provide that there shall be in Victoria three classifications of abattoirs. Further, in this part there is reference to the operation of this authority in licensing meat works establishments.

To decide whether or not this measure is worthy of support, the Country Party believes it should
examine the arguments for and against. My party has received representations from many organizations and municipal councils in support of the Bill. Similarly, representations have been received from the Australian Institute of Health Surveyors and some municipal councils in opposition to the Bill. The Country Party has examined all aspects and arguments for and against, and on balance it has decided that the arguments in favour of the Bill are substantial and soundly based. The Country Party will therefore support the Bill.

That is not to say that members of the Country Party do not have some reservations and at a later stage I will mention particular areas of the Bill with which we are not completely satisfied. It is appropriate to examine the arguments which have been advanced for and against the Bill. On the question whether all meat in Victoria should be subject to meat inspection, there is no disagreement. Even the Australian Institute of Health Surveyors is in favour of that principle. There is one point worthy of mention. In the deliberations of the all-party Meat Industry Committee, members were concerned with the geographically isolated areas of the State where it may not be possible or practical to provide a complete meat inspection service. In those areas of the State this could apply to some municipalities in the north-western area and also in East Gippsland—it may be necessary to grant exemption from the operation of the Act as provided for in clause 3.

On the provision of veterinary supervision of meat inspection, Mr. Elliot pointed out that abundant evidence was placed before the committee that this principle was in the best interests not only of the meat industry but also of public health. The system of veterinary supervision of meat inspection applies in most States of Australia and is operated by the Department of Primary Industry in meat works preparing meat for export. The system also operates in New Zealand and in the United States of America. It is fair to say that, because this State is making this change only in 1973, Victoria has lagged behind the other States. In my discussions with the Minister of Agriculture, the honorable gentleman indicated that for a number of years this matter has been raised by State Ministers at meetings of the Australian Agricultural Council. The question has been asked why Victoria was not implementing this type of meat inspection system.

The principle of veterinary supervision of meat inspection has been supported by the highest medical authorities in the world. I have obtained reprints of articles published by the World Health Organization and shall briefly refer to two of them. These leave no doubt whatsoever that this organization is firmly behind this system, and the quotations should answer the criticism of those who are against this type of meat inspection system. In a document published jointly by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization in 1957, the following statement appears on page 111—

Ante-mortem inspection ought to be carried out solely by veterinarians, and these should preferably have had a long experience of general clinical practice before taking up this type of work.

In another publication issued by the Food and Agricultural Organization and the World Health Organization, Technical Report Series No. 99, being the first report of the expert committee on meat hygiene, this statement appears on page 15—

Ante-mortem veterinary inspection of animals intended for slaughter should be regarded as an essential procedure in any efficient meat inspection service. One advantage of such a procedure is that it is the means of detecting animals suffering from some affection which might be injurious or prejudicial to human health. I suggest that quotations from authorities as important and respected as the World Health Organization indicate that the principle

The Hon. S. R. McDonald.
embodied in the Meat Industry Committee's recommendations and in this Bill is sound.

I now turn to the transfer of the control of the operation of meat inspection from the Department of Health to the Department of Agriculture. Ample evidence was placed before the committee that this was a system which enabled a rapid trace-back of disease to either individual herds, flocks or districts as a whole and was of immense benefit in the interests of both public health and the meat industry. Mr. Elliot mentioned briefly the eradication of animal diseases in Australia. This was referred to by the Chairman of the Australian Meat Board, Colonel McArthur, in his introductory letter to the Minister for Primary Industry when representing the Australian Meat Board's report for 1972 where, among other things, he had this to say—

The presence of tuberculosis in cattle in some parts of Australia currently prevents export of meat from these cattle. There is every prospect that a similar situation will apply to meat from cattle with brucellosis in the not-too-distant future. This makes it imperative that we step up our eradication plans on a national basis.

In the same document, referring to the mutton industry and the effect of cysticerosis on the mutton trade, Colonel McArthur said—

Unless producers take heed, average mutton prices will continue to suffer because of rejection.

Colonel McArthur was referring to the rejection in the United States of America of mutton which resulted in reduced returns, with a consequent loss to the meat trade and finally in the long run to the meat producer.

The opposition to the Bill is in two forms. The first comes from the Australian Institute of Health Surveyors and the second from some municipal councils, particularly those in country areas. The Country Party believes that the Australian Institute of Health Surveyors has every right to put forward its opinions and points of view where public health is involved. In statements the institute has criticized the Meat Industry Committee, accusing it of not being concerned with or ignoring public health. I suggest that any honorable member who examines the evidence placed before the committee will find that it gave considerable attention to public health. In fact, on the recommendation of the committee one of the three representatives on the advisory committee was from the Department of Health. That demolishes the argument that public health has been overlooked by the committee. I think I have said sufficient about meat inspection and veterinary supervision to refute the arguments put forward by the health surveyors.

In a document circulated by the Australian Institute of Surveyors, dated 16th August, 1972, over the signature of Mr. W. U. Hughes, who is the State secretary of the organization, reference is made to a number of matters which have caused much of the opposition to the Bill from other sources. The document, which contends that the Bill will lead to monopoly control in the meat industry, states—

The Abattoir and Meat Inspection Bill proposes a large monopoly which places the consumer at the mercy of the combined efforts of producer organizations.

It also states that the Bill “will predestinate the consumer to an unproven standard of meat and cleanliness”.

The arguments submitted by the health surveyors outside the area of public health have been inaccurate and erroneous, and have given rise to some misapprehensions and misconceptions concerning the Bill. If the institute had restricted its comments to public health there would have been much less opposition to the Bill. When the Bill is being considered in Committee, perhaps the Minister of Agriculture might give honorable members a run-down on some of the steps taken by various people leading up to the introduction of the Bill.

The most important opposition has come from certain municipal councils. The councils have a justifiable
concern over some of the implications of the Bill and the subsequent financial results. Some municipalities subsidize the cost of meat inspection and others make a handsome profit from their meat inspection service. This is not justified, and under the new system a uniform fee should be fixed.

Municipalities which employ a health inspector who at the same time fulfils the duty of meat inspector have claimed that under the measure they will lose some revenue which would go towards paying the salary of the health inspector. The Minister has already stated that this is not the case; that suitable arrangements will be made between the proposed authority and the municipality to overcome the problem.

The major opposition stems from a real concern for the possible effect of the measure on abattoirs and slaughter houses in country areas. It is feared that the power of the authority to license meat establishments and to set standards will be used to set excessively high standards which will have the effect of closing some works. It is worth pointing out to the municipalities which have this fear that sub-clause (2) of clause 4 provides—

The Authority shall in the exercise and discharge of its powers, authorities, duties and functions, be subject in all respects to the control and direction of the Minister.

The provision means that the authority will be well and truly under the control of the Minister.

The Hon. H. R. WARD.—What does Mr. McDonald suggest the Government should do about that?

The Hon. S. R. MCDONALD.—I am not suggesting that anything should be done. Indeed, Ministerial responsibility or control should be exercised over all departments and authorities. Furthermore, an additional safeguard to which I will refer at the Committee stage is included in the provisions relating to the right of appeal to the Minister on any decision to suspend or delicense an abattoir.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—I intend to move an amendment to that provision so that the suspension will operate only until such time as the person has the opportunity of appealing, instead of closing the establishment down and then lodging an appeal.

The Hon. S. R. MCDONALD.—I am pleased to hear the Minister’s statement because it is in line with one of the points I intend to raise later. In the final analysis, it is fair to say that the future of the meat industry, and of abattoirs and slaughter houses in particular, must surely be a matter of Government policy.

Opponents of the Bill have suggested that all sorts of things will be done to arbitrarily close abattoirs and slaughter houses. However, in the long run whatever is done in this respect will surely be a matter of Government policy. I am also certain that the Bill contains more safeguards concerning the future of abattoirs and slaughter houses than are contained in the Health Act. On the matter of applications to build or modify abattoirs, sub-section (2) of section 10 of the Health Act provides that the Commission of Public Health may with or without any modifications or conditions approve of the plans and specifications, or may refuse the application. There is no provision for an appeal from that decision. Therefore, this measure contains more safeguards than does the Health Act.

I now refer to the few points about which my party has some concern. Already the Minister has indicated that he intends to move an amendment relating to the procedures when an appeal is made to the Minister. Members of my party wait with some interest the proposed amendment.

The first qualification concerning my party’s support for the Bill relates to the membership of the proposed Victorian Abattoir and Meat Inspection Authority. As has been pointed out by the Minister and by Mr. Elliot, the eight-man authority will include one representative from the
The Victorian Farmers Union and one from the Graziers Association. The Country Party has received representations from the Victorian Dairyfarmers Association that, as it is an important meat producer organization, it should be represented in a like manner. At a later stage, I shall move an amendment to this effect.

The second point to which I refer relates to clause 10, which empowers the Director of Agriculture to set fees for meat inspection. The Country Party believes the fees set for this service in each of the categories of abattoirs should be uniform throughout the State. No one can seriously question or oppose that view. During the Committee stage I shall move an amendment on behalf of the Country Party to bring about that result.

The final doubt that members of the Country Party have relates to subclause (5) of clause 22, which provides—

A licence for a slaughter house shall be issued only to an applicant who satisfies the Authority—

(a) that he uses or intends to use the slaughter house for slaughter of animals for preparation of meat or meat products for retail sale in shops owned or operated or controlled by him; or

(b) that the throughput in the slaughter house of animals for slaughter is or will be below the prescribed maximum throughput.

Paragraph (a) is straightforward. It has been suggested by some municipalities that the prescribed maximum throughput in paragraph (b) could be set at a low figure and that in some cases it could mean the closure of an abattoir. The Country Party believes that the restriction of prescribing a maximum throughput should be removed and that there should be a maximum prescription based on the number of retail outlets that can be supplied by an individual slaughter house. I shall explain the proposition in more detail when I submit the appropriate amendment.

I have no doubt whatever from the evidence received by the Meat Industry Committee that the provisions of the Bill will be tremendously important to the meat industry and the meat export trade. In the past the meat industry has too often differentiated between local trade and export trade, and this Bill will go a long way towards overcoming this deficiency.

I repeat my earlier statement that the effects of the Bill on abattoirs and slaughter houses, and the meat industry generally, must surely be a matter of Government policy and, like Mr. Elliot, members of my party will be waiting with some interest to hear the remarks of the Minister concerning the Government's intentions on the future of smaller country abattoirs and slaughter houses.

On the motion of the Hon. S. E. GLEESON (South-Western Province), the debate was adjourned.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: HORSHAM HIGH SCHOOL.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

The Hon. C. A. MITCHELL (Western Province).—The first matter that I wish to speak on relates to the Horsham High School.

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. R. W. Garrett).—I point out to Mr. Mitchell that an honorable member may raise only one matter on the motion for the adjournment of the sitting.

The Hon. C. A. MITCHELL.—I first direct attention to the fact that I have not had an answer to a simple question, which I asked three weeks...
ago, relating to the staff of the Horsham High School. Apparently the Government does not want to answer the question.

The Hon. Murray Byrne.—What is the number of the question?

The Hon. C. A. Mitchell.—It was question No. 5 on Notice Paper No. 29 of 20th March. The question asked how many high schools in the metropolitan area were understaffed, how many high schools outside the metropolitan area were understaffed, and what steps the Government was taking to rectify the position with regard to the staff shortage at the Horsham High School. In the past two years, this school has been understaffed and has worked a four-day week. This is the third year in which this situation has applied. Some time ago, the Minister promised that he would examine the position but it has not changed, unless it has done so within the past few days. What does the Government intend to do? It is not right that the school should be understaffed year after year. This is the worst situation at any school in my electorate.

The Hon. J. M. Tripovich.—There are dozens of schools like that.

The President (the Hon. R. W. Garrett).—There should be no interjections and no debate on matters raised on the motion for the adjournment of the sitting.

The Hon. C. A. Mitchell.—There is another matter which concerns me.

The President.—If it is an entirely different matter, I cannot hear Mr. Mitchell on it. Only one matter may be raised by any member during the adjournment debate. If the other matter is relevant to the matter already raised, I shall hear Mr. Mitchell on it but, if it is not, it will have to wait until tomorrow.

The Hon. Murray Byrne (Minister for State Development and Decentralization).—Mr. Mitchell is concerned, like every other honorable member, with the schools in the area he represents. He asked a question relating to the staff shortage at the Horsham High School, but he also asked for information concerning all high schools in the metropolitan area. I gave him the answer from the Minister of Education, which was reasonable, that it would take some time to compile the information asked for.

I am not quite sure of the purpose of Mr. Mitchell’s complaint tonight. I think he is suggesting that he has not received an answer relating to the Horsham High School, and he has expressed his concern about the staffing position at the school. I will take up the question of the staffing position at the school, but I do not apologize for the answer provided by the Minister of Education to the question placed on the Notice Paper by Mr. Mitchell. That related not merely to his own electorate but also to every high school in Melbourne.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.19 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, March 27, 1973.

The Speaker (Sir Vernon Christie) took the chair at 2.36 p.m., and read the prayer.

Questions on Notice.

The following answers to questions on notice were circulated:

HOUSING COMMISSION.

Units under Construction: Tenancy and Purchase Applications.

(Question No. 995)

Mr. Edmunds (Moonee Ponds) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Minister of Housing—

1. How many Housing Commission separate villas were under construction as at 5th March, 1973?
2. How many are planned to be finished and listed for the next annual report to Parliament?

3. In which areas these houses are being constructed and whether they will be available to tenancy and purchase applicants, respectively, in each area?

4. How long such applicants have been waiting for purchase or tenancy in each case?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).
—The answer supplied by the Minister of Housing is—

1. 1,049.
2. 1,106.
3. Metropolitan area.. 386
   Country
   Avoca .. 4
   Bacchus Marsh .. 2
   Bendigo .. 31
   Eaglehawk .. 30
   Bright .. 3
   Cobram .. 5
   Colac .. 6
   Geelong .. 217
   Echuca .. 5
   Edenhope .. 2
   Frankston .. 25
   (armed service only)
   Hastings .. 27
   Heyfield .. 4
   Irymple .. 6
   Leitchville .. 5
   Maffra .. 14
   Mildura .. 3
   Mornington .. 20
   Mooroopna .. 31
   Myrtleford .. 5
   Narre Warren .. 82
   Robinvale .. 6
   Rochester .. 5
   Rutherglen .. 3
   Sale .. 13
   Shepparton .. 83
   Simpson .. 2
   Stawell .. 6
   Wangaratta .. 5
   Warrnambool .. 10
   Wodonga .. 54
   Yarrawonga .. 6

In the metropolitan area all new civilian type houses are sold and in the country they are erected for both rental and purchase.

4. The information is incorporated in the answer to question No. 997.

(Question No. 997)

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Minister of Housing—

1. How many tenancy and purchase applications, respectively, are outstanding, in the categories of families with up to three children, four children, five or more children, single male pensioners or female pensioners, elderly couples requiring Darby and Joan units, and any other category, in the metropolitan area?

2. What is the average waiting time for each of these categories in the metropolitan area?

3. How many tenancy and purchase applications are outstanding in each of the above-mentioned categories and any other category, itemized and listed for each of the country towns, as detailed in table C of the 1971–72 Housing Commission annual report?

4. What is the average waiting time for each of the categories listed for each of the country towns as itemized?

5. How many units to accommodate each of the categories listed in the metropolitan area and country towns as itemized are planned for the next twelve months?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).
—The answer supplied by the Minister of Housing is—

1. Outstanding applications for tenancy or purchase (metropolitan only) comprise:
   Lone persons (male and female) .. 850
   Low rental (Darby and Joan) .. 270
   Childless couples .. 512
   Families (one to four children) .. 7,158
   Families (five or more children) .. 350

2. Average waiting times for metropolitan estates are:

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tenancy</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lone person flats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low rental (Darby and Joan) flats</td>
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<td>Childless couples, flats</td>
<td>18 months</td>
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<td>Two bedroom flats</td>
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<td>Three bedroom houses</td>
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<td>34–4 years</td>
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<td>Number of applicants</td>
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<td>Town</td>
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<td>Darby and Joan (pensioner couples)</td>
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<td>Waiting time</td>
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<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heyfield</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heywood</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopetoun</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsham</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inglewood</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irymple</td>
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<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaniva</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
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<td>Kerang</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koo-wee-rup</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koroi</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korumburra</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyabram</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyneton</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakes Entrance</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang Lang</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leitchville</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leongatha</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Indefinite</td>
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<td>Longwarry</td>
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<td>Indefinite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maffra</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Meeniyan</td>
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<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merbein</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merrigum</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildura</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>Lone persons (male and female)</td>
<td>Darby and Joan (pensioner couples)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of applicants</td>
<td>Waiting time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minyip</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>7 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirboo North</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moe</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>13 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mooroopna</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>7 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mornington</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortlake</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morwell</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moyhu</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murtoa</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murchison</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myrtleford</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagambie</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathalia</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natimuk</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nilh</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numurkah</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyah West</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omeo</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orbost</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouyen</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakenham East</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penshurst</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poowong</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Fairy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsea</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyramid Hill</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>Number of applicants</td>
<td>Waiting time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point Lonsdale</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Cliffs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinvale</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosedale</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutherglen</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Arnaud</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Depends on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea Lake</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepparton</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simpson</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanhope</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stawell</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratford</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strathmerton</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan Hill</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallangatta</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangambalanga</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatura</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terang</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongala</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toora</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trafalgar</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traralgon</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>Number of applicants</td>
<td>Waiting time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wangaratta</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warracknabeal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warragul</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrnambool</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wedderburn</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Werribee</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willaura</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wodonga</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonthaggi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodend</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wychenproof</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarram</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarrawonga</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yea</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Depends on vacancies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. The metropolitan and country building programme for 1973–74 has not yet been determined.
SALE OF HOMES AT HAMILTON.
(Question No. 1170)
Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Minister of Housing—

How many Housing Commission homes at Hamilton have been sold in the past five years and what commission has been paid to agents in respect of these sales?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Housing is—

Forty-six.

$3,728.06.

MAINTENANCE OF TEACHERS' HOMES AT HAMILTON.
(Question No. 1171)
Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Minister of Housing—

1. How many additional houses have or will come under the administration of the Housing Commission's maintenance officer in Hamilton in view of the transfer of teacher housing to the Minister?
2. Whether this officer has or will receive any additional assistance; if not, why?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Housing is—

1. When the Housing Commission accepted responsibility for maintenance of teacher housing authority houses on 1st July, 1971, the maintenance officer (works officer) at Hamilton was made responsible for maintenance on an additional 95 units.

2. No; the work load is considered reasonable at the present time.

CONSTRUCTION OF HOMES IN KOWREE SHIRE.
(Question No. 1172)
Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Minister of Housing—

1. When Kowree shire first applied for the construction of five Housing Commission homes within its area?
2. Whether all of these homes have been built; if not—(a) how many have been completed; and (b) when tenders will be called for the construction of further homes?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Housing is—

1. 1969.
2. No.

(a) Two units under construction at Edenhope.

(b) The 1973-74 building programme has not yet been formulated.

CONSTRUCTION, SALE AND RENTAL OF HOMES AT CHURCHILL.
(Question No. 1175)
Mr. AMOS (Morwell) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Minister of Housing—

Further to the answer to question No. 1078 asked in this House on 20th March, 1973—

1. Whether the rate of interest on borrowings from the Commonwealth since the inception of Churchill has varied from 6 per cent; if so, what were the variations and from when they were effective in each case?
2. What total commission has been paid to private agents for the sale of homes and/or rental collections in—(a) the Latrobe Valley; and (b) throughout Victoria, since such agents were authorized to do such work?
3. Why agents are used for this purpose when the district office of the Housing Commission is capable of performing the task?
4. Whether he will review the present arrangements; if not, why?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Housing is—

1. Yes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Rate of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st February, 1962</td>
<td>4 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st July, 1963</td>
<td>3·5 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26th June, 1964</td>
<td>3·625 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st January, 1965</td>
<td>4 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th April, 1965</td>
<td>4·25 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27th June, 1969</td>
<td>4·4 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th April, 1970</td>
<td>5 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29th June, 1970</td>
<td>6 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st July, 1971</td>
<td>7 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th February, 1972</td>
<td>6 per cent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Total commission paid to agents for sale of homes and for collecting instalments up to and including financial year, 1971-72—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Collections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Latrobe Valley</td>
<td>$213,871·48</td>
<td>$156,048·24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Throughout Victoria</td>
<td>$1,070,212·50</td>
<td>$1,125,532·27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 and 4. As it is considered that, by using private agents, a more satisfactory service is provided to the public in regard to house sales, no change in the present arrangements is contemplated.
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.
EXPENDITURE ON SCHOOLS IN BENNETTSWOOD ELECTORATE.
(Question No. 1007)

Mr. McLAREN (Bennettswood) asked the Minister of Education—

What amounts over $100 have been spent, or subsidies given—(a) during the 44th Parliament; and (b) to date in the 45th Parliament on—(i) Burwood Teachers College; (ii) Ashwood, Burwood and Wattle Park high schools; (iii) Burwood and Jordanville technical schools; (iv) Ashwood, Bayview, Bennettswood, Box Hill South, Burwood, Essex Heights, Jordanville South, Mount Waverley, Wattle Park and Waverley North primary schools; and (v) Allambie and Princess Elizabeth special schools, giving details in respect of each item of expenditure?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

Reference to the Public Works Department has indicated that the information cannot be obtained without seriously interfering with the normal working of that department.

PRIMARY SCHOOL No. 2828.
(Question No. 1128)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Education—

1. When renovations will be carried out at primary school No. 2828?
2. What has been the cause of the delay since the tender was let last year?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1. Tenders will be advertised Wednesday, 28th March, 1973. Subject to a satisfactory tender being received it is anticipated that a contract will be let in May, 1973.
2. Work could not proceed due to the funds position at that time.

WHITE HILLS TECHNICAL SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1130)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Education—

Whether flood damage was caused recently to the new gymnasium/music block at the White Hills Technical School; if so, why a proposed drainage system had not been installed prior to the flash flood late last month?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1. Flood damage caused to the floor of the new gymnasium/music block will necessitate replacement of the flooring. Replacement will be covered by builder's insurance.
2. Prior to the unprecedented flash flood that caused the above damage, the existing 3 ft. 6 in. barrel drain had proved more than adequate under all conditions.

BENDIGO GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1131)

Mr. CURROW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What classes are short of teachers at the Bendigo Girls High School?
2. What subjects have been taken by correspondence because personal attention is not available?
3. Whether music has been dropped as a full-time subject because of lack of staff?
4. Whether two teachers have left the school since the start of the year; if so, when they will be replaced?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1. There is no need for pupils at Bendigo Girls High School to be without full-time tuition.
2. The following number of students are taking correspondence tuition from the Bendigo Girls High School in the subjects as listed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>English literature</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>Mathematics II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>Agricultural science</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>Social studies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correspondence tuition is effective at senior levels and is encouraged for small classes.
3. The reasons for a school's change of subjects is not normally questioned. However, Bendigo Girls High School is seeking both music and physical education teachers.
4. Teachers will be replaced if they cause a genuine shortage which cannot reasonably be adjusted within the school.

SCHOOLS IN SWAN HILL ELECTORATE.
(Question No. 1136)

Mr. BROAD (Swan Hill) asked the Minister of Education—

How many—(a) students; (b) teachers; and (c) class-rooms, are at the Robinvale, Swan Hill, Kerang, Birchip and Sea Lake high schools, respectively?
Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education)—The answer is—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrolment</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Rooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robinvale</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan Hill</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>50·4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerang</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birchip</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>13·1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea Lake</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TECHNICAL SCHOOL FOR BELMONT.
(Question No. 1138)

Mr. BIRRELL (Geelong) asked the Minister of Education—

1. When the projected site works for the new technical school in Belmont are scheduled to commence?
2. Whether tenders for the construction of stage 1 of the new school will be called before the end of 1973?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1. Site works are always scheduled to follow on the completion of the actual building works.
2. Yes.

APPRENTICES: TRAINING COURSES.
(Question No. 1148)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What degree of co-ordination exists between the Apprenticeship Commission and the Education Department in respect of the design and quality of trade courses and the taking of a periodic census in respect of apprenticeship training needs?
2. What statistics, if any, have been compiled from any census of apprenticeship training needs?
3. What significant changes have taken place in apprenticeship training, staffing of schools and provision of machinery and equipment during the past five years, indicating the reasons for such changes, who authorized them and what surveys have been made to measure their effects?
4. What seminars and conferences have been held in relation to the education of apprentices during each of the past five years?
5. Whether the records of recommendations and other decisions of these conferences are filed and available for reference?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1. A high degree of co-ordination and liaison exists. The deputy president of the Apprenticeship Commission is a senior member of the Board of Technical Inspectors; Education Department subject standing committees work conjointly with the trade committees of the Apprenticeship Commission; and a senior teacher is seconded to the Apprenticeship Commission to co-ordinate the arrangements concerning requirements for classes and placement of apprentices in particular schools.
2. The Apprenticeship Commission maintains statistics concerning present and projected needs for apprentice training. An assistant director of technical education maintains statistics concerning present classes in schools and projected needs for additional facilities required.
3. During the past five years—
   (a) the four-year courses have been consolidated into three years;
   (b) modular training is replacing the traditional subject training;
   (c) there has been a continuing improvement of both quantity and quality of teachers;
   (d) teaching loads and class sizes have been reduced;
   (e) equipment and machinery are constantly being supplemented and replaced to meet the changing needs for training; and
   (f) the process of linking school training and on the job training is being accelerated by the secondment of some twelve experienced teachers as training advisers to industry.
4. Numerous inservice education activities are conducted on annual and periodical bases for all areas of training concerned. These involve a wide range of teachers and representatives of industry.
5. Yes—particularly through the many standing committees concerned.

MACHINERY IN TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.
(Question No. 1155)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Education—

In respect of students, other than apprentices, using machinery in technical schools—

1. What machines are currently in use?
2. What is the degree of risk of injury to unskilled students operating these machines?
3. What average proportion of weekly school hours are devoted to machine shop activity?
4. What is the student-teacher ratio during workshop instruction?
5. What maintenance staff is employed by the Education Department to keep machines and equipment in safe working order?
6. What assessment of relative dangers has been made in respect of each type of machine?

7. What measures have been taken to standardize shut off devices such as kick switches on machinery used for instruction?

8. What special provisions have been made to overcome the problems associated with students of small stature and size operating standard size machines?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1. Machines currently in use—
   - Drilling machines.
   - Lathes.
   - Shaping machines.
   - Milling machines.
   - Grinding machines.

2. The degree of risk of injury to unskilled students operating these machines is negligible provided that the students adhere closely to the safety precautions taught and insisted on by the teaching staff in workshops.

3. In a 30-hour school week the hours devoted to machine shop activity vary between one and a half hours for form II. students to six hours for some form V. students.

4. The over-all student teacher ratio at the secondary level is approximately twelve to one.

5. It is the responsibility of the teaching staff to ensure that minor repairs and adjustments are carried out and that students receive instruction in this matter. Major problems are referred to the relevant Public Works Department inspectors for attention.

6. As safe working procedures in workshops have been assessed and stressed for many years, no relative assessment of particular machines has been published. However, each teacher is expected to carry out this task and to provide the necessary instruction and supervision at the class level.

7. All new machines purchased by the Education Department must be equipped with projecting mushroom headed stop buttons. Drilling machines are now equipped with floor-mounted oversize mushroom headed stop buttons. Older machines are being converted as finance becomes available. Every machine shop has at least two safety isolating stop buttons mounted on the walls. These isolating buttons cut off all electric power from the machine shop.

8. Where student stature prevents the use of standard machines, safety platforms are used to enable the students to be in comfortable control of all operating levers, control buttons, etc.

SHERBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL.

(Question No. 1159)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What action is proposed for the next building stage of class-rooms at Sherbourne Primary School to accommodate the expected increase in enrolments?

2. When construction will be completed and how many rooms will be provided?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1 and 2. The provision of additional class-rooms for the Sherbourne Primary School is being considered in conjunction with the review of the department’s capital works programme.

At this stage, no indication can be given regarding the number of rooms to be provided and when work will commence.

CENTENARY OF EDUCATION: COMMEMORATIVE PUBLICATION.

(Question No. 1163)

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park) asked the Minister of Education—

Whether the Education Department has produced a book to commemorate the centenary of education in Victoria; if so—(a) how many were printed; (b) to whom they were distributed; (c) what was the total cost of printing and production; and (d) whether he will make copies available to all members of the Parliament?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

Yes. A book of three volumes is being produced.

(a) 5,000 copies of volume 1 have been printed.

The printing of 4,000 copies of volumes 2 and 3 each is in progress.

(b) (i) All members of Parliament.

(ii) To every State school and college.

(iii) Universities, School of Education.

(iv) Victoria Institute of Colleges.

(v) Senior departmental officers.

(vi) Major libraries.

(vii) Director-General of Education in each State.

(viii) Library of the Education Department in each State.

(c) As printing is not yet complete a final figure on the cost of production is not available.

Volume 1 is already available for sale at the Government Printer at $8 a copy.
Volume 2 and volume 3 will cost $6 each when completed.

(d) Yes. The Government Printer has the list with names and addresses of all members of the Parliament and the distribution of volume 1 will be effected shortly.

SCHOOLS IN DUNDAS ELECTORATE: TOILET AND WASHING FACILITIES.

(Question No. 1168)

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Minister of Education—

Which schools in the electoral district of Dundas do not have wash basins in conjunction with toilets?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

This information will take some time to obtain as each school will have to be consulted.

I will advise the honorable member by letter when the information is available.

(Question No. 1169)

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Minister of Education—

1. Which primary, secondary and technical schools, respectively, in the towns of Hamilton, Stawell, Murtoa, Natimuk, Rupanyup and Edenhope have separate toilet facilities for staff?

2. When the remaining schools in these towns will be provided with separate toilet facilities for staff?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1. Of those schools named the following schools have separate staff toilet facilities:—

   Primary School 295 Hamilton; Primary School 4777 Hamilton; Primary School 4847 Hamilton; Hamilton High School; Hamilton Technical School; Stawell Technical School; Primary School 4934 Stawell West; Primary School 4549 Pleasant Creek; Edenhope High School.

2. The provision of staff facilities at Primary school 502 Stawell, Stawell High school and Murtoa High school are currently under consideration in connection with a review of the department's building programme. There is no proposal at this stage to provide staff toilet facilities at Primary school 2035 Hamilton North, Primary school 1549 Murtoa, Primary school 1548 Natimuk, Primary school 1595 Rupanyup, Primary school 3872 Rupanyup South or Edenhope Consolidated School but consideration will be given to staff facilities in conjunction with any proposed additions to these schools.

NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR EAST ROSANNA.

(Question No. 1176)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Education—

What plans have been formulated for the construction of an additional primary school at East Rosanna to absorb the increasing number of children now served by the Viewbank and Banyule primary schools?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

It is proposed to provide a new primary school to relieve the Viewbank and Banyule primary schools.

The department's capital works programme is currently under review and it is not possible to indicate, at this stage, when construction will commence.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL FOR PRESTON AREA.

(Question No. 1177)

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston) asked the Minister of Education—

Whether there are plans to establish, in the immediate future, a senior high school in the Preston area consisting of form V. and VI. students?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

Having regard to the needs for new schools and the upgrading of accommodation at existing schools, I am unwilling, at this stage, to approve the necessary finance for the building of a senior high school in the northern suburbs for the coming financial year. The matter will be reviewed when the Prime Minister replies to the request for an additional $90 million for the school building programme.

REVIEW OF BUILDING PROGRAMME.

(Question No. 1178)

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Education—

When the current review of the Education Department's building programme will be completed?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

The review of the building programme will be completed in May, 1973.

PEMBROKE-TYPE HIGH SCHOOLS.

(Question No. 1180)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Education—

In respect of the Pembroke-type high schools, whether consideration has been given to—(a) dispensing with the carpet
Questions [27 MARCH, 1973.] on Notice.

in the demonstration kitchen area; (b) providing a means by which the clay sink can be emptied without the need to use buckets; and (c) providing a remote control in the main building for the boiler room equipment.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

(a) The revised plan for the 69/1/900 high school no longer refers to the demonstration kitchen area as such. It is now used as an art/craft area and for visual education. The soft floor covering is satisfactory.

(b) An evaluation of facilities has shown the need for an improved method of waste disposal from the clay trough. Action will be taken to remedy this defect in future schools of this type.

(c) Additional control points will be incorporated in designs for boiler room equipment in future schools of this type.

MEAT INDUSTRY.
RETRENCHMENT OF EMPLOYEES AT HAMILTON ABATTOIRS.

(Question No. 1009)

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Treasurer—

Whether he is aware that Hamilton abattoirs has retrenched 35 men due to high sheep prices; if so, whether he will provide additional rural unemployment funds to the City of Hamilton without delay?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—The answer is—

I have made inquiries in this matter and I understand that recently 35 men were retrenched from the Hamilton abattoirs. By the very nature of abattoir operations there are necessarily fluctuations in the numbers of men employed.

Of the 35 men retrenched only ten are currently registered for further employment with the Commonwealth Employment Service. The Government is prepared to give consideration to any proposal submitted by the City of Hamilton to assist in meeting the situation within the framework of the rural employment scheme.

MELBOURNE AND METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

FREeway Construction.

(Question No. 1043)

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Premier—

Further to his public statement of 21st December, 1972 on freeways—

1. Whether the continuation of partly constructed freeways into inner areas will automatically commence at a later date?

2. What are the locations and boundaries of the inner areas referred to?

3. How “substantial loss of housing and community disruption” will be measured and by whom?

4. At what locations the modal interchanges referred to are being planned?

5. When and where construction of the first modal interchange will be commenced?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—The answer is—

1. No.

2, 3, 4 and 5. These matters will be dealt with in policy announcements at the appropriate times.

YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS.

GRANTS.

(Question No. 1050)

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation—

1. What State financial assistance has been given to each youth organization in the electoral district of Moonee Ponds this financial year?

2. What financial assistance was sought by the youth organization concerned and any other organization in the electoral district?

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation).—The answer is—

1. An equipment and maintenance grant of $1,375 was made to the Ascot Vale Opportunity Youth Club.

2. This youth club applied for a grant of $7,804. No other youth club in the Moonee Ponds electoral district has applied for assistance this financial year.

LAW DEPARTMENT.

SUPREME COURT LIST: CASE OF THE LATE MR. MARSENGO.

(Question No. 1070)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Attorney-General—

1. How many cases are currently listed for the Supreme Court?

2. Whether the case of the late Mr. Marsengo, currently being dealt with by the Public Solicitor, is amongst those cases; if so—(a) what priority, if any, is being given to this case and where it is placed on the list; (b) when the case was first listed and when it will be heard; and (c) what are the reasons for delay in this case?

3. Whether any measures are being taken to provide for Mrs. Marsengo and her three daughters; if so, what measures?
4. What was the date of Mr. Marsengo's death?

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General).—The answer is—

1. I assume that the honorable member is referring here to the civil jurisdiction and not to the criminal or matrimonial causes jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The position in relation to the civil jurisdiction is as follows:—

Civil matters in respect of which certificates of readiness for trial have been filed (excluding cases to be heard during March)—

(i) Jury actions... 1,234
(ii) Non-jury actions certified to take less than two days... 53
(iii) Non-jury actions certified to take more than two days... 40

There are some 200 other matters awaiting hearing. These are designated "miscellaneous cases" and include, for example, applications for custody of children, orders to review decisions of Magistrates Courts, applications for the modification or removal of restrictive covenants, and originating summonses for the determination of questions arising from wills.

There is a delay of some twelve months in the hearing of civil jury cases from the date of the filing of certificates of readiness for trial. The honorable member will be aware that additional judges of the Supreme Court have been appointed to reduce delays in hearings. He will be interested to know that in the present month seven judges are dealing with cases in the civil jurisdiction. This number includes one judge hearing miscellaneous cases.

2, 3 and 4. I have grouped these questions to enable the events in relation to the particular case to be listed in chronological order.

Mr. Marsengo died on 1st October, 1969, and Mrs. Marsengo attended at the Public Solicitor's office on 29th October, 1969, seeking legal assistance. This was before the implementation of the Legal Aid Act 1969 which, as the honorable member will be aware, changed the distribution of functions between the Public Solicitor's office and the Legal Aid Committee in the field of legal aid. From the implementation of the Act the Public Solicitor's office became concerned with the provision of legal assistance in certain criminal cases. However, the office was required to complete civil matters in respect of which applications for assistance had been accepted before the implementation of the Act.

Mrs. Marsengo's claim is one conducted pursuant to the Wrongs Act arising from the death of her husband. An inquest into the death of Mr. Marsengo was held on 27th May, 1970, and a writ initiating an action on Mrs. Marsengo's behalf was issued by the Public Solicitor on 8th December, 1970. The following events have occurred since the issue of the writ:—

(a) The Writ was served on the defendant on 21st December, 1970.
(b) An appearance was entered on behalf of the defendant by his solicitors on 7th January, 1971.
(c) The defendant's defence was delivered on 11th January, 1971.
(d) Between January, 1971, and August, 1972, the parties delivered and answered each other's interrogatories.
(e) The matter was set down for trial on 13th October, 1972.

The matter is listed as jury case No. 1001 and it may be approximately twelve months before it comes to trial. The case does not have special priority and it seems that there are insufficient grounds on which to base an application for an earlier hearing. The conduct of the matter has not been delayed in the Public Solicitor's office and the steps preliminary to the setting down of the case for trial have been taken with reasonable speed. It is understood that Mrs. Marsengo is being assisted by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services.

WATER AUTHORITIES.

SUBSIDIES FOR INTEREST PAYMENTS.

(Question No. 1089)

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Treasurer—

What amount of finance has been allocated in each of the past ten years to subsidize interest payments by the Ballarat Water Commissioners and what subsidy was paid to each of the other non-metropolitan water authorities in the State in that period?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—The answer is—

Finance allocated to subsidize interest payments by the Ballarat Water Commissioners in each of the past ten years has been as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>16,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>14,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>9,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>8,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>5,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>5,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>5,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-65</td>
<td>5,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>5,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>5,992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interest subsidies paid to other non-metropolitan water authorities in the State in that period are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Waterworks trusts</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apollo Bay</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ararat—Shire of</td>
<td>2,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bairnsdale</td>
<td>11,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnawartha</td>
<td>1,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benalla</td>
<td>15,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boolarra</td>
<td>2,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright</td>
<td>5,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadford</td>
<td>3,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlton</td>
<td>2,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobram</td>
<td>3,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colac</td>
<td>91,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleraine and Casterton</td>
<td>26,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corryong</td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daylesford</td>
<td>8,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreun</td>
<td>15,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echuca</td>
<td>17,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmore</td>
<td>884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euroa</td>
<td>15,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gembrook, Cockatoo, Emerald</td>
<td>1,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>31,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healesville</td>
<td>7,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsham</td>
<td>15,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverloch</td>
<td>1,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaniva—Shire of</td>
<td>920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerang</td>
<td>1,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kooweerup</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korumburra</td>
<td>24,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kowree—Shire of</td>
<td>587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyneton—Shire of</td>
<td>5,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakes Entrance</td>
<td>18,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang Lang</td>
<td>2,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leongatha</td>
<td>9,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindenow</td>
<td>1,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedon</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maffra</td>
<td>1,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansfield</td>
<td>981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryborough</td>
<td>20,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meynjar</td>
<td>2,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melton</td>
<td>15,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metung</td>
<td>1,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moe</td>
<td>22,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mooroopna</td>
<td>9,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morwell</td>
<td>6,058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Macedon</td>
<td>1,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Rouse—Shire of</td>
<td>4,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myrtleford</td>
<td>10,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathalia</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nhili</td>
<td>6,939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numurkah</td>
<td>2,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orbost</td>
<td>32,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paynesville</td>
<td>2,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plenty—Yarramata</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local governing bodies</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ararat City Council</td>
<td>4,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacchus Marsh Shire Council</td>
<td>2,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beechworth Shire Council</td>
<td>6,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bet Bet Shire Council</td>
<td>915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camperdown Town Council</td>
<td>786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale City Council</td>
<td>52,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrnambool City Council</td>
<td>16,310</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TRANSPORT AUTHORITIES.**

**TRAMWAY AND RAILWAY ROUTES.**

(Question No. 1092)

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Minister of Transport—

1. What mileage of new tramway and railway routes has been constructed in Victoria since 1960 and what are the respective locations, purposes and cost of each route?

2. What mileage of rail and tramway routes have ceased operation since 1960 and what were the respective locations and former purposes of such routes?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—The answer is—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barry Beach railway</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>285,570</td>
<td>To cater for natural gas development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyabb—Long Island</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>187,420</td>
<td>To cater for Westport development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tottenham-Brooklyn loop</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>736,104</td>
<td>To facilitate entry of western traffic to Tottenham yard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spencer Street—Albury</td>
<td>195.60</td>
<td>32,262,000</td>
<td>To facilitate traffic between States by dispensing with change of gauge at Albury.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total ... 200.52
2. Mileage—188.55 miles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Use immediately prior to closure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kerang—Murrabit</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colac—weeaproinah</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilydale—Warburton</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waubra Junction—Waubra</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heathcote Junction—Heathcote</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldon—Shelbourne</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meringur—Morkalla</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murrabit—Stoney crossing</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballarat Racecourse</td>
<td>Passenger traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Fitzroy—Rushall</td>
<td>Unused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Fitzroy—Northcote loop</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benalla—Oil siding</td>
<td>Goods traffic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TRAMWAYS.**

**Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board.**

1. | Location | Route mileage | Purpose | Cost | Completed |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Queensway and Dandenong Road from St. Kilda Road to Hornby Street, Windsor.</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>Relocation of former tramway in Wellington Street as part of the St. Kilda Junction improvement scheme to provide a tramway within a reservation.</td>
<td>$458,000</td>
<td>June, 1969.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Nolan Street, South Melbourne, from St. Kilda Road to Sturt Street.</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>Relocation of tramway as part of St. Kilda Road underpass project.</td>
<td>$91,000</td>
<td>May, 1970.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Riversdale Road, Surrey Hills from Warrigal Road (Single track) to Elgar Road.</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>Duplication of previous single track tramway.</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>September, 1970.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Nicholson Street, Coburg, from Crozier (single track) Street to Edna Grove.</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>Duplication of previous single track tramway.</td>
<td>$34,000</td>
<td>December, 1966.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Sydney Road, Coburg, from Fame Street to (single track) Bakers Road.</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>Duplication of previous single track tramway.</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
<td>March, 1965.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The following tramway routes or portions of routes have ceased operation since 1960:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Route mileage</th>
<th>Former purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) City of Footscray (various streets)</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>Local (Footscray) tram services radiating from Footscray railway station.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Glenhuntly Road from Brighton Road to Point Ormond.</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>Shuttle service from Elsternwick railway station to Point Ormond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Wellington Street and Dandenong Road, St. Kilda and Windsor.</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>Portion of Malvern and East Brighton tram routes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) City Road and Sturt Street, South Melbourne.</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>Portion of South Melbourne Beach tram route.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

State Electricity Commission

1. Nil.
2. A total of 22.48 miles of tramway at Bendigo and Ballarat has been replaced with bus services.
CORONERS COURT.

CONSTRUCTION DATE: COST: LAND AREA.

(Question No. 1119)

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park)—asked the Attorney-General—

1. When the existing Melbourne Coroners Court and morgue was built?
2. What is the total cost of the building to date including any further construction?
3. What is the total land area occupied by the building and its immediate surroundings?

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General).—The answer is—

1. The work of erecting the building commenced in 1952 and it was occupied in February, 1956.
2. Construction and subsequent additions Maintenance $273,798 $ 60,057
3. Approximately 13,300 square feet.

POLICE DEPARTMENT.

POLICE STATION FOR ALTONA NORTH.

(Question No. 1120)

Mr. LOVEGROVE (Sunshine) asked the Chief Secretary—

What progress has been made towards the erection and staffing of a police station in Altona North?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—The answer is—

Plans have been prepared to erect a police district headquarters complex, including a 24-hour police station, at Altona North at an estimated cost of over $500,000.

The project together with a request that it be listed for the preparation of contract documents in the 1973-74 financial year, has been included in the police works and services programme shortly to be placed before the Treasury. If Treasury approval is granted and the necessary finance is made available, building should commence in the 1974-75 financial year.

No specific plans have been made at this stage in respect to the staffing of the police station.

BODYCRAFT PTY. LTD.

DIRECTORS: SHARES.

(Question No. 1121)

Mr. LIND (Dandenong) asked the Attorney-General—

What are the names, addresses and official positions of the directors of BODYCRAFT PTY. LTD., and what percentage of the total shares in this company are held by each director?

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General).—The answer is—

The annual return of the company as at 28th December, 1972, gave the following information in respect of the directors of BODYCRAFT PTY. LTD:—

Alan Macley Cumming, 23 Fernhill Drive, Highton, ambulance superintendent.
Gerald Stuart Strachan, Norwood Street, Herrnhill, panel beater.

The nominal share capital of the company is $20,000 divided into 10,000 shares of $2 each of which 7,600 had been taken up at 28th December, 1972. As at 28th December, 1972, Alan Macley Cumming held 60 shares (or approximately 0.79 per cent of the issued shares) and Gerald Stuart Strachan held ten shares (or approximately 0.13 per cent of the issued shares).

F100 AMBULANCE.

(Question No. 1122)

Mr. LIND (Dandenong) asked the Minister of Health—

Whether BODYCRAFT PTY. LTD. has undertaken or is undertaking any work associated with the design and construction of the F100 ambulance; if so, what is the nature and the estimated cost of such work?

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health).—The answer is—

At the request of the Hospitals and Charities Commission's Ambulance Design Committee and with the agreement of the commission, BODYCRAFT PTY. LTD. has undertaken design and development work on the F100 ambulance.

In 1968, when five prototypes were produced at the commission's request for testing throughout the regional ambulance services of Victoria, design and development costs totalled $8,404—that is, $1,681 per ambulance, including modifications during the trials.

The initial design and development work on the first of the prototypes covered special sound insulation, special fittings, a partial partition behind the driver, individual berth lights, pressurized interior, sound absorbing interior trim, full swing rear doors, individual bunk screens and a considerable number of minor developments. Subsequent specifications covered stretcher securing devices, anti-whiplash protection, stretcher location, locker provision and a number of other alterations.
For production of the mark II. prototype it is expected that design and development costs will be approximately the same.

Ford Motor Company of Australia Ltd. was the successful tenderer for the supply of complete ambulances and Bodycraft Pty. Ltd. was the successful tenderer to Ford Motor Company for the body-building sub-contract.

I am informed that it is not the practice of the motor industry or of the Ford Motor Company to disclose confidential details of sub-contracts with principal contractors. Bodycraft Pty. Ltd. submitted the lowest tender and I am informed that the body building cost (excluding equipment) represents approximately 50 per cent of the total cost of the construction of the ambulance (excluding equipment).

1. Per Capita Grants to Private Schools.

(Question No. 1124)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What amounts were paid by way of per capita grants in each of the past five years to each non-Government school in the electoral district of Greensborough?

2. What is the total sum of such grants for the whole State in each of these years?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

The following information was provided by the Director of Finance:

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<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Ladies College, Diamond Street, Eltham (formerly in East Melbourne).</td>
<td>$6,040</td>
<td>$14,100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Rice College, Plenty Road, Bundoora.</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>1,270</td>
<td>1,280</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady Help of Christians School, Main Road Eltham.</td>
<td>2,860</td>
<td>2,755</td>
<td>4,085</td>
<td>5,120</td>
<td>11,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parade College, Plenty Road, Bundoora.</td>
<td>14,300</td>
<td>15,170</td>
<td>23,240</td>
<td>30,660</td>
<td>30,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacred Heart School, Gipson Street, Diamond Creek.</td>
<td>1,975</td>
<td>2,140</td>
<td>3,260</td>
<td>4,790</td>
<td>9,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Damian's School, Plenty Road, Bundoora.</td>
<td>3,290</td>
<td>1,725</td>
<td>3,840</td>
<td>5,950</td>
<td>14,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Francis Xavier School, 90 Mayona Road, Montmorency.</td>
<td>2,720</td>
<td>2,835</td>
<td>4,025</td>
<td>5,490</td>
<td>11,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Martin of Tours School, 5 Silk Street, Rosanna.</td>
<td>5,660</td>
<td>5,645</td>
<td>9,025</td>
<td>12,410</td>
<td>26,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Mary's School, 210 Grimshaw Street, Greensborough.</td>
<td>6,665</td>
<td>7,355</td>
<td>11,275</td>
<td>15,780</td>
<td>30,670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total per capita grants in Victoria</td>
<td>2,580,510</td>
<td>2,658,900</td>
<td>3,949,365</td>
<td>5,350,910</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Maintenance and Requisites Allowances.

(Question No. 1160)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What maintenance and requisites allowances are available to pupils in—(a) Government primary schools; (b) Government secondary schools; (c) non-Government primary schools; and (d) non-Government secondary schools?

2. What are the conditions of eligibility for these allowances?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1. (a) Government primary schools

Requisites only.

Grades 1 and 2—$2.75 per annum.

Grades 3 and 4—$5.00 per annum.

Grades 5 and 6—$6.50 per annum.
(b) **Government secondary schools**

Requisites.

Form I. - $14 per annum.
Form II. - $14 per annum.
Form III. - $16 per annum.
Form IV. - $16 per annum.
Form V. - $18 per annum.
Form VI. - $34 per annum.

Maintenance.

$78 per annum payable half yearly.
$104 per annum payable to holders of junior scholarships.

(c) **Non-Government primary schools**

Requisites only.

Grades 1 and 2—$2.75 per annum.
Grades 3 and 4—$5.00 per annum.
Grades 5 and 6—$6.50 per annum.

(d) **Non-Government secondary schools**

Maintenance only.

Only payable for junior scholarship holders.
$104 per annum.

2. The gross weekly income of both parents may not exceed $51 plus an amount of $1.50 for the third and each successive dependent child.

**MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY.**

**MONT PARK PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL.**

(Question No. 1143)

Mr. **LIND** (Dandenong) asked the Minister of Health—

1. Whether, in response to the request of a deputation from the Hospital Employees Federation, No. 2 Branch, he visited the psychiatric hospital at Mont Park to investigate complaints of understaffing and unrealistic establishments; if so, whether he found any proof that, because of shortages, insufficient staff were available to give reasonable care to the patients and, in that event—(i) what immediate steps he proposes taking to alleviate the situation; and (ii) whether, in order that tangible and immediate benefits may become available to patients and staff, the Government will treat this matter as urgent, rather than refer it to any interested department for investigation?

2. What is the average number of staff available to staff wards during the night shift at this hospital?

3. Whether some wards are staffed by only one unqualified person during the whole of the night shift?

4. What action will be taken to provide adequate care for patients in the event of a further stop-work?

Mr. **ROSSITER** (Minister of Health).—The answer is—

1. Yes. I visited Mont Park on Monday morning, 12th March, 1973. During my visit, I did not see anything which indicated that patient care was inadequate; nevertheless, I propose to arrange for an immediate survey of the staffing situation at Mont Park. If necessary and as a matter of expediency a request will be forwarded to Treasury for additional staff in areas of heavy nursing, particularly, in psychogeriatric wards.

2. Average number of staff available for night shift—

   Males—12.
   Females—19.

3. The following wards are staffed by only one unqualified person during the night shift:
   - M1, M3, M4, M6 and M7.
   - MF5.
   - F2, F3, F5, F6, F8, F9, F13 and F14.

4. In the past the Hospital Employees Federation, Victorian No. 2 Branch, has generally shown a responsible attitude to patient care and an understanding of what the profession of nursing stands for and has left skeleton staff in the wards when required.

   However, the Government will take whatever action is necessary to ensure the maintenance of the services required by all elderly psychiatric patients needing nursing care.

**ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY.**

**PURCHASE OF BOAT.**

(Question No. 1147)

Mr. **SIMMONDS** (Reservoir) asked the Minister for Conservation—

If he will lay on the table of the Library the file containing all data, correspondence and memoranda relating to the construction of the boat ordered for the Environment Protection Authority?

Mr. **BORTHWICK** (Minister for Conservation).—The answer is—

The relevant departmental files relating to the purchase of a boat for the Environment Protection Authority have been laid on the table of the Library.
Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Transport, for the
Minister for Local Government—
Under what conditions the scout movement can build scout halls on property
under the control of municipal councils?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—The answer supplied by the
Minister for Local Government is—

Scout halls could be erected on property
under the control of municipal councils
under the provisions of section 237 of the
Local Government Act.

This provides that any municipality may
let on lease for a term not exceeding ten
years and subject to any exceptions reserva-
tions covenants and conditions any lands
vested in such municipality.

Such a lease does not require approval
or consent and accordingly I would not be
made aware of the conditions imposed by a
council.

Section 238 of the said Act provides for
leases of a longer term and for building
or improving leases and one subject to
approval as is specified in the Act. The
legislation provides that the leases shall
be made at the best rental that can be
reasonably obtained by auction or tender
and that such a lease shall provide a condi-
tion for re-entry for non-payment of rental.
The council may impose such other condi-
tions as it deems desirable.

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked
the Minister of Transport—

1. What was the—(a) adult; and (b)
child, day return rail fare from Eltham,
Greensborough and Rosanna, respectively,
to Princes Bridge, in each of the past ten
years?

2. What was the average week-day train
departures between 6.30 a.m. and 8.30 a.m.
from Greensborough and Eltham, respec-
tively, to Princes Bridge and between 4.00
p.m. and 6.00 p.m. from Princes Bridge to
Greensborough and Eltham, respectively, in
each of the past ten years?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Trans-
port).—The answer is—

The Railways Commissioners have informed me that the day return fares were—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Eltham</th>
<th>Greensborough</th>
<th>Rosanna</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>4s. 10d. 0.48c</td>
<td>4s. 5d. 0.44c</td>
<td>3s. 8d. 0.37c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964 (from 29th November, 1964)</td>
<td>5s. 11d. 0.59c</td>
<td>5s. 5d. 0.54c</td>
<td>4s. 6d. 0.45c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>5s. 11d. 0.59c</td>
<td>5s. 5d. 0.54c</td>
<td>4s. 6d. 0.45c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966 (from 14th August, 1966)</td>
<td>0.68c</td>
<td>0.62c</td>
<td>0.52c</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>0.68c</td>
<td>0.62c</td>
<td>0.52c</td>
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<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>0.68c</td>
<td>0.62c</td>
<td>0.52c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969 (from 26th January, 1969)</td>
<td>0.72c</td>
<td>0.66c</td>
<td>0.56c</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>0.72c</td>
<td>0.66c</td>
<td>0.56c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971 (from 17th January, 1971)*</td>
<td>0.74c</td>
<td>0.68c</td>
<td>0.58c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971 (from 29th August, 1971)*</td>
<td>0.87c</td>
<td>0.79c</td>
<td>0.67c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972*</td>
<td>0.87c</td>
<td>0.79c</td>
<td>0.67c</td>
</tr>
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* From 17th January, 1971, fares include Melbourne Underground Rail Loop Authority levy—adult return $0.02, child return $0.01.
2. The commissioners also inform me that the average week-day departures were—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>from Greensborough</th>
<th>to Greensborough</th>
<th>from Eltham</th>
<th>to Eltham</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>1964</td>
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<td>1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
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**MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN.**

**GRANT FOR MURDOCH HOUSE, ST. ARNAUD.**

(Question No. 1132)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Treasurer—

What annual amount Murdoch House Mentally Retarded Centre at St. Arnaud will receive each year under the Educational Grants Act 1972?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—The answer is—

The annual amount which Murdoch House Mentally Retarded Centre at St. Arnaud will receive each year under the Educational Grants Act 1972 depends upon the number of pupils attending the centre on the schools census date and the rate of per capita grant payable in accordance with the terms of the Commonwealth legislation.

In 1973 payments by the State Government will be based on per capita grants of $51 for each primary pupil and $72 for each secondary pupil.

**TEACHER HOUSING AUTHORITY.**

**PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS OF HOUSES.**

(Question No. 1137)

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds) asked the Minister of Education—

1. Why the Teacher Housing Authority has refused to provide the Residence Selection Committee of the Education Department with copies of the plans and specifications of houses which are to be erected by the authority?

2. Whether he will provide him (the member for Moonee Ponds) with copies of the authority's plans and specifications; if not, why?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1. This is not so. Plans of the standard types of residences used for the Teacher Housing Authority's building programme have been tabled at the 29th May, 1972, meeting of the Residence Selection Committee.

2. Yes.

**NERANG PTY. LTD.**

**SHAREHOLDERS: DIRECTORS: STAFF.**

(Question No. 1162)

Mr. LOVEGROVE (Sunshine) asked the Attorney-General—

With respect to Nerong Pty. Ltd.—(a) who are the shareholders and what are their respective shareholdings; and (b) what are the names of the directors, managers and secretary, respectively?

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General).—The answer is—

The records of the Companies Office do not include reference to a company with the name Nerong Pty. Ltd. However, it is assumed that the honorable member refers to Nerang Pty. Ltd. and the following information, taken from an annual return as at 14th December, 1972, relates to this company:

(a) Shareholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shareholders</th>
<th>Shares held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wyuna Investments Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Robert Bruce Small</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) The annual return lists the directors of the company as—

Andrew Bruce Small.
Lillian Ada Small.
William Robert Bruce Small.
Alexander James Douglas Bell (alternate for Andrew Bruce Small).
Herbert Frank Night (alternate for Lillian Ada Small).
John Douglas Bell (alternate for William Robert Bruce Small).
The annual return does not include the name of manager. The secretaries are shown as William Robert Bruce Small and Kenneth Baguley.

STATE RIVERS AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION.

WATER SUPPLY FOR HARROW.

(Question No. 1164)

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Minister of Water Supply—

Whether agreement has been reached between the Kowree shire and the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission in respect of the proposed Harrow water supply; if so—(a) what is the estimated cost to the shire; (b) what amount of money by way of grant or loan is available; (c) what type of supply is planned; (d) when works will be carried out; (e) how many residences will be serviced; and (f) what is the estimated cost apportioned to the consumer?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Water Supply).—The answer is—

The State Rivers and Water Supply Commission wrote to the Kowree Shire Council on 20th November, 1972, advising that an investigation into the use of bore water as a possible alternative source of supply to serve the township of Harrow had been completed and the results indicated that such a supply was feasible. Accordingly, the council engaged a qualified engineer of water supply to prepare a detailed report on the engineering aspects of the proposed scheme together with the estimates of capital cost, annual operating costs and the rating structure necessary to raise the required revenue. It is understood that this report is nearing completion and will be submitted to the council in the near future.

The commission will give consideration to this report following its acceptance by the Kowree Shire Council.

Answers to parts (a) to (f) inclusive of the question will be available following receipt of the engineer's report.

VICTORIAN INLAND MEAT AUTHORITY.

FINANCE FOR EXPANSION OF WORKS.

(Question No. 1165)

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Minister for Conservation, for the Minister of Agriculture—

Whether any money has been allocated to the Victorian Inland Meat Authority for expansion of facilities at either of its works; if so, what is the nature of such expansion and how much money is involved?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Agriculture is—

The authority is constantly upgrading and improving the facilities at its works from funds provided from its own resources. The authority has also recently embarked on a major upgrading programme of its Ballarat works involving improvements to all aspects of the various processes. Loan funds up to $1.6 million have been made available to the authority towards the cost of this project.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

PARAMEDICAL SERVICES.

(Question No. 1166)

Mr. W. J. LEWIS (Portland) asked the Minister of Health—

1. How many paramedical establishments there are in Victoria and how many staff are employed at each centre?

2. Whether any centres are short of staff in sections such as physiotherapy?

3. Whether incentives are being offered to persons to encourage training for the various positions; if so, what incentives?

4. Whether bursaries are being offered at any hospitals; if so, which hospitals?

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health).—The answer is—

1 and 2. There are no paramedical establishments as such in Victoria. If the honorable member will give me further details of his requirement, I will endeavour to obtain the information he requires.

3 and 4. Incentives are being offered by the Hospitals and Charities Commission and by some individual public hospitals to encourage persons to train in certain paramedical employments. These incentives generally take the form of bursaries to individual students. When I have received further information on the honorable member's requirement, I will obtain for him details of bursaries, etc.

SALE-YARDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

ESTABLISHMENT: RECOMMENDATIONS.

(Question No. 1173)

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Minister of Transport, for the Minister for Local Government—

1. When the inter-departmental Sale-yards Advisory Committee was established?

2. When the committee's recommendations will be finalized and published?
Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—The answer supplied by the Minister for Local Government is—

1. The inter-departmental Sale-yards Advisory Committee was established in March, 1972.

2. The committee's task is a continuing one, viz., to examine applications for subsidies for the construction or additions to municipal sale-yards and to recommend thereon. The committee found it necessary, in examining the eighteen applications initially placed before it, to make a detailed investigation of all these outstanding applications before making any recommendations. This task, which involved making an appreciation of municipal sale-yards in adjoining areas, is nearing completion and recommendations will be submitted to the Ministers for Local Government and Agriculture by the end of this month. Municipalities will be advised as soon as possible of the Ministerial decision.

FLOOD RELIEF.

ASSISTANCE FOR SHIRE OF STAWELL.

(Question No. 1181)

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Premier—

Whether he has received a request from the Shire of Stawell for assistance in respect of flood damage estimated at $180,000; if so, what assistance will be provided?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—The answer is—

I have received no request. However I understand that the shire has submitted a claim of $240,000 to the Country Roads Board's divisional engineer who is at present examining the request.

When received it will be considered along with the many other claims which have been submitted. Substantial assistance has been given in the past in similar circumstances.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

DONVALE HIGH SCHOOL: PROVISION OF BASKETBALL AND TENNIS COURTS.

(Question No. 1182)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Public Works—

Whether Donvale High School submitted tenders for approval early in December, 1972, for contract works to provide basketball and tennis courts at that school; if so—(a) whether the Public Works Department approved the tender on 9th January, 1973 and if not, on what date it was approved; (b) why the school has not been advised of approval of this tender and when it will be advised; and (c) whether the successful tender has now been withdrawn because of delays in notification of approval by the department and if so, what action he proposes taking in connection with these works?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works).—The answer is—

On 13th December, 1972, the Education Department requested a report on the tenders received from Donvale High School for site works to provide basketball and tennis courts under special grant.

(a) The Public Works Department advised the Education Department of tender approval on 17th January, 1973.

(b) The school was advised by the Education Department on the 16th March, 1973, that they could accept the tender recommended.

(c) The Public Works Department and the Education Department have no knowledge of a withdrawal by the successful tenderer.

OIL EXPLORATION.

PERMITS FOR OPERATIONS IN PORTLAND AREA.

(Question No. 1183)

Mr. W. J. LEWIS (Portland) asked the Minister of Mines—

1. How many oil exploration companies have permits to operate in the electoral district of Portland?

2. What are the names of these companies?

3. In which shires these companies are operating, indicating how many rigs are drilling in each particular area?

4. Whether these companies are bound to acquaint the shires concerned of the nature of their operations?

5. Whether any blasting by these companies has taken place this year; if so, where?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister of Mines).—The answer is—

1. Four oil exploration companies have petroleum exploration permits.

2. (a) Planet Exploration Company Pty. Ltd., holding petroleum exploration permit No. 26.

(b) Alliance Oil Development Australia N. L. holding petroleum exploration permit No. 54.

(c) Shell Development (Australia) Pty. Ltd. and Frome-Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. holding petroleum exploration permit No. 5.

3. The only operation this year has been a weight drop seismic survey conducted by Shell Development (Australia) Pty. Ltd. in the shires of Portland, Minhamite and Belfast—work is currently continuing in the...
Shire of Belfast. This operation does not require any drilling nor the use of any explosives. As a consequence there are no drilling rigs operating on this work.

4. Companies are not bound to acquaint shires of the nature of their operations unless working along roads under the control of shire councils.

5. Because of the nature of the seismic survey no blasting has taken place this year.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

STATE ELECTIONS.

Mrs. GOBLE (Mitcham).—I desire to ask a question without notice of the Premier. Has any decision yet been reached—

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! The honorable member for Mitcham should ask the question and be heard in silence. The Chair did not hear the question.

Mrs. GOBLE.—Can the Premier inform me whether a decision has been reached yet regarding the date of the coming elections?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—I am glad our only lady member asked that question. If she will maintain her interest and patience until the end of question time, I shall make a Ministerial statement on the subject.

PORT PHILLIP BAY.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—Can the Minister of Transport inform me whether the Government has received a report on the environmental study of Port Phillip Bay, and will the honorable gentleman arrange to have copies of that report made available to honorable members?

The SPEAKER (the Hon. Vernon Christie).—Order! Is this a matter for the Minister of Transport?

Mr. WILTON.—I understand that the Minister of Transport represents the Minister for Local Government.

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—If the question is really directed to my colleague, the Minister for Local Government, to answer, I shall refer the question to him. I am not aware of the report having been received.

SPEED LIMIT.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote).—I ask the Chief Secretary whether he will examine the advisability of considerably reducing the absolute speed limit of 70 miles an hour because of expert opinion now available that seat belts are unsafe at speeds exceeding 65 miles an hour?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I was under the impression that it was always understood that if a person was involved in a collision at very high speeds, a seat belt could not save him. The purport of the statement reported in the press was merely to remind people that if they have an impact at high speeds they cannot consider themselves safe merely because they are wearing a seat belt.

Mr. WILKES.—What about the speed limit?

Mr. MEAGHER.—It has been given its twelve months' trial. On the completion of that trial it was considered worthy of a further trial. The whole question of traffic regulation is being examined at present with a view to reviewing the entire set of rules.

COMMONWEALTH FUNDS FOR EDUCATION.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party).—Has the Premier received any assurance, public or private, from the Prime Minister on a special grant of $1,443 million for the States for education in the near future?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—The answer is, “No.” In February of this year the Minister of Education wrote to the Federal Minister for Education seeking a tiny advance of $15 million on the sum promised by the Federal Labor Party before it became the Government. This sum was sought for the current
financial year so that the construction of urgently needed school buildings, especially in the inner suburbs of Melbourne, could be put in hand. The request was refused.

I wrote to the Prime Minister on 8th March renewing the request and pointing out that, whatever results flow from the current investigation into education which was put in hand by Canberra, at least this sum would be required, and suggesting that it should be paid as an interim advance. On 20th March I again wrote to the Prime Minister and requested his advice on whether Victoria's share of $300 million, which would be a proportionate part of the $1,443 million for the next five years, would be available next year so that a start could be made on planning for the new schools and the additional equipment which would be required for the 1974 year. So far I have not had an answer to either request.

SUNSHINE CITY COUNCIL.

Mr. LOVEGROVE (Sunshine).—Has the Attorney-General taken action to ensure that the Sunshine City Council is constitutionally appointed under the Local Government Act and, if so, what action?

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General).—Yesterday I caused to be issued by the Supreme Court of Victoria a writ of summons in which I am the plaintiff, as the Attorney-General of Victoria, and the defendant is Mr. J. A. Tighe, a councillor of the City of Sunshine. The writ of summons seeks certain orders from the Supreme Court in this matter. I do not propose to elaborate on this as it has now become sub judice, but I will make a copy of the writ which I caused to be issued available to the honorable member for Sunshine.

VICTORIAN SECONDARY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION.

Mr. STEPHEN (Ballaarat South).—Has the Minister of Education been officially notified by the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association that it is the intention of that organization to mount an anti-Australian Labor Party campaign in the coming State elections?

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—I cannot see that a question of that nature would be a matter of Government administration.

ROAD ACCIDENT MEDICAL SERVICE.

Mr. MUTTON (Coburg).—Can the Minister of Health inform the House of the result of negotiations between the Government and the voluntary road accident medical service on the supply of urgently needed radio technical equipment?

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health).—Yes. The Government has decided that emergency services shall be the subject of a pilot scheme, and the matter will be worked out in due course.

MEMBERS' ACCOMMODATION IN ELECTORATES.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura).—Has the Premier seen an article in today's Age which refers to the decision of the South Australian Government to provide an office and a secretary for each of 47 members of the South Australian Parliament in their own electorates? If not, will he investigate the matter and approve a similar suggestion for members of this Parliament?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—I have not seen that article. It is an interesting suggestion. I shall be glad to have a look at it.

MARYBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara).—Is the Minister of Education aware that teachers at Maryborough High School intend to strike every Friday until critical staff shortages at the school are remedied? If so, what action does the Minister plan to overcome the critical situation at that school?
Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—As I have previously pointed out, Victorian secondary teachers at present have a lower weekly teaching load—26 to 27 periods out of 40—than teachers in any other State in Australia.

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! There should be few, if any, interjections.

Mr. THOMPSON.—I admit I have mentioned this before, but it seems to take some time to sink in. In California, the world’s richest country, teachers have a weekly work load of 32 periods or more out of 40. At Maryborough High School there is a slight shortage below the target which was aimed at this year, and which is far more liberal than that laid down by the Teachers Tribunal schedule. All we ask is that, in view of their low teaching load, the teachers at the school should cover these deficiencies temporarily until replacements can be made. Their idea of solving a shortage by creating a worse one and walking out of the school is just plain ridiculous.

AMBULANCE DESIGN COMMITTEE.

Mr. BIRRELL (Geelong).—Can the Minister of Health inform me whether Mr. Cumming, of the Geelong Ambulance Service, has tendered his resignation from the Ambulance Design Committee of the Hospitals and Charities Commission because of conflict of interest?

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health).—I can so inform the honorable member; Mr. Cumming has resigned as a member of that committee.

GIPPSLAND LAKES AUTHORITY.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East).—Can the Premier inform me whether the Government has given any further consideration to the recommendation of the Public Works Committee that a Gippsland lakes authority should be established? If so, what proposals has the Government in mind?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—This matter is still under consideration. It is by no means a simple one, and I am not able to give the honorable member a direct answer. I will try to expedite the examination and recommendations.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY.

Mr. FELL (Greensborough).—Can the Minister for Conservation inform me whether the Environment Protection Authority has only 50 per cent of the desired staff and whether a large number of queries referred to the authority by local organizations remain unanswered? What action is proposed? Is the shortage of staff due to shortage of funds from the Treasury?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation).—Any current shortage of total staff numbers of the Environment Protection Authority is completely unrelated to finance. A staffing schedule has been laid down in the various categories of work within the Environment Protection Authority, and in some segments persons are still in the process of interview and selection. By the end of May there will be no shortages whatever. We are presently receiving applications for licensing, and before they have to be dealt with the authority will have its full number of approved staff.

PRESCRIBED PREMISES.

Mr. DIXON (St. Kilda).—Is the honorable member for Moonee Ponds in favour of Federal grants to persons suffering family hardships on premises which have ceased to be prescribed premises?

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! I think I ruled similarly on a previous question.
Questions directed to a member other than to the Ministry should be in respect of proceedings or the handling of a matter on the Notice Paper in his name. This is asking an opinion on the matter, and in fact discussing the matter, and therefore would be out of order. It would obviously make question time impossible if questions arising out of the contents of a Bill or other notice on the paper were asked of a private member of this House.

Mr. STEPHEN (Ballaarat South).—On a point of order, is it not a custom of the House that questions should alternate from one side to the other?

The SPEAKER.—Order! I have dealt with that this session as best I can.

HOLMESGLEN FACTORY.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds).—Is the Minister representing the Minister of Housing aware of the announcement that the Housing Commission intends to cease constructing any more components for high-rise units at the Holmesglen factory? If so, is the honorable gentleman aware that this will cause unemployment at the factory? If he is aware of these two points, will the Minister authorize the management of the Holmesglen factory to submit tenders for all pre-stressed concrete works proposed, both public and private, to enable that factory and its 700 employees to remain at maximum production?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I am aware of the announcement that high-rise flats are not going to be built in future. I am also aware that the original announcement that high-rise flats were being phased out was made at least two years ago. I am further aware that the arrangements for the maintenance of Holmesglen have been attended to and the factory will continue in operation with other works.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. DIXON (St. Kilda).—On a point of order in connection with questions to Ministers and other members, Standing Order No. 79 states—

At the time of giving Notices of Motion questions may be put to Ministers of the Crown relative to public affairs, and to other Members relating to any Bill, motion, or other public matter connected with the business of the House, in which such Members may be concerned.

I suggest to you, Sir, that this Standing Order enables me to put the question which I have put.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! The honorable member's question was, firstly, out of order, because it definitely asked an opinion. If the honorable member is concerned, and this House may well be concerned, about the ruling, I would be glad to look at this deeply and make the honorable member feel more happy about it by making a ruling on the next day of sitting.

DARTMOUTH DAM.

Mr. A. T. EVANS (Ballaarat North).—I direct a question to the Minister of Water Supply. When is it likely that tenders will be called for the first major works for the Dartmouth dam?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Water Supply).—I assume that the honorable member for Ballaarat North is referring to tenders which closed approximately three or four weeks ago for the first major contract, which is for the river diversion tunnel. There were about eight tenderers, and the tenders have been processed by the Water Commission. The successful tender will amount to between approximately $4.25 million and $4.5 million, and subject to the approval of the Governor in Council I expect that next Tuesday the name of the successful tenderer will be known.

REMEDIAL TEACHING.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell).—Last week the Assistant Minister of Education informed me that the Treasury had
been requested for additional funds for the Psychology and Guidance Branch to enable branch officers to travel to country areas. I ask the Treasurer what action he intends to take to enable the Psychology and Guidance Branch of the Education Department to receive those additional funds.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—I am unable to give a definite answer to the question. I ask the honorable member to put it on notice so that I can examine it.

YOUTH COUNCILS.

Mr. TREWIN (Benalla).—Can the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation inform the House whether members have been selected for the youth and sports councils? If so, could he inform the House who they are; if not, when they will be appointed?

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation).—Cabinet on Monday finally agreed to the membership of both the State Youth Council and the Sports and Recreation Council. As a matter of courtesy to those members who have been appointed, we are advising them by telephone of their appointment before making an announcement. I expect that we shall be in a position to announce the membership of both these councils either later today or tomorrow.

COMMONWEALTH FUNDS FOR EDUCATION.

Mr. BIRRELL (Geelong).—Has the Minister of Education any information on the Commonwealth Government's reported decision to underwrite tertiary education entirely, and if so does this relate to the current triennium? What might be the impact annually of assistance to the State?

The SPEAKER Sir Vernon Christie).—This question does really impinge on Commonwealth policy and action, but I will allow it.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The statement was reported as having been made by the Federal Treasurer in December that a blank cheque had been made available for certain sections of tertiary education, and certainly for the advanced college system. I sent him a telegram at the time to ascertain the meaning of this, when the blank cheque started and how much money was involved, but to date the State has received no indication of the degree to which the States as a whole would be relieved of financial liability in the tertiary field.

A very important problem is also related to this question. It is the degree of autonomy that will remain with the States in administering tertiary education. When this matter has been discussed at State Ministers' conferences it has always been the view of all Ministers present that any additional assistance in the tertiary and other fields of education should not be accompanied by tags and restrictions which constitute an invasion of State constitutional rights.

ALPINE REGIONS.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—My question is directed to the Minister for Conservation. Is the Government involved in discussing with private enterprise plans for the establishment of an accommodation complex in the Victorian alpine regions, and will the Minister make public any such plans?

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister for Conservation).—The only indication I have ever received of any interest by private enterprise in alpine regions for accommodation is the subject of a master's degree thesis at the University of Melbourne by Mr. Handley. It was referred to by the honorable member for Benambra when the Mt. Hotham Alpine Resort Bill was being debated in this House. A proposal for the development of Mount Feathertop was brought forward. I made it very clear during the debate on that Bill that under no circumstances would the Government approve any development there or in any other area—this information is contained in Hansard—until the Land
Conservation Council makes a full study of the alpine regions in Victoria.

POLICE GUARD ON THE HOME OF DR. CAIRNS.

Mr. JONA (Hawthorn).—Can the Chief Secretary inform me whether the home of Dr. Cairns in Hawthorn is under continuous guard and, if so, whether this guard is being provided by a Commonwealth or State agency? If it is being provided by a State agency, can the honorable gentleman inform me whether the Commonwealth Government has been meeting the cost of this guard?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—During the visit of the Premier of Yugoslavia last week arrangements were made for the Yugoslav Consulate to be kept under constant surveillance by both Commonwealth and State police. Instructions were also given to the police on duty to keep an eye on other relevant properties.

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne).—Can the Minister of Education advise the House about the future of the higher school certificate? Can he also give to the House the nature of the proposed aptitude test which the Australian Council of Educational Research will be administering in June, and will a failure in that aptitude test in June prevent a student who might otherwise pass a higher school certificate examination from entering a tertiary institution?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—This type of replacement examination was discussed and approved by the Advisory Council on Tertiary Education after months of preparatory work by experts in the field. The whole purpose of the examination is to experiment with a pilot scheme which might provide a more effective system of examination and which would relieve the pressure on higher school certificate students at the end of their secondary school career. It might also provide a more effective guide to success at the tertiary level. It embodies, first of all, an aptitude test somewhat similar to the Commonwealth scholarship type of examination now administered at the form IV. level, an essay examination and a recommendation from the individual school.

The results from these three methods of testing will be compared with the actual results achieved in the higher school certificate examination to determine whether there is a high correlation. If there is this would suggest that the higher school certificate examination in its present form could be abolished and replaced by this form of testing. Further study will be made of the results obtained by people, who excel in this form of test, later at the university or tertiary level to decide whether, although the results may not correlate exactly with the higher school certificate examination, they may provide a more accurate guide to success at the tertiary level.

When these observations and tests have been carried out, a decision will be made on whether the test should replace the higher school certificate examination altogether. At present it is purely in the nature of an experiment and the higher school certificate examination will still remain as the guide and the qualifying method for university entrance.

SOCIAL WELFARE OFFICES.

Mr. DIXON (St. Kilda).—Is the Minister for Social Welfare aware that the Commonwealth Government is setting up two welfare offices in each of the cities of Sydney and Melbourne? Are these Commonwealth offices within the constitutional rights of the Commonwealth Government and, if so—

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! That would be entirely out of order.

Mr. DIXON.—Is the Minister for Social Welfare aware that the Commonwealth Government is setting up two welfare offices in each of the
cities of Sydney and Melbourne and, if so, what effect will the office in Melbourne have upon planning by the Victorian Social Welfare Department?

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Social Welfare).—From what I have heard from Canberra—there has been no correspondence on this yet, although I have had a meeting with the Minister for Social Security—at this stage it does appear that the Commonwealth is planning to take over the role or some of the roles of State Governments in the welfare field. What the Commonwealth Government does not realize, and what it will certainly find out, is that adequate courses have not been provided in the past to supply sufficiently qualified people in adequate numbers to undertake these jobs.

Mr. WILTON.—Who controls that?

Mr. I. W. SMITH.—The Victorian Universities Admissions Committee.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! Question time is impossible with questions asked by interjections and worse still when they are answered by interjections.

Mr. I. W. SMITH.—As honorable members will appreciate, each university has power to establish its own courses, the number of courses and the type of courses. Clearly universities have, in the past, not done this. In some cases they are still not aware of the tremendous needs that exist now and will exist in the future throughout Australia for the States, for churches and for voluntary organizations to employ skilled social workers.

Currently, my department has 27 vacancies for qualified social workers, and with our proposed extension it has been decided to launch an overseas recruitment programme. That is now currently under way, and is being conducted by three people who are qualified to judge suitable persons. By the end of the year we will have 50 staff vacancies.

For the Commonwealth to think that it can intrude into a traditional State field and recruit staff to the general betterment of the welfare field is quite ludicrous. Quite simply, all the Commonwealth will do will be to take qualified people from the States, the churches and voluntary organizations which are already doing this work. If the Federal Government pursues this policy to the point where direct contact between State Governments and the people is lost, I believe it will be in the worst interests of the people.

The States of South Australia and Victoria have achieved a wide measure of diversification and regionalization in administering welfare services.

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—I suggest that the Minister should answer the question and not make a statement.

Mr. I. W. SMITH.—Our most successful regional office is in Geelong. As honorable members will recall, the Government announced when the last Budget was presented that it would establish two more regional centres—one in the Latrobe Valley and one at Ballarat—and staff vacancies have been advertised. We are experiencing difficulty in attracting staff because they are simply not available.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! I suggest to the Minister, as I have previously, that it is within his compass to decide whether to answer a question or not; but in the best interests of question time it is quite out of order to make an answer so wide as to turn it into a statement. I invite the Minister to conclude.

Mr. I. W. SMITH.—In my opinion, the Commonwealth Government, rather than entering a field within the State in which the people involved have expertise and skill, should confine itself to financing proper programmes through the various States
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—particularly training programmes at universities—and should keep its sticky nose out of our business.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

STATE PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—I desire to make a Ministerial statement. After consultation with His Excellency the Governor, and with the concurrence of the President of the Legislative Council as provided in The Constitution Act Amendment Act 1958, it has been decided that the periodical election of the members of the Legislative Council due to be held this year will be conducted conjointly with the general election for the Legislative Assembly.

Accordingly, I have recommended to His Excellency the Governor that the following programme of dates be fixed for the conjoint election:

Issue of writs—Wednesday, 18th April, 1973.
Return of writs—Friday, 8th June, 1973.

On the basis of this programme it is possible for Parliament to meet as late as 13th April.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote).—By leave, Mr. Speaker—

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—It is usual for only the Leaders of parties to say something on this subject.

Mr. WILKES.—I direct the attention of the Premier to a peculiar situation which arises because of his announcement that the day of the elections will be 19th May—although the Opposition welcomes that. Has the honorable gentleman made provision to advise 165,000 young people who might be enrolled, because of a recent Government Bill which was agreed to by the Parliament, of the election date? Have they been advised that electoral rolls will close six weeks before voting day, which means that they have less than ten days in which to enrol? What arrangements is the Premier making to advertise these facts in the daily papers and other advertising media?

The Federal Labor Government has placed the necessary advertisements in the newspapers. I ask the Premier what the Government proposes to do so that young people will not be disfranchised because they do not know when the rolls close.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party (By leave).—The Country Party welcomes the announcement of the date because the situation has been confusing with the Government's campaign being publicly opened a week ago and the other parties—the Labor Party and the Country Party—not knowing whether the election would be held in five weeks' time or on 4th August. One wonders how ethically correct it is for a campaign to be formally started in every country newspaper and radio station without the other parties knowing the date. The Government has set the pace and it is in keeping with some of its actions in recent times. The challenge will be taken up by the Country Party.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer) (By leave).—I refer the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to various newspapers which were published today and will no doubt be published in the future, and which contain the advertisement to which the honorable member referred, informing eighteen to twenty-year-olds of their rights under the legislation recently passed by this Parliament.

In answer to the Leader of the Country Party, it is not true that the Government's campaign has formally opened. A number of advertisements have been published by all parties in recent weeks trying to get in first, so to speak. No doubt, a number of advertisements
have been put in country newspapers. I assure the Leader of the Country Party that the Government's campaign has not yet begun but it will begin from now.

PETITION.
FREeways.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park).—I present a petition from certain rate-payers and residents of the City of South Melbourne praying that the House take such action to ensure that Parliament immediately order a halt to all freeway planning and construction; and the Parliament direct that the current review of the freeway system be extended to include a full examination of every form of transport and a thorough evaluation of sociological and environmental effects and provide for full public participation in the review and decisions at all stages. The petition is respectfully worded, is in order and bears 1,771 signatures, I desire the petition to be read.

THE CLERK read the petition, which is in the following terms:—

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

The humble petition of the undersigned ratepayers and residents of the City of South Melbourne in the State of Victoria respectfully sheweth:

1. That a system of freeways has been proposed for Melbourne and its environs by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee.

2. That the said system of freeways is a grid or radial system of roads crossing and re-crossing heavily populated areas.

3. That freeways known and referred to as “F9” and “F14” have been proposed by the said Committee to pass through the City of South Melbourne.

4. That the estimated total cost of the whole freeway system, to be completed by the year 1985, was $1,675 million when the said Committee made its recommendation in 1969.

5. That the present estimate of the total cost of the said freeways is $2,500 million.

6. That the said Committee proposed improvements to the existing public transport system, to be completed by the year 1985, at an estimated total cost of $355 million.

7. That, due to its concern for the environment, for the wishes of the people of the State of Victoria and for other reason, Parliament directed the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works on October 4th, 1971, not to proceed further with planning for or construction of that part of the freeway system known and referred to as “F1” and directed the said Committee to review its recommendations for the said freeway system.

8. That parts of the said freeway system have already been constructed, further parts are under construction and it is proposed that works will shortly commence on other parts of the proposed freeway system.

9. That since the survey upon which evaluation of Melbourne’s transport needs was undertaken and since that evaluation and the recommendations of the said Committee there has been a change in public opinion and desires regarding pollution and the environment and the Government has announced far reaching plans for decentralization.

10. That the use of the motor vehicle ought not to be encouraged to expand at the existing rate having due regard and concern for the environment, the amenity of the metropolitan area and the quality of life.

11. That unless restrained the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works and the Country Roads Board will continue to carry out and implement the aforesaid recommendations of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee at great financial cost to the people of Victoria
and with consequent degradation of the environment, loss of amenity of the metropolitan area and deterioration in the quality of life.

12. That the matters are of utmost urgency and importance to the citizens of South Melbourne and of the State of Victoria.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray:

A. That Parliament immediately order a halt to all freeway planning and construction.

B. That Parliament direct that the current review of the freeway system be expanded to include:

(i) a full examination of every form of transport,

(ii) a thorough evaluation of sociological and environmental effects,

(iii) full public participation in the review and decisions at all stages.

C. That this petition be taken into consideration immediately upon presentation, and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

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

PAPERS.

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

Education Act 1958—Resumption of land at Montmorency—Certificate of the Minister of Education.

Public Service Act 1958—Public Service (Public Service Board) Regulations—Regulations amended—Nos. 389 to 391 (three papers).


Statutory Rules under the following Acts:

Apprenticeship Act 1958.

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—
City of Croydon Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 46, 1970.
Eildon Sub-Regional Planning Scheme 1961, Amendment No. 4, 1969.

Victorian Inland Meat Authority Act 1958—Statement of guarantee given by the Treasurer for the repayment of advances made to the Victorian Inland Meat Authority.

TEACHING SERVICE BILL.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—I give notice that to­mor­row I will move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill entitled a Bill to amend the provisions of the Teaching Service Act 1958 relating to the Teachers Tribunal and to its functions and for other purposes.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote).—I have no objection to notice. I thought the House had disposed of notices of motions. The House dealt with a petition which suggested that notices had been dispensed with.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! The point of order is well taken and I am sorry that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was not informed what the slight delay was about. We had not finished with notices. Notices may not be brought up after Orders of the Day are brought on. I am sorry that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was not informed.

CATTLE COMPENSATION BILL.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of a Bill to amend the Cattle Compensation Act 1967 and the Swine Compensation Act 1967 with respect to the further use of moneys standing to the credit of the Cattle Compensation Fund and the Swine Compensation Fund, to amend the Stamps Act 1958 and for other purposes.

The House went into Committee to consider the message.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power).—I move—

That it is expedient that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the
purposes of a Bill to amend the Cattle Compensation Act 1967 and the Swine Compensation Act 1967 with respect to the further use of moneys standing to the credit of the Cattle Compensation Fund and the Swine Compensation Fund, to amend the Stamps Act 1958 and for other purposes.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote).—I can understand messages in respect of the Cattle Compensation Act and the Swine Compensation Act, but I cannot understand how the Stamps Act becomes involved. I should like the Minister to explain how two indirectly related items can be dealt with on one message.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power).—It is quite simple. To pay compensation on cattle, stamps must be bought. The purpose of this Bill is to provide moneys out of the Cattle Compensation Fund and the Swine Compensation Fund to build diagnostic centres at Bairnsdale and Benalla. Because of the amount of money which is being paid into both of those funds and the rather small amount that has been paid out, it is proposed that the amount payable to the Swine Compensation Fund shall be reduced by half.

Mr. WILKES.—What is the relationship to the Stamps Act?

Mr. BALFOUR.—For every $5 paid a 4 cent stamp must be bought and that has to be put on the receipt.

The motion was agreed to, and the resolution was reported to the House and adopted.

On the motion of Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power), the Bill was brought in and read a first time.

COAL MINES (PENSIONS INCREASE BILL (NO. 2)).

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister of Mines) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of a Bill to amend Part III. of the Coal Mines Act 1958.

The House went into Committee to consider the message.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister of Mines).—I move—

That it is expedient that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of a Bill to amend Part III. of the Coal Mines Act 1958.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—In view of the debates that have taken place in this House in recent years dealing with this legislation, I ask the Minister whether he can give an outline of the Bill, and how far the Government proposes to go on this occasion, bearing in mind that the Opposition has spelled out in clear terms what the Government should be doing with this Part of the Act? I ask the honorable gentleman whether he can give an indication of what the Government has in mind?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister of Mines).—I am pleased to do so and if I do it now it will give the honorable member for Broadmeadows some notice of what is intended. When the Bill is read a second time, he may even agree to its immediate passage. The proposed legislation deals with three aspects. It carries out the Government's promise that when the Commonwealth social service pensions are increased, the coal mines pensions will be increased accordingly.

It provides for an increase of $1.50 for each coal mine pensioner.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—In view of the debates that have taken place in this House in recent years dealing with this legislation, I ask the Minister whether he can give an outline of the Bill, and how far the Government proposes to go on this occasion, bearing in mind that the Opposition has spelled out in clear terms what the Government should be doing with this Part of the Act? I ask the honorable gentleman whether he can give an indication of what the Government has in mind?

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister of Mines).—I am pleased to do so and if I do it now it will give the honorable member for Broadmeadows some notice of what is intended. When the Bill is read a second time, he may even agree to its immediate passage. The proposed legislation deals with three aspects. It carries out the Government's promise that when the Commonwealth social service pensions are increased, the coal mines pensions will be increased accordingly. It provides for an increase of $1.50 for each coal mine pensioner.

Over a period the Wonthaggi coal mines association, supported by the honorable members for Gippsland West and Broadmeadows, has proposed that the coal mines pensions should be increased particularly for those pensioners who are under the age of 65 years and who do not get the same kind of benefits as the old age pensioner. So it is proposed that for a single pensioner an additional $2 will be provided, and for a married pensioner, there will be an increase of $3.50.

The third proposition I shall put to the House will be another attempt to make these increases in payments come about automatically. The honorable member for Broadmeadows
will recall that, some years ago, an attempt was made to do this. The legislation of the time was designed for an equal payment being made by the Commonwealth but, in 1963 and 1966, the Commonwealth changed the procedure and gave one type of pensioner one increase and another a different increase. This put the Victorian Act out of order and, on the advice of the Solicitor-General, the legislation which made the increases automatic was repealed. It has now been redrafted and I propose to put to the House that, in future, any increase in the Commonwealth pension should automatically flow to the coal-mine pensioners.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows) I appreciate the explanation that the Minister has given but I am still interested in the relationship between the Victorian pensioner and the retired miner in New South Wales. This has been a vexed question with the retired miners association over many years.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister of Mines).—This is not the right time to debate these matters, but perhaps I did not make myself plain to the honorable member. What the Government proposes is what the Wonthaggi pensioners association proposed; the figures will be the same.

The motion was agreed to, and the resolution was reported to the House and adopted.

On the motion of Mr. BALFOUR (Minister of Mines), the Bill was brought in and read a first time.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE (OSTEOPATHY, CHIROPRACTIC AND NATUROPATHY) BILL.

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of a Bill to constitute a Joint Select Committee to inquire into and report upon the practices of osteopathy, chiropractic and naturopathy, and for other purposes.

The House went into Committee to consider the message.

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health).—I move—

That it is expedient that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of a Bill to constitute a Joint Select Committee to inquire into and report upon the practices of osteopathy, chiropractic and naturopathy, and for other purposes.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—Will the Minister inform the Committee whether it is intended that the committee be an all-party Parliamentary committee, whether it will be on the pattern of other committees of this type established by Parliament, and whether honorable members from both Houses will be involved?

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health).—The answer to all those questions is, “Yes”.

The motion was agreed to, and the resolution was reported to the House and adopted.

On the motion of Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health), the Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CRIMES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Although the Bill is relatively short, it contains a number of important amendments of the Crimes Act 1958. In the second-reading notes which have been circulated, reference is made to an explanatory memorandum which, although I have had it circulated, is not printed with the Bill. In the circumstances, so that there will be a full record in Hansard, I propose to read the explanatory memorandum, which is quite short.

Clause 2 extends the provisions relating to the cases in which the spouse of an accused person may be compelled to give evidence, by including the offences of child stealing and kidnapping. Clause 3 is designed
to make better provision for the apprehension of persons required to give evidence at a trial who do not intend to appear.

Clause 4 re-enacts in the Crimes Act certain provisions of the Justices Act relating to the bailing of persons in custody that were repealed by the Crimes (Powers of Arrest) Act 1972. Clause 5 provides for the repeal and amendment of various provisions of Part V. of the Crimes Act, which severely restrict the power of certain convicted persons to deal with their property. These provisions are ancient in origin and inconsistent with modern conditions.

I am convinced that the amendments proposed by the Bill will result in a considerable improvement of the Crimes Act 1958.

I now propose to refer to the clauses, details of which are set out in the explanatory memorandum to which I referred earlier.

Section 400 of the principal Act provides that a husband or wife of the person charged shall be a competent witness for the prosecution without the consent of the person charged, but, save as is otherwise expressly provided in sub-section (3) or in any other Act, may not be compelled to give evidence. Sub-section (3) of the section provides that the husband or wife of a person charged with any of certain specified offences may be compelled to give evidence.

Sub-section (3) was amended in 1967, following recommendations made by the Statute Law Revision Committee in the previous year. In broad terms the amendment made the spouse of an accused person a competent but not compulsory witness against the accused in all cases, and the spouse was made both competent and compulsory where the accused was charged with any of certain specified offences may be compelled to give evidence.

Sub-section (3) was amended in 1967, following recommendations made by the Statute Law Revision Committee in the previous year. In broad terms the amendment made the spouse of an accused person a competent but not compulsory witness against the accused in all cases, and the spouse was made both competent and compulsory where the accused was charged with any of certain specified offences may be compelled to give evidence.

Sub-section (3) of section 415 of the principal Act enables a judge of the Supreme Court or County Court to issue a warrant for the apprehension of a person who, having been bound over to appear and to give evidence or to produce documents or having been served with a subpoena, fails to attend at a trial. The sub-section also authorizes the issue of a warrant to apprehend a person who is proved to be keeping out of the way to avoid service of a subpoena. However, the sub-section confers the power to issue a warrant upon "the judge of such Supreme Court or County Court"—emphasizing the word "such"—namely the trial judge, and the result is that a warrant cannot be issued until the trial has commenced.

The sub-section satisfactorily deals with the problem of non-attendance of a witness whose failure to attend only becomes apparent at the commencement of the trial. However, it does not meet the case where there is reason to believe that a person bound over or served with a subpoena does not intend to appear, or where it is known that a person is keeping out of the way to avoid service of a subpoena upon him. In these circumstances it is desirable that a judge be enabled to issue a warrant of apprehension as soon as it appears that the intended witness does not propose to appear.

Clause 3 of the Bill, therefore, proposes amendment of section 415 as follows:

(a) Sub-clause (1) amends sub-section (1) of section 415 by repealing the provision in respect of a person proved to be keeping out of the way to avoid service of a subpoena, thus confining its operation.
to the cases of persons bound over or served with a subpoena who fail to attend at a trial. The sub-clause also proposes to increase the maximum amount of the fine under section 415 from $40 to $200 to make it accord with present-day money values.

(b) Sub-clause (2) inserts a new sub-section (1A) in section 415 which enables any judge of the Supreme Court or of the County Court to issue a warrant of apprehension where it is proved that a person bound over or served with a subpoena is likely to absent himself from the trial or that a person is keeping out of the way to avoid service of a subpoena, and to impose a fine not exceeding $200 on such person.

Clause 4 re-enacts as sub-sections (6), (7) and (8) of section 460 of the principal Act provisions which were originally enacted by the Justices (Bail and Appeals) Act 1970 as sub-sections (3), (4) and (5) of section 39 of the Justices Act 1958. The latter section was repealed by the Crimes (Powers of Arrest) Act 1972 which, while re-enacting and extending the provisions of sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 39 of the Justices Act, did not include the provisions of sub-sections (3) and (5) thereof. It is desirable, therefore, that these provisions be restored as proposed by clause 4 of the Bill.

Part V. of the principal Act contains provisions relating to the property of persons convicted of various offences and section 549 provides, in effect, that a convict shall not be entitled to sue for or to alienate property or to make any contract except as provided in the Act. The later provisions of Part V. make provision for appointment of a curator of a convict’s property and confer certain powers on a curator to deal with such property. It appears that the existing provisions were derived from the Forfeiture Act 33 and 34, Victoria, Chapter 23 which had the purpose of providing some relief from the harsh operation of the rules relating to forfeiture of a felon’s property. Comparable provisions were repealed in England in 1948, and they appear to be a relic of the past. Clause 5 of the Bill, therefore, proposes the repeal of sections 549 to 561, with consequential amendments of sections 562 to 564 of the principal Act. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. JONES (Melbourne), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, April 3.

Patriotic Funds (Amendment) Bill.

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Patriotic Funds Council of Victoria has drawn attention to two problems which arise in relation to patriotic funds. The first of these is that quite often the terms upon which a patriotic fund has been established restrict the amount, or the rate of application, of money payable from the fund. This sometimes has the result that, because of changes in the purchasing power of money, the fund cannot be put to the best use.

The second problem arises where the trustees of a patriotic fund desire to provide assistance for beneficiaries of the fund, but the funds available for the purpose are insufficient or it would otherwise be impracticable for the trustees to undertake the task themselves. For example, the trustees may wish to ensure that elderly ex-servicemen or widows of ex-servicemen are placed in a hospital or an appropriate housing development, but are unable to undertake the construction and management of homes or hospitals. However, the desired result could be achieved if the trustees were empowered to transfer the patriotic fund or portion of it to a charitable organization which will accommodate the beneficiaries of the fund.
The Bill, therefore, is intended to overcome these problems by the amendments of the Patriotic Funds Act 1958 that are contained in clauses 2 and 3. Clause 2 proposes the insertion of a new sub-section (2A) in section 17 of the principal Act. The new sub-section provides that where the amounts of money which may be applied from a patriotic fund, or the rate at which money may be so applied, are too small to enable the fund to be put to the best use, the Governor in Council on the application of the administrators of the fund may redefine the purposes of the fund as regards any matter relating to the amounts or rate of payment of money for the purposes of the fund or to beneficiaries of the fund.

Clause 3 contains proposed section 12A of the principal Act. Sub-section (1) deals with the case where the administrators of a patriotic fund are of the opinion that the purposes of the fund would be more successfully accomplished if the fund or portion of it were transferred to the trustees of a charitable trust or to a corporation having charitable objects. In those circumstances, the administrators of the patriotic fund may, with the sanction of the Governor in Council, transfer the fund or portion thereof to the trustees of the charitable trust or to the corporation to be applied to its charitable objects. The effect of the sub-section is that, unless the Governor in Council specifies trusts upon which the transferred fund or portion is to be held, the fund or portion transferred will be held for the purposes of the charitable trust or the charitable objects of the corporation.

Sub-section (2) of the proposed section 12A is a provision in common form to enable the persons transferring a patriotic fund or portion thereof under the section to obtain a sufficient discharge in respect thereof. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, April 3.

TRUSTEE COMPANIES (TRUSTEES EXECUTORS) BILL.

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time. Its purpose is to amend the Trustee Companies Act 1958 so as to allow the Trustees Executors and Agency Company Limited to vary its capital.

The Trustees Executors and Agency Company Limited was incorporated in Victoria in 1878 and subsequently a private Act conferred on the company power to be appointed and to act as executor of deceased estates and as administrator and trustee in certain other capacities. Amongst the provisions of the Act were restrictions with regard to the capital and shares of the company. These provisions are now contained in item 1 of the Second Schedule of the Trustee Companies Act 1958.

The capital structure of the company is rather more complicated than that of the other trustee companies referred to in the Second Schedule. When the company was incorporated its capital consisted of 2,500 shares of $10 each, and on 8th December, 1879, those shares were divided into 5,000 shares of $5 and became known as "original shares". On the same date the company was authorized by legislation to increase its authorized share capital to $1,000,000 by the issue of additional shares of $5 each, known as "new series shares".

The present authorized capital of the company is, therefore, $1 million divided into 200,000 shares of $5. The nominal capital amounts to $800,000 consisting of 5,000 original shares and 155,000 new series shares. As to the original shares, all 5,000 are paid to $3 each, with an uncalled amount of $2 a share, and 100,000 are paid to $1, with an uncalled
amount of $4 a share. The total amount uncalled is $520,000 and the total paid capital is $280,000.

As will be seen from item 1 of the Second Schedule of the Act, in the event of winding up the company the holders of both original shares and new series shares are required to contribute $5 a share in addition to any uncalled amount then existing. Holding of shares is restricted to a limit of 500 shares—in the case of original shares, by the Articles of Association of the company; and in the case of new series shares, by the provisions of item 1 of the Second Schedule to the Act.

The amendments proposed by clause 2 of the Bill are as follows:—

(a) To substitute for the present limit on the holding of shares a limit of shares amounting to one five hundredth part of the nominal amount of the issued capital of the company. This is, however, subject to the right to retain shares lawfully held on or before the commencement of operation of the legislation, but without a right to vote in respect of shares in excess of one five hundredth part of the nominal amount of the issued capital.

(b) To extend to all shares in the company the existing provision that transfers of new series shares shall be subject to approval of the transferees by the directors.

(c) To vary the existing liability of shareholders on winding up to pay, in addition to any uncalled capital, the sum of $5 a share, by providing for payment of an amount in respect of each share calculated by dividing $1·32 million by the number of issued shares or stock units. In effect, this creates a reserve liability of $1·32 million for protection of beneficiaries.

As I indicated when giving notice of motion for the introduction of this Bill, I propose to move a certain motion, as is usual with private Bills, and I have in mind at a later stage to move for the appointment of a Select Committee.

On the motion of Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, April 3.

MAGISTRATES' COURTS (JURISDICTION) BILL.

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

To a large extent the Bill is a consolidating measure, re-arranging parts of the statute law which have been in operation for a long time. It represents the second phase of a complete review of the Justices Act 1958, which commenced with the passage of the Magistrates' Court Act 1971. I might add that work on the final stage of the review is well advanced and it is expected that a Bill to re-enact the remaining provisions of the Justices Act, in relation to procedural matters, will be introduced in the spring session of Parliament.

As honorable members will observe from the explanatory memorandum and comparative table circulated with the Bill, the Bill includes amendments of the existing law and some new provisions. Reference to the comparative table will show at a glance what is new and what is existing law. The Bill is, of course, explained in detail in the explanatory memorandum and I do not propose to cover the same ground. However, I should draw attention to some of the more important provisions of the Bill.

Clause 6 and the provisions of clause 10 relating to bailiffs and warrants of distress in civil matters are in accordance with the undertaking of the Government to relieve members of the police force of the burden of executing such warrants. These provisions will enable the considerable amount of time spent by the police on this work to be devoted to normal police duties, with consequent benefits for the community.
Clause 9 of the Bill contains a great variety of provisions in respect of the jurisdiction of Magistrates Courts, appeals from the decisions of such courts and other matters. While most of these re-enact existing provisions, a number of them involve amendments designed to improve the administration of justice. For example, proposed section 69 extends the jurisdiction of Magistrates Courts to deal summarily with indictable offences.

As will be seen from the detailed comments on page 3 of the explanatory memorandum circulated with the Bill, proposed section 69 extends the existing summary jurisdiction of a Magistrates Court, with the consent of the accused, to larceny as an agent, larceny or embezzlement by servants of the Crown, larceny or killing of cattle not exceeding $1,000 in value, the receipt or solicitation of secret commissions not exceeding $200, destruction or damage of trees not exceeding $1,000 in value, and forgery and other offences in respect of bills of exchange and promissory notes up to $1,000 in amount. This will enable a Magistrates Court in appropriate cases to dispose of such charges and will result in a considerable saving of the time of superior courts.

I believe the Bill effects significant improvements of the law relating to Magistrates Courts and I commend it to the House.

On the motion of Mr. Edmunds, for Mr. LOVEGROVE (Sunshine), the debate was adjourned.

Sir GEORGE REID (Attorney-General) (By leave).—My motion for adjournment of the debate for one week is subject to the understanding that I would be prepared to grant the honorable member additional time. However, I point out that very full explanations of the clauses are given in the explanatory memorandum, and in view of an announcement that was made earlier in the day, too long an extension cannot be granted. However, as the honorable member for Moonee Ponds knows, I am always very reasonable in these matters.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until Tuesday, April 3.

VICTORIAN INLAND MEAT AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time. The proposed amendments to the Victorian Inland Meat Authority Act are designed to reconstruct the authority financially. Some 30 years ago the authority became the successor in law to a number of country killing and freezing works. In the succeeding years it maintained operations at Ballarat and Bendigo on a service basis; that is, it killed and processed livestock on a set schedule of charges for the trade in general and for local butchers.

In this line of business the authority had varied fortunes, including some substantial losses. The net result was that from time to time, pursuant to its loan raising authority, a series of loans was made to the authority by the Treasurer for a number of purposes, broadly as follows:—

(i) for improvements and additions to existing facilities;
(ii) for replacement of plant for which provision could not otherwise be made due to unprofitable operation;
(iii) to cover cash deficits due to operating losses.

The authority has been quite unable to service principal and interest payments in respect to these loans and the present position is that the Treasury is owed some $3.7 million, of which some $750,000 is for overdue interest. Over the past three years the authority has had to look very seriously at just where its future lies if it is to continue operating at Ballarat and Bendigo in such a way that it would be a reasonably efficient operation by industry standards.

The authority has, over this period, set about building up a management and financial structure more suited to the rapidly changing situation in which the meat industry now has to operate. The authority has made considerable progress in this regard although much remains to be done. The authority showed a profit in 1971-72 and is currently showing a reasonable profit record for 1973 although the next three months will be uncertain owing to a shortage of livestock.

Broadly, the aim of the authority is—

(i) to have works at Ballarat and Bendigo which will meet export standards for virtually any reasonable world market; in this regard a $1.6 million project for Ballarat is in hand. Bendigo works are reasonably up to date and no major expenditure is foreshadowed there;

(ii) to attain an operational efficiency in the works up to or better than industry standards;

(iii) to provide a reasonable continuity of operation, so that losses inherent in a fluctuating throughput service operation can be avoided, and so that a labour and management team can be retained, and also to see that action can be taken to assist in developing the best possible markets for livestock.

To achieve these ends and give reasonable prospects of self-sufficiency in the financial sense, it has been necessary for the authority to devote an increasing amount of its throughput to processing livestock purchased by the authority and sold in export markets by the authority as a trading operation.

The proposed legislation allows for the following:

(i) The authority to become responsible for a debt to the Treasury of $1 million in lieu of $3.7 million currently shown on the books of the authority, but which it has been possible to service and is not represented by assets which could be expected to service that level of debt.

The figure of $1 million in the Bill has been determined by agreement between the authority and the Treasury on broad lines as representing, on the one hand, the liability now represented by productive assets and, on the other, a liability which the authority might expect to be able to carry in the course of its commercial operations.

(ii) To allow the authority to borrow further sums as may be appropriated by the Parliament on conditions determined by the Treasurer—this is necessary for the future and to cover the present Ballarat project;

(iii) To allow the authority, with the Treasurer's approval, to obtain financial support from the banking system, guaranteed where necessary by the Treasury as to whole or in part; and

(iv) Generally bring the present long-standing financial provisions more up to date.

Although not the same in terms of its actual drafting, the proposed financial arrangements in concept are in line with those of other statutory authorities. Broadly, the financial structure of the authority on the passing of the legislation will be as follows:

Owing to the Treasurer pursuant to the new section 17 . . . 1 million
Being borrowed for $ Ballarat project pursuant to new section 16 .. 1.6 million

Presently required for working capital by means of overdraft 1.5 million

Additional required on overdraft when the new Ballarat works are operating .. 1 million

Total borrowing 5.1 million

Turning to the Bill itself, I point out that clause 2 makes an amendment which is consequent on the change to the metric system of measurement, and clause 3 permits the authority to insure its part-time members against accident or illness arising out of their duties with the authority.

Clause 4 substitutes the title "General Manager" for that of "Secretary". The general manager is the senior person appointed by the authority and the changeover to "General Manager" from "Secretary" is consequential upon this.

Clause 5 provides for restructuring the financial structure of the authority, details of which have already been given, and clause 6 provides for consequential amendments following an amendment to the Public Account Act 1970.

The Bill is presented with the objective of bringing the Victorian Inland Meat Authority to a position where it can operate efficient inland killing facilities in keeping with the rapidly changing conditions in the meat industry.

Between 700 and 800 persons are employed at the Bendigo and Ballarat works; the annual pay-roll exceeds $3 million, and both works provide valuable additional markets for a wide range of livestock. Basically, the Government's aim is to increase the output and efficiency of the works. I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr. Balfour.
The prime function of the proposed committee is to determine which hospitals are suitable for providing adequate experience in medicine generally for graduate medical practitioners. The functions of the committee are set out in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of sub-section (7) of proposed new section 7A. Although the committee will examine and report on matters relating to the accreditation of hospitals, it is the function of the Medical Board of Victoria itself to decide whether or not any institution in the State is approved as suitable for providing post-graduate internship.

The new section 15A of the Medical Practitioners Act 1970, to be added by clause 7 of the Bill, specifically sets out the power of the Medical Board in this regard. From this new section it will be seen that that board may approve or conditionally approve an institution as suitable for post-graduate internship and may cancel any approval given or vary any condition imposed.

Three new sections—19A, 19B and 19c—to be added by clause 8 set out the methods of control that will be necessary to enable the proper introduction of a compulsory post-graduate year of training for medical graduates.

Every medical practitioner first registered after 1st October, 1973, will be regarded as being registered provisionally only until he satisfies the Medical Board that he has completed a period of twelve months' internship in an approved institution or institutions. Any person only provisionally registered who practises outside the hospital in which he is receiving his residency training will be guilty of an offence and subject to a penalty of $200.

There should be little difficulty experienced in controlling the provisional registration and internship training of medical graduates from Victorian universities. However, provision must be made for persons who have been trained in other States or in overseas countries where medical qualifications, registrable in Victoria, may be obtained.

In the event of a person who has not served a requisite period of internship in Victoria seeking to be registered here, the Medical Board, under the provisions of the new section 19B, is authorized to accept equivalent post-graduate training obtained elsewhere. The Medical Board of Victoria must be satisfied that this post-graduate service obtained outside Victoria provides experience and further training equivalent to that required in Victoria.

As a matter of interest, for many years past the Medical Board of Victoria has acted as the agent of the General Medical Council in certifying as to a Victorian medical practitioner's post-graduate hospital experience when the Victorian doctor wishes to go to England for further post-graduate study for which he needs full registration.

The new section 19B is expressed very widely to ensure that the Medical Board is able to accept for full registration any person who is qualified academically under the general registration provisions of the Medical Practitioners Act and who has adequate training and experience to enable him to enter practice.

Clauses 5 and 6 of the Bill are introduced to remove an anomaly which was overlooked at the time the original Act was being prepared. As the Act is now drawn, if a registered medical practitioner who wishes to leave Victoria temporarily advises the Medical Board and arranges for his registration to be cancelled until his return, that registration may be restored on payment of a fee of $25. I refer honorable members to paragraph (d) of sub-section (3) of section 5 of the Act. However, should he merely depart for overseas and, in due course, have his name removed for non-payment of the renewal of registration fee, on his return he may have his name restored to the register upon payment of a
fee of $20. This is provided in paragraph (c) of sub-section (3) of section 5. It is felt that this anomaly might encourage some medical practitioners not to keep the Medical Board informed of their intention to leave the State.

Provision is made in clause 11 for amendment of the regulation-making powers to enable payment to be made to members of the Hospitals Accreditation Committee, to persons authorized by that committee to inspect hospitals and generally to define the committee’s duties.

Clause 10 provides for some verbal alterations to section 32 of the Medical Practitioners Act, the only substantive provision being the amendment of sub-section (5) of section 32. This amendment reduces from five to three years the time during which the Specialist Practitioners Qualifications Committee, appointed under section 29 of the Medical Practitioners Act 1970, can receive applications from experienced persons, but not necessarily academically qualified persons, for registration as specialists.

When the Medical Practitioners Act 1970, was introduced it was thought that it would be a very time-consuming job to carry out a survey of all applicants. However, this was not the case, and the Medical Board has completed its activities in this regard. The continued presence of this provision merely invites applications from overseas practitioners, unqualified as specialists, for registration as such.

The only other provision is to amend the Poisons Act, consequent upon the substitution of the Medical Practitioners Act 1970 for the Medical Act 1958.

On the motion of Mr. Kirkwood, for Mr. LIND (Dandenong), the debate was adjourned.

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health).—I move—

That the debate be adjourned until Tuesday next.

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston).—I should like to receive an assurance from the Minister that he will extend the period of the adjournment of the debate for longer than one week, if necessary.

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health) (By leave).—As the honorable member for Dandenong is not present in the Chamber, the Government will agree to that course.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned to Tuesday April 3.

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION (YALLOURN COUNCIL) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 21) on the motion of Mr. Balfour (Minister for Fuel and Power) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray).—This Bill provides for a reduction of the voting age for the elections of the Yallourn Town Advisory Council from the present 21 years of age to eighteen years of age. The measure is in line with the State and Federal Governments’ Bills on electoral matters which were passed early in this sessional period in Canberra and Melbourne.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister for Fuel and Power graciously referred to matters which had been considered during the last session of this Parliament, particularly to the State Electricity Commission (Amendment) Bill which was debated in this House on 7th December, 1972. During that debate I moved an amendment to provide, in effect, for the principle now contained in this Bill. If my amendment had been accepted—it was supported by the Country Party—it would have provided for a reduction of the voting age for this council from 21 years to eighteen years as from December last. In that debate members of the Opposition said that the amendment was in line with provisions for the Local Government Act.
The principle stated by the Minister was that of my party and in fact in line with the Liberal Party policy as enunciated from time to time. Somewhat to my surprise, last December the Minister refused to accept the amendment. The honorable gentleman explained that there were problems in implementing the principle essentially related to Commonwealth responsibility for the roll used for voting for the Yallourn Town Advisory Council. Members of the Opposition then regarded the attitude of the Government, and still do, as a “head in the sand” attitude. It is evident from the Federal election results and the stated policy of the Labor Government that voting rights should be given to eighteen-year-olds. But the question of voluntary enrolment was open to the Victorian Government in 1972. By refusing to accept the Opposition’s amendment, the Government denied voting rights to eighteen-year-olds. Those rights have long been denied to them by the Liberal Government.

I am confident that on 19th May the electors will not forget these facts. The Government was hoping that the question of voting age could be shelved until after the State elections. It is interesting to note that the Government is attempting to push this belated Bill forward in the very short period between now and the State elections. The people of Victoria will not be fooled.

It is important to note that at the time of the debate on the State Electricity Commission (Amendment) Bill the Victorian Government was willing to be subservient to Commonwealth dictation on matters of this kind. It is an insult to a sovereign Parliament for this Government to say on 7th December last, “If the Commonwealth cannot do it, we cannot do it”. It will be the policy of my party to make its own decision on matters of this nature. The measure is desirable. It embodies a principle that has been espoused by the Opposition for a considerable time in respect of both Yallourn and Melbourne. At last the Government is catching up with the rest of Australia in sponsoring legislation providing for votes for persons between the ages of eighteen and 21 years. Members of the Opposition support the Bill but roundly condemn the Government for delaying its introduction.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East).—The Country Party supports the Bill.

The motion was agreed to.

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

MARYBOROUGH LAND BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 14) on the motion of Mr. Borthwick (Minister of Lands) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara).—This Bill is long overdue; it enables the Education Department to control Station Street and part of Victoria Street, Maryborough, for educational purposes. As long ago as 1960 the Education Department should have realized that the Maryborough Technical College could not remain on its present site. If the department had been far-sighted, it would have shifted the school from the original small triangular block and from land acquired directly across the road from the old building, to a site of 20 acres close by.

The technical school is now situated in a densely populated area, and two streets have to be closed. The land was acquired in 1960, and a trade block was established opposite. Another trade block was established in 1970. Now equipment valued at $1 million is operating in these wings situated on the other side of the street to the old school building. This should never have been allowed to occur. When the school enrolment expanded in 1960 the school should have been removed from this area. After a large State investment in technical school facilities has been made a street has to be closed.

A school crossing has been provided and children are continually walking to and fro. Many of the
trades people have complained of a waste of time when vehicles approach the crossing and drivers have to wait for the children to cross. This is so; it would be better for the vehicular traffic to go up Nolan Street and down Victoria Street, as they will now be asked to do. The old School of Mines is almost 100 years old; it was built on this site in 1889, and long ago it should have been removed elsewhere, regardless of its condition.

Mr. Scanlan.—Who built the school?

Mr. Curnow.—I will give the Minister without Portfolio some of the history of the school. Mr. Outtrim, a former member of the Legislative Assembly, obtained a grant of $4,600 from Parliament to match a contribution of $2,000 which the local residents battled to raise. I shall quote from the Maryborough Advertiser of 9th March, which gives the history of the school. It reported, inter alia—

Mr. Outtrim’s efforts obtained a building grant of $4,600 in 1889, and a site for the new school had to be selected. Many were investigated but the present site was eventually acquired from the Victorian Railways. A tender of $9,000 by Spurway and Rose was accepted for the east wing of the 2-story building. The foundation stone was laid by Dr. Pearson, Minister of Public Instruction on 2nd June, 1890. The building was occupied in January, 1891.

It was then called the Maryborough School of Mines. When the Education Department took it over in 1913 the overdraft of $1,500 was liquidated. Since 1913 bits and pieces have been added. A school building recently demolished was built in 1920. A photograph recently published in the Herald showed the building to be disgraceful. The old building was removed through the efforts of the school advisory council, and I am glad that it has gone forever. I hope that after 30th June a new Commonwealth library and science block will be added, but this will encroach on the street by approximately 10 feet. In its wisdom the Maryborough City Council decided that it would be better to give the Education Department this land.

Some important conditions relating to this measure are not stated in the Bill, but they were mentioned by the Minister in his second-reading speech as reported at page 4054 of Hansard. I agree with the provision that the vista of Maryborough’s magnificent station, which is at the other end of Station Street, should not be blocked by any building constructed on the grounds of the technical school. The railway station is a site worth seeing and the view of it must be preserved. Railway workers, of whom there are many in Maryborough, will still have access to the station by a 15-ft. promenade. This is important because many people walk or ride bicycles in that town. An important access to the station will be through a laneway at the end of the college grounds. An hotel abuts the other side of the laneway, as do two houses. The Education Department has agreed to buy these houses to widen the laneway to improve access to the station.

I understand that the Commonwealth library and science block has a high priority, and I assume it will be constructed in the next financial year. I impress upon the Education Department that the two houses in question must be bought immediately so that the laneway may be constructed into a roadway which will allow the railway station to be approached from two directions as at present. Unless this laneway is widened, when Station Street is closed there will be only one means of access to the railway station. The department has agreed to the proposal, so let it be done now.

The Education Department has also agreed to give the council a piece of land at the corner of Victoria Street and Nolan Street so that the corner may be widened. However, this is impossible because the domestic science wing of the Maryborough Technical College extends to the footpath at the corner of Victoria
Street and Nolan Street and there is no land that can be used for the purpose desired.

Therefore, although the department has agreed to give the council this piece of land, I fail to see how it can live up to its promise. Anyone who knows the Maryborough Technical College, or any resident of Maryborough, can inform the Education Department of the situation, so I do not know how it came to make that promise. However, generally speaking, members of the Opposition support the Bill because it will mean progress in education at Maryborough; it will increase safety for children; and the town of Maryborough will not be inconvenienced in any way by the proposals.

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister without Portfolio).—I thank the honorable member for Kara Kara for his contribution to this debate. Some criticism of the Education Department was expressed by the honorable member, particularly in regard to the facilities provided and the condition of buildings at Maryborough Technical College. Probably these criticisms are well founded. However, the point is that there is a limitation on the funds available to the Education Department to improve the 2,200 schools which are its responsibility.

The honorable member sought an assurance that the department will act immediately to acquire certain sites. I should like to be able to give the honorable member an assurance that immediate action will be taken, but unfortunately I cannot do so primarily because of the limitation on the funds available to the department. Therefore, without making a great deal of the point, I hope the honorable member will support the Victorian Government when it asks the Federal Labor Government to honour its promise and to provide the sum of $15 million for Victoria, which would be helpful in speeding up the provision of the various matters raised by the honorable member.

The existing problem is one of finance. As soon as the finance is available, the Victorian Government will act. I can give the honorable member that assurance, but at this stage, in view of the financial limitations upon the State Government, I am unable to assure the honorable member that immediate action will be taken.

Mr. BROAD (Swan Hill).—Members of the Country Party support the Bill. Despite earlier difficulties, which took a good many years to overcome, this Bill is evidence of a commendable spirit of co-operation between the Maryborough City Council, the Victorian Railways Commissioners and the Education Department—involving both the technical college and the State school. The proposal certainly deserves to succeed because it is a rare accomplishment to secure unanimity among five separate bodies.

The main idea is to close Station Street and part of Victoria Street, Maryborough, and to use that land for educational purposes after providing satisfactory alternative roadways. From inquiries I have made, I consider that the proposed arrangements should prove to be highly satisfactory and the rights of all persons concerned safeguarded. I hope this venture in co-operation will prove to be completely successful, and I commend it to the House.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park).—I commend the honorable member for Kara Kara on the manner in which he handled this Bill for the Opposition. The honorable member gave an excellent outline of what has happened in the district and mentioned the importance of retaining the existing view of the Maryborough railway station.

Mr. KIRKWOOD.—How did it get there?

Mr. DOUBE.—The honorable member for Kara Kara can give its history if he wishes to do so. The honorable member's comments were in marked contrast to those of the Minister without Portfolio. To bring in the
question of politics at this stage seems to me to be a poor attitude. The whole question of finance for education is not involved in this Bill, but it is involved in the twenty-year failure of this Government and the previous Liberal Party Government in Canberra. It is a mean and despicable action for the Minister to assert that the fault lies directly with the present Federal Government. How can anyone in his right mind and with any sense of the propriety of the situation make such a statement? Yet the Minister did so.

It will take years—not hours or months—to undo the mess that resulted from the refusal of the previous Federal Government to enter fully into commitments with Victoria in the field of education. It is an absolute falsehood and a piece of pretentiousness and political manoeuvring for the honorable gentleman at this stage to attack the present Federal Labor Government as he did. However, honorable members have learned that that is about all—

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister without Portfolio).—I raise a point of order. Is the honorable member suggesting that he does not support the Victorian Government’s request to the Federal Labor Government for implementation of its promises, which would provide this State with the funds it needs?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Sir Edgar Tanner).—Order! The point of order is not upheld. I ask the honorable member for Albert Park to return to the Bill.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park).—I shall do so, Sir. The Minister knew very well that he was not raising a point of order; he made a personal comment. If he did not know that, it is time that he learned the forms of the House.

The honorable member for Kara Kara made an excellent speech, which was pertinent to the Bill, interesting and informative. Then the Minister without Portfolio delivered a political diatribe, a heap of rubbish, although he is a so-called responsible Minister. Fortunately, within the next six weeks honorable members will see his removal from this House and be spared the rubbish that he talks.

The motion was agreed to.

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

WORKERS COMPENSATION BILL.

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

Consideration was resumed of clause 2—

At the end of section 2 of the Principal Act there shall be inserted the following sub-section:

“(4) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any rule of law or construction the provisions of this Act, so far as they relate to weekly payments of compensation in force immediately before the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973 shall apply with respect to every weekly payment of compensation in respect of any period after the 9th day of May, 1972 irrespective of the date of the occurrence or origin of the injury or disease giving rise to the right to compensation and notwithstanding that an award for a lesser rate may have been made by the Board before the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973 and every policy of accident insurance or indemnity which operated to indemnify an employer against claims which arose under the Act before the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973 shall notwithstanding anything to the contrary therein be read and construed as fully insuring or indemnifying the employer against the increased liability incurred by reason of the provision made by the Workers Compensation Act 1973.

(5) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (4) a person shall not be entitled to any additional payments in respect of weekly payments of compensation made between the 9th day of May, 1972 and the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973 in respect of any period after the 9th day of May, 1972 by reason of the enactment of sub-section (4) unless he is in receipt of weekly payments of compensation on the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973 or on or before the 30th day of June, 1973 he makes application to his employer or to the insurer of his employer for the increased payment”.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir).—In his remarks on clause 2 in Committee, the Minister concluded by challenging members of the Opposition to justify their proposals. I hope the
Minister will soon be present to hear the case for the Opposition. In my second-reading speech I pointed out that members of the Opposition considered that this Bill was a fraud. It does not make provision for persons injured prior to May, 1972, because the existing rates of compensation for their injuries and disabilities will continue if the Bill is passed as drafted.

As I indicated, members of the Opposition are happy to rebut the attitude taken by the Minister that there will be no disability to those persons at present receiving compensation. Before I move the first amendment circulated in my name, I indicate that it has obviously been drafted from the 1953 Workers Compensation Act. The amendment to the 1953 Act provided that persons in receipt of workers compensation payments for any reason should be paid at the then current rate. In 1953 it was possible to amend the Act to provide that weekly payments would be uniform; that payments for a dependent wife on the death of a worker would be uniform according to the dates of death and not the date of injury; that the payment for dependent children would be uniform; and that the scheduled lump sum injuries which were related to the other payments would also be paid at the rate operating in the 1953 Workers Compensation Act. Section 8 of the Workers Compensation (Amendment) Act 1953 reads as follows:

For section fifteen of the Workers Compensation Act 1953 there shall as from the commencement of that Act be substituted the following section:

"15. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any rule of law or construction, the provisions of the Principal Act as amended by the foregoing provisions of this Act, so far as they relate to rates or amounts of compensation, shall apply with respect to every payment of compensation after the commencement of this Act irrespective of the date of occurrence or origin of the injury or disease giving rise to the right to compensation and notwithstanding that an award for a lesser rate or amount may have been made by the board before the commencement of this Act, and every policy of accident insurance or indemnity in force under the Workers Compensation Acts at the said commencement shall, notwithstanding anything to the contrary therein, be read and construed as fully insuring or indemnifying the employer against the increased liability accordingly."

Mr. Turnbull.—What did the High Court say about that?

Mr. Simmonds.—The High Court upheld that amendment and in the second-reading debate I indicated that the amendment to be moved by the Opposition would be based on the 1953 Act. Therefore, it is clear that the current Act can be amended in that way and that the amendment has been tested in the court.

The Opposition was challenged to show that people would be disadvantaged by the Bill, and that the persons referred to would suffer disability if the Bill were passed in its present form. I submit that the only possible benefit of this proposed legislation is that the amount received on a weekly basis will be at the current rate. The effect of this is to burn up the entitlement of injured workers at a much faster rate. Consequently, workers injured prior to 1965 would reach the limit of $5,600 much more rapidly than would have been the case previously. When one compares that limit of $5,600 with the present limit of $15,260, one can see the enormous disadvantage suffered by these people.

The Minister has stated that he has a cure for this. The honorable gentleman used a unique device in informing the committee that he had contacted Judge Harris. Investigations ought to be made to determine how the Minister could come into this Chamber to propose an amendment to the legislation, and say that it did not matter if the situation was not met because he had made arrangements with Judge Harris for these people to have their cases dealt with by the Workers Compensation Board.

Mr. Meagher.—That is not what I said.

Mr. Simmonds.—That is not what the Minister said, but that clearly must have been the intention:
the Minister is saying that there will be no disadvantage to these people. If that is the case, why would the Minister not accept the amendments? Does it not justify the case that if the Government intends to ensure that there is no disadvantage to these people, the position should be placed beyond doubt in the legislation. I understood that Judge Harris was not particularly impressed with the quotation attributed to him by the Minister. In Hansard of 21st March, 1973 at pages 4367 and 4368 the Minister is reported as having said—

When I first read that statement in the papers I was concerned that it might be true. I approached Judge Harris, the Chairman of the workers Compensation Board, and received his unequivocal assurance that the board has adequate powers to increase those amendments in appropriate cases. Does the Minister still believe that to be true?

Mr. MEAGHER.—That is true, but that is not what the honorable member said. He said that I had made an arrangement with Judge Harris, which is a different thing.

Mr. SIMMONDS.—The Minister indicates that he accepts the truth of the position. The only way in which people on weekly payments can obtain an extension is by going to the Workers Compensation Board, where they will be required to have legal representation. Each case will be judged on its merits, based on the rules of procedure of the Workers Compensation Board, which I understand will not be changed despite this proposed legislation. Those procedures will take into account the likely degeneration of the condition of the worker concerned, not as a result of the injury but as a result of the natural progression of his life span.

Another factor which will be considered is the limitation of weekly payments. I should like to read to the Committee a statement made by Judge Harris on 23rd March in response to questions put to the Workers Compensation Board. People skilled in the every-day workings of workers compensation were perturbed about the extension of weekly payments and the settlements that had been made between 9th May, 1972, and the current period on the basis of existing rates. There are instances where the redemption of weekly payments is believed to be of benefit to the insurance companies and the workers concerned. In those cases, no doubt, a payment would enable an injured worker to rehabilitate himself in another industry, trade or calling.

When those considerations were made after 9th May, 1972, before the Workers Compensation Board, the criterion was the weekly payment then operating and the cut-off limit, which ranges from $5,600 to $15,000. Future redemptions will still be considered by this criterion and the case of any worker who suffered an injury prior to May, 1972, will be considered in the usual terms of workers compensation procedures. His entitlement will be assessed from the time of the injury and the rates will be those that were applicable at that time. Other factors will be the injury and the age of the worker.

Where a person was injured before 1965, when it was not necessary to show an association with the employment in terms of a causal connection with the injury, there will be an entitlement under the Workers Compensation Act 1965 and the weekly rate will be $25.60 with a cut-off point of $5,600. If a person goes to the Workers Compensation Board this week or next week, his redemption of weekly payments will be considered on this criterion, but he will not have access to the new rate because the board has adopted the procedure of showing causation. Therefore any extensions of weekly payments for those people with injuries which occurred prior to 1965 will be automatically abolished by the policy of the Workers Compensation Board. This means that the people in those three areas will be disadvantaged by the redemption of weekly payments and the cut-off limit.
Mr. SIMMONDS.—I will talk about Mr. Cameron's Bill later. During his remarks, the Minister said that he did not have time to introduce amendments to the Act. An amendment similar to that now being debated was first moved in May, 1972, and the Minister was not the incumbent of his present office at that time, but I am sure he was in office prior to 2nd December, 1972. As the honorable member for Bruns­wick West indicated, a Federal Government has been able to introduce a comprehensive workers compensation Bill and get it before the Parliament between 2nd December and now. Therefore, the Chief Sec­retary stands condemned for wast­ ing time and for his lack of applica­tion to his task.

I return to what Judge Harris said on the questions that were raised before the Workers Compensation Board. Judge Harris and the people who questioned him were most per­turbed. Mr. Hill, a representitive of the firm of Slater and Gordon, barristers and solicitors, in asking for comment on the position as it might be affected by this Bill, received this reply from Judge Harris—

Dealing with the matter raised by Mr. Hill, I feel, and the members are disposed to consent to my view, but it is a matter for me personally, the way it has been put — I feel I should not enter into discussion about the effect of retaining the so-called primary limit on weekly payments.

Firstly, Judge Harris is concerned about entering into a discussion about the Minister's using his name. He goes on—

The effect of that on settlements—as an erstwhile practitioner in the jurisdiction and as chairman I am aware of the approach made in many cases and it may be that Mr. Hill has mentioned a very important matter, but it appears on that particular point the legislation may not or does not effect any change.

So far as the major matter, the first matter raised by Mr. Parker, is concerned, I think it is probably very desirable in the light of what he says that this board should make a pronouncement here, a pronouncement which I think is consistent with both other boards as well. The criteria applied by the Workers Compensation Board in applications for extension for weekly payments are well known and have not been changed. The board knows of no reason change. There is one qualification to that which I will refer to later.

The statement of Judge Harris con­tinues—

As I see it and I speak to you for all boards, the board will look at each applica­tion on its merits. There will still be a careful scrutiny of the facts to see whether the applicant is able to work, is permanent and what degree of severity is required by the Act for the exercise of our discretion. The matter is entirely at the discre­tion of the board. The worker on weekly payments is not entitled to a time extension—a right which he would have had under the amend­ment of 1953. To establish his rights under this measure he will have to apply to the board, which will deal with the matter on a dis­cretionary basis. Judge Harris fur­ther states—

This means, as it has in the past, that some people will find that their compensation payments are not continued on and past what is called the primary limit, which at the moment varies between $5,600, $10,000 and $15,260, depending on the date of injury.

The board is aware that Parliament has considered a Bill to increase weekly pay­ments as distinct from any other payments for all injuries, irrespective of the date of occurrence. The board has seen and believes you have seen a copy of the Bill before Parliament. From that Bill, it appears that a worker on weekly payments will find that, subject to him being disabled, he reaches the primary limit considerably earlier than previously would have been the case. If he had been receiving $26 per week before the Bill becomes law and his rate becomes $43 per week pursuant to the Bill, then with the primary limit of $10,000 he considerably hastens the time before he litigates for further compensation. In every instance, there has to be a formal application for an award of the board. In every instance there has to be the institution of legal proceedings, service of documents and the retaining of supporting evidence and unless the matter is settled, full-scale proceedings of litigation proceed. Getting the weekly payments is
not an automatic process. The only rider I make is that I am unable to say whether one of the relevant factors which any tribunal exercising its discretion under the Act may have to consider is whether the fact that a man reaches the limit earlier because of increased payments should have some bearing on him receiving an extension.

It is not much to grasp that in what is virtually a court of law the worker may receive an extension. Judge Harris concludes by saying—

The point I am making is that there has been, and will be as far as I can see, no change in the careful and meticulous examination in each of these cases.

The Opposition believes the people who will suffer are those with existing injuries. They will not be disadvantaged, but having a disability and receiving a weekly payment, on the statement of Judge Harris, they will not stand the test of working. The argument advanced by the Government has been completely rebutted. The Opposition does not accept the narrow terms of the measure. Because the Bill will allow wide areas of discrimination against people with existing injuries, it should not leave this House in its present form.

On the narrow question of weekly rates, in many instances under the proposed legislation the weekly rates will be exhausted earlier than in the past. If there is a case for redemption of the weekly rate by substituting for it a lump sum payment, this also will not be of much benefit. To illustrate my argument I cite the case of a person who has dermatitis and who is associated with the metal trades industry. If he cannot find employment within his industry, he may be able to leave his trade and find employment in another area. On application he may get a redemption of his weekly payments by the grant of a lump sum settlement which will provide him with capital which will enable him to get started in a new industry. Redemptions are made—and have been made in the past twelve months and will always be made—in circumstances of this type, and in those areas people are always disadvantaged.

Mr. Simmonds.

It is also important to consider the position on widows whose husbands have passed away as a result of injuries received during any of the four periods I mentioned earlier, namely, before 1965, before 1970, before 1972 and the current period. In the event of the death occurring in the three earlier periods, the widows will receive the rates applicable at the time. What does it mean to the insurance companies? It means that they are able to pay current liabilities at rates set as far back as 1953. No business community in the world would fail to make an exorbitant profit out of a similar situation. It means that the liability is taken from the insurance companies and put on the backs of those least able to afford it.

Another principle involved relates to the amputation of a limb. If the limb has to be amputated today as a result of an accident which occurred in any of the three earlier periods I have mentioned, the lump sum payment for the loss of the limb will be based on the date of the injury and will have no relationship to today’s costs. The Government, which has been in office for far too long, has had eighteen years in which to do something about workers compensation but it has failed to do so. Instead the Government has compiled a hotchpotch list of rates and disabilities for all type of people and, at varying periods, the rates have been adjusted. The Opposition endeavoured to point the right way in 1972 but its proposal was rejected. The way is still there and the Chief Secretary is aware of it because this measure is really based on the 1953 amendment moved by the Opposition. The honorable gentleman has simply taken the wording of that amendment, and selecting from it the most meagre section, namely weekly payments, leaving the cut-off limits the same and thereby ensuring that no extra amounts have been paid by the insurance companies. In fact, certain savings will be effected because the
number of weekly payments will be reduced and with lower administrative costs the net result of the measure to the insurance companies will be one of financial benefit. However, the net result to the people of this State involved in industrial accidents or lost earning capacity as a result of injury or disease, will be one of disadvantage.

In case the Chief Secretary feels that the Opposition may be alone in its criticism of the Bill, I assure him that since the Bill was introduced in this House I have received telephone calls from various sections of the community. The people who are most concerned with the proposed legislation are those involved in workers compensation, those sitting on boards, representatives of the trade union movement and even members of the legal profession who act for clients who will be impoverished as a result of the implementation of the legislation. Finally, the most important group consists of those who are receiving workers compensation. They have struggled for varying periods and are concerned to see that the workers compensation legislation is amended in a manner which will help their position and probably help those who may find themselves in a similar situation in the future.

I propose to read to the Committee certain letters which I have received on this matter. The first letter, from Slater and Gordon, barristers and solicitors, who wrote to the Secretary of the Trades Hall Council on 15th March, 1972, states—

We wish to draw to your attention the latest Government amendment to the Workers Compensation Act as mentioned in the daily papers of 15th March, 1973. A perusal of the proposed amendments reveals that the Government intends to raise the weekly payments of compensation to injured workers irrespective of the date of injury. The proposed amendment, however, is little short of a fraud on the worker and on the public at large.

Furthermore, the Bill makes no reference to the payment to injured workers of the higher amounts in the table of schedule injuries and it does not increase the amounts payable to widows.

In addition the responsibility for claiming the higher rate of compensation rests with the worker and unless the claim is made by the worker on his employer or the insurance company on or before 30th June, 1973, then the worker apparently loses his rights even to the increased weekly payments.

It is our view that this whole problem needs the widest exposure and every effort should be made to replace the present proposed amendment with an amendment similar to that which was used by the Labor Party in 1953. This would provide that all compensation would now be payable at the current rate irrespective of when the injury or death occurred.

A letter from the Trades Hall representative on the Workers Compensation Board, addressed to Mr. P. Nolan, Assistant Secretary, Victorian Trades Hall Council, reads—

Re: Amendment to Workers Compensation Act.

Further to your telephone conversation re the Bill referred to in this morning's press, I am writing to submit some comments on the proposal as I understand it. I understand that the Chief Secretary would be keen to discuss this measure with interested parties. I should be interested to hear the honorable gentleman's comments on the proposal that it is important to discuss with people the nature and intent of the Bill and whether that intent is being carried into action by the Government. The letter continues—

You will note that the terms of the Bill refer only to 'weekly payments to be made to certain persons'.

So far as I can discover, the proposal means no more than that, if they apply before 30th June, 1973, people now receiving weekly payments will all receive the rate prescribed by the 1972 Act, regardless of the date of injury.

As I read the Bill, the maximum amount of weekly payments is not included in this Bill and for anyone being paid under the...
terms of earlier Acts it could mean that the maximum would be reached sooner, at no additional cost to the insurer.

Similarly, it appears that the Bill does not provide for any change in the lump sum amounts payable under the table or in the amount payable to widows.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wheeler).—Order! The honorable member has one more minute. If no other honorable member rises in his place the honorable member may continue for another fifteen minutes.

Mr. SIMMONDS.—I thank honorable members for their courtesy. The letter continues—

Finally, the Bill provides that unless claims are made before 30th June, 1973, applicants will not receive the higher rates of payment, but, as one would expect, there is no indication of the method by which people will be advised of their rights.

I believe all of these matters should be raised with the Parliamentary Labor Party as a matter of urgency and would be pleased to discuss this further if you feel this would be of value.

I have a further letter dated 19th March which sets out figures supporting the case I have already made.

Mr. RAFFERTY.—Who wrote the letter?

Mr. SIMMONDS.—The Minister of Labour and Industry would know if I mentioned the name of Mr. Jack Wood, the Trades Hall representative on the Workers Compensation Board. Mr. Wood expressed his grave disgust with the measure before Parliament and hoped the Government would at this late stage see the folly of its ways.

In his second-reading speech, the Chief Secretary made some comments which reflect the reason why the Bill was introduced in its present form. When I informed the honorable gentleman that some people were virtually illiterate and consequently it would not be possible to communicate with them over their rights under this legislation in time for them to make application before 30th June, he saw this as a reflection on the people concerned. The Chief Secretary interjected to say that the people in question would not be pleased at my describing them in this way. Some people who become eligible for workers compensation, through no fault of their own, are illiterate.

Because of the way in which the Government drafts its legislation and proposes to implement it, the Government is responsible for depriving these people of their rights because they have limited resources to obtain advice about changes in the workers compensation legislation. Even a person who is skilled in English experiences difficulty in obtaining the necessary information and adopting the required procedures to ensure that his rights are not frittered away if he does not apply before 30th June.

The amendment which I propose to move will ensure that the insurance companies are responsible for making payments to the people concerned. The recipients of weekly payments shall not be required to take any action to secure their rights. Accordingly, I move—

That, in proposed sub-section (4) of section 2, the expression, “so far as they relate to weekly payments of compensation, in force immediately before the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973 shall apply with respect to every weekly payment of compensation in respect of any period after the 9th day of May, 1972 irrespective of the date of the occurrence or origin of the injury or disease giving rise to the right to compensation and notwithstanding that an award for a lesser rate may have been made by the Board before the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973” be omitted with the view of inserting the expression, “as in force immediately before the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973 so far as they relate to rates or amounts of compensation shall apply with respect to every payment of compensation made on or after the 9th May, 1972 irrespective of the date of occurrence or origin of the injury or disease giving rise to the right to compensation and—

(a) notwithstanding that an award for a lesser rate or amount may have been made by the Board before the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973; and
(b) notwithstanding that payments at a lesser rate or of a lesser amount may have been made before the commencement of the Workers Compensation Act 1973 — 

The only change in wording from the 1953 amendment is to relate the rates to 9th May, 1972, and to correct what the Government should have done then and claims to be seeking to do now—to bring the rates for those people who were receiving compensation on 9th May, 1972, to the rates that were set at that time. The intention of paragraph (b) of the amendment is simply to cover the position of those who between 9th May, 1972, and the commencement of this Act may have received a redemption settlement on the basis of rates set before 1972. Some redemption settlements would have been based upon a weekly rate of $25.60, whereas the current rate is $63 with a cut-off limit of $15,260 as against $5,600. If the Bill is amended in the way proposed, the settlements would be reopened and the assessments made on the new rates.

In 1953 it was said that Victoria had the best workers compensation scheme in the world. Since then the State has fallen behind most other States and certainly behind the Commonwealth in this field. I was intensely proud to read the report of the debate in the House of Representatives on 7th March, 1973. Although the Federal Labor Government was elected to office only on 2nd December, 1972, on 7th March it placed before the Federal Parliament a comprehensive Compensation (Commonwealth Employees) Bill to restore to Commonwealth employees access to workers compensation rates on the basis that was operative under the 1953 Victorian Act with respect to definition of injury and disease; to provide for full pay for the full period of absence from work due to injury; to provide for payment to dependent widows and children of the average weekly earnings of the employee for so long as they are dependent; and to provide that when the children achieve independence the widow will receive 75 per cent of the average weekly earnings. The Bill also provides for quarterly adjustment of the average weekly earnings so that the rates will be increased in line with rising costs.

For the first time, Commonwealth employees can expect what they should always have been entitled to expect—access to workers compensation at rates that provided for their dependants and compensation for loss of earning power. Under the Victorian legislation workers compensation is a misnomer because there is compensation not for actual loss involved but only for loss of income. Because of the failure of the Government over the years to up-date workers compensation rates many people have been driven into abject poverty. For too long the rates have remained below the poverty line.

One can imagine an injured worker having to live on $25.60 a week in 1965 when, since that rate had been fixed in 1953, there had been a fantastic rise in costs. Meanwhile, adjustments which have been made since then have barely kept pace with living costs. As I indicated during the second-reading debate, the rates set in May, 1972, are already out of date. A week-end paper has publicized the prices of commodities, and in fourteen days the increases in prices of a selected number of basic foodstuffs totalled 26 cents.

It is no wonder that persons in receipt of workers compensation have requested that cheques should be forwarded on Wednesday rather than Thursday so that they can take advantage of “specials” in the supermarkets. Their budgets are so finely balanced that every cent saved on foodstuffs presents them with the opportunity of purchasing a further morsel for the table. With the increases in prices since May, 1972, any person living on 1972 rates must have the utmost difficulty in maintaining an adequate living standard.

Earlier in the debate the honorable member for Bendigo suggested that workers compensation in 1914 amounted to two-thirds of the
average weekly earnings. I advise the honorable members to study the legislation because in 1914 the weekly rate was half the average weekly earnings and that proportion was increased to two-thirds from 1922 onwards. The current $63 barely maintains the position. Since 1922 the relative proportion of weekly payments has remained unchanged. Because of changes in social legislation in other areas the Victorian Parliament stands indicted because it has failed to come to terms with the concept of providing adequate compensation payments for those who are injured in the course of their employment.

When speaking on clause 2, the Chief Secretary issued a challenge to the Opposition to show that the certain persons referred to in the Bill will be disadvantaged or will suffer a disability. The Minister said that if proof were provided he would do something about it. On weekly payments, I suggest that I have clearly shown that those people will not be on a parity with those on rates operative from 9th May, 1972. If the Minister is honest he will restore the position so that they receive weekly payments on a basis which is comparable with the payments today. The Minister will take similar action concerning the dependants and ensure that persons who have received redemption payments will be on an equal footing with people who will be receiving a lump sum payment on the basis of the legislation now proposed. An easy way is open for the Minister to do these things. It depends on the honorable gentleman's willingness to accept the amendment on its merits.

When speaking to clause 2 the Minister alleged that I had approached the measure on a class basis. I make no apology for doing so because the class that I represent has very little going for it, except the capacity to wring from those who are in control of society the measure of justice to which they are entitled.

If the Government intends to deal with this question on a class basis and the Minister is honest, fair and decent—all those things which are said when reasons are stated for not giving justice on some occasions—the honorable gentleman will agree that any disability that arises from support for the amendment can be borne by the insurance companies. The Minister should concede that any disability should not be borne by those who suffer from an industrial disease or as the result of an industrial accident. It is a clear question of where the burden will be borne. Ultimately, it will not be borne by the insurance companies but by the community in the form of increased costs.

That is the crux of the matter. Society has a responsibility to provide for those who are injured or suffer disease as a result of their employment. If this is his approach, I have no hesitation in saying that the Minister must, in all conscience, support the amendment put forward by the Opposition. On the basis of his comments on the clause, the honorable gentleman has a position to justify, but he has not yet justified it.

There is no question but that Judge Harris is of the view that the people concerned will be disadvantaged. They will have access to the increased benefits only after obtaining legal representation, and any decision will be at the discretion of the board—they will not have an absolute right to the increased benefits. They should not need to become involved in legal proceedings. This is the only fair and correct attitude to take.

In the coming weeks the Labor Party will put to the people of Victoria the principles contained in the Commonwealth legislation. It will challenge the Government to stand up to its position and to account for its failure since 1955 to deal adequately with workers compensation. That it has failed to do so is patently obvious. The need to amend

Mr. Simmonds.
the Act is clear and it should be amended in the way in which the Labor Party proposes. It should provide the same sort of coverage as the Commonwealth employees legislation.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—During the Committee stage last week I spoke in accordance with the advice I had received. That was to the effect that the payments to people currently in receipt of weekly workers compensation would automatically be increased to the current rates and that there was no problem in overcoming the difficulty of the total amount of payment not being increased.

Like the honorable member for Reservoir, I read the remarks of the Chairman of the Workers Compensation Board. Having done so, and having taken further advice, I was satisfied that there was no certainty that the position was covered in that way. Accordingly, I immediately gave instructions for the preparation of amendments to ensure that was done. The amendments will ensure that there is no doubt whatever that the total amount will be available to meet the increased payments. In short, what I shall propose will make doubly certain that legislation will provide what it was always intended to provide and what my advice suggested was already available. For this reason, the Government does not propose to accept the amendment moved by the honorable member for Reservoir but will circulate its own amendment for consideration later in the debate.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East).—I listened with interest to the honorable member for Reservoir. I hoped that if the Chief Secretary did not intend to accept the amendment he would give a detailed explanation of why he would not. The honorable member had a great deal of justification for seeking to extend the benefits of the proposed legislation to all those concerned, whether they were being compensated by weekly payments, as encompassed in the Bill, or had received, recently, lump sum payments which are specifically excluded.

Members of the Country Party have studied the measure closely and cannot understand why a distinction should be made between various people in these circumstances. During the second-reading debate, the honorable member for Reservoir stated that only 54 cents in each $1 paid in premiums actually goes to injured workers as compensation. The results of further inquiries indicate that this estimate was not far from the actual figure.

It is of extreme concern to members of the Country Party that the arrangements should be so inefficient. This is a ridiculous situation. There must be a more efficient means of providing workers compensation. As I understand the facts, the average profit made by insurance companies in this field is in the region of 17 per cent, which seems remarkably high on an absolutely certain business proposition. The present legislation virtually guarantees insurance companies in this field a straight-out profit exceeding 17 per cent. There is no reason why a greater amount should not be found to compensate injured workers.

As I said in the second-reading debate, one concern of the Country Party is whether the Bill will have the effect of increasing premiums. No doubt it will. Although the insurance companies may have to provide for those who are injured between May, 1972, and now there is no doubt that the position will be used as a strong argument for increased premiums to cover the extra benefits in the future.

A thorough examination of the whole field of workers compensation should be made. With the moves being made in other fields, which were referred to by the honorable member for Reservoir, particularly the Commonwealth legislation, if the position is related to a single employer and a single employee, it becomes absolutely impossible. Only
last week-end I spoke to a person whose situation demonstrates this. He was an abalone diver who employed one man as a sheller on the boat. The diver was subjected to grave risks and, indeed, he is suffering from a disease as a direct consequence of the diving operations. However, he must cope with his own problem of long-term disability. Many abalone divers are faced with permanent disability and permanent loss of employment after a relatively few years in the industry. This man must protect his sheller who, apart from the normal risks of going to sea in a small boat, would possibly face only the risk of sticking a knife in his finger or something of that nature. The whole position is becoming completely haywire. Workers compensation coverage in all occupations should be thoroughly examined. Compensation should not be related to the ability of the Commonwealth to compensate its injured employees. It should not be claimed that the whole range of employers are in the same position as the Commonwealth.

The Country Party supports the amendment because it is reasonable. There should be no distinction between those who receive weekly payments and those who, for whatever reason, chose to receive lump sum payments. My party believes that it is fully within the ability of insurance companies to meet the additional liability.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—The honorable member for Reservoir has put a comprehensive case which takes up the challenge of the Chief Secretary to the Opposition when this Bill was last before the Committee. The Chief Secretary has foreshadowed amendments to the clause. They have been circulated and so the Committee can compare them with the amendment moved by the honorable member for Reservoir. The Minister has failed to grasp the situation outlined by the honorable member. The Government accepts that a worker who is receiving workers compensation now shall receive increased payments. However, it would ignore the plight of the widow if, as the result of the injury or illness for which the worker is receiving compensation, he dies at some time in the future.

That is the crux of the Opposition's argument. If the Government is prepared to accept that workers compensation payments should be increased, where is the logic of ignoring the plight of the worker's widow and children? There is no logic in that argument and the Opposition rejects it. The honorable member for Reservoir clearly spelt out the circumstances that can face a worker as a result of accident or injury arising out of or in the course of his employment. The honorable member gave a pertinent case history.

The amendment is designed to ensure that a widow and children are not ignored if they have the misfortune to lose the bread-winner through death. The Opposition believes that society ought to be prepared to accept that responsibility, and has advocated that principle over and over again. That fundamental principle was the basis of the original workers compensation legislation. The Parliament of the time accepted the concept that if a worker is killed or dies as a result of illness caused through his employment, means must be provided for the sustenance of his family.
The honorable member for Reservoir enunciates that principle in the amendment. The Government is ignoring not only the plight of these people but also that of the worker who has the misfortune to suffer an injury or incur an illness. In the event of the amputation of a limb the rate of compensation to be paid will be based on the schedule that applied when the illness or injury occurred.

The Government is using double standards. It is introducing this measure on the false premise that it has some regard for this section of the community. An investigation of the details reveals the shallowness of the claim. I congratulate the honorable member for Reservoir on the case he has put. It is a long time since such a detailed case has clearly spelt out the shortcomings of a measure and of double-dealing by the Government. If the Minister intends to reject the amendment moved by the honorable member for Reservoir and submit his own circulated amendment, it is obvious that the Government has closed its ears to the case put forward by the honorable member. The Government demonstrates to the working-class people of the State that it has no regard for either the widow and children or the worker who has the misfortune to undergo an amputation or an equally serious operation which will leave him impaired to some degree.

The Minister concedes that the honorable member for Reservoir has a valid argument because the honorable gentleman's amendment will remove one anomaly regarding the cut-off point of the total amounts involved. The measure should be more humane than that. The Government has an opportunity of demonstrating that it has an appreciation of the difficulties confronting people engaged in industry. I should like the Minister to explain what will be the situation of a widow who has the misfortune to lose her husband from injury or illness resulting from his employment and who is given a lump sum payment based on a calculation of some years ago. If these people are parties to a contract of sale with the Housing Commission, under the present legislation they will have to surrender their rights because they will be unable to service the contract. The Minister is aware that no rebate is allowable on weekly commitments to anyone involved in a contract of sale who has the misfortune to go on workers compensation. It is regrettable that once again the Government is closing its eyes and ears to the argument put forward by the Opposition. In the dying hours of the life of this Government—

Mr. Ross-Edwards.—Do not use the word “dying”.

Mr. Wilton.—One could be excused for assuming that the Government is in a state of stupor because of its inactivity over past months. Victorians can rest assured that on becoming the Government of this State the Labor Party will take the necessary steps to ensure that the principles of the amendment are embodied in the legislation.

Mr. Wilkes (Northcote).—I should like the Minister to advise why people injured in 1965 will have no entitlement under this amendment. The Minister is aware that certain limits operate. In 1965 the limit was $5,600, and on 1st July of that year it was raised to $10,000. On 1st October, 1970, the limit was increased to $13,149, and on 9th May, 1972, it became $15,260. Nothing that the Minister can say will alter the fact that the Bill does not specifically increase these limits, and no assurance has been given that they will be increased. By interjection, the Minister says that that is the effect of the Opposition's amendment, but it is not the effect of the Government's amendment. Under the Government's amendment the worker has no right to apply for an extension of the limits under the present Act.
The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wheeler).—Order! Copies of the Minister's amendment have been circulated. A passing reference to it may be made but I cannot allow a debate in depth on it.

Mr. WILKES.—The Minister's amendment is in fact the Bill. One could be debating the Minister's amendment and still be debating the Bill.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN.—At the moment the Committee is debating the amendment moved by the honorable member for Reservoir.

Mr. WILKES.—The amendment of the honorable member for Reservoir attempts to rectify the situation that is maintained by the Minister's amendment. People in my electorate are anxiously awaiting the Government's action on their compensation payments. The honorable member for Reservoir interviewed a number of people on my behalf. He was forced to advise them that they would be disappointed if they waited for the Government to show any sympathy for the fact that they were drawing compensation based on the 1965 limit. The Government's proposed amendment to the Act would make no difference. The amendment moved by the honorable member for Reservoir corrects that anomaly. That is a humane approach to adopt. The Minister should concede the point.

Although there may be reservations about retrospective legislation, proof can be produced where people suffer hardship because of the way the Act militates against them. It may be that the legislation will fully cover a person who is injured today, but the Opposition is concerned about people who have previously been injured and are already receiving compensation payments. Although the compensation payment is increased, the payment is still based on the 1965 limit. The amendment proposed by the honorable member for Reservoir corrects that anomaly. That is a humane approach to adopt. The Minister should concede the point.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell).—The Government has said that it has not had sufficient time in which to give full consideration to the amendment which has been moved by the honorable member for Reservoir. The fact is that the Government has had sixteen years in which to consider the enactment of legislation in the workers compensation field, but has failed to do so. It has failed to recognize the plight of industrial workers in Victoria. That inactivity would be informed that this would not be costly for the Government. It would mean a great deal to the people affected, but would make a negligible impression on Treasury funds. If money can be found to pay for many of the Government's blunders, money can be provided legitimately to ease the problems of these people.

Today the Minister for Social Welfare was bellyaching about an intrusion by the Commonwealth into the field of social welfare. If an intrusion assists anyone it should be accepted. The Minister should consider this point. Acceptance of the Opposition's amendment would not mean a political or Government capitulation. It is a practical proposition to rectify what is regarded by the whole of the work force in Victoria and by many of the employers as a serious anomaly. Stoppages do not create more lost time in Victoria than anywhere else, as stated by members of the Government. Industrial stoppages are responsible for only a third of the time lost by industrial accidents in the State. That indicates the immensity of the problem that the Committee is debating. The Minister, who has not shown much compassion during the debate, might consider that some people are directly affected, and will continue to be affected, by the fact that the rates are not applicable to their case. In an endeavour to assist these unfortunate people, I urge the Minister to reconsider the matter before this measure is transmitted to another place.
Workers Compensation [27 March, 1973.]

Bill.

has to be compared with the actions of the new Commonwealth Government which, in its first 60 days of office, introduced approximately 30 new measures, one of the most important of which dealt with workers compensation.

In the edition of Commonwealth Hansard which was issued on 7th March of this year, the Minister for Labour, in his second-reading speech, referred to the subject which is now before this House for consideration. He was proposing similar amendments to the Commonwealth Act, and he stated—

The intention is that the amending legislation will come into operation on the day on which it receives the royal assent and the Bill provides for the new weekly incapacity payments to apply on and from that date, notwithstanding that the payments relate to an injury sustained before that date. The new weekly payments for death and the new basis of payment in respect of lump sums or specified losses will apply on and from the date of commencement of the amending Act in all cases where the death occurs or the loss is suffered on or after that date, even though the death or the loss may have resulted from an injury sustained before that date. Perhaps I should add that the new provisions relating to disease cases will apply only where a disease is contracted or the aggravation, acceleration or recurrence of a disease occurs on or after the date of commencement of the amending legislation.

The Opposition contends that the Minister has had ample time in which to consider the amendments moved by the honorable member for Reservoir. The Government is showing an obvious reluctance to accept the concept that the lump sum payments to dependent widows and dependent children ought to be increased. The Opposition is urging that the base rate of Workers Compensation lump-sum payments should be increased. In 1953 the base rate was $4,480 and, today, twenty years later, it has risen to only $13,690. This matter is causing a great deal of concern. I am totally dissatisfied with the Government's attitude in this matter, and I should like to place on record the complaints which have been made by injured workers in the Latrobe Valley concerning the Government's poor record. Only two weeks ago I called upon one of my constituents who was in the position which the honorable member for Reservoir is seeking to cure by his amendment.

No one has to remind the House of the hardships which are incurred by people who have been affected by an accident in the course of their employment; every honorable member will know of cases. The Opposition is not prepared to stall any longer. It is not so long ago that the Government showed its reluctance to help the people concerned prior to the amending legislation in 1970. The Government's reluctance at that time was noted throughout Victoria. I have no doubt that its reluctance on this occasion will be noted also.

The sitting was suspended at 6.23 p.m. until 7.58 p.m.

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East).—The Chief Secretary, who has charge of this Bill and the amendments now being considered by the Committee, has numerous opponents in his own party on the subject of censorship, but on the far more important subject of workers compensation—a matter which affects the livelihoods of thousands of men, women and children of this State—he seems to have none. If I have not correctly assessed the position, there must be apathy among Government supporters in this Chamber because it is noticeable to Opposition members that only the Chief Secretary has attempted to enter the debate. Of course, it is possible that the matters being discussed are too difficult for honorable members on the Government side or that they do not care about the subject of workers compensation. I would excuse, of course, the honorable member for Bendigo who has participated in the debate on this Bill and on other measures relating to workers compensation legislation. The honorable member is the stark exception on the Government side of the Chamber.

Mr. CRELLIN.—For what?
Mr. BORNSTEIN.—The honorable member for Sandringham will find himself in difficulty understanding this.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wheeler).—Order! The honorable member for Brunswick East should ignore the interjection and address the Chair.

Mr. WILTON.—The honorable member for Sandringham should shut up.

Mr. CRELLIN (Sandringham).—I take exception to that remark. In this Chamber we should not need to tell people to shut up.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wheeler).—Order! The statement made by the honorable member for Broadmeadows is not Parliamentary, but there is no point of order.

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East).—Last week the Chief Secretary courageously threw down the challenge to members of the Opposition to show him where this amending legislation was deficient and where it adversely affected the people coming within the aegis of workers compensation. In view of the magnificent contribution to the debate made by the honorable member for Reservoir last week—my colleague demolished the pitiful argument of the Chief Secretary—it is not surprising that the honorable gentleman spoke briefly in reply and that no other Government supporter attempted to rebut any of the points made by the honorable member for Reservoir.

In itself the amendment moved by the honorable member for Reservoir is a clear challenge to the Government to debate the wider issue of the workings of the Workers Compensation Act and the tremendous injustice that arises from it. The Government was happy to throw down the challenge last week, but it was not prepared to go on with it and certainly it is not prepared to take up the challenge of the honorable member for Reservoir today.

Members of the Opposition believe, as a matter of fundamental principle—it has frequently been pointed out and it still needs to be pointed out because it has not yet got through to Government supporters—firstly, that workers compensation should relate to people's needs; secondly, that it should be equal in value regardless of the time of injury; and, thirdly, that it ought to be removed as far as possible from lengthy and costly litigation.

The amendment moved by the Chief Secretary has arisen as the direct result of the criticism of the honorable member for Reservoir last week and in earlier debates on the same subject, and the Bill and the amendment make little attempt to meet the three basic requirements which are fundamental to the operation of a good workers compensation scheme such as that which applies in a Commonwealth jurisdiction. The Government has a clear precedent for taking similar action.

A Labor Government introduced model legislation twenty years ago in Victoria so that the present Government has a clear precedent going back that length of time to rectify this deficient legislation. In its own interests one might expect the Government to rectify this legislation because, in the same way that it skims on all basic community services such as social welfare, the Government will find that its neglect to pay out under workers compensation will come back two-fold or three-fold in other measures that will be necessary to assist people who are suffering great hardship and who may be required to avail themselves of other community services funded by the Government.

The Government may think that it is saving money, but probably it is undertaking a far more costly venture. During a previous debate on workers compensation the former Chief Secretary, now the Premier, promised substantial changes in the Workers Compensation Act. He said that the arguments of the honorable member for Reservoir had a great
deal of merit; in fact, his comments may be noted in Hansard and will probably be referred to in more detail later in this debate. The honorable gentleman also foreshadowed radical changes in the legislation in the spring of last year but that sessional period came and went, and this amending legislation does not embody the changes he indicated.

Workers compensation will never fulfill its rightful role until the advent of a Government that rejects a compensation scheme based simply on actuarial concepts. Workers compensation must involve more than a scheme which works simply on those concepts. It may be all right in the field of private insurance where an individual is free to enter into negotiations with a private insurance company and to purchase insurance for some particular area of his needs. He has a choice of whether or not to enter into that agreement and if he signs the agreement he is covered. The premiums that he pays and the benefits that accrue are based on actuarial concepts. But where the Government places an obligation on employers to insure the worker and on the worker to be insured, there is the added obligation on the Government to go beyond the simple actuarial concept mentality. It is that kind of thinking that has led the Chief Secretary to level the charge of class warfare at the honorable member for Reservoir, largely because he is unable to understand that the Government has an added obligation beyond the workings of the actuarial concept.

Because the fixing of workers compensation payments is not a matter for the insurance companies and is a political decision, a Labor Government would clearly fix rates which would be entirely in accord with the needs of the people who suffer crippling injuries, disabilities and disease as a result of their employment. It is open to this Government to rectify its inaction of the past and to take a similar political decision. No honorable member could argue that if this Government were to accept the amendment of the honorable member for Reservoir it would have a substantial effect on the high profits now being enjoyed by the private insurance companies which are the main beneficiaries of workers compensation legislation and not the workers themselves. The effect on their profit levels would be slight.

Mr. Stephen.—Tell us what the actuarial concept is?

Mr. Bornstein.—If the honorable member for Ballarat South needs a detailed explanation of what the actuarial concept really is, I assure him that there is a fine Library within this building, and if he wishes also to find out more about workers compensation the staff of the Library will be only too pleased to assist him. This amending legislation increases the basic weekly rates to bring them up to the level applying in May of last year. As a result of the excellent contribution of the honorable member for Reservoir, the Government proposes to move a further amendment which means that the limited weekly payments, as a lump sum, will be brought up to date.

However, the Government’s proposal still falls short of the terms of the amendment moved by the honorable member for Reservoir which would bring the lump sum payment both for the dependent widow and for the child into line with the principle it has embodied for the total lump sum entitlement as weekly rates; and, further, it has still failed to bring up to date, in line with the moves in the other two areas, the lump sum payments for schedule injuries. Obviously, the Government has an ad hoc approach and one can only continue to pressure the Government in the hope that it will agree to this amendment and will ensure that the legislation is comprehensive so that it will not create needless difficulties in future for workers and their dependents through the costly and lengthy processes of litigation, and will not put intolerable burdens on the Workers Compensation Boards. Until the Government
agrees to the amendment moved by the honorable member for Reservoir, workers compensation legislation in Victoria will remain one of the most archaic in Australia.

I refer to comments made on 28th April, 1972, by Judge Conybeare, on the eve of his retirement as Chairman of the New South Wales Workers Compensation Commission, as reported in the *Australian* of 29th April of last year. His Honour said—

It is a law which has remained stagnant for far too long. It compares lamentably with the humane, enlightened system of North America. Although it has been amended by Parliament 35 times since 1926, He was referring to the New South Wales legislation, but I have no doubt that the figures are comparable in Victoria—

its authors have been content to confine its benefits to the monetary situation for the injured worker.

This was by way of rates of compensation which were out of phase with current costs of living and with the prevailing abundant economic capacity of the community.

How much longer will the community remain satisfied to toss the injured worker the mere consolation of a cash handout?

While it is to be acknowledged that some enlightened employers provide rehabilitation practices for their own injured workers and are achieving valuable results in a limited field, they are only a tiny minority.

It should behove the Government to take careful note of Judge Conybeare's comments, if it is not prepared to listen to the arguments of members of the Opposition.

If the Government regards the argument of members of the Opposition as political, would it regard the comments of the learned judge with his wealth of experience in workers compensation jurisdiction as similarly political? I do not think so. Members of the Opposition believe there is a far better way of providing assistance to workers who have had the misfortune of being injured or of suffering from some disease arising from their employment. It is fortunate that the Opposition, as the new Government, will be able to implement that legislation in a short time.

Mr. Bornstein.

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park).—I support the amendment moved by the honorable member for Reservoir. In the Chief Secretary's second-reading speech on this Bill, and in the comments of the previous Chief Secretary—now the Premier—when introducing the Bill in 1972, the reason given for submitting amendments to the House was that the Government considered that the compensation payments, lump sums or weekly payments, fell short of what was required to allow dependants of injured workers to maintain a reasonable standard of living. I hope the Chief Secretary will listen to the arguments advanced by the Opposition because the honorable gentleman has indicated that only one sum of money should be regarded as the maximum payment for workers compensation irrespective of when an industrial accident occurred to an injured worker. If the Chief Secretary concedes that one maximum payment should be applicable to an injured worker, irrespective of when the injury occurred, his proposed amendment goes some of the way along the lines proposed in the amendment now before the Chair.

If the Chief Secretary is consistent in his desire not to have fragmented payments and considers that there should be one maximum payment irrespective of when the industrial accident occurred, he must examine the lump sum payment for various types of physical and mental disabilities, for the loss of arms and eyes and so on. In the past, lump sum payments have been calculated as a proportion of the maximum compensation payable. The Chief Secretary, having conceded that there should be only one maximum payment and that it should be applicable to all persons injured in industrial accidents, should apply the same principle to widows and dependants who are entitled to receive lump sum payments. The honorable gentleman should consider the Opposition's views before he dismisses out of hand the amendment moved
by the honorable member for Reservoir. If he desires time to consider the matter, I suggest that progress be reported and that the debate be continued tomorrow.

Mr. FELL (Greensborough).—It is time the people of Victoria were told precisely what is going on and what is proposed by the Government in this Workers Compensation Bill. This is merely a political sham to put up a front before the election in an endeavour to convince some people that the Government really cares about injured workers who are receiving workers compensation, or their wives and other dependants. Nothing could be further from the actual position, because honorable members have heard nothing, apart from the Opposition's amendments, which seeks to give justice to all the persons concerned. Honorable members have heard the pious remarks of Government supporters that the weekly payments are to be updated. The allegations and queries which have appeared in the national press have not been answered by the Government. Although it is proposed to increase weekly payments, they will cut out earlier because lump sum payments will not be adjusted. The Bill does not seek to correct this situation, and that in itself is an indictment of the Government which has had plenty of opportunity to rectify the position in the past eighteen years. As the representative of the employers and big industry, it has made no attempt to alter the situation. The argument advanced by Government supporters is that any increases will put a colossal burden on the insurance companies. I say, "To hell with the insurance companies". The persons who are suffering under this legislation are entitled to consideration. The policy of the Labor Party is quite clear. Why cannot the Government's policy be made clear? The Labor Party considers that an injured person is entitled to the same wage or salary that he was receiving at the time of his accident. We accept the principle that no worker injures himself for the purpose of freeloading on the community. Although this may be the Government's contention, it is certainly not that of the Labor Party, and it is rejected by the whole community.

The business sheet of the Victorian Trades Hall Council for 22nd March, 1973, supports the point I am making and is pertinent to this debate. The recommendation it contains is a message to the Government to pull up its socks. The recommendation states—

Council, having heard the interim report of the secretary, condemns the Bill amending the Workers Compensation Act now before Parliament, as a shallow political "gimmick" in an attempt to gain favour with the electors of this State.

Whilst the actions of the Government to increase the weekly compensation payment to the higher level is commendable, no attempt has been made to adjust the lump sum payments or the total weekly payment limitation to the same appropriate level. That is an undeniable fact. The recommendation continues—

The Government is denying the principle it enunciated in the 1972 amendments to the Workers Compensation Act, when it stated that workers should have their payments adjusted in line with current cost of living requirements.

Members of the Opposition can find nothing in this Bill which will bring about that situation in the long term. The Government's proposal will have a short term effect and will cause a great deal of inequality in the future. One has only to read newspaper reports of adjourned proceedings relating to lump sum payments to obtain verification of my remarks.

The concluding recommendation of the Victorian Trades Hall Council was as follows:—

Council, therefore, calls upon the Government to adopt the principle of placing all persons on the same weekly payments, same weekly payment limitation and same lump sum payments.

The Bill introduced by this sloppy, lazy Government does not recognize payments to dependent widows, who are not included. That is the sort of
justice that can be expected from this crazy, corrupt, Liberal Government.

Mr. SCANLAN.—Repeat that.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wheeler).—Order! I suggest that the honorable member should not repeat the word "corrupt".

Mr. FELL.—Not only are the widows disfranchised by the Government, but even their dependent children are not recognized. That is a disgusting approach and demonstrates the limits to which this Government will go.

In its first 100 days the new Federal Labor Government has produced a 23-point major policy programme. When one compares that effort with the attitude of this Government over the past eighteen years, one concludes that it is not fit to be in office. Steps will be taken by all persons concerned to ensure that it is not in a position to govern the State in the future.

The Chief Secretary smiles. I point out to the honorable gentleman that widows and dependent children have no smiles on their faces. If the honorable gentleman worked as hard in his electorate as I do in mine he would realize the suffering being occasioned to persons who are disfranchised and cannot obtain justice. Government supporters will find many persons in their electorates who are adversely affected by this legislation. I could quote a number of examples in the electorate which I represent. Until the Government acts with some conscience instead of adopting its pragmatic approach and trying to curry favour, the existing inequalities will continue. No attempt is made in this Bill to remove them, so the only thing left for the electors is to remove the Government. I hope that will happen within the next few weeks.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir).—Perhaps what has been lost sight of in this debate is that the Opposition has adopted a consistent attitude.

When the Act was amended in 1970 the present Premier, as Chief Secretary, was in charge of the Bill and indicated that there would be a change in the concept of weekly payments. He adjusted the weekly payments, lump sum payments in respect of scheduled injuries, payments to dependent widows in the case of death and payments to dependent children. In other words, in adopting the principle of relating the rates to average weekly earnings the Government acknowledged that it was important that these rates should be carried right across the scale of workers compensation payments. Similarly, when the rates were amended in May last year, they were amended right across the scale of payments.

If this Bill is amended as proposed by the Chief Secretary there will be a set of payments for people on current rates, because of the time of the injury; and there will be a set of four different rates of payments for dependent widows. It will mean that a widow will receive one of four rates of payment, depending upon the time of the initial injury or disease and not dependent on the time of the death of the bread-winner. It will mean that the children of the deceased bread-winner will have an entitlement related not to current rates or circumstances but to circumstances that were in existence at the time the injury was received or the disease was contracted. The work of the Workers Compensation Board will be made much more difficult than it would be if the amendment proposed by the Opposition were adopted.

Again I suggest to the Chief Secretary that he should consult those people who are experienced in workers compensation and that he should gain an understanding of the problem, because the fact that he has brought this proposed legislation before the House indicates that he does not understand the problem.
The Chief Secretary has already given an indication that he is prepared to listen to submissions. The amendments circulated in his name suggest that the honorable gentleman is prepared to accept the proposition that the reform should be made by the legislature rather than by the Workers Compensation Board or the judiciary. However, the introduction of reforms for weekly payments and not for lump sum payments for scheduled injuries or for dependent wives and children will create havoc with workers compensation. The cost and the number of people involved is not great, but the waste of money, time and energy that would occur if the Bill were passed in its present form could be avoided by adopting the amendment which the Labor Party has now moved and which is similar to the amendment moved on 3rd May, 1972.

I draw the attention of the Committee to a proposal at page 5853 of Hansard of 3rd May, 1972. On that occasion I moved the following amendment—

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any rule of law or construction, the provisions of the Principal Act as amended by the foregoing provisions of this Act, so far as they relate to rates or amount of compensation, shall apply with respect to every payment of compensation after the commencement of this Act irrespective of the date of occurrence or origin of the injury or disease giving rise to the right to compensation and notwithstanding that an award for a lesser rate or amount may have been made by the board before the commencement of this Act, and every policy of accident insurance or indemnity in force under the Principal Act or any previous corresponding Act at the said commencement shall, notwithstanding anything to the contrary therein, be read and construed as fully insuring or indemnifying against the increased liability accordingly.

The Government should not be surprised that I moved the amendment now being considered. The Labor Party should be surprised, in view of the comment of the then Chief Secretary—now the Premier—on the amendment at that time, if it is not accepted. The then Chief Secretary said—

The proposed new clause A strikes me as having a great deal more justification, on the surface, than any of the other amendments which have so far been proposed. However, it contains a principle which is not operating, so far as I am aware, in any workers compensation Act in Australia. This is one proposal which I shall certainly want to give urgent attention because there is much to be said for having people receiving benefits at the current rate rather than at a rate which is already obsolete through changes in the Act.

In the light of that comment on 3rd May, 1972, by the then Chief Secretary, members of the Opposition could have expected that in presenting further amendments to the workers compensation legislation there would not be a perpetuation of four separate rates for dependent widows and for scheduled injuries.

What are the rates and what are their effects? The dependent widow of a bread-winner who died as a result of an injury or disease sustained prior to 1965 will receive $9,000 and will receive the same in the future because the payment will be based on the date of contracting the disease or receiving the injury. Nothing in the Government's Bill or the proposed amendment of the Chief Secretary will correct this situation.

If a worker loses an arm as a result of an injury prior to 1965— it may not be probable, but it could occur—and his condition stabilizes at any time from now on, he will receive a payment of $5,000 because the initial injury was received prior to 1965. On current rates he would receive a greatly increased amount, but his payment is based on the date of the initial accident.

There is a direct relationship between the scheduled injuries and weekly payments. The lump sum payment for an injury such as the loss of an arm is a compensation against future weekly payments. A worker is no longer entitled to weekly payments once he receives a lump
sum for a disability. This is why the Opposition and other people who are conversant with the problems of workers compensation are most concerned that the Government should understand what it is doing to workers compensation legislation when it does this.

In the event of the death of the bread-winner following an injury which occurred between 1965 and 1970, the dependent wife would be entitled to $11,834. Each dependent child would receive $263 based on the time of injury. There is a different rate for other widows based on the time of injury.

A person who lost an arm as a result of an injury prior to 1965 would receive $5,000. However, if the arm were amputated at any time after the passage of this proposed legislation, the rate would be $6,755. A situation could arise of two workers each losing an arm on the same day under similar circumstances. One would receive $5,000 compensation and the other $6,755, depending on the time of the initial injury. There is sufficient discrepancy there, but other anomalies occur between those who received injuries between December, 1970, and 9th May, 1972. The dependent wife of a worker injured between those dates would receive a payment of $13,690, and each dependent child would receive $400, based on the circumstances at the time of the injury, not on premiums. It is a lottery and the amount paid depends on the date the initial injury occurred. The payment has no relationship to current prices or costs. Parliament set those rates between 1970 and 1972.

A person who suffered an injury between 1970 and 1972, and subsequently lost an arm, would receive $10,960 under the schedule of payments. There is a direct relationship between weekly payments and the scheduled payment for lump sum injuries on the basis that no further weekly payments are made after a lump sum settlement. Therefore, there is a third rate for the period between 1970 and 1972 containing the rate of $10,960 for the loss of an arm.

A worker who suffered the loss of a right arm as a result of an injury which occurred before 1965 would receive only half the amount of lump sum compensation that would be received by a worker who lost an arm as the result of an injury he suffered prior to 1972. Under the current rates the amount would be even more disproportionate.

It can be clearly and concisely arranged that the payments for all these people would be at the current rates based on current needs and costs. The burden of this would be placed initially on the insurance companies, but it would not be a huge burden. The people involved in workers compensation have explained to the Government their concern at what the Government is doing. Members of the Opposition may not be as expert as they might be, but they have certainly not received an expert indication of the needs of workers compensation in Victoria from a Government that proposes legislation in this form. There is still an opportunity for the Government to examine the position, to listen to advice and to correct the anomalies that are apparent to anybody who is prepared to look for them. The means of correcting the anomalies are equally apparent.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wheeler).—Order! The honorable member's time has expired.

The Committee divided on the question that the expression proposed by Mr. Simmonds to be omitted stand part of the clause (Sir Edgar Tanner in the chair)—

| Ayes | 36 |
| Noes | 25 |

Majority against the amendment 11
Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I move—

That, in proposed sub-section (4) of section 2, after the word “compensation”, where third occurring, the words “and so far as they relate to the total liability of an employer in respect to weekly payments of compensation” be inserted.

This is in line with the request made last week by members of the Opposition to increase the total payments available for meeting the weekly payments to people receiving workers compensation. In response to some of the recent comments made by members of the Opposition, I cannot stress too strongly that all this Bill seeks to do is to ensure that people who are dependent on weekly payments of workers compensation for their subsistence receive the modern rates rather than the old rates. The reason that the Bill does not go further is that a joint Parliamentary Committee is almost ready to present a report on the whole ambit of workers compensation. It would be absurd to start dickering with other parts of the Act until the report prepared by that committee, representative of all parties in this Chamber, has been examined. I repeat that the Bill does no more than rectify one serious anomaly to ensure that people trying to subsist on workers compensation do so on updated rates. Although the existing rates were relevant several years ago, they should now be increased, and the Bill brings them up to date.

As to the plight of widows and dependent children, about whom reference has been made during the debate today, I undertake to examine in detail the remarks of members of the Opposition and the objectives proposed. I will do that before the Bill is dealt with in another place. I am not prepared, off the cuff, to accept their propositions without proper examination. I suggest there is no need for further debate on this Bill, as the amendment I have moved virtually implements a request made by the Opposition when this Bill was last debated. I suggest to the Opposition that to facilitate the relief to people who will receive these payments, and who I have no doubt will not regard the additional payments as a fraud or a delusion when they receive them, the Committee might deal with my amendment and so enable the Bill to be transmitted to another place.

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir).—The Opposition is most grateful for the assurance of the Chief Secretary. It accepts his undertaking, and on that basis will support the amendment.
that he will examine the further amendment circulated in my name. I shall put to the honorable gentleman the concern that has been expressed by those connected with the Workers Compensation Board. The Opposition is of the view that some people will not be aware of their entitlement and it will not be possible to communicate with them to inform them that they may make an application to the board.

Some people who have received weekly payments of workers compensation only since May of last year, may have an entitlement to a considerable amount of money. In the normal course of business it would be incumbent on the person paying the rates to make the payments. The Opposition believes that these people should not have to apply, but as a principle of right, should receive the additional payment. The Bill, as it now stands, will deny that right, or will make it difficult for many people to obtain that right. The Bill will also put an additional load on the Workers Compensation Board, which is already overburdened. If the Chief Secretary will undertake to consider the position before the Bill reaches another place the Opposition will be prepared to co-operate.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wheeler).—I take it that the honorable member for Reservoir does not intend to proceed with the amendment that has been circulated.

Mr. SIMMONDS.—On condition that the Opposition can get an assurance.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—To clear the matter up, I should like to say that it was my intention to move a further amendment to this proposed sub-section. For the benefit of honorable members I shall read my proposed amendment. It is that after “June, 1973” the words “or such later date as the Board having regard to the special circumstances determines in a particular case”.

This was to enable the board latitude in determining any claim that came in for payment from a person who is currently receiving workers compensation and to extend the time limit under which an application may be made. When the Bill was last debated members of the Opposition pointed out that somebody who was unaware of his rights might be too late in lodging an application and would so forfeit further payments. My proposed amendment is to ensure that that does not happen.

As to the claim of the honorable member for Reservoir that this clause denies people the right to compensation, I assure him that the intention of the proposed sub-section is to ensure that anyone who was overlooked by the board or by the insurance company will have the right to lodge a claim. It may be that a person is no longer receiving workers compensation payments or has returned to work or shifted to another job and might not be easy to contact. Conceivably the insurance company could not find him to pay him. This proposed sub-section was inserted specifically to give a right to people if they happened to be overlooked.

However, I am prepared to give an undertaking that I will consider the matter and see whether it could be expressed in a better way.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wheeler).—The undertaking having been given, I ask the honorable member for Reservoir whether he intends not to proceed with his amendment.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir).—On the basis indicated, I will not proceed with it.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I move—

That, in proposed sub-section (5) of section 2, after the expression “June, 1973” the words “or such later date as the Board having regard to the special circumstances determines in a particular case” be inserted.

The amendment was agreed to, and the clause, as amended, was adopted.

The Bill was reported to the House with amendments, and passed through its remaining stages.
MARKETING OF PRIMARY PRODUCTS (CITRUS FRUIT) BILL.

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

BARLEY MARKETING (AMENDMENT) BILL.

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

BOILERS AND PRESSURE VESSELS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 14) on the motion of Mr. Rafferty (Minister of Labour and Industry) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir).—The Opposition does not oppose the measure, which places on the owner the responsibility for keeping boilers and pressure vessels in good order. The measure should be passed immediately.

Mr. R. S. L. McDONALD (Rodney).—The Country Party supports this small Bill. Clause 2 inserts a new definition of "owner" in section 3 of the principal Act. "Owner" will now include a mortgagee or lessee of the equipment.

Clause 3 inserts a new paragraph (da), which prescribes the manner in which a steam engine or boiler to which Division 2 of Part II. does not apply shall be maintained by the owner thereof.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2, relating to the interpretation of "owner".

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry).—I thank the speakers for the Opposition and the Country Party for their perspicacity and good judgment.

LATROBE VALLEY (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 14) on the motion of Mr. Dunstan (Minister of Water Supply) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell).—This Bill provides for two simple amendments to the principal Act. Basically, it will enable the membership of the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board to be increased by two persons. One of the newly-appointed members will be the chairman, and the other will be an additional elected member to represent the municipalities throughout the Latrobe Valley.

The short history of the principal Act is interesting. The first Act dealing with the subject was the Latrobe Valley Development Loan and Application Act, which received assent on 8th November, 1949. The next measure was the enactment on 7th November, 1951, of the Latrobe Valley Drainage Bill, followed on 15th October, 1953, by the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Act which amended the Latrobe Valley Drainage Act. Then, on 30th September, 1958, there was a consolidation of all the Acts.

Since then three amending Bills which have had important effects on the region and on the board's activities have been assented to. On 7th May, 1968, there was the Latrobe Valley (Amendment) Act, which repealed Part I. of the Act; this related to development aspects of the board's activities. Further amending legislation received assent on 28th October, 1969, to provide for the replacement of the representative of the Gas and Fuel Corporation, which has since closed its brown coal operations at Morwell, by a representative
of the Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd. A further Latrobe Valley (Amendment) Act dealt with the financial structure of the board, and received assent on 14th December, 1971.

These amending Bills have a great bearing on the current responsibilities of the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board and on the Government's purpose in again proposing amendments to the principal Act to enable the manager of the board to be a full-time manager and not necessarily the spokesman or chairman of the board. When explaining the Latrobe Valley Drainage Bill on 11th September, 1951, as recorded at page 4362 of volume 236 of Hansard, the then Minister of Water Supply, Mr. Brose, referring to representation on the board, said—

The board itself will be a local authority of persons selected or elected because of their special knowledge or experience. The manager, who will be chairman of the board, will be an engineer of water supply qualified under the Water Acts and appointed by the Governor in Council. There will be six other members who will act in a part-time capacity. Two will be elected by the sewerage authorities whose districts are wholly or partly within the Latrobe Valley, and one will be elected by the river improvement trusts within the valley. Two will be appointed by the Governor in Council because of their expert knowledge of large industrial undertakings in the valley, one being a member or officer of the Gas and Fuel Corporation, and one a commissioner or officer of the State Electricity Commission. The sixth member will also be appointed by the Governor in Council.

During the second-reading debate the then spokesman for the Opposition—

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—I do think a long historical recount of how the board was constituted in the past is a little out of order in a short amending Bill such as this.

Mr. AMOS.—With the greatest respect, even though the Bill may be termed a simple measure it deals with changes in representation on the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board.

The SPEAKER.—But not in the past; the honorable member for Morwell—on the present Bill.

Mr. AMOS.—I am referring to the past only to draw attention to the fact that when changes in representation were made to the board's structure in the past certain comments which were made at that time are still pertinent today. I am using those arguments to support my submission that the changes which the Bill seeks to effect in the representation may not be the most desirable.

I conclude on this point by quoting the spokesman for the Opposition at that time, Mr. Bolte, who was highly critical of the membership on the board. He made the point that in his opinion, and in the opinion of the Liberal Party Opposition, there was not sufficient representation of the ratepayer. At page 4851 of volume 236 of Hansard, Mr. Bolte said that three of the seven members would represent ratepayers directly but that the majority would be Government nominees.

The responsibilities of the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board have changed and will continue to change over the years and representation on the board should be updated to ensure maximum participation by all those affected. Recently, the board was given the responsibility of administering the licensing provisions of the Environment Protection Act in an area greater than the Latrobe Valley itself. The area has representation from ten municipalities and extends to the Gippsland lakes area.

I forwarded copies of the Bill to a number of municipalities and to people in the Gippsland area who would be interested in the proposed change. Some interesting comments were made by both municipalities and individuals. In a letter to me, dated 20th March, one gentleman, an engineer retired from the service of the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board, said—

In a large area (Sale, Bairnsdale, Lakes region) in which the board will now function it has no direct representation. All representation is from the western and central position of the Latrobe Valley.
The Opposition does not oppose the Bill but on its behalf I criticize the Government because it has arranged for the board to shoulder these extra responsibilities but has not extended representation on the board to allow more taxpayers and ratepayers outside the Latrobe Valley to have a say in its activities. As has been said, an additional municipal representative will be elected to the board. That means that there will be one elected representative from sewerage authorities, one from water authorities, one from river improvement trusts, and now one from municipalities. The Minister specifically mentioned the area from which the representation will come. The Third Schedule to the Latrobe Valley Act defines the Latrobe Valley as—

The municipal district of the shires of Buln Buln, Mirboo, Morwell, Narracan, Rosedale, Traralgon and Warragul and the City of Sale, and the Yallourn works area.

It also includes, of course, the municipality of the City of Traralgon and the City of Moe.

The board is responsible for controlling the quality of water in the Latrobe River. As all honorable members know, that river flows into the Gippsland Lakes which are situated in Gippsland East. Whatever the board does or does not do will affect the quality of the water of the Gippsland Lakes. However, municipalities and water and sewerage authorities in Gippsland East have no direct representation on the board. The Government should consider this as well as the added responsibilities of the board as a licensing body for the Environment Protection Authority. In the not too distant future, an amending measure should be brought in to allow the board to continue to properly serve the Latrobe Valley area and the Gippsland area as a whole.

I have complete confidence in the officers and members of the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board. They carry out a difficult task responsibly. Although the Bill improves the situation, it should certainly be reviewed in the near future.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East).—I echo the sentiments expressed by the honorable member for Morwell. It is important that people living east of the defined area of the Latrobe Valley should be represented on the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board while it exercises administrative powers and functions under the Environment Protection Act.

Although I circulated copies of the Bill to various bodies in Gippsland East, the short period of the adjournment of the debate has meant that many municipalities have not had an opportunity to express their views on the measure. Further, I do not know whether they are really aware of what will be the impact of administration by the board of the provisions of the Environment Protection Act. As the honorable member for Morwell said, the discharge of effluent throughout the Latrobe Valley will undoubtedly affect the Gippsland Lakes area. One only hopes that the Government has in mind the establishment of a Gippsland lakes authority which may, in its turn, have the powers necessary to prevent pollution of that fine waterway which already suffers greatly from mismanagement. If the board is to maintain its control over effluent disposal and so on throughout the whole of Gippsland, the municipalities beyond the defined Latrobe Valley area should be represented on it.

The motion was agreed to.

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

TAXATION APPEALS (COMMENCEMENT) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 20) on the motion of Mr. Rafferty (Minister of Labour and Industry) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.
Mr. LOVEGROVE (Sunshine).—The Opposition does not oppose this Bill. It amends an Act passed by Parliament a year ago. The Bill which became the Act was explained by the then Chief Secretary, Mr. Hamer, on 22nd March last year and, on 11th April, the honorable member for Moonee Ponds resumed the debate on behalf of the Opposition. On that occasion, neither the Opposition nor the Country Party opposed the Bill introduced by the Government and, with minor amendments, it was passed with some acclamation from all parties. However, the Act has not been proclaimed.

I understand that the reason given by the Minister for the introduction of this Bill is that it is desired to proclaim the Act in sections and not in toto. The Taxation Appeals Act which was passed a year ago had three parts. One part set up the Victorian Taxation Board of Review; another dealt with various consequential alterations to other Acts related to taxation; and the third dealt with transitory provisions.

Clause 2 seeks to amend section 1 of the principal Act by deleting the words—

and shall come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation of the Governor in Council published in the Government Gazette.

and substituting these words—

The several provisions of this Act shall come into operation on a day or the respective days to be fixed by proclamation or successive proclamations of the Governor in Council published in the Government Gazette.

The Opposition does not object to this proposed amendment. I make one observation apropos of both the Acts passed last year, and not proclaimed, and the Bill now before Parliament. Most of the State taxation which would be the subject of any appeals before the new Victorian Taxation Board of Review would be derived from pay-roll tax, probate duty, land tax, gift duty and stamp duty. The former Chief Secretary—the present Premier—indicated in the second-reading speech he made last year that there would no doubt be an increase in the number of appeals as a result of the simplified and cheaper procedures made possible by the Act, but that this would also lead to greater equity between taxpayers and the Government.

I refer to pay-roll tax and a situation which has developed in the building industry. Recently many complaints have been made concerning the quality of domestic construction and of the workmanship going into a certain class of home in the metropolitan area. I point out that there can be a wide area of disagreement between State taxing authorities and some of the people who are supposed to be paying pay-roll tax in the building industry owing to the system of employment operating in it. Under this system men working in the industry are described as subcontractors and are employed by developers such as those who featured in recent press articles highlighting poor workmanship in house building and their employers, who may or may not be obliged to pay pay-roll tax.

Because of the disputes that have arisen recently over the quality of workmanship and the fact that part of the deterioration has been caused by the system of sub-contracting, a systematic review of the persons doing this class of work should be undertaken as soon as possible to settle two legal questions. One is the liability of some builders to pay pay-roll tax for some of the subcontractors. The second is the consequential question whether the subcontractors are in fact employees.

Fortunately the Minister of Labour and Industry is familiar with this type of problem, so I commend it to him in both his capacities for further examination.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.
Clause 2 (Amendment of No. 8274 s. 1.)

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry).—I thank the honorable member for Sunshine for his observations in support of the Bill. It is correct that the original Bill was largely of an administrative character, in that it set up a board of review and there were consequential provisions for amendments to other Acts and transitory provisions. It has been found desirable that the chairman of the board of review should be appointed now to assist in the making of administrative decisions and the drafting of rules and regulations. For that reason the Government asks that these provisions should be proclaimed in several parts. Although the other matters raised by the honorable member for Sunshine were wide of the mark, I will certainly examine them at the earliest opportunity, particularly as the speech made by the honorable member will be one of the last excellent speeches we will hear from him, and he was kind enough to say that I have some knowledge of the subject. I will make it my business to take full cognizance of his remarks.

The clause was agreed to.

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

HOSPITALS AND CHARITIES (GUARANTEE) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 6) on the motion of Mr. Hamer (Premier and Treasurer) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr. LIND (Dandenong).—This is a Treasury Bill, as the title suggests. It is surprising that a similar Bill has not been introduced before, partly in view of the many similar guarantee Bills concerning the major private hospitals which have been before the House and have all been agreed to. It is not surprising that some of the larger financiers realized that there was no guarantee concerning public hospitals and charitable institutions and decided to make sure of their ground by approaching the Government. This Bill will cover all the cases that come before the Government in future and it will not be necessary for Parliament to enact legislation on every occasion, as has been the case with private hospitals. It is comforting that guarantees will be given only when a viable proposition is put forward by an institution. It is pleasing that the Royal Women's Hospital has such a proposition and considers that an economic structure can be built near the hospital and used for the purpose of staff flats, medical suites, car parking, and so on, which are all essential in this crowded city. The Opposition in no way opposes the Bill.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura).—The Country Party believes that this measure will be of benefit to the larger public hospitals throughout the State. It would have been obvious to anyone that a guarantee would be required by people prepared to lend money to these institutions rather than take a chance on the fact that the loan was not guaranteed, although the Governor in Council would have to give approval before work commenced. This measure puts the situation beyond doubt. The committee of management of the Royal Women's Hospital is to be congratulated for persuading the Government to automatically guarantee loans on works of this type.

Members of the Country Party are interested in the eventual progress of this work, and we trust that any other hospital which puts before the Government a similar proposal will obtain a guarantee without undue delay. We fully support the Bill and trust that it will be as effective in practice as it appears to be on paper.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2, providing for power to the Treasurer to execute guarantees.
Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry).—On behalf of the Government, I thank the Opposition and the Country Party for their rapid and effective support of the Bill.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT.


Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry).—I move—

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until tomorrow, at Two o'clock.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry).—I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds).—I direct the attention of the Minister who is responsible for the Road Safety and Traffic Authority to a matter which is of vital concern in my electorate. A few years ago the authority assessed that a stop-go set of traffic signals was not justified at the corner of Buckley, Fawkner and Cooper streets, Moonee Ponds.

This is a busy intersection, which hundreds of school children cross every day at the commencing and finishing times of their schools. It is also used by many pedestrians who visit the shopping centre there. There is a need for a fully operating system of lights at this location, and I ask the Minister to authorize the Road Safety and Traffic Authority to carry out another count of pedestrians using the crossing with a view to the installation of a full-time system of stop-go lights. The lights should operate for 24 hours because the intersection is dangerous.

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston).—I direct the attention of the Minister of Education to the shortage of teachers at the Preston East High School. They are bearing a very heavy burden. Over the past five weeks the extra periods that they have worked each week have been 88, 74, 58, 104, and 60, making a total of 384 periods. That is 76·8 more periods a week than they should be required to work. The Minister of Education has talked of periods of 40 minutes each, but these teachers work 50-minute periods. Consequently they are working the equivalent of 96 periods a week. That is the equivalent of having three and a half extra teachers each week.

I point out to the Minister that a commerce teacher recently resigned, that another teacher has left to return to Canada and yet another is suffering from a prolonged illness. Others on the staff have part-time study leave.

This area requires special assistance. The financial position of people in the area is well known; and, in any event, the teachers there have assumed a burden that they should not have to bear. I ask the Minister to consider what assistance he can give.

Mr. TREWIN (Benalla).—I draw the attention of the Minister for Education and the Minister of Public Works to conditions which prevail at Mansfield Primary School, which is attended by approximately 300 students. The condition of the toilets there is disgraceful and has been the subject of correspondence between the school committee and the department, and the local branch of the Victorian Teachers Union and the department. The urinal is made of concrete, and when I visited the
school last Friday the odour emanating from it was most unpleasant. Mansfield is almost completely sewered, and I ask the Minister to study the feasibility of connecting the school toilets to the Mansfield sewerage system. I know that the Public Works Department has plans for a new toilet block, but the school committee has informed me that it does not have enough money to finance construction of the block. I am afraid that if something is not done, there could be an outbreak of hepatitis or some other infectious disease at the school. I ask the Minister of Education and the Minister of Public Works to arrange for their departments to work together and install a new toilet system at the school and to ascertain whether it can be connected to the Mansfield sewerage system. Existing conditions could have an effect on the pupils' future health.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir).—I understand that in Ballarat two employers—B. and G. Myers, and G. Irish—are engaging in a Chamber of Manufactures apprenticeship contract which is beyond the scope of the Apprenticeship Commission. I ask the Minister of Labour and Industry to have the commission investigate the conditions under which the apprentices are employed.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne).—I direct to the attention of the Minister of Education the fact that many adults who wish to better themselves by studying leaving certificate or higher school certificate subjects find it impossible to attend adult courses at trade schools in my electorate and in other members' electorates.

The constituent of mine who raised this problem with me attempted to enrol at the Education Department's correspondence school but learned that that school provided teaching services only in subjects for which there were no teachers; for example, if a student wishes to learn German and no teacher is available. It also provides correspondence courses for people who are institutionalized—perhaps in hospital or in prison—and for those who live in remote areas. Correspondence courses were not available for adults who wished to improve themselves. This has the effect of pushing these people into commercial colleges which charge heavy fees—

Mr. ROSSITER.—What about the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology?

Mr. JONES.—I should be interested for the Minister to follow up the question of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. It is one outlet that I did not think of. There must be many people of advanced years who cannot attend night-time classes and to whom the services afforded by part-time classes could be made available. I suppose it would be rather costly, but I suggest that the Minister should consider the situation, because it will encourage people to further their education. I ask the Minister to consider whether, in exceptional cases, the departmental correspondence school can extend its facilities to people of the type to whom I have referred.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party).—I wish to draw to the attention of the Premier the widespread dissatisfaction in both country and city areas at the imposition of daylight saving. There is no doubt that people are divided about its merits, about whether the period of its imposition should be four months, and about whether February should be eliminated. I ask the Premier to consider conducting a referendum on this issue in conjunction with the State elections on 19th May.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park).—I have been led to understand that the Education Department intends to issue a commemorative booklet to celebrate 100 years of education in this State. Can the Minister of Education advise whether that is so? I was informed not only that the department was considering this matter but that a sum of $90,000 was involved in producing the history of education in Victoria consisting of three
volumes. This seems to be extraordinary in view of the demands on the public purse. We have heard of the dire need of the Government in education. We all know that certain services have been cut, such as the Psychology and Guidance Branch.

In view of all the difficulties that the children in our school system are facing, the Minister should explain why there should be an expenditure of $90,000 on what he is going to call the history of education. That history is well known, and I doubt whether any new facts would emerge that are not already known. If it is anything like the other books published in the Minister’s time, it will be florid and over-exposed, containing all the facts that are known and other quite misleading material. The Minister owes the House an explanation of what I regard as an unwarranted use of public funds.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! The honorable member is making a set speech.

Mr. W. J. LEWIS (Portland).—I draw to the attention of the Minister of Education the fact that the Education Department is still sending single female teachers into one-teacher country schools. Has the department any plans to cease this practice in the near future? We do not want a repetition of the kidnapping that occurred last year. If the Government were to send male teachers to these schools the situation could be overcome.

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East).—I urge the Premier to reconsider a decision made last week to refuse to meet a deputation of prominent Aborigines introduced by myself. The purpose of the deputation was to discuss the possible transfer of the jurisdiction of Aboriginal affairs from Victoria to the Commonwealth. As the Premier, and I hope other members of the Government party and the Country party are aware, in 1967 a referendum on the subject of Aborigines was held.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! The honorable member should be calling on the Government for some action.

Mr. BORNSTEIN.—I am. A total of 97 per cent of the Australian people signified their desire that the Commonwealth should assume overriding power for the administration of Aboriginal affairs. No action was taken until the advent of the new Commonwealth Government, which stated its intention to assume this responsibility.

The SPEAKER.—Order! I think the honorable member should reflect on what he is saying, that this is in the nature of a set speech, an advocacy. The adjournment is for the purpose of bringing up matters of State administration.

Mr. BORNSTEIN.—It is State Government administration because it involves this Government very much. The purpose of the deputation, which would comprise Mr. Murray, the Director of the Aborigines Advancement League, the President of that league, the Secretary of the National Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee, recently appointed, and another member of the steering committee, was to discuss with the Premier the transfer of the jurisdiction of Aboriginal affairs to the Commonwealth.

This is a matter for the State Government to determine. I should have hoped that these matters would be considered and decisions made at the highest Government level. The Premier informed me that he was passing the matter on to his Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. The matter was specifically referred to the Premier at the request of the Aborigines concerned. They did not have a great deal of confidence in the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, who has shown very little interest in his portfolio.

The SPEAKER.—Order! The honorable member might be getting onto a subject. This is a question relating to Government action.
Mr. BORNSTEIN.—I respectfully urge the Premier to reconsider his decision, as I believe a decision on this matter can be made only at the highest Government level. The problem will not be facilitated by buck-passing to the holder of a relatively junior portfolio such as the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North).—I refer to the Minister of Transport a matter causing great concern in Geelong West. Consideration is being given to the installation of a briquette depot on railway land adjacent to McCurdy’s Road, at Herne Hill. I understand from the local council that the establishment of a briquette dump at this area will cause a pollution problem to Geelong West. Will the Minister examine the situation and give me an assurance that the briquette depot will not be established on Victorian Railways land near that road unless it is acceptable to the residents?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I will ask the Road Safety and Traffic Authority to investigate the problem raised by the honorable member for Moonee Ponds.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—In connection with the deputation of a group of Aborigines referred to by the honorable member for Brunswick East to discuss the transfer of Aboriginal affairs from State Government to Federal Government administration, I should have thought that the proper course would be to seek a deputation first with the Minister responsible for Aboriginal affairs. I went to the trouble of arranging for the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to see the deputation. In any case, the Ministry would want to know the Minister’s views and recommendations. I believe this was a proper course and I certainly would not be prepared to receive a deputation at that stage when the matter had never been referred to the Minister who had a responsibility to that portfolio.

The Leader of the Country Party suggested that a referendum might be held on daylight saving in conjunction with the State elections. The proper answer is that a Government—for that matter, a Parliament—has to ascertain as best it can the wishes of the people. The honorable member will recall that daylight saving was introduced under an Act of Parliament passed by this House. I have never been under the illusion that daylight saving was favoured by all sections of the community. Some people found it to be of considerable disadvantage. I am equally persuaded that the vast majority of people are strongly in favour of it. This is a social arrangement in which we must endeavour to suit the wishes of most people in the community. A referendum would show that no more than 80 per cent of the people were in favour of it.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—I will be happy to obtain an urgent report on the difficulties mentioned by the honorable member for Benalla relating to the sewerage facilities at the school in Mansfield with a view to alleviating them.

The proposal of the honorable member for Melbourne is a worthy one and will be investigated. If there is a further need to extend these classes, they could be extended to other high schools. There are quite a number in the metropolitan area where these classes are in operation. Correspondence classes generally should be extended, and I shall be happy to consider his proposal.

I know of the difficulties experienced by the school mentioned by the honorable member for Preston. I am aware that the school has a hard-working principal. However, I would not regard the extra periods of work that the honorable member has indicated as excessive. It would be a little more than two periods a teacher and that has been the average possibly through the years. Those extra periods were readily covered when there was a
Adjournment.

[ASSEMBLY.]

Adjournment.

much longer teaching week and when classes were much larger. I will be prepared to carry out an investigation of the detailed needs of that school.

I am utterly amazed at the remarks of the honorable member for Albert Park. Six years ago the Centenary History Section of the Education Department commenced writing its history. The honorable member for Albert Park made the extraordinary statement that although that section had been working on this publication for six years and had produced a volume of 4,000 pages, not one new fact had been unearthed. That is irresponsible.

Mr. Doube.—Mention one.

Mr. Thompson.—How ridiculous it would be to start citing a fact from a 4,000-page volume. It is a masterpiece. I should like to take the opportunity of paying a tribute to the excellent work done by Mr. Blake and his team of writers over six years. I regard the remarks of the honorable member for Albert Park as an indictment of the Centenary History Section of the department and I am sure he would not be supported by other members of his party. After 100 years surely the department is entitled to write its history. The Age reviewed the history last Saturday and gave it a favourable report. It suggested that an $8 investment would be sound for the first volume dealing with the general education scene, and said that it was a fine publication.

Mr. Wilcox (Minister of Transport).—The honorable member for Geelong North raised the matter of a briquette depot at Herne Hill. I do not know anything about this matter but I will be pleased to inquire into it. Obviously briquettes must still be sold when they are produced in the Latrobe Valley. There is still a demand and I am assured that briquettes are still the cheapest fuel. Obviously there are users in the Geelong area. If that is so, I am sure that the honorable member for Geelong North will be pleased to see the people in that area obtaining a cheap fuel. If that is not so, I should be surprised. I believe he would also be in favour of maintaining full employment in the Latrobe Valley for the proper utilization of the brown coal resources. With that as a background, I will certainly look at the matter. I am sure that the honorable member will realize that if people want briquettes, a briquette depot must be located somewhere.

Mr. Thompson (Minister of Education).—The honorable member for Portland raised the question of one-teacher schools. The Education Department will bear in mind, when any future appointments are made, certain incidents which took place last year. This type of school has been part of the educational scene in Victoria for many years. The Education Department, like the honorable member, is aware of the difficulties associated with the staffing of such schools.

Mr. Simmons (Reservoir).—I take a point of order. Am I to understand that the Minister of Labour and Industry, who was in the House when I raised a question previously, is either not going to answer it or cannot answer it?

The Speaker (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! There is no point of order. It is not fully incumbent on the Minister to answer; he may or he may not.

Mr. Rafferty (Minister of Labour and Industry).—I must admit that I do not know what the honorable member is talking about. I did not hear him ask me a question. If he did, I will certainly answer him either tonight or later.

Mr. Simmons (Reservoir).—On a further point of order, when I was speaking earlier I deliberately stopped and attracted the honorable gentleman's attention. At the time, he was discussing something with the Premier, and he should pay attention.

The Speaker.—There is no point of order.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.17 p.m.
Questions [28 March, 1973.] on Notice. 4495

Legislative Council.

The President (the Hon. R. W. Garrett) took the chair at 2.28 p.m., and read the prayer.

VICTORIAN LAND TRANSPORT SYSTEM.

REPORT OF BOARD OF INQUIRY.

The Hon. O. G. Jenkins (South-Western Province) asked the Minister for Local Government, for the Minister of Transport—

Is it proposed to implement, at an early date, the recommendation on page 109 of the report of the Board of Inquiry into the Victorian Land Transport System that the present provisions regarding ancillary vehicles ("Eg" Licences) should be extended to substitute 6 tons load capacity for the present 4 tons?

The Hon. A. J. Hunt (Minister for Local Government).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Transport is—

This matter is under consideration along with other matters stemming from recommendations made by the Board of Inquiry into the Victorian Land Transport System. A decision is expected to be made soon.

COUNTRY ROADS BOARD.
GRADE SEPARATION AT MELBOURNE ROAD, SPOTSWOOD.

The Hon. A. W. Knight (Melbourne West Province) asked the Minister for Local Government, for the Minister of Transport—

Further to question No. 8 asked in this House on 20th March, 1973, what are the locations of the properties which are partially affected by the grade separation at Melbourne Road, Spotswood?

The Hon. A. J. Hunt (Minister for Local Government).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Transport is—

Eleven properties are partially affected. These are—

(a) eight properties in Melbourne Road being two vacant residential allotments, and six residential properties known as Nos. 499, 506, 507, 508, 510, 535, 554 and 556. Two of the properties are owned by the Victorian Railways;

(b) two residential properties in Schutt Street, Nos. 58 and 59;

(c) one vacant allotment in Blackshaws Road owned by the Williamstown City Council.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

SUNSHINE WEST HIGH SCHOOL.

The Hon. H. A. Thomas (Melbourne West Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

Has there been any investigation into the accommodation problem at the Sunshine West High School, where the library, gymnasium and laundry are used as classrooms; if so, what action is to be taken, and when?

The Hon. Murray Byrne (Minister for State Development and Decentralization).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Education is—

Yes. The department regularly conducts investigations into the accommodation position at all schools. It is expected that an additional portable class-room will be delivered to the school in the near future.

MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO SPECIAL EDUCATION.

The Hon. C. A. Mitchell (Western Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

Have school principals been notified of the Ministerial committee of inquiry into special education in Victoria, so that they may provide statistics and any relevant information required; if not, why?

The Hon. Murray Byrne (Minister for State Development and Decentralization).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Education is—

Principals of all special schools in Victoria were advised of the inquiry in writing by the Assistant Minister of Education, the Honorable A. H. Scanlan, on 24th November, 1972.

An advertisement was published in the Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid for 31st January, 1973, and advertisements were also published in the daily press on 27th November, 1972, and 27th January, 1973.
HIGH SCHOOL FOR BALMORAL.

The Hon. C. A. MITCHELL (Western Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

When will work start on the high school at Balmoral?

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

Tenders are currently under consideration but no precise indication can be given, at this stage, as to when work will commence on the construction of the Balmoral High School.

TRANSPORTATION OF SCHOLARS.

For the Hon. R. J. EDDY (Doutta Galla Province), the Hon. A. W. Knight asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, for the Minister of Education—

What was the cost of transporting students by buses to schools throughout the State for each of the years 1968 to 1972, stating the costs for country and metropolitan areas, respectively?

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cost of transport services under contract to Minister in country areas</th>
<th>Cost of transport services in metropolitan area for special school children and for emergency transport</th>
<th>Conveyance allowance paid on behalf of pupils for travel other than on contract services—separate country and metropolitan costs not kept</th>
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<td>1968–69</td>
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<td>1969–70</td>
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<td>1971–72</td>
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<td>$382,822</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL.
REPORT ON SOUTH-WESTERN DISTRICT.

The Hon. C. A. MITCHELL (Western Province) asked the Minister of Housing, for the Minister for Conservation—

When is it expected that the Land Conservation Council will make its final recommendation to the Minister on the south-western district, and when will the Minister present the report to Parliament?

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

The final recommendations of the Land Conservation Council for district 1, south-west area, were forwarded to the Government Printer today and it is expected that they will be submitted to the Minister for Conservation in about two weeks' time.

I am advised by the Minister that it is intended to present the report to Parliament as soon as practicable thereafter.

CROWN LAND RECREATION RESERVE COMMITTEES.
ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP.

The Hon. C. A. MITCHELL (Western Province) asked the Minister of Agriculture, for the Minister of Lands—

(a) Is a person living in South Australia, who pays rates on a property in Victoria, eligible to be a member of a Crown land recreation reserve committee?

(b) Is a person who owns a building block in a town eligible for election to the Crown land recreation reserve committee for that town, even though he resides in another town; if not, has such a person the right to be at a public meeting that elects such a committee?

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—The answer supplied by the Minister of Lands is—

(a) Yes.

(b) Yes. In explanation there is no statutory provision for the eligibility of persons who may be appointed as a committee of management of any Crown
reserve. However, it is the general practice to regard any ratepayer and any adult resident within the "community of interest" of the relevant reserve as eligible to attend and be nominated at the public meeting convened by the mayor or president of the municipality, who, with his knowledge of local conditions is in the best position to determine the boundaries of the "community of interest". It is not the practice to debar a resident of another State or another town from appointment to such a committee provided of course he obtains nomination at the public meeting. The policy is generally to impose minimum restrictions on the right of the public to choose the personnel of these committees.

In any case where a formal restriction is desirable the Minister could define the "community of interest" and if Mr. Mitchell desires to make representations concerning any particular reserve they would receive consideration.

DECENTRALIZATION.
Promotion Officers.

The Hon. C. A. MITCHELL (Western Province) asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization—

Will the Government provide a grant on a $2 for $1 local contribution basis for financing promotion officers in places apart from the five already named?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization).—The answer is—

This is a matter which must be taken into account in conjunction with the Government's policy relating to the regionalization of the State, which, it will be recalled by the honorable member, is one of the points under the Government's ten-point policy on decentralization.

Accordingly, it is not opportune to indicate the basis upon which the Government may or may not assist financially in the proposal.

When regions have been established, the question of representation by my department and other departments in them will be examined.

MARIBYRNONG RIVER.
Bridge at Fisher Parade.

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT (Melbourne West Province) asked the Minister for Local Government—

(a) Have plans been finalized for the replacement of the bridge over the Maribyrnong River at Fisher Parade; if so, will a copy of the plan be laid on the table of the Library?

(b) How many times have the plans been changed, who has paid for the costs of such changes, and what have been the paramount changes?

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

(a) No.

(b) The design of a new bridge on the south side of the present bridge was well advanced, but was suspended early in 1972 because of inquiries into a proposal for the future development of the Footscray Institute of Technology which would require deviation of Farnsworth Avenue. The alignment now proposed will fit in with the present route of Farnsworth Avenue and yet would permit realignment of Farnsworth Avenue to suit the institute's proposals in the event of their adoption which is however in no way committed by the new alignment. The city engineer, Footscray City Council, has advised the Country Roads Board's divisional engineer, metropolitan division, in writing, that the Footscray City Council will meet the additional design and construction costs involved. The paramount change in the plans is the proposal to construct the new bridge north of the present bridge rather than south of the present bridge.

INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE.
Location.

The Hon. C. A. MITCHELL (Western Province) asked the Minister for Housing, for the Minister for Conservation—

Has the Government decided on a location for the proposed institute of marine science; if so—(i) which site has been chosen; and (ii) what factors influenced the Government in its decision; if not—(i) when will a decision be made; (ii) which places have been considered as possible sites; and (iii) what factors have been, or are being, taken into account in the consideration of sites?

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

Finality on a site for the institute has not yet been reached but negotiations to secure an area of Crown land within approximately 50 miles of Melbourne have now reached a very advanced stage.

The Royal Society, the three universities, the Victoria Institute of Colleges, the National Museum and the Fisheries and Wildlife Division are all involved in the project.

Factors influencing the choice of site are—

(a) Crown land with a water frontage;
(b) deep water close enough to shore for wharfage facilities in a reasonably sheltered situation with direct access across the wharf to the laboratories;

(c) sufficient area to accommodate buildings for all institutions involved;

(d) central location with respect to current activities in Port Phillip and Westernport bays and Bass Strait;

(e) ready access to parent institutions and facilities such as computers, libraries, biological supply houses; and

(f) clean water for a flow-through aquarium supply which could be maintained for some time to come.

For the reasons outlined, consideration was limited to a number of sites in Port Phillip and Westernport bays.

FREeway CONSTRUCTION.

FREeway F2.

For the Hon. R. J. EDDY (Doutta Galla Province), the Hon. A. W. Knight asked the Minister for Local Government, for the Premier—

Did the Premier state, over radio 3XY on 18th March, 1973, that all freeways now being built would be finished, and that no new freeways will be constructed in inner areas which would involve substantial loss of housing or disruption of the local community; if so, will the Premier give a definite undertaking that the F2 freeway, on which construction has not started and which will certainly cause substantial loss of housing and disruption of the local community, will not proceed?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government).—The answer supplied by the Premier and Treasurer is—

The honorable member is referred to a formal statement made by the Premier on behalf and with the full concurrence of the Government this day, and reported in this afternoon's press, which sets out the position fully and clearly, effectuates past policy statements and honours previous undertakings.

GRANTS AND SUBSIDIES.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR MUNICIPALITIES AND SPORTING BODIES.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province) asked the Minister for Local Government—

(a) What financial assistance is available to municipalities from the Municipalities Assistance Fund, and under what conditions is it available?

(b) What other grants and subsidies are available to sporting bodies and committees of management of public lands for the provision of sporting and other recreational facilities?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government).—The answer is detailed, and, with Mr. McDonald's concurrence, I seek leave for its incorporation in Hansard without being read.

Leave was granted, and the answer was as follows:—

(a) Subsidies are allocated from the Municipalities Assistance Fund on a basis of $2 Government to $1 local contribution towards the cost of works at recreation reserves. These works including grading and draining of ovals, laying down of cycling tracks, cricket pitches, construction of tennis, basketball courts, fencing, providing water supplies, dressing rooms and conveniences, clubhouses, purchase and erection of play equipment etc. The total subsidies paid from the Municipalities Assistance Fund is $600,000 with $4,000 per annum as the basic grant to rural councils and $3,000 per annum to urban councils outside the metropolitan area.

Works should be the subject of an application for subsidy by council by way of an annual priority list, and should be on land that is council or Crown owned or held in any other acceptable manner.

(b) A Sporting Centres Fund of $200,000 has been created to provide new recreational facilities in rural areas and on the fringe of the metropolis. The purpose of this fund is to encourage the establishment of one sporting centre at which several sports can be catered for with a reasonable sharing of expensive facilities such as toilets, shower, changing rooms etc.

Subsidies are made available on a $1 for $1 basis, with an upper limit of $30,000 per $100,000 of total expenditure on any one project. Thus a project costing between $60,000 and $100,000 would attract a total subsidy of $30,000 whilst one costing between $160,000 and $200,000 would be granted a subsidy of $60,000.

PORTS AND HARBORS DIVISION.

LAUNCHING FACILITIES AT LADY BAY.

For the Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province), the Hon. A. W. Knight asked the Minister for State Development and Decentralization—

Are plans in the course of preparation to provide improvements to and/or the replacement of the existing launching facilities at Lady Bay, Warrnambool; if so—(i)
what stage have the plans reached; and (ii) when is it expected work will commence and finish?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization).—The answer is—

Yes. City of Warrnambool proposes new ramp to replace existing.

(i) Council have submitted preliminary plans of proposed sites to Ports and Harbors Division of Public Works Department, the latest being received on 23rd March, 1973; however, the actual best location for the ramp in the harbor, having regard to siltation problems, has not been settled by council and Ports and Harbors Division.

(ii) This would be the responsibility of the council but subject to agreement of location by the council and the Ports and Harbors Division, and provision of funds by Ministry of Tourism.

LATROBE VALLEY (AMENDMENT) BILL.

This Bill was received from the Assembly and, on the motion of the Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization), was read a first time.

TAXATION APPEALS (COMMENCEMENT) BILL.

This Bill was received from the Assembly and, on the motion of the Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization), was read a first time.

HOSPITALS AND CHARITIES (GUARANTEE) BILL.

This Bill was received from the Assembly and, on the motion of the Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing), was read a first time.

PAPER.

Pursuant to the provisions of an Act of Parliament, the following paper was laid upon the table by the Clerk:—

Town and Country Planning Act 1961—
City of Hamilton Planning Scheme, with maps (three papers).

BOILERS AND PRESSURE VESSELS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is a Bill to amend the Boilers and Pressure Vessels Act 1970. Sections 9 to 13 of that Act contain requirements as to the placing of equipment under the control of certificated attendants. Sub-section (1) of section 9 provides for exemption from those requirements with respect to steam engines or boilers which comply with prescribed conditions. The corresponding previous enactment permitted exemptions from all or any of its provisions by Order in Council. From time to time, exemptions from the requirement to have boilers under the control of and in the charge of certificated boiler attendants were granted on the recommendation of the Minister.

When the legislation was rewritten in 1970, it was decided that there should be clear conditions for exemption, which should be stated in the form of regulations and that any installation which complied with the regulations would automatically be exempt. Over the past two years, a good deal of consideration has been given to the formulation of appropriate regulations. It was decided that the basic elements in any exempt boiler installation should be (a) the provision of adequate automatic controls and (b) the regular maintenance of such control equipment by competent persons.

Although it was considered that the powers of the Governor in Council to make regulations covering these matters were adequate, a doubt has been raised whether the powers are wide enough to impose requirements on owners of boilers with respect to the maintenance of controls. That doubt having been raised, it has been decided that the best way to resolve it is to make special provision in the regulation-making powers.
Clause 2 of the Bill amends the definition of "owner" contained in section 3 of the principal Act. The provisions of clause 3 of this Bill regarding maintenance of steam engines and boilers place responsibility on the owner. Because it is considered that the responsibility ought to be shared by persons other than the true owner, the definition of owner has been widened to cover the mortgagee in possession and the lessee of steam engines and boilers as was done in the principal Act in relation to pressure vessels.

Clause 3 of the Bill adds a further sub-paragraph to sub-section (1) of section 47 of the principal Act giving the Governor in Council power to make regulations prescribing the manner in which the owner shall maintain a steam engine or boiler which has been granted exemption from the provisions of Part II, Division 2. I commend the Bill to the House.

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

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until later this day.

LATROBE VALLEY (AMENDMENT) BILL.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It provides for two simple but important alterations to the structure and membership of the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board. The proposed changes are being sought, firstly, to assist the board in its moves towards financial stability in its operations, particularly those connected with its collection and disposal of waste waters, and secondly, to facilitate greater understanding between the board and the community.

The board at present comprises seven members. Of these, the Governor in Council appoints a manager, who is ex officio chairman of the board, and one other member. The remaining five members are elected or nominated to represent the interests of the State Electricity Commission, local waterworks trusts, local sewerage authorities, local river improvement trusts, and private industry.

It will be recalled that the 1969 amendment to the Latrobe Valley Act provided for the last-named member to replace the representative of the Gas and Fuel Corporation, which about that time closed down its brown coal gasification operations at Morwell. The private industry representative is in fact an employee of the Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd., the board's largest customer. It can be seen that, generally speaking, the board members are representatives of its customers. Until the last few years the board's main task was to construct works for the bulk supply of water to industries and local water authorities in the valley, and the collection and disposal of waste waters from industries and local sewerage authorities.

Although the board's role has now changed to one of operation and maintenance of the works it has built, its activities have been increasing in complexity. The board now is involved in water supply, waste water disposal, farm operation, control of pollution and engineering activities for other organizations. All this involves the board in more long-term contact with the community generally, a situation which is now accentuated by the board's recent appointment as a delegated agency of the Environment Protection Authority.

Furthermore, the board has rightly been taking the lead in community interests relating to development and utilization of water resources of the valley as well as preservation of the environment. Having regard to the nature of the board's current problems and its changing role, it is considered preferable that the chairman should be free of the supervision of the day-to-day administration of its
activities. He would then be free to concentrate on the initiation of policies to meet the changing circumstances which now exist.

The first of these measures in the Bill therefore provides for the appointment of a part-time chairman, separate from the manager. The latter will continue as manager at his present salary and will remain a member of the board. The principal Act requires that the manager shall have the specialized professional qualifications of an engineer of water supply under the Water Act, and this requirement of course will remain unchanged. However, no such restriction is proposed in the appointment of a board chairman.

In view of the board's present circumstances and problems, it is envisaged that the initial appointment of a separate chairman should be a person suitably experienced in the administration of large commercial undertakings but free of any interest in the organizations represented by the remaining board members. This will provide objective guidance on policy matters and leave the manager more time in which to deal with detailed technicalities of engineering and management.

The second measure in the Bill provides for municipal representation on the board, which will facilitate a greater understanding between the board and the community. From time to time since the inception of the board local views have been expressed suggesting that the board membership should include representation of municipalities. In view of the board's current activities, already outlined, this appears to be an appropriate time to provide for an additional member of the board to be elected by the ten municipal councils within the valley.

The procedure for election of such a representation will be set out by a regulation, yet to be drafted, which will be similar to that for the present members representing the local water and sewerage authorities. The existing provision for the Governor in Council to appoint one other ordinary member of the board will be repealed.

The Bill also provides for several minor consequential machinery amendments. It might be noted, therefore, that the net effect of the Bill will be to provide for a separate and independent chairman, a manager who will also be a member of the board, and a representative of municipal councils. This will increase the over-all membership of the board by one. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of the Hon. A. W. Knight, for the Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, April 3.

**HOSPITALS AND CHARITIES (GUARANTEE) BILL.**

The Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of Housing).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to enable the Treasurer to execute guarantees in respect of borrowings by public hospitals and charitable institutions which may be authorized by the Governor in Council, after report by the Hospitals and Charities Commission pursuant to the provisions of section 67 of the Hospitals and Charities Act 1958.

The background to the Bill is that the Royal Women's Hospital has developed a self-financing proposal for the construction of staff flats, medical suites and car parking facilities on land owned by the hospital in Cardigan Street, Carlton. The hospital has found an institutional lender prepared to finance this project by a series of loans, provided that the loans had a Government guarantee. The prospective lender was aware that over recent years legislation had been enacted by the Parliament to provide a Government guarantee in specific cases in respect of approved borrowings by certain major private hospitals.
Honorable members will recall that guarantees have been given on this basis for borrowings by the Cabrini Private Hospital, the Mercy Private Hospital and St. Vincent’s Private Hospital. The Government has informed the House that as a matter of policy it is prepared to give guarantees to private hospitals which are affiliated with the various churches in respect of approved borrowings for capital developments. However, specific legislation will be necessary in every case.

The position with public hospitals is different. There is already a provision in the Hospitals and Charities Act empowering public hospitals to borrow subject to the consent of the Governor in Council. Such borrowings also come under the control of the Loan Council because public hospitals are regarded as semi-Government bodies by the Loan Council. In these circumstances, lending institutions have found it hard to understand why such borrowings by public hospitals are not subject to a Government guarantee. There is no reason why they should not be guaranteed, and because the general borrowing power is already in the Hospitals and Charities Act, it is appropriate that a general guarantee power should also be included in that Act. This is the purpose of the Bill.

I emphasize that the Bill applies only to public hospitals. Each case will have to be considered specifically by the Government and approved by the Treasurer. At this stage it is envisaged that guarantees will issue only in respect of loans raised to carry out works which will generate sufficient revenue to make them self-supporting.

The Royal Women’s Hospital project will be financed by borrowings of $2.3 million over a four-year period commencing in September, 1972. For this reason, sub-clause (4) of clause 2 of the Bill provides for the guarantee provision to operate from 1st September, 1972. I commend the Bill to the House.

The Hon. V. O. Dickie.

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

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, April 3.

TAXATION APPEALS (COMMENCEMENT) BILL.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill makes a simple but important machinery amendment to the principal Act. It provides for a change in the commencement provisions of the Taxation Appeals Act 1972 to enable different provisions of the Act to be proclaimed into operation on different days.

The Government is at present proceeding to establish the Victorian Taxation Board of Review so that it may commence operations as soon as possible. It is desirable that the chairman of the board shall be appointed at an early stage so that he may participate in the drafting of the rules in respect of the board’s proceedings and in decisions on such matters as accommodation and staffing. In its present form the whole of the Taxation Appeals Act would have to be proclaimed into operation in order for the chairman to be appointed.

The amendment which forms the substance of this Bill will enable the chairman to be appointed before the remainder of the Act is brought into operation. I commend it to the House.

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

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, April 3.

ABATTOIR AND MEAT INSPECTION BILL.

The debate (adjourned from the previous day) on the motion of Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.
The Hon. S. E. GLEESON (South-Western Province).—In view of the number of speakers in this debate, I shall not go into the detail of the Bill. Instead, I shall try to sketch, with a wide brush, some of the circumstances which caused the Meat Industry Committee to issue the report on which the Bill is based. It is difficult to be entertaining on the subject of abattoirs. They are like hospitals. The only difference is that fewer animals survive the treatment they receive in abattoirs than patients the treatment they receive in hospitals.

What should be made clear is the province of meat inspection, the job it does, and its relevance to public health. It is in these areas, on the cost of administration, and on the risk to public health, that criticism of the Bill has been levelled.

Originally, the problem of meat inspection was that, owing to lack of knowledge, no one realized how disease was transmitted. The purpose of inspection was merely to remove those parts of the carcass which were grossly offensive to people as items of food. In those days, far too much emphasis was placed on visual signs, such as parasites and tumors, which actually had little relation to public health. As knowledge increased and the real problems of bacterial contamination and of disease which could be transmitted to humans became known, action was taken.

The two major diseases which represent a threat to humans—they are now in decline—are tuberculosis and brucellosis. The reduction of the number of cases of these diseases within the community dropped spectacularly not because of any action of doctors or the medical profession but because of, firstly, the pasteurization of milk which cut down the incidence of bovine tuberculosis in humans and, secondly, the reduction in brucellosis in animals which led to a reduction of the number of cases within the community.

An interesting fact which has emerged recently is that the people most liable to contract these diseases are operatives in the livestock industry, rather than the consumers of meat. Most cases of bovine tuberculosis are found in abattoir workers, veterinarians and so on, who run the risk of contracting the disease by inhaling the organisms. The human being is remarkably resistant to contracting disease from substances which pass through the alimentary canal.

Brucellosis is difficult to recognize on the meat inspection floor and it is contracted, in the main, from infected meat or tissue. Again, most sufferers are veterinarians or meat workers. The efforts to reduce the incidence of disease in the community should be directed to reducing the incidence of disease in the animal population rather than towards the recognition of disease on the abattoir floor. For that and for another reason, the public health issues are quite different from what are usually thought.

The other reason is the matter of contamination. Mr. Elliot mentioned salmonella, which is ubiquitous. It cannot be removed altogether. It is almost a fact of life in the animal population. But salmonella does not become a threat until the number of bacteria consumed rise above a certain level.

In recent tests, 250 cases of food poisoning were investigated and about 70 or 80 were found to result from meat, but in only two cases was the infection traced to raw meat. In most instances the contamination occurred after the meat had left the abattoir and after it had left the butcher. It was often infected in the kitchen or the cafeteria.

The Hon. R. W. MAY.—What about ptomaine poisoning?

The Hon. S. E. GLEESON.—Ptomaine poisoning is a different thing. This is caused by botulism which is a growth which occurs particularly in preserved food. There is very little botulism in fresh food. Botulism is another of the ubiquitous
organisms which cause trouble. But, in the main, it can be destroyed by boiling. Problems arise only when the botulism is allowed to grow in reasonable temperatures, well below boiling point. This occurs with badly preserved food, possibly when a housewife preserves vegetables without boiling them properly. It may also occur when meat in the can has not been properly treated or has been allowed to go bad while in the can. It has very little relation to problems of abattoir management and maintenance.

Most criticism of the Bill has been in four areas, and I think I can rebut the criticism. The first suggestion was that the Bill would lead to increased costs in the industry. The purpose of the recommendation of the Meat Industry Committee was to reduce costs by reducing the number of dual inspections which take place in many export abattoirs because of the intransigence of local government authorities in requiring additional inspection of meat which has already passed a certain standard of inspection. The inspection procedures are the same in both cases. It is a most arbitrary procedure when a municipality, in many cases, requires meat to be inspected again and charges for its inspection. Many municipalities use meat inspection as a revenue earner and do not charge a proper service fee for this activity. I have not examined the Bill in detail and I am not sure whether this point is mentioned, but it is hoped that a uniform fee will be set and that it will be in line with the cost of the service rendered rather than be fixed in an endeavour to justify the wages of an employee. In general, any extra costs resulting from the Bill will come only from the provision of extra services. These could be the compilation of statistics and information which will be available on the incidence of disease and the tracing back of the disease to its source of origin. In addition, of course, meat inspection will now be extended into areas where, previously, it was not available.

The second area in which criticism of the Bill has been made relates to public health. As I have pointed out, the effect on public health, if any, will be slightly to reduce the incidence of the communication of disease from animals because every effort will be made to reduce disease in the animal population. A more acceptable product should be obtained from the abattoirs, and in the main risks should be minimized. In many cases the actual incidence of disease will be removed. It is hoped that two of the diseases which have been referred to will be totally eradicated from the animal population in the foreseeable future. Health surveyors and others have criticized the measure because they consider that economic issues should not be confused with health issues. In my opinion an abattoir can be classified more as a factory than as a hospital. Factory procedures and a maximum of hygiene precautions are needed in an abattoir, but costs should be reduced to acceptable levels, rather than have some arbitrary idea of satisfying health procedures. Operational procedures which cut down contamination should assist in providing acceptable standards.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn.—Some people are concerned that this measure may centralize killing.

The Hon. S. E. Gleeson.—To some extent it may. If a local slaughter house is declared as being below the accepted standard, the proprietors may decide that it is not worth making the desired alterations. It is reasonable to expect from proprietors of slaughter houses the same standards as are required from other sections of the community who are responsible for the production of food. It will be the task of the authority to lay down acceptable levels, but from my experience of the Department of Agriculture I am certain that it will be reasonable in its requirements and in the time which it will allow these people to upgrade their works.
It has been suggested that it is not in the public interest to give such an authority power to make recommendations on a matter in which it is an interested party. As honorable members are aware, the interested party in any legislation makes submissions or recommendations. It is surprising that the main criticism levelled at this body is that its activities tend to increase costs. Obviously, if the authority is interested in the meat industry it will not deliberately raise costs and make meat too dear a commodity.

The Hon. R. W. May.—No, but it would be a natural trend of the times.

The Hon. S. E. Gleeson.—Yes, it would be a natural trend for costs to increase, but undoubtedly the authority will play no part in increasing the speed of the trend and is being constituted purely to listen to expert opinion and make recommendations to the Minister.

I refer now to the suggestion that various other people should be members of the committee. It is not correct to assert that the authority will consist of experts. It will consist of reasonably knowledgeable people who will listen to expert opinion in any relevant field and make recommendations. For that reason, with all due respect to the gentleman to whom Mr. Elliot referred yesterday—undoubtedly he is most knowledgeable—as a member of the authority he would be able to do no more than if he were to put his case before it.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot.—Mr. Gleeson is being a typical old Tory now.

The Hon. S. E. Gleeson.—I take that as a compliment. Reference has been made to the extension of meat inspection into areas of the State where at present it does not exist. The number of towns in which meat is not subject to inspection is surprising. This has been referred to in another place. There can be no objection to the requirement that all meat shall be subject to proper inspection. This will not add much to the cost involved.

The Hon. M. A. Clarke.—How many complaints have there been about meat in these areas?

The Hon. S. E. Gleeson.—I received a complaint which pointed out a serious health risk and the local butcher now asks for meat inspection because of the problems he encountered. I have not received many complaints because nearly all the area which I represent is covered by meat inspection. I consider that the objections and the costs will be minimal and that the advantages will be very great. It must be recognized that, despite the fact that public health is paramount, the economy of the country is of considerable interest. History reveals that most of the State's health measures have not been introduced until they have been supported by financial considerations which make them desirable.

It is fortunate that the requirements of the export meat trade have made it necessary to improve Victoria's abattoir facilities and to take more stringent action on animal diseases, because otherwise I fear we would have been dragging the chain, as it were, for a lot longer. The present indications are that the export trade will be required to offer meat free of tuberculosis and brucellosis in the near future. The year 1975 is a possible target date. If this is correct, it will require every effort by all sections of the trade to ensure that disease is at a low level by then. A slaughter programme is desirable to attain this. There is no doubt that the Department of Health has not provided the sort of incentive to eradicate these diseases that it is hoped will emanate from the Department of Agriculture when it takes over meat inspection. Much co-operation and effort is required from everyone.

The Hon. S. R. McDonald.—Is the honorable member suggesting that there has been a lack of co-operation?

The Hon. S. E. Gleeson.—I am being non-controversial. The industry is of much value to Victoria. It is hard to obtain actual figures on what it is worth but the latest figures I
saw indicated that the meat industry brings approximately $750 million a year to Victoria. That figure will have increased by now as values and production are increasing. Approximately half of this amount comes from the export field. The industry is too valuable to be jeopardized by lack of action on meat inspection and on the health of the animal population. For those reasons, I support the Bill.

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province).—This Bill raised considerable interest long before it was presented to Parliament, because the public made many assumptions about it. These assumptions were fostered by various groups which, I believe, spread many misconceptions and fears in people's minds for various reasons. Sometimes these persons were concerned to preserve the positions they held or perhaps to preserve authority for local municipalities. Many theories were put forward concerning the implications of the Bill and the threat it offered to the existence of abattoirs in country areas. Many of these fears are unfounded because the transfer of meat inspection to the Department of Agriculture will not result in the closing of smaller abattoirs. The general public and the farming community have been highly satisfied with the supervision of the dairy industry by the Department of Agriculture and with amalgamation of activities. The possible closing of smaller establishments is not related to the fact that the conditions will be laid down by the Department of Agriculture.

The House is concerned not only with animal health but also with the health of the community. The health of the community cannot be separated from the economic aspects of the industry. Honorable members tend to think of the economy of the industry and the returns that it gives to the producers, and sometimes the cost to the consumer may be overlooked. An immeasurable cost is involved if animal health and human health are not associated. In the past the Department of Agriculture and its officers have shown a dedication to the responsibility which has been entrusted to them. This inspires confidence that they will apply themselves to the task of supervising these meat inspections in a manner beneficial to the meat industry and the community. This emphasizes the importance and desirability of tracing disease in animals to its origin. This is more simply done if veterinary officers are able to find the source. The minimal method of eradication of disease is prevention, and preventive methods will be more effective through veterinary control of meat inspection.

Inspection has generally been considered the major aspect of this Bill. The measure is important in that it establishes the Victorian Abattoir and Meat Inspection Authority which has far wider powers than those of merely supervising or laying down conditions for meat inspections. The authority can specify the standards of abattoirs—export abattoirs and local abattoirs—and slaughter houses and can exercise a significant influence not only on the standards of hygiene within the meat industry but also on the siting of abattoirs in the interests of the pastoral industry and the community. In future the authority may have a significant effect on the progress, development and direction of the meat industry in Victoria. This industry is increasing considerably in importance year by year.

Some controversy exists over the membership of the authority. This is not a marketing authority; it is an inspection authority, to a large degree. I support the view that there should be two representatives from the Department of Agriculture and one from the Department of Health on the authority, but I consider that the representation of livestock producers is over-weighted—if it is not over-weighted it is unbalanced. No representation is granted to the Victorian Dairyfarmers Association. The dairy industry might not appear to be a meat producing industry but it does produce a large volume of...
meat. However, the Graziers Association of Victoria, which represents a small section of the pastoral industry, is represented. I should prefer that representation from the producers should be confined to the Victorian Farmers Union. An endeavour should be made to have one body representing the interests of the producers.

There is also a duplication of representation for the meatworks in that both the Victorian Meatworks Association and the Meat Exporters Association are represented. I concede that those organizations are certainly closely involved in the actual operations of meatworks and that regard perhaps they should have a stronger voice being more intimately concerned with the actual functioning of meatworks than the graziers. However, it seems completely illogical that those who are perhaps most vitally concerned with the efficient operation of meatworks should not have representation. I refer to those who are employed in the industry. They are the ones who will work under the conditions which will be specified by this authority. They will be expected to co-operate so that efficient operation can be maintained in the industry and that smooth relationships will exist between employer and employee. If there is to be development of all aspects of the industry to create harmony and efficiency, the employees should be represented. With efficiency must come a reduction in the cost between the producer and the consumer, whether on the local or export market. I do not intend to name a particular individual but I stress that it is important in an authority such as this, which is concerned not with marketing but specifically with the operation of meatworks, that those people who are vitally concerned with the plant should be represented. It would be to the advantage of the industry if this was done.

There is another matter which has been brought to my attention by the State Meat Inspectors Association of Victoria. In this society in which we live there is considerable jealousy between all sections of the community about the status which they are given. Mr. D. H. Carter, the Secretary of the State Meat Inspectors Association of Victoria, has requested that I direct the attention of the House to the resentment which his members feel at the term "lay meat inspector" which was used by the Minister in his second-reading speech to describe meat inspectors. Mr. Carter pointed out that meat inspectors now employed by various municipalities have at least two years' study to complete before obtaining their meat inspector's certificate, then an additional two years' apprenticeship under the guidance of a senior meat inspector before their certificate can be endorsed, followed by a further five years which must be served making a total of seven years before they are allowed to be termed qualified meat inspectors. The inspectors claim they possess qualifications distinct from those who are veterinary inspectors.

Much of the "meat" of this Bill has been discussed by honorable members who were involved in the proceedings before the Parliamentary Meat Industry Committee and in the preparation of the recommendations made by it. This is a progressive measure and if it is administered effectively, as it should be, it will do much to stimulate the progress which is necessary throughout the meat industry in Victoria if Victoria is to keep pace with development and be a leader in initiating necessary changes. Victoria must maintain its place in world markets and within the local community, and especially must maintain health standards which are essential in modern times.

Those honorable members who know something of the type of conditions under which meat has been allowed to be prepared on many occasions in the past know quite well that there have been many animal-borne diseases which have caused ill health and premature death to many
people. For the sake of the industry and public health, the Labor Party supports this Bill which it believes will be to the betterment of Victoria despite the doubts and the uncertainty which some people have. The Labor Party considers that this is a move in the right direction which all its members support.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Templestowe Province).—I do not desire to delay the passage of the Bill which has received popular acceptance in this House and in another place, and indeed in the whole State. I have a background history as a meat producer and have served with other distinguished honorable members of this House on the Meat Industry Committee. Because I represent a province which contains a small but significant section of meat producers, I desire to make a contribution to the debate on the Bill.

The Bill is introduced against a background of an increasingly industry, particularly in this State. Of a total meat production of 2,271 million tons in 1972, approximately 643,000 tons were exported. Victoria's meat production in that year was 743,000 tons. This means that one-third of the meat produced in the Commonwealth is produced in Victoria. This demonstrates the importance of primary production to the progress of this State. Honorable members also know that Victoria's share of production in other primary industries, particularly in the dairying industry is high. This State produces well in excess of 73 per cent or 74 per cent of the national total of dairying produce. Although Victoria is a small State, in both cereal grains and wool it produces quantities out of all proportion to its size.

The medico-municipal treatment of meat throughout the world is becoming pretty well "old hat" and that applies even in Australia. Unfortunately, it has lingered on in this State for too long. Bearing in mind the importance of our export trade and the need to eradicate disease, honorable members will realize why veterinary control of meat inspection in this country is so important. Animal health is extremely relevant to human health in the consumption of meat. So, this Bill seeks to transfer the control of meat inspection to veterinarians. Most of the meat produced in Australia for human consumption is in fact passed through veterinary meat inspection control. The criticisms which have been advanced that this Bill will increase the cost of meat are eye-wash. The committee's recommendations were aimed at reducing the cost of meat inspections. During the first three years of the existence of the Parliamentary Meat Industry Committee, dual inspection of meat was one of the aspects which it considered to be a wasteful procedure and this legislation will assist the industry to move towards a single inspection of meat. I have much pleasure in supporting the measure.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Bendigo Province).—Probably all that can be said on this Bill has been said but I should like to add my support to it. I was not an original member of the all-party Meat Industry Committee, but I congratulate the committee for the recommendations which it has presented. Honorable members have heard some excellent speeches from Mr. Elliot, Mr. McDonald and Mr. Gleeson, three honorable members well versed in the meat industry. I suppose the outstanding speech was that of Mr. Elliot, who had a little advantage over the other two honorable members because he led off and perhaps could have stolen some of their thunder. Nevertheless, it was a great contribution and will go down in the records as a fine speech from that honorable member.

As has already been said, this Bill transfers the inspection of meat from the Department of Health to the Department of Agriculture and this is where it rightly belongs. I believe that the Department of Agriculture is best equipped to handle the inspections through its veterinary section. The veterinarians can inspect the
meat prior to slaughter, after slaughter and on the chain, and I am sure that these inspections will eradicate many of the diseases which are being encountered at the moment.

As the Minister has stated either in his second-reading speech or on some earlier occasion, all slaughter houses and abattoirs will be licensed and I trust that this will be adhered to—I have no doubt that it will because of the sincerity of the Minister of Agriculture. This will lead to the licensing of all abattoirs, slaughter houses, meat inspection works, knackeries and pet food establishments. This is an excellent idea because I am sure that these establishments should have been controlled many years ago. There was trouble with knackeries before when there was an outbreak of anthrax at Echuca or Gunbower and the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture combined in a joint effort to eradicate the disease.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—Has Mr. Granter had trouble with knackeries?

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER.—No, not personally. The Bill will bring Victoria into line with other States and other countries. When I visited Western Australia with the Meat Industry Committee, the West Australian Abattoirs Committee was anxious to study the legislation that would be introduced in Victoria. I feel sure that the Government of that State will introduce legislation along the same lines.

Mr. Houghton said that Victoria was the largest meat producing State in the Commonwealth and quoted a figure of 745,000 tons as the production according to the Meat Producer and Exporter of August, 1972. Undoubtedly, the figure has increased considerably since then although the State has suffered a fairly severe drought. The figures quoted include 307,600 tons of beef, of which Victoria is the second largest producer in the Commonwealth, and mutton production totalling 246,600 tons. Therefore the meat industry is important to the State and Parliament should endeavour to protect it in every way.

Mr. Kent stated that the Bill would enable Australia to maintain its place in the world markets and I heartily agree with him. The measure is a step in the right direction and the multi-million dollar export industry in beef, mutton and pig meats will be enhanced.

Probably the most vital interest that I have in the Bill is the Victorian Inland Meat Authority killing works at Bendigo. This establishment is important to the Bendigo community in that it employs a large number of personnel and affects the livelihood of many producers in surrounding districts, including the Riverina.

Honorable members should be justifiably proud that the Bendigo stock market is the third largest in the Commonwealth. It is the largest market outside a metropolitan area, which means that it is the largest apart from Newmarket and Homebush. The number of sheep sold through the market total 1·5 million a year, and 100,000 cattle pass through it.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—Is it the third largest in Australia?

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER.—It is. With the increase in stock numbers in the northern areas of the State undoubtedly it will grow. One point that has been missed by other honorable members who have spoken to the Bill is the effect that the measure will have on the stud industry. The men who operate the studs have an enormous amount of money invested in the industry and therefore the eradication of disease as the result of the implementation of the measure will probably increase their output, and will undoubtedly help them to raise their standards.

The measure has had a chequered career since it was first announced. A lot of opposition was encountered although some of it was ill-founded. Many councils contacted members of
Parliament expressing opposition but some have now withdrawn their opposition. About four municipalities within the Bendigo Province still maintain that the Bill is not in the interests of the State. I do not think that these councils are considering the interests of the producers to the extent that they should.

I trust that the Bill will serve the State and achieve the results that members of all parties wish it to. The measure has been endorsed by all parties in this House.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE (Bendigo Province).—Although I am not a member of the Meat Industry Committee, I have an interest in the measure. As a primary producer, I have visited many abattoirs ranging from the small country establishment with perhaps a dirt floor and without adequate fire proofing to the most advanced and superb abattoirs such as the establishment at Kyneton. A tremendous range of abattoirs exist and I feel sure that the Bill will raise the standards.

Some municipalities have expressed fears about the Bill. Some feared that it would be used to demand such high standards that certain abattoirs would be forced to close. This applied particularly to the abattoirs in the City of Castlemaine. It was feared that if they were required to meet export standards, the butchers from Bendigo, who obtain their meat from the Castlemaine abattoirs more cheaply than they can from the Victorian Inland Meat Authority works at Bendigo, would revert to the Bendigo establishment.

Moreover, municipalities such as the Shire of Seymour were, until recently, in the extraordinary position of not being in a declared meat area and therefore the meat being consumed by the inhabitants was not inspected. The measure will result in all meat killed and sold being subject to inspection, which is a very real advance.

The importance of the meat industry is indicated by the employment of roughly 250,000 people, that it is one of Australia’s largest export earners, and that its ramifications are felt throughout Australia. Tremendous growth has ensued in the industry and I have some interesting figures from the Meat Producer and Exporter, which is published by the Australian Meat Board. The publication indicates the tremendous growth in the quantity of meat produced for export and for home consumption. These things are well known to honorable members. It is also well known that Australia will shortly experience an acute shortage of meat both for export and the home market. Therefore, it is important that while honorable members consider the measure they should have cognizance of the standards that will be required by the countries to which Australia exports and also locally.

Although some councils feel reluctant to support the measure, I am certain that those who are associated with the industry, particularly the meat inspectors and those who are currently concerned about their position when the Department of Agriculture takes over, need have no concern. I have received this assurance from the Minister and undoubtedly we can look forward to a steady growth within the industry along the right lines.

The Hon. K. S. GROSS (Western Province).—I feel somewhat diffident about taking part in the debate because five of the last seven speakers have been members of the Meat Industry Committee. Over the past several months, I have been involved with the preparation of the Bill and the criticism and the praise that has been levelled at it. It has been refreshing to hear all honorable members praise the Bill. Accordingly, the measure should be passed and get off to a successful start.

The criticism that has been voiced in the past seven or eight months has come mainly from two
sources—the Australian Institute of Health Surveyors and some municipalities. Although I spent considerable time with them, three municipalities within my province still oppose the measure. I have been unable to convince them of the wisdom of this type of legislation.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot.—Mr. Gross cannot win all the time.

The Hon. K. S. Gross.—I know, but it is a little frustrating at times. Mr. Houghton rightly said that municipal control of meat production is broken down to a certain extent because out of 135 shires in the State, 67 abattoirs in 72 shires still have no meat inspection. In this day and age we ought to be ashamed to admit that these conditions exist.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot.—How many abattoirs and slaughter houses are within 30 miles of Mr. Gross’s home?

The Hon. K. S. Gross.—There is one at Murtoa, as well as one at Horsham and one at Warracknabeal, which is just beyond the 30-mile radius.

Concern was felt by those municipalities which are currently employing a health inspector in the dual capacity of health inspector and meat inspector. They felt they could be financially embarrassed by having to employ a health inspector full time when the work did not justify it or a full-time meat inspector when one was not needed full time.

The Minister and the Department of Agriculture have made it clear that this sort of situation will not arise and that arrangements will be made with the municipalities which are in this position to ensure that the people concerned are not jeopardized in their employment and that the councils certainly will not be financially embarrassed by the transfer.

Inspection fees vary tremendously from abattoir to abattoir and from municipality to municipality. Following the establishment of this authority, I hope meat inspection fees will be uniform throughout the State. In some cases this will mean a reduction—I hope, at any rate—in the price of meat to the consumer; in others it may entail a small increase, but overall, in the long term, every one should pay a somewhat similar price.

It has also been said that the authority will be monopolistic and will result in the closing down of small abattoirs and slaughter houses. I challenged two municipalities to show me in the Bill how this could happen, and they could not do so. I am certain that there is no intention that this sort of thing will occur when the authority is established. However, if abattoirs or slaughter houses are forced to close at some stage, there will be only one reason for it, and that will be because they are unhygienic. Surely the public of Victoria, the meat consumers, are entitled to purchase meat which is killed under the best possible conditions.

The Hon. S. R. McDonald.—A number of abattoirs have gone out of business voluntarily in recent years.

The Hon. K. S. Gross.—That is so, and in New South Wales quite a few have not renewed their applications for licences for this reason. It is a fair assumption that if they are not prepared to bring their works up to a reasonably hygienic state, no authority or Government should allow them to operate as meat works and in the preparation of food that is to be consumed by the general public.

The suggestion has also been made that all the works will have to come up to the export standard. Here again, there is no suggestion in the Bill that this is to be the situation. In fact, the Bill specifically provides for three types of licence—one for export, one for abattoirs, and one for slaughter houses. The slaughter house licence is for works with a small throughput.

It has also been suggested that meat prices will rise astronomically because of the closing down of small
works and that certain bigger works will have to close, with the result that meat killed in other centres will have to be transported back and the cost passed on to the consumer. There is no basis for any of these assertions.

Another suggestion was that there would be a risk of diseased meat reaching the public. Mr. Gleeson dealt adequately with that subject. Of course it does not follow that merely because meat inspection is being transferred from the Department of Health to the Department of Agriculture and the control of veterinarians that this will be the result. That suggestion has no basis whatsoever.

They are some of the main objections which have been levelled against this Bill. What have we in its favour? I consider that there are four main points. Firstly, the Bill will provide that there will be uniform standards of meat inspection and appropriate standards of hygiene at all the meat works in Victoria. Secondly, it will bring Victoria into line with other major meat producing countries of the world which have already transferred meat inspection to veterinary control. I agree wholeheartedly that it is high time this was done in Victoria. Thirdly, the meat inspectors themselves will enjoy a professional backing which they have not had in the past. It was somewhat refreshing to talk to the meat inspectors when this Bill was being prepared and to find how enthusiastic they were in their support for this type of measure. This attitude was evident right through from their association down to the individual members with whom I spoke.

The fourth major point is that the Department of Agriculture will gain an enormous advantage from the flow of information concerning animal disease which will come from the abattoirs and meat works. This point has already been covered, and I do not intend to go into it any further.

I again say how pleased I am that so many members of this House have spoken in favour of the Bill. Like them, I am certain that the establishment of this new authority will do much to safeguard the meat industry of Victoria. As has been pointed out, it is a big industry. In the past financial year it was the biggest export earner of any single primary industry. Of course, this will not be the position this year because of the astronomical rise in wool prices, but meat will probably run a good second. Therefore, I wish the authority every success when it commences operations.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2, relating to interpretations.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I venture to suggest that but for the Meat Industry Committee, representing all parties in this House, this Bill would not have been placed on the statute-book for another ten or twenty years. It is a typical illustration of what can be done by an all-party committee investigating a problem and bringing in a unanimous recommendation. I pay tribute to the committee and to its chairman, Mr. Gleeson, and also to the agricultural committee of the Liberal Party because this proposal was closely vetted before the draft legislation was finalized and brought into the House in the form of a Bill. A lot of work has gone into the preparation of this measure.

Year after year, criticism has been raised in the meetings of the Australian Agricultural Council about the type of meat inspection that has existed in Victoria and which I have had to endeavour to defend. I am sure this Bill has the approval of the Department of Primary Industry, the Department of Trade, and all of those persons who are responsible for the quality of the meat which goes out of Australia to maintain our markets throughout the world.

The Hon. K. S. Gross.
It is probable that this year $1,000 million worth of meat will be exported. That is a huge figure. By 1975 it is likely that restrictions will be imposed throughout the world on the quality of meat, and it might be necessary to obtain certificates stating that the meat is brucellosis free, tuberculosis free, or free from other diseases. Therefore, one realizes that this type of legislation is vital if Australia is to hold its export markets. I think it will be agreed generally that it is a good measure, that it is overdue, and that it will be of great benefit to the community as well as to persons who are involved in the export of meat.

Some mention has been made about the constitution of the Victorian Abattoir and Meat Inspection Authority. I know some criticism has been voiced by certain sections of the community which have an interest in this type of measure. When the Bill was first mooted there was not a representative of the Department of Health on the authority and, on reflection, I think there should have been. It was immediately agreed that the Chief Health Officer of the Department of Health should be a member of the authority.

Criticism from the health inspectors' organization had also to be withstood. Much of that criticism was due to the fact that the provisions of the Bill were not thoroughly understood. It was believed at that stage that if an officer held a dual ticket—health and meat inspection—the loss of the meat inspection part of his work, which would pass to the Department of Agriculture, would probably mean that the council would find great difficulty in meeting that part of his salary which had been obtained from the inspection of meat. That has been overcome by the assurance that where a man held two tickets and was involved in meat inspection the part of his work concerning meat inspection would be paid for by the authority. This removed some of the criticism of the legislation.

Those involved in the killing of animals who have a licence from the Department of Primary Industry have a standard to meet in accordance with export needs, and therefore they are in a category by themselves. All other abattoirs and slaughter houses will get licences as of right. They will continue in business. Before they can be put out of business they will have the privilege of appealing to the Minister of the day, who will determine whether or not they should lose their licences. That is certainly another safeguard.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot.—And more than reasonable time will be given for them to upgrade their facilities, will it not?

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—Of course it will. No authority can be unmindful of the responsibility it has in imposing health standards to ensure that justice is done to the individual. The appeal to the Minister is a safeguard for everyone involved. Reference was made to superannuation and other rights of employees who will be transferred from the Department of Health to the Department of Agriculture. Honorable members will recall that when officers were transferred from the Veterinary Research Institute to the Department of Agriculture, this matter was handled carefully through the State Superannuation Board, the Department of Agriculture, the Treasury and the association to which those people belonged. The same principle will apply with the transfer of officers from the Department of Health to the Department of Agriculture and their interests will be safeguarded.

Dual inspection of meat has always been under criticism in Victoria.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot.—And it is expensive.

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—That is so. Under the Bill dual inspection will be minimized. To all intents and purposes under the Bill, officers of the Department of Agriculture will be officers of the Commonwealth and officers of the Commonwealth will be
The clause was agreed to, as were clauses 3 and 4.

Clause 5, providing, inter alia—

(1) The Authority shall consist of eight members appointed by the Governor in Council of whom—

(d) one shall be the Chief of Division of Animal Health of the Department of Agriculture, who shall be chairman;

(f) one shall be the representative of the Meat Exporters Association.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province).—I move—

That, in paragraph (f) of sub-clause (1), the words “Meat Exporters Association” be omitted with the view of inserting the words “Victorian Trades Hall Council”.

I explained the purpose of the amendment during the second-reading debate and I have already mentioned the person whom I have in mind for appointment. He is a man who is spoken of most consistently in Trades Hall circles. I am reluctant to move that the representative of the Meat Exporters Association be denied representation on the authority because representation of that organization is desirable, but because of a technicality in the procedures of this Chamber the only way in which the Labor Party can register its protest at the non-inclusion of Mr. George Seelaf is to proceed in the way in which I have proceeded.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province).—Mr. Elliot’s amendment seeks to replace the representative of the Meat Exporters Association on the Victorian Abattoir and Meat Inspection Authority by a representative of the Victorian Dairyfarmers Association appointed to the authority as an additional representative. However, because of a procedural difficulty, we are not in a position to do that and we have now to decide whether the amendment moved by Mr. Elliot is

officers of the Department of Agriculture. They will have the same rights and there will be only one meat inspection.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—Will there be a common meat inspection course?

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—I believe so. I have already indicated that everyone in the industry will get his licence by right. At present killing works in a large part of the State are not subject to meat inspections and it would be ridiculous to try to impose costly standards on those abattoirs because that would make the meat very dear.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—If the standard of slaughter houses and abattoirs could be improved, that would be of considerable benefit.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—It would, but there are some areas which may be completely exempted from the provisions of the Bill and that is provided for in the measure.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—Does that mean that there will not be minimum hygiene standards in those places?

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—No meat inspections are carried out at abattoirs located in more than half of the State. If Mr. Elliot is suggesting that every animal that is killed in every slaughter house or every abattoir in every part of the State has to be inspected, I cannot agree with him.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—I did not mean it that way; I meant that the premises ought to be inspected.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—I have no doubt that that will be examined closely, but there is provision in the Bill to exempt certain slaughter houses which it is considered ought to be exempt. That covers the position from top to bottom and honorable members cannot expect more than that. I shall leave any other comment I might have to be debated when the appropriate amendments have been moved.
worthy of support. The recommendations of the Meat Industry Committee were different from those contained in the Bill. The committee recommended that a three-man advisory committee should be appointed. Members of the committee foresaw that if an authority with a large membership were proposed, there would be some objection from other organizations desiring representation on the authority. If the gate were opened, the Minister would probably have a football team on the authority.

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—I would want a tribunal!

The Hon. S. R. McDonald.—The Minister may still need one. Members of the Country Party believe that in the interests of good relations between the employers and the employees, Mr. Elliot's amendment is worthy of support. On occasions, the meat employees have aroused my ire when they have gone on strike and I have had stock for sale, but generally speaking there is some benefit to be gained by having a member of the butchers' union represented on the authority.

Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture).—I have a great respect for the gentleman named by Mr. Elliot and for his activities in the meat industry over many years in connection with the union which he represents.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot.—And the industry.

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—Yes. On 30th June last year, there was a conference attended by 26 representatives from many organizations. One of the aims of the conference was to seek agreement on the personnel of the authority, and this involved considerable effort. The conference decided unanimously to set up the authority proposed, provided that if any alterations were made other organizations would have the right to be represented. An agreement was reached, so it would be undesirable for me to consider accepting this amendment or that relating to the Victorian Dairyfarmers Association, which also desires representation on the authority. The Meat and Allied Trades Federation also wishes to be represented.

For those reasons I must adhere to the agreement which was reached unanimously by the representatives present at the conference because that agreement was reached on the basis that if there were to be any alteration to the representation, consideration would be given to other parties desiring representation on the authority. I ask the Committee to decline to accept the amendment proposed by Mr. Elliot.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot.—Was any worker representation requested at the meeting to which the Minister has referred?

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—I can give the names of the organizations that were present, if that is necessary.

The Hon. J. M. Tripovich.—Were they all employer organizations?

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—Employer or producer organizations.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot (Melbourne Province).—It seems a pity that in such an important authority as the Victorian Abattoir and Meat Inspection Authority the Government has not envisaged worker representations. Mr. McDonald has spoken of strikes; nobody likes strikes, but the bargaining power that workers have collectively is their only attribute when they are seeking better conditions for themselves. I was not referring to the fact that Mr. Seelaf is a high official in the butchers' union. I referred only to his extensive experience in the meat industry. I sound a note not of warning but of caution, that the modern tendency in the desire to preserve harmony in any industry is to involve the workers concerned. If the thousands of workers involved in meat processing in Australia are not worthy of representation in the so-called dawn of a new era in the Victorian meat industry, I believe something is missing.
The Committee divided on the question that the words proposed by Mr. Elliot to be omitted stand part of the clause (the Hon. G. J. Nicol in the chair)—

Ayes 14
Noes 14

AYES.

Mr. Byrne
Sir Gilbert Chandler
Mr. Dickie
Mr. Fry
Mr. Gleeson
Mr. Grimwade
Mr. Gross
Mr. Hider
Mr. Clarke
Mr. Elliot
Mr. Galbally
Mr. Kent
Mr. McDonald
Mr. Mansell
Mr. May
Mr. Mitchell

Tellers:
Mr. Jenkins
Mr. Campbell.

NOES.

Mr. Swinburne
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Tripovich
Mr. Walton.

Tellers:
Mr. Dunn
Mr. Knight.

PAIRS.

Mr. Bradbury
Mr. Hamilton
Mr. Hauser

Mr. Granter
Mr. Trayling
Mr. Eddy.

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. Nicol).—The result of the division has not determined the question, and it therefore devolves upon me to give a casting vote. It appears to me that this is in the nature of a major amendment, and, in the circumstances, I feel that the intention of the Government should be maintained. I therefore cast my vote with the Ayes.

The amendment was therefore negatived.

The clause was agreed to, as were clauses 6 to 9.

Clause 10—

(1) The Director shall provide inspection services for every meat establishment licensed under this Act.

(2) The Director may demand and receive fees as prescribed from the owner of a meat establishment—

(a) for examining animals at a meat establishment;

(b) for examining and branding carcasses and meat pursuant to this Act at a meat establishment;

(c) for certificates given by inspectors relating to examinations made by them.

The Hon. S. R. McDONALD (Northern Province).—During the second-reading debate I indicated that, on behalf of my party, I would move an amendment to this clause with the object of bringing about a system under which uniform fees are charged throughout the State for meat inspection at various categories of abattoirs. My party believes that the principle of uniform charges is important. It has adopted this policy for other industries, and it sees no reason for not doing the same on this occasion. I therefore move—

That the following sub-clause be added:—

“( ) A fee prescribed pursuant to sub-section (2) for any purpose shall, in respect of any category of abattoir set out in sub-section (1) of section 22, be uniform throughout Victoria in respect of that category.”

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province).—The Labor Party applauds the reason behind this proposed amendment. The party supports the policy of regional development to the fullest extent and is of the view that this amendment will greatly assist in that development. My colleagues and I think that, logically, the amendment should be accepted by the Government.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—After listening to two excellent speeches in support of this amendment, I remain unmoved. In saying that, I am mindful of the desirability that, wherever possible, there ought to be uniformity of charges throughout the State, and I believe also that that should be the aim of the authority, if it is possible. However, I do not think it is desirable to make it mandatory at this stage, having regard to the large differences in fees which obtain at present. The fee for cattle varies from 20 cents to $2 a head, the most common fee being between 35 and 75 cents a carcass; the fee for sheep varies from 10 to 42 cents, the most common fee being 10 to 20 cents; and the fee for pigs varies from 10 to 80 cents for each carcass, the most common fee being
between 20 and 25 cents. There is enormous variation. Although I believe it should be the aim of the authority to bring about uniformity, I do not think it is desirable to have the provision proposed in the amendment included so that uniformity will be mandatory from the commencement of operation of the Act. I do not think the Committee should accept the amendment.

The Hon. S. R. McDonald (Northern Province) - I have listened with interest and respect to the Minister's remarks. I have no doubt that he really means what he says, namely, that uniformity should be the objective of the authority. However, my party is unmoved by the Minister's explanation and intends to seek a division on the amendment.

The Committee divided on Mr. McDonald's amendment (the Hon. G. J. Nicol in the chair) -

Ayes .. .. 14
Noes .. .. 15

Majority against the amendment .. 1

AYES.
Mr. Dunn Mr. Swinburne
Mr. Elliot Mr. Thomas
Mr. Galbally Mr. Tripovich
Mr. Kent Mr. Walton.
Mr. McDonald
Mr. Mansell Tellers:
Mr. May Mr. Clarke
Mr. Mitchell Mr. Knight.

NOES.
Mr. Byrne Mr. Houghton
Mr. Campbell Mr. Hunt
Sir Gilbert Chandler Mr. Jenkins
Mr. Dickie Mr. Ward.
Mr. Fry
Mr. Garrett Mr. Granter
Mr. Gleeson Mr. Gross
Mr. Granter Mr. Hamilton.

The clause was agreed to, as were clauses 11 to 21.

Clause 22, providing, inter alia —

(5) A licence for a slaughter house shall be issued only to an applicant who satisfies the Authority—

(a) that he uses or intends to use the slaughter house for slaughter of animals for preparation of meat or meat products for retail sale in shops owned or operated or controlled by him; or

(b) that the throughput in the slaughter house of animals for slaughter is or will be below the prescribed maximum throughput.

The Hon. S. R. McDonald (Northern Province).—Sub-clause (5) of this clause relates to three categories of abattoirs. The use of the expression "prescribed maximum throughput" has raised some fears in municipalities and operators of smaller slaughter houses in the country that this could be set at an artificially low figure to embarrass the operator of a slaughter house. It has been put to members of the Country Party that the purpose of paragraph (b) of sub-clause (5) of this clause is to ensure that a slaughter house operator would not be able to establish a large chain of retail outlets and consequently have a large throughput when, in fact, he should be licensed under the next category of a local abattoir. Members of my party believe that these points of view could be reconciled by the acceptance of my amendment to impose a maximum on the number of retail outlets owned by the operator of a slaughter house through which he supplies meat. Therefore, I move—

That sub-clause (5) be omitted with the view of inserting the following sub-clause:—

"(5) A licence for a slaughter house shall be issued only to an applicant who satisfies the Authority that he uses or intends to use the slaughter house for slaughter of animals for preparation of meat or meat
products for retail sale at not more than the prescribed number of shops, whether the shops are—

(a) shops owned or operated or controlled by him; or
(b) shops not owned or operated or controlled by him and named in writing to the Authority."

I repeat that the purpose of this amendment is to impose a maximum on the number of retail outlets that can be supplied from one slaughter house and to ensure the removal of the expression “maximum prescribed throughput” which has caused some concern to municipal councils.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I am not convinced that the amendment is desirable. Paragraph (b) of sub-clause (5) of the clause provides—

That the throughput in the slaughter house of animals for slaughter is or will be below the prescribed maximum throughput.

This sub-clause is designed entirely to safeguard the interests of the slaughter houses; it will protect them from the inroads of those who hold abattoirs licences. Mr. McDonald may not agree with the aims of this sub-clause, but I believe it would be undesirable to alter the wording in any respect.

The Hon. S. R. MCDONALD (Northern Province).—I appreciate that the Minister is correct when he asserts that paragraph (b) of sub-clause (5) of the clause provides—

That the throughput in the slaughter house of animals for slaughter is or will be below the prescribed maximum throughput.

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. Nicol).—The Committee is considering sub-clause (5) of clause 22, not sub-clause (4); the amendment specifically relates to that.

municipalities, particularly those in which small slaughter houses operate.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—Which municipalities?

The Hon. B. P. DUNN.—A large number throughout the north-west of Victoria.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—Which ones in particular?

The Hon. B. P. DUNN.—At Swan Hill both the city and shire councils have expressed concern, as have other shires, about the effects on slaughter houses within their boundaries.

The Hon. K. S. GROSS.—Swan Hill would not have a slaughter house.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN.—It is a large municipality. It is understood and agreed that standards should be maintained at a certain level. No one disputes that. Certain assurances have been received but these standards should be enforced under the Act with due regard to the effect they have on the meat industry and on operators. Many slaughter houses are run by small butchers who purchase their stock locally, either buying a small number of stock at a farm or bidding at the local stock sales where they help to create competition. If the improved standards are such that it is uneconomical to upgrade these slaughter houses, the operators could be forced out of business and butchers would have to buy their meat from a central killing works. This would cause some disruption.

I know that the Minister has stated on a number of occasions that the problem of slaughter houses will be examined, but I make this plea to him. Sub-clause (4) provides—

A licence shall be issued for a particular category of abattoir only if the abattoir for which the application has been made complies with the prescribed minimum standards laid down for that category.

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. Nicol).—The Committee is considering sub-clause (5) of clause 22, not sub-clause (4); the amendment specifically relates to that.
The Hon. B. P. DUNN.—I apologize, Mr. Chairman. I thought I could comment on the amendment and the clause.

The CHAIRMAN.—That is so, but the Committee is dealing with sub-clause (5), not sub-clause (4).

The Hon. B. P. DUNN.—I think they are related but I have said all I want to say on that. I ask that the Minister and the authority take these points on slaughter houses into consideration when putting the proposed Act into effect.

The Hon. K. S. GROSS (Western Province).—When this Bill was being prepared, this clause was the subject of much discussion. The Meat Industry Committee believed the provision, as it is written in the Bill, would thoroughly safeguard the owner of a small slaughter house. He would be able to kill his meat and sell it through his own outlets, or to another butcher in his own or a neighbouring town, without necessarily having to upgrade his works to the extent that they became a local abattoir. If Mr. McDonald's amendment is accepted, would the slaughter house operator be able to determine how many retail shops or outlets his meat would go to? I doubt whether he could. How could he satisfy the authority that he sold meat to another shop only? A purchaser could sell the meat through a number of outlets. The Committee would be well advised to reject the amendment and leave the provision as it is.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province).—A number of provisions of the Bill have been accepted by members of the Country Party because the Minister of Agriculture has made certain statements and given certain undertakings and we have great faith in the honorable gentleman and confidence that he will do what he says he will. But, unfortunately, the Minister will not be with us for a great length of time. That is something which, I am sure, all honorable members regret. Regulations will be made under sub-clause (5) and they will not be under the control of the Parliament. They will be under the control of a future Minister of Agriculture and there is a genuine fear that the number of slaughter houses may be arbitrarily reduced by the Government in the interests of greater centralization. A number of small butchers with slaughter houses fear that the finger has been pointed at them, regardless. I am apprehensive that the prescribed standards to be set down under the provisions of the sub-clause may be sufficiently severe to force these people out of business. If the number of animals is prescribed at a fixed level, what will happen if, at certain periods of the year, the demand for meat is greater? A slaughter house could not expand its production to meet an abnormal demand.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—It is an average throughput.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE.—An average throughput is difficult to determine. I do not know how to appeal to the Minister on this but I believe the provision will be at the mercy of a future Minister who may take a view different from that of the present Minister. Slaughter house proprietors will be at the mercy of regulations which may be quite different from what the Parliament expects.

Mr. Gross says that the Subordinate Legislation Committee will look after that position. Honorable members are aware that many regulations which have been passed by the Subordinate Legislation Committee have been strongly objected to by the House. There is no reason why the protection of that committee should be implicitly relied upon. The regulations made by the Environment Protection Authority are a case in point.

I strongly urge the Minister to accept the amendment which Mr. McDonald has moved on behalf of the Country Party. It is reasonable and it will overcome the problem. I do not agree with the comment of the
Minister that this clause will protect slaughter houses; I think it will ultimately be a grave threat to their existence.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province).—I was intrigued by the interpretation which Mr. Gross placed on the amendment moved by Mr. McDonald. He expressed the fear that a retail shop which bought meat from a slaughter house could sell it again to other shops. Paragraph (a) of sub-clause (5) has exactly the same wording, so if that interpretation is placed on the amendment it must be placed on the provision in the Bill. Paragraph (b) of the sub-clause enables meat to be sold to other than the person's own shops as set out in paragraph (a). It is set out in the regulation-making power that a prescribed maximum throughput can be set. That could be either high or low.

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. Nicoll).—I am trying to find specific power, under the regulation-making power, for that to be done.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE.—I am referring to paragraph (i) of clause 48 under which the Governor in Council may make regulations prescribing the maximum throughput of animals for slaughter in a slaughter house. That power is related to sub-clause (5) of clause 22. I fail to see how Mr. Gross can say that the Subordinate Legislation Committee will have a say on this. Power is clearly given to the Governor in Council to set down the maximum number of animals. People are worried that the wording of the clause could be used to the detriment of some of the smaller slaughter houses in the country. I am not concerned with the larger places. A line must be drawn somewhere between what is known as an abattoir and what is known as a slaughter house. At present, the line is mythical.

Paragraph (a) of clause 5 allows a slaughter house proprietor to supply a number of retail shops owned and operated by himself and it is suggested by the Minister that paragraph (b) would allow him to supply other shops. If that were done, the slaughter house would be getting into the category of an abattoir.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—Would Woolworths be regarded as a shop?

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE.—Of course it is a shop. There is probably more meat sold through chain stores today than through butchers' shops because of the attraction of pre-wrapped meat. The point I am making depends on where the line is drawn. In the country, a slaughter house should be a place where a butcher kills meat for his own shop, and that is all the slaughter house should be. If a slaughter house could supply a number of shops owned by Woolworths, that might involve feeding half of the State. Surely, in that case, the killing works would not be a slaughter house.

It is said that the provision was included for one purpose, to protect the small slaughter houses operated by butchers in the country, but the Country Party does not like its wording and the amendment the Country Party has proposed should be adopted. If the broad approach suggested by the Minister and Mr. Gross is put into operation there will be no protection for the little fellow and there will be great difficulty in deciding what is a slaughter house and what is an abattoir.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I did not see this amendment until a few minutes ago. If it meets the convenience of the Committee, I suggest that progress be reported. The amendment could then be examined and the rest of the Bill dealt with a little later.

Progress was reported.

GAS AND FUEL CORPORATION (COLONIAL GAS HOLDINGS LIMITED) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 27) on the motion of the Hon. Murray Byrne (Minister for State Development and Decentralization) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.
The Hon. A. W. Knight (Melbourne West Province).—The Labor Party does not oppose the measure which is in line with the stated policy of the Australian Labor Party over many years. It is pleasing that the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria is now acquiring Colonial Gas Holdings Ltd. It would be remiss of me if I did not record the achievements of Colonial Gas Association Ltd. from its formation in 1888 until its projected demise in 1973. The foundations of the Colonial Gas Association Ltd. were laid by John Coates and his youthful kinsman, the Honorable George Swinburne, a former member of this house. At that time Melbourne, although the most prosperous of the Australian cities, was approximately one-tenth of its present size, and of the six towns in which the association first acquired an interest, Maldon was the most important. Maldon is a town of great historic interest.

In 1888 gas was used almost solely for lighting. Some hardy souls in whom the instincts of the trailblazers were evident were cooking their meals in primitive gas stoves and heating their bath water in crude gas bath heaters. Honorable members will remember the old English custom of bath night on Saturday. Gas fires were in use, but they were more eloquent of the ironfounder's craft, which at that time was at its height, than the kindly radiance of gas heat. The founders of the association went forth into the wilderness of Victoria seeking contracts for the lighting of towns which were demanding some outward evidence of civic advancement. The first works established by the association were at Benalla, Maldon, Seymour, Shepparton, Wangaratta and Warragul. At that time Maldon was a prosperous mining town with a population of some 3,000 people. Today it is only a small village living on memories of the gold-mining days. The other towns were, and still are, rich centres of primary production. The civic administrators of the time had much foresight in fervently hoping that their dreams would come true with the introduction of reticulated gas. It is probable that at no time in their histories have the provincial towns of Victoria shown greater prospects than at present. Undoubtedly, the provincial centres have grown and are continuing to grow, but Melbourne has also grown since 1888 from a relatively small city to one of the largest cities in the Commonwealth of Nations. It is to the growth of Melbourne that the Colonial Gas Association Ltd. owes its development. The Box Hill gas works were erected in 1890; Box Hill at that time was separated from Hawthorn, Kew and Camberwell by a large expanse of open country, which has since been extensively built on, so that the fringe of Melbourne and suburbs now lies well beyond the City of Box Hill, whereas in 1890 it was definitely marked by the now disused outer circle railway.

The undertaking of the Bairnsdale Gas Company was acquired by the association in 1901, and the Horsham United Gas Company Ltd. sold its undertaking to the association in 1913. In 1914 the undertakings of the Oakleigh Gas Co. Ltd. and the Footscray Gas and Coke Co. Ltd. were acquired. At the time of these sales, Oakleigh had about 700 customers and Footscray supplied gas to 2,000 homes.

In April, 1923, the Frankston gas undertaking, with 162 customers, was purchased. In the following year the Williamstown Gas Company amalgamated with the Footscray undertaking. In 1926, the small undertaking of the Dandenong Shire Gas and Coke Co. Ltd. was purchased and was linked to Oakleigh by a high-pressure main. During these formative years of the association, its activities extended throughout Australia, and gas works in Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland were constructed or acquired. The paid-up capital of the Australasian Gas Association Ltd. which, until 1893, was the original title of the company, was 23,364 pounds. This capital structure was steadily increased with the growth of the
company until in December, 1972, at the time of the offer made by the Gas and Fuel Corporation its shares were valued at $19,437,500. In addition to this sum, the company has issued debenture stock to the value of $18,080 million.

The company has had only six chairmen. They range from Mr. Henry L. Hammack, who presided from 1888 until 1894. His place was taken by Mr. Samuel Spencer until the transfer of the head office from London to Melbourne in 1924. At this time Mr. P. C. Holmes Hunt, who had been chairman of the local board since 1913, assumed the more responsible position of chairman and held this position, at the same time remaining its chief executive officer, until his death in 1941. Sir Arthur Robinson, who was elected a director in 1934, was the next chairman and remained so until his death in 1945, when Mr. C. F. Broadhead was elected to the position. The present chairman of the company, Mr. Robert Weir, joined the board in 1939 and has served as chairman since 1955. Most honorable members would know Mr. Robert Weir.

A number of these gentlemen and others associated with the company have played a prominent part in the development of Victoria. They include a former Premier, the late Honorable Thomas Bent, M.L.A., who later became Sir Thomas; Edward Noyes; the Honorable George Swinburne, M.L.C.; Sir John Taverner; Sir Arthur Robinson; and Sir Stephen Morell. The famous Morell Bridge was named after Sir Stephen Morell.

For more than 70 years gas sold by the company was produced from the carbonization of coal and this naturally led to an interest being taken by the company in the marketable by-products of this process. Throughout this period the principal marketable by-product was coke, a clean smokeless fuel, which found use in industry and as a domestic fuel. In the period up to the end of the first world war ammonium sulphate was manufactured in significant quantities. Production of this material became unattractive as synthetic fertilizers were produced. However, the company has maintained its production of ammonia, and today is a significant distributor of this chemical in both Victoria and Queensland. An interesting development was the production of liquid carbon dioxide and solid carbon dioxide, the common name of which is dry ice. Most people have had their fingers burned by trying to pick up dry ice when it has been packed around ice-cream. These products are still used extensively in the preservation of foodstuffs, aerated waters and the maintenance of low temperatures. The company, with its partner, the Colonial Sugar Refining Co. Ltd., operates the only carbon dioxide plant in Queensland. Tar produced in the company’s gas works has been widely used for road making, but in later years the distillation of the raw material became a viable proposition and large quantities of creosote oils and carbolic oils have been produced for the local markets.

Other diversified operations of the company which are still in operation today include road surfacing and the manufacture of high-grade commercial catering equipment for both gas and electricity. Perhaps the most important venture in which the company has become interested in recent years is the production of activated carbon manufactured from brown coal produced by the State Electricity Commission of Victoria in the Latrobe Valley. Without going into the technical ramifications, I inform the House that there is a difference in the manufacture of char and activated carbon, one being from briquettes and the other from coal. Activated carbon is capable of playing a major part in the control of pollution, and as environmental authorities in this country and overseas are imposing increasingly stricter controls on the release of effluents, large quantities of activated carbon will be required by industry. The old gas retorts of the company would cost in the vicinity of $5 million if they were built today.

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The company is now concerned with producing activated char from the carbonization of gas. The Labor Party wishes the Colonial Gas company well in this undertaking and hopes that with the experience and co-operation of the Gas and Fuel Corporation its efforts will result in production of a viable commodity, not only here but throughout the world. When I was privileged to be overseas last year I was informed by many leading industrial companies that they were anxious to discover how far Australia had gone in this field. Although it was only in the experimental stage, the companies thought a lot of the future of the process and were holding out high hopes for this activated char. Overseas cities which are smog bound will be cleaned up if this product can be used as it is in effect a clean fuel, and the Labor Party wishes the Colonial Gas company success in producing this product.

Throughout its existence the company has kept abreast of modern developments in its fields of interest. As an example, in Queensland in 1913 it installed one of the first vertical retort carbonization plants in the world, and in 1958 it constructed at Seymour the first tempered liquid petroleum gas plant in Australia. Much of this development can be attributed to the high calibre of the engineering staff who played a significant role in the recent dramatic floods at Seymour. I have been informed, and honorable members may have seen visual evidence on television, that the gasometer in Seymour was surrounded by water at the height of the disaster which occurred recently. Within 24 hours the Colonial Gas company's staff had the gasometer in order and gas was being reticulated into Seymour and surrounding areas. So, it is significant to note that Seymour has played a vital part in the history of the Colonial Gas Association Ltd.

Much of the past development can be attributed also to the high calibre of the executive staff employed by the company. I refer particularly to the Honorable George Swinburne, Mr. P. C. Holmes Hunt and Mr. R. G. Parsons who took an active part not only in the gas company's operations but in charitable work and in the educational field. Subject to correction, I believe that at one stage Mr. Parsons was president of the Swinburne Technical College Council. He was also the president of the Western Suburbs General Hospital and played an increasingly important part in its development. So, beside his interest in the workings of the Colonial Gas company, much of his spare and valuable time was devoted to the interest of the community in the fields of education, hospital and charitable work. Then followed Mr. J. R. Duggan. The present manager is Mr. R. C. Arnold, who was appointed in 1967. All of those people have played a significant role in the history of the company and I acknowledge the part they have played.

During the period of the second world war, the company played a significant role in supplying gas for industries of national importance. Shortages of men and materials placed a heavy burden on those responsible for carrying out an essential public service. To meet the rapidly increasing demand for gas, additional plant was installed at both Footscray and Box Hill and further extensions to the Box Hill plant were carried out in 1950.

During the war years and immediately afterwards the financial policies of the Commonwealth Government made it difficult to finance the rapid growth of the company's undertakings and it was therefore decided to resolve the problems of working with a company incorporated in England. The logical decision was to reconstruct the company as an Australian enterprise and thus Colonial Gas Holdings Ltd., a company registered in Victoria and having a 90 per cent Australian
shareholding, was formed. Colonial Gas Holdings Ltd. acquired the shares of the Colonial Gas Association Ltd. in exchange for shares in the new company. This is probably one of the few cases of an Australian company wholly owning a company of United Kingdom registration. The operation of reconstructing the company was of considerable magnitude and a tribute must be paid to the board of that time, particularly the company secretary, Mr. H. V. Allchin, and his accountant, Mr. G. C. Idle, for carrying out a magnificent task.

At about this time the company was invited to join with the Metropolitan Gas Company and the Brighton Gas Company in the formation of the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria. The directors decided in their wisdom that the terms on which the company was to be acquired were inequitable and would not agree to similar terms being applied to the association's Victorian gas undertakings. The Gas and Fuel Corporation was given powers of compulsory acquisition of other gas undertakings in Victoria and subsequently the company sold sections of its operations at Dandenong, Frankston, Warragul and parts of the Oakleigh district to the corporation.

As the corporation became the supplier of the bulk of Melbourne's gas requirements, it was essential that there should be close collaboration between the two organizations to ensure that the pattern of over-all development of the gas industry in the Melbourne area would be for the ultimate good of the community as a whole. It was the policy of the company to co-operate fully with the corporation and during the past 21 years this close co-operation has been carried out faithfully by the senior executives. The Labor Party considers that all credit must go to them.

The post-war years brought their difficulties in other forms besides the shortage of labour which I have previously mentioned. The difficulty of obtaining satisfactory supplies of the basic raw material, coal, from New South Wales, was another difficulty. However, the company was well supported by its major suppliers of coal and despite acute shortages operations were continued with little interruption.

Towards the end of the 1950s, honorable members saw the introduction of liquid petroleum gas in the form of propane and butane from oil refineries in Victoria. It is commonly referred to as L.P.G. It had been observed overseas that liquid petroleum gas was a very useful form of gas which could be distributed without difficulty to remote areas of population. In those early years wood fires were still in vogue but once liquid petroleum gas became available a tremendous change occurred. Honorable members could observe the difference when they travelled into remote areas where liquid petroleum gas is now used extensively for cooking and domestic purposes. This was brought about by the part the Colonial Gas Association and other companies played in overcoming fuel problems in these places.

In conjunction with the Australian Gaslight Company of Sydney, a joint company, Thermal Traders (Vic.) Pty. Ltd., was formed to distribute liquid petroleum gas under the trade name “Portagas” in Victoria, South Australia and southern New South Wales. This company, which subsequently became wholly owned by Colonial Gas Holdings Ltd., has enjoyed substantial growth and has played a significant part in the improvement of the standard of living in country areas.

The development work with liquid petroleum gas led to the investigation of the use of this material for gas production at country centres where labour costs in the manufacturing process were high and the supplies of coal difficult to provide. In 1959 the first Australian tempered liquid petroleum plant was installed at Seymour. It is interesting to recall this because, as I said earlier, the manufactured gas plant at Seymour was

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one of the first to be installed and the first Australian tempered liquid petroleum plant was also installed at Seymour, so that Seymour plays a significant part in the history of the Colonial Gas company, particularly in its formative years, but also right through its history.

In the early 1960s it became evident that owing to the cost of administration some consolidation of operations must take place and it was therefore decided to dispose of gas undertakings outside the State and consolidate the gas activities within Victoria. At that time the undertakings ranged wide and far, from Townsville in North Queensland to Albany in Western Australia. This programme of disposal proceeded at a steady rate and was completed in 1969 with the sale of the Wollongong Gas Company. The only gas undertaking remaining outside Victoria is that at Mount Gambier, South Australia, which is adjacent to the company's Victorian operations.

In 1965 the consortium of Esso-B.H.P. discovered natural gas at the Barracouta field in Bass Strait, and in the following year the Colonial Gas company joined in negotiations led by the Gas and Fuel Corporation for the purchase of this gas for distribution in Melbourne. The company was at the point of installing additional gas manufacturing plants but with the discovery of natural gas its plans were deferred. The company produced long-term estimates of gas requirements on the assumption that low-priced natural gas would be available. The company's relations with the corporation were enhanced by co-operative effort and it whole heartedly supported the intensive effort being made to produce an agreement compatible with the interests of the Victorian gas distributors and their customers.

Concurrently, the company conducted feasibility studies and in the light of these estimates decided to proceed with the introduction of natural gas, provided that the contractual arrangements for purchasing gas were satisfactory. These arrangements were concluded with the completion of a letter of intent. The company believed this letter, which committed it to the purchase of a quantity of gas worth almost $100 million, outlined a most favourable agreement which would service the requirements of the Victorian gas industry for the ensuing twenty years.

The company then proceeded to convert its system and its customers' appliances to natural gas operation which placed a burden of $8 million expenditure on the company for the following three years. It was with confidence that this large sum of money was made available for the introduction of natural gas, and in co-operation with the Gas and Fuel Corporation conversion procedures were devised; although different contractors were employed to perform this work, close liaison was maintained at all times. Some difficult problems arose with the contractors. That relates to the old question which has been raised in this House many times when honorable members have debated adjournment motions and particularly when natural gas was first considered.

Natural gas was introduced into the metropolitan area in May, 1969, and all customers were using the new gas by March, 1970. The conversion programme proceeded with little variation to the original plan and at a cost within the estimates prepared some four years earlier. There were some setbacks caused by adverse press publicity but the acceptance of natural gas by users has been overwhelming and sales have exceeded expectations, particularly in the industrial sector where it has been found that natural gas is a pollution-free fuel giving many side benefits to industrial operations. Figures that I shall cite give some indication of the growth of the company's gas sales in Victoria during the past 30 years. In 1942, it sold 5.4 million therms; in 1952, 7.7 million therms; in 1962, 11 million therms; and in 1972, 57.7 million therms.
It is of interest to note that on the forecast sales for 1973 the Colonial Gas company will be the second largest gas distributor in Australia, second to the Gas and Fuel Corporation with which it will shortly amalgamate. Since its formation in 1888 the company had had its major and minor triumphs and its problems and perplexities. Much of its continued success has been through the loyalty of its employees, many of whom have seen a lifetime of service with the company. The Colonial Gas company has, I believe, been proud to play a small but significant part in the development of Australia and its name will long be remembered in the annals of the Australian gas industry.

I thank the House for its indulgence, but I felt that it was wise to record the history of the Colonial Gas company because, having gone back through old editions of Hansard, I discovered that an account of its history has never been given. I should not like to besmirch any private enterprise but I believe the Colonial Gas company to be one that is well known and respected for its business operations over many years. My colleagues in another place explained the ramifications of this measure, as did the Minister. I thank Mr. Smith and the officers whom he made available to me for their courtesy and co-operation. I also thank the Minister for the courtesy extended to me in this respect.

There are some isolated minor problems concerning the takeover but by wisdom and wise planning and leadership they will be overcome. The Labor Party wishes the new amalgamation well. Soon in the whole field of gas distribution in Victoria there will be only one body, namely, the Gas and Fuel Corporation. The distribution of gas will be extended and maintained at a reasonable cost to customers. The Labor Party supports the measure and trusts that it will enable the Gas and Fuel Corporation to advance to become the best and biggest distributor of gas in any State of Australia. Members of the Labor Party are pleased to support the Bill because it follows the stated policy of the Labor Party that the Gas and Fuel Corporation should be the only distributor of gas throughout Victoria.

The Hon. R. W. MAY (Gippsland Province).—On behalf of the Country Party I am happy to be associated with the measure. I do not propose to traverse the ground that has been so adequately covered by Mr. Knight. This short Bill contains four clauses and sets out the procedure whereby the Gas and Fuel Corporation will take over Colonial Gas Holdings Ltd. When one organization is taking over another, an essential ingredient is finance. Accordingly, the Bill increases the borrowing powers of the corporation.

An honorable member in my position must express paternal appreciation and admiration because in 1950 the Gas and Fuel Corporation was created by the Country Party Government and therefore members of my party can throw out their chests in pride at the achievements of the corporation. In 1950 the borrowing powers of the corporation were limited to $20 million and now, 20 years later, they have escalated to $260 million. Correspondingly, there has been a tremendous increase in gas sales by the corporation.

When the corporation was first established its charter was to produce gas by the Lurgi process, but the discovery of natural gas has enabled the corporation to supply gas from that source. The measure marks an era in the life of the corporation because it brings about the culmination of the ideal that the corporation would become the sole manufacturer and distributor of gas in Victoria. By this Bill, the corporation will be enabled to take over the Colonial Gas Holdings Ltd.

The new consolidation will bring about the concept that has always been supported by the Country
Party, the fixing of a uniform price for gas within the metropolitan area and ultimately throughout the State. Only fringe areas in the country have received the benefits of a gas supply.

The Bill provides for an increase of $35 million in the borrowing powers of the corporation. Although the purchase price for the shares in the company amounts to $19 million, it is heartening to members of the Country Party that the corporation is able to find from its own sources $2.5 million. The Country Party is conscious that the corporation, in taking over the company, will acquire assets which will not be required and which will be sold off in due course, but in the interim they have to be paid for and therefore increased finance is necessary for the purpose.

Members of the Country Party are delighted at the progress made by the corporation since its establishment and they are confident that in the future the corporation will achieve even more spectacular success.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (Approval of acquisition of shares in Colonial Gas Holdings Limited by the Corporation).

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization).—I thank honorable members for the way in which they have facilitated the passage of this important Bill and in particular Mr. Knight, who has given the historic background to the measure. The honorable member has become an authority in this sphere and the information that he gave honorable members was of great interest and certainly of educational value to me. I also thank Mr. May for his support and his comments.

I join with both honorable members in paying a particular tribute to Mr. Neil Smith, who is one of the great servants of the State. I only wish that I could second him to some of my activities as I do not know anyone who is more enthusiastic and able to cope with the problems of business. Mr. Smith is very much a public servant and certainly serves the State well as Chairman of the Gas and Fuel Corporation.

As honorable members have indicated, and as I outlined when introducing the Bill, this measure is the wonderful success story of the Gas and Fuel Corporation. Its passage is important as hundreds of thousands of people will receive immediate benefits from its provisions. The major category will be the customers who benefit from a reduction in tariff of some 9 per cent. Those on the general tariff will benefit by 13 per cent and the concessional tariff will get an immediate reduction of some 10 per cent. Moreover pensioners in receipt of full Commonwealth and invalid benefits will be entitled to concessional tariffs.

I think I should mention one aspect which has not been brought out so far—

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. Nicol).—Is the Minister proposing to introduce new matter?

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE.—No, Mr. Chairman. I conclude my remarks by saying that the operation of the Bill will bring to certain country areas uniform charges and indeed reduced charges which will make a real contribution to the more balanced development of the State. For that reason alone, the Bill certainly has the support of many country people.

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

The Bill was reported to the House without amendment, and passed through its remaining stages.
ABATTOIR AND MEAT INSPECTION BILL.

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

Consideration was resumed of clause 22, providing, inter alia—

(5) A licence for a slaughter house shall be issued only to an applicant who satisfies the Authority—

(a) that he uses or intends to use the slaughter house for slaughter of animals for preparation of meat or meat products for retail sale in shops owned or operated or controlled by him; or

(b) that the throughput in the slaughter house of animals for slaughter is or will be below the prescribed maximum throughput.

and of Mr. McDonald's amendment—

That sub-clause (5) be omitted with the view of inserting the following sub-clause:—

"(5) A licence for a slaughter house shall be issued only to an applicant who satisfies the Authority that he uses or intends to use the slaughter house for slaughter of animals for preparation of meat or meat products for retail sale at not more than the prescribed number of shops, whether the shops are—

(a) shops owned or operated or controlled by him; or

(b) shops not owned or operated or controlled by him and named in writing to the Authority."

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—Since progress was reported, the amendment has been examined and discussions have taken place, but it is thought desirable from the point of view of the Government and the Department of Agriculture that the amendment should not be accepted. Therefore, I urge the Committee to reject it.

The Hon. S. R. McDoNALD (Northern Province).—I am rather sorry that Mr. McDonald has persisted with his argument on the amendment because basically I still stand by what I said previously about it. It is difficult to understand how the proposed amendment would give protection to the smaller slaughter house owner as the honorable member described. Possibly the difference in our interpretation of the clause and the amendment could be on what will be a slaughter house and what will constitute an abattoir. The Government wishes to protect the owner of a slaughter house which would be used for killing on no more than one or two days a week. If the owner is then going to branch out into the trade as suggested by Mr. McDonald, he will increase his throughput to such an extent that he will have to be licensed as an abattoir owner so that he can continue killing and servicing the shops.

The Hon. K. S. GROSS (Western Province).—I am rather sorry that Mr. McDonald has persisted with his argument on the amendment because basically I still stand by what I said previously about it. It is difficult to understand how the proposed amendment would give protection to the smaller slaughter house owner as the honorable member described. Possibly the difference in our interpretation of the clause and the amendment could be on what will be a slaughter house and what will constitute an abattoir. The Government wishes to protect the owner of a slaughter house which would be used for killing on no more than one or two days a week. If the owner is then going to branch out into the trade as suggested by Mr. McDonald, he will increase his throughput to such an extent that he will have to be licensed as an abattoir owner so that he can continue killing and servicing the shops.

The Hon. S. R. McDoNALD.—Did Mr. Gross read what the honorable member for Lowan said on the subject in another place?

The Hon. K. S. GROSS.—I did not read what he said, but I know his views on the subject fairly well. The clause as drafted will give the necessary protection to the slaughter house owner. I ask the Committee to reject the amendment.

The Hon. R. W. MAY (Gippsland Province).—I ask the Minister of Agriculture to consider the position of a slaughter house in a remote area servicing an influx of tourists.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT.—Is the honorable member suggesting that slaughter houses may be declared places of tourist interest?

The Hon. R. W. MAY.—In the future they may become such curios that they will be tourist attractions. I had not thought of that aspect. In a very popular tourist resort such as Mallacoota, which is miles from Melbourne, in the height of the tourist season the influx of tourists could number 25,000. That is higher
than it has been, but I am thinking of the growing popularity of those areas.

The Hon. A. J. Hunt.—Would these abattoirs discharge effluent into the inlet?

The Hon. R. W. May.—No. The Environment Protection Authority will look after that. As the owner of the slaughter house must pay a licence fee, no doubt he will take care not to offend, because the penalty of $5,000 would be a deterrent.

The Chairman (the Hon. G. J. Nicol).—Order! I suggest that Mr. May ignore the irrelevant remarks of the Minister.

The Hon. R. W. May.—We want the Minister to consider areas such as Mallacoota and Lakes Entrance, because it is difficult to prescribe a maximum figure for the influx of population. In the off season the number of tourists coming to such an area would be entirely different from the number in the height of the tourist season. Will the Minister give an assurance that there will be this elasticity in arriving at the throughput figure to meet the situation? This is what my colleagues hope to achieve with the amendment, and with this in mind we were prompted by various municipalities to present this point of view.

Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture).—I have listened very carefully to what the honorable member has said. He asked me to give an assurance. When this authority is set up, it must of necessity be flexible. I am sure the views expressed by the honorable members would be very deeply in the minds of members of the authority in the execution of their responsibilities.

The Hon. S. R. McDonald (Northern Province).—I am reluctant to advance my argument again, but I was tempted to do so after listening to the comments of Mr. Gross. It is quite evident from clause 22 that under the regulation-making powers in clause 48 it is possible to prescribe a maximum throughput.

Members of the Country Party have the utmost confidence and faith in the Minister and the departmental officer who will be the chairman of the authority, but if some suitable alternative can be found there is no reason why the term “prescribed maximum throughput” cannot be deleted. That is the reason for the Country Party’s stand on the amendment.

The Hon. D. G. Elliot (Melbourne Province).—The whole intent of this Bill is to ensure that people will get decent, clean meat. Throughput must be defined in relation to a slaughter house, abattoir or export abattoir. It is all very well for Mr. May to talk about the influx of 25,000 tourists into Mallacoota, but no slaughter house could get into that category when it could cater for a population of that size. If an abattoir of sufficient size to cater for a population of that dimension were built at Mallacoota there would be mass pollution and there would be a high danger of infection similar to that which has occurred at the Gold Coast in Queensland. For many years there were slaughter houses and abattoirs adjacent to that area, but eventually the authorities were forced into introducing a more sophisticated method because of the incidence of diarrhea and allied salmonella infections caused through bad meat. All that honorable members hear from members of the corner party is something to satisfy the few bleatings that emanate from certain country areas.

The Committee divided on the question that the sub-clause proposed by Mr. McDonald to be omitted stand part of the clause (the Hon. G. J. Nicol in the chair)—

| Ayes | ... | 21 |
| Noes | ... | 7 |

Majority against the amendment .. 14
The clause was agreed to, as were clauses 23 to 28.

Clause 29, providing, *inter alia*—

(2) The Authority shall not suspend or cancel a licence to a meat establishment on the ground specified in paragraph (b) of section 27 unless—

(a) it has first served on the licensee a notice—

(i) specifying the works or repairs or installations required to be executed to enable the abattoir to comply with the prescribed minimum standards for that category of abattoir; and

(ii) specifying the time within which the works or repairs or installations specified in the notice are completed; and

(b) the works or repairs or installations specified in the notice have not been completed within the specified time.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That the following sub-clause be added:

"( ) The suspension or cancellation of a licence under paragraph (a), (b), (c) or (d) of sub-section (1) shall remain in abeyance—

(a) until the expiration of the time for lodging an appeal to the Minister against the suspension or cancellation pursuant to sub-section (1) of section 31; or

(b) where such an appeal is duly lodged under section 31 until the giving of the decision by the Minister on the appeal."

The purpose of the amendment is to safeguard the interests of those who hold licences to ensure that their businesses cannot be closed down by the authority without the licencee having an opportunity of appealing to the Minister of the day.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT.—What if there is a grave health risk?

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—That is covered by another provision. This amendment confirms the assurance that was given that there would be an avenue of appeal for people whose licences were to be cancelled because of standards but not because of an outbreak of disease.

The Hon. S. R. MCDONALD (Northern Province).—The Country Party supports the amendment which has been moved by the Minister. Following discussion with the Minister and his departmental officers last week, the Country Party was inclined to move a similar amendment to clause 31, but it has been decided to support this amendment. Members of the Country Party believe it is sound, and consider that there should be an avenue of appeal. The amendment provides safeguards which are additional to those which are contained in clause 3 and clause 31.

The Hon. D. G. ELLIOT (Melbourne Province).—The Labor Party supports the amendment moved by the Leader of the House.

The amendment was agreed to, and the clause, as amended, was adopted, as were the remaining clauses.

Schedule.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—This legislation is a fine example of what can be done on an all-party basis, following thorough examination of its contents and a recommendation in relation to the manner in which the problems involved can be solved. I pay tribute to Mr. Gleeson and the Meat Industry Committee, to my colleagues on the agricultural committee and to the officers of the department, Dr. Flynn and Dr. Rushford, and, of course, the Director of Agriculture, Dr. Wishart.
The enactment of this legislation will lift the industry in this State to the highest category of efficiency. It will mean much to Victoria in the future.

The schedule was agreed to.

The Bill was reported to the House with an amendment, and passed through its remaining stages.

WORKERS COMPENSATION BILL.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill benefits workers on compensation who were injured prior to 9th May, 1972. As at that date, the Workers Compensation Act 1972 came into operation and increased the rates of compensation for persons injured after that date. As honorable members will appreciate, prior to the coming into operation of the amending legislation, it has never been the practice to make increases in compensation rates retrospective to the date on which the injury was sustained. The reason is quite obvious: The employers have had to know their liability and be able to insure against it, and in turn the insurers have had to know their liability in order to determine premiums and establish a fund to meet future claims.

However, the Government recognized that, as the result of the adoption of this sound accounting principle, there are some grave anomalies in that workers at the present time may be on any one of four different rates of compensation even though they all face the same living costs, because the compensation they receive is based on the date of the injury.

That anomaly will be removed by this Bill, and workers who were injured prior to July, 1965, October, 1970, May, 1972, or since, will all receive the same rate of compensation. Incidentally, the Bill increases the total liability of the employer, in respect of weekly payments, to $15,260 irrespective of when the injury took place.

The increased rates of payments are applied automatically to all workers currently receiving workers compensation payments, and others, who are not currently receiving them but may resume receiving them, will receive the rates on application to the Workers Compensation Board, the employer, or the insurer. An incidental effect of the Bill is to validate policies of insurance in respect of the increased rates of weekly payments.

On the general question of workers compensation, I remind the House that a committee consisting of representatives of all parties—the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country Party in another place and myself, with representatives of the Workers Compensation Board, the Trades Hall Council, the employers and the Insurance Commissioner—are reviewing aspects of the whole structure of the Act with a view to removing anomalies of the kind which are dealt with in this measure. There is no final report yet to hand, but, when it is, the House can look forward to its adoption and operation shortly after this Bill has come into operation.

On the motion of the Hon. J. M. Walton, for the Hon. J. M. TRIPOLI- \n
VICH (Doutta Galla Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, April 3.

The sitting was suspended at 6.23 p.m. until 8.4 p.m.

VALUATION OF LAND (VALUERS) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 21) on the motion of the Hon. A. J. Hunt (Minister for Local Government) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province).—This small Bill proposes to amend the Valuation of Land Act and also to extend the provisions that were enunciated in the Valuation of Land (Valuers) Act 1960 wherein valuers who valued for municipal authorities
Valuation of Land (Valuers) Bill.

and State instrumentalities were made to register under a Valuers Qualification Board.

This Bill proposes to extend the provisions of that Act to include all valuers. This is a good move. It will not immediately affect all concerned because the provisions of the Bill to enable a person who is not a valuer at present to obtain the necessary qualifications or to find alternative work will not come into effect until 1979. Honorable members can remember the reasons for the enactment of the 1960 Act because uniformity between municipalities was non-existent at that time. Some instrumentalities, such as the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, rated on net annual valuation, and a person residing in one municipality was at a disadvantage compared with the owner of a similar property in another municipality. Some municipalities boasted that they had the lowest rate in the metropolitan area.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT.—They deliberately kept valuations down.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON.—That is so.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT.—It also meant that other people were paying a higher rate.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON.—That is so; if some people pay lower rates others must pay more. Making valuations as near as possible to the amount that the property could be expected to realize on the open market is fair enough. I see no reason why the passage of the Bill should be delayed and members of my party do not oppose it.

The Hon. S. R. MCDONALD (Northern Province).—Members of the Country Party have examined this measure and have reached the same conclusion as Mr. Walton, that it should be supported. I agree with the honorable member's comments on the reason for its introduction. Much could be said about the valuation of land in rural municipalities.

At present, I am engaged in discussions with the Valuer-General and his department concerning a number of valuation matters in country municipalities. I could say a great deal about this subject, but I do not propose to do so tonight as the time is not opportune.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister for Local Government said that the Valuation of Land Act was enacted in 1960 to cover persons who were acting as valuers but who had no real qualifications. The provisions of this Bill go a step further. The Commonwealth Institute of Valuers has asked for the changes embodied in the Bill and this has been agreed to also by the Real Estate and Stock Institute of Victoria. All parties agree that the principle of the complete registration of every person who sets himself up as a valuer should be followed. The Bill also provides a penalty after 1979 for a person who acts as a valuer without registration, which gives adequate time for persons acting in this profession to make the necessary adjustments. The Country Party supports the Bill.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (New Part substituted for No. 6653 Part II.).

The Hon A. J. HUNT (Minister for Local Government).—I thank Mr. Walton and Mr. McDonald for their support of this measure, which I believe is important and which will improve standards of valuation.

The clause was verbally amended and, as amended, was adopted, as were the remaining clauses.

The Bill was reported to the House with an amendment, and passed through its remaining stages.
The debate (resumed from earlier this day) on the motion of the Hon. Murray Byrne (Minister for State Development and Decentralization) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT (Melbourne West Province).—The measure before the House has the support of the Australian Labor Party. I should indicate the amount of energy which can be stored in a pressure vessel, particularly a boiler. I have not converted the figures to the metric equivalents but I point out that the total energy released from a boiler containing approximately 100 gallons of water at 100 lb. per square inch pressure would be 10·6 million ft. lb. That is the energy equivalent of more than 5 lb. of nitro glycerine exploded in the atmosphere. This will give some idea of the potential danger of a boiler working at anything between 60 and 100 lb. per square inch. The metric equivalent would be from 30 to 35 bars.

There have always been problems related to the operation of boilers, and on numerous occasions I have referred in the House to uncertified boiler attendants who neglect boilers. I commend to the Minister and the department an article in the August, 1972, issue of Dynamo, the official organ of the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association (Victoria Branch). The author of the article is Mr. R. W. Burgess, superintending inspector in charge of boilers and pressure vessels for the board which examines enginedrivers and boiler attendants in New South Wales. I recall that in the course of my duties, before becoming a member of this House, I visited the remote Gippsland town of Loch where a vessel was damaged because a boiler was unattended. This is another indication of the danger of boilers.

There are particular problems relating to the use of automatic devices. You, Mr. President, would know from your experience and your knowledge of both aeronautical and motor engineering that automatic devices cannot be relied upon. I put it bluntly to the House that the law should provide that they are not to be relied on. There is potential danger with the use of boilers and pressure vessels in all high-rise buildings, including the new headquarters of the Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd. which has a total energy plant. Total energy plants and boilers are lethal weapons. They are not the sort of thing with which children should be allowed to play or which untrained men should control.

The Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association of which I had the honour to be connected as the secretary supports the measure. But I remind the Government that the Bill does not go far enough. The legislation should provide that no unlicensed person shall be in charge of a boiler. However, the Labor Party wishes this Bill a speedy passage because it will help to protect the people concerned.

The Hon. R. W. MAY (Gippsland Province).—The Country Party is always in accord with progressive measures which have as their purpose the well-being of members of the community; in this case it is plant operators. As Mr. Knight will know, when a person is examined for a boiler attendant's certificate, one question asked is what is the first thing he would do when entering a boiler-room and the correct answer is, "Look at the pressure gauge."

Much progress has been made in steam generation and the controls on many of the vessels and boilers are automatic with the result that the legislation must be updated. I am intrigued with the definition of "owner" in clause 2 of the Bill. The Minister's second-reading notes state that it was found necessary to cover not only the owner but various other persons. So mortgagees and lessees will now be included in the definition. I do not know whether this refers to a change in the social structure.
The Bill clears up the question of the responsibility for the maintenance of automatically-controlled boilers. It is just as essential that the automatic controls are kept in proper order as the boilers themselves. If they are not kept in proper condition, there is no safety. Accordingly, my party supports the Bill.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province).—I direct the attention of the Government to the fact that cylinders containing liquid petroleum gas are now sold to caravan users. Once, these cylinders were hired from the people who sold the gas and, when they were returned from time to time, they were tested. Now, the cylinders are filled on request at any filling station. They are tested when first manufactured but they may go without testing for the rest of their lives. As yet, there is no great problem because the cylinders have not been sold, as opposed to being hired, for any great length of time. But, in the future, there will be problems with cylinders being filled over and over again without being tested. Apart from their explosive effects, there is danger if they leak in enclosed places.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE. —I know of the danger. I acted some years ago for a person who was injured as a result of an explosion. But the cylinder has a date on it.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON. —That may be so but the point I make is that the cylinders no longer go back to the people who supply the gas. I am not against their being sold because, previously, it was expensive to use these cylinders of gas. Some cylinders may be exchanged, but I am not sure that even then they are tested. Something should be done about this position and I ask the Government to take action.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (Amendment of principal Act).
bursts does not throw out particles. A type of metallic container could be designed with a strengthened cover from which the contents could be released without the risk of explosion.

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT (Melbourne West Province).—Whilst I appreciate Mr. Gleeson's comments, extensive feasibility studies have been carried out on the higher pressure vessels, and a plastic or strengthened cover is not feasible. I suggest that Mr. Gleeson should stick to meat and farming and leave industrial matters to the people who know the game.

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

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

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION (YALLOURN COUNCIL) BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 27) on the motion of the Hon. Murray Byrne (Minister for State Development and Decentralization) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. A. W. KNIGHT (Melbourne West Province).—This Bill is in line with the long-enunciated policy of the Australian Labor Party to give eighteen-year-olds a right to vote at elections whether municipal, State or Federal. The Labor Party supports the measure. I berate the Government for not giving the amendment to the State Electricity Commission Act 1958 its imprimatur three months ago when the Labor Party moved an amendment which was supported by the Country Party. The delay has wasted the money of the taxpayers of Victoria; this action should have been taken three months ago.

The Hon. MURRAY BYRNE (Minister for State Development and Decentralization).—This is a wonderful Bill. Every party is claiming the credit for it, and the Government introduced it.

The clause was agreed to.

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

EGG INDUSTRY STABILIZATION BILL.

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

Discussion was resumed of clause 2, providing for the division of the Act into Parts and Divisions.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—Mr. Chairman, with your permission an explanation is due to the Committee of events since progress was reported on clause 2. Today I met three organizations connected with the egg industry of the State. They were the Commercial Egg Producers Association, which, to some extent, is a Bendigo-based organization; the Victorian Farmers Union, the poultry section of which has members from various parts of the State and is considered by some people to be an outer-
metropolitan and inner-country organization; and the Egg Producers Association of Victoria, which has a membership of about 60.

Anyone who is conversant with the politics of the egg industry will be aware that it is difficult to obtain unanimity on a measure of this nature. The trend that was occurring in relation to the Bill was such that I felt compelled to invite those organizations to discuss with me, once again, the position as I saw it. As a result of that discussion a compromise has been agreed on in connection with whether the three years' production period, which dates back three years from 2nd March, 1972, should be used as the basis for fixing quotas. Certain sections of the industry were adamant that the period should be three years, and another section of the industry was adamant that the Bill should remain on a one-year basis. The outcome of the discussion was the reluctant agreement by both divisions in the industry for a two-year period to be taken into account prior to 2nd March, 1972.

I have the approval of those industries to indicate to the Committee that they were reluctant to agree to anything but the three-year period or the one-year period. However, they did not want the Bill to be lost in the dying days of this session, and rather than a conflict and a resultant deadlock on this vital clause they have agreed to a compromise.

Consequently, the amendment to that clause which I shall move later will provide for the highest hen return in each of the two years prior to 2nd March, 1972, to be added together and divided by two. That will form the basic quota to which the group A poultry farmer will be entitled. That fairly explains what did take place.

Agreement was reached on the other clauses of the Bill. Whilst some wanted the provisions altered others did not but they all wanted the Bill and, in order to facilitate its passage, it was agreed—though some people were reluctant—that I should move this amendment.

The clause was agreed to.

Clause 3, providing, *inter alia*—

(1) In this Act unless inconsistent with the context or subject-matter—

"Pullet" means a hen that is less than six months old.

"Relevant period" means the period of one year that ended on the 2nd day of March, 1972.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—Some drafting amendments have been found necessary. I move—

That, in the interpretation of the word "Pullet", as contained in sub-clause (1), the word "hen" be omitted with the view of inserting the words "female domesticated fowl of the genus gallus".

If any honorable member desires a full explanation, I shall provide it in writing.

The amendment was agreed to.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in the interpretation of "Relevant period", as contained in sub-clause (1), the words "one year" be omitted with the view of inserting the words "two years".

That amendment will bring into effect the principles which I enunciated earlier.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province).—This is the test clause, as one might term it, because if the Committee accepts this principle, it accepts the consequent amendments which have been circulated. Agreement has been reached between commercial egg producers, the Victorian Farmers Union and the Minister. At the outset I clearly state that members of the Country Party do not like the agreement but will vote for it because it is an agreement made between the industry and the Minister. Members of the Country Party believe it is not in the best interests of the egg producers of this State, and clearly outlined their views during the second-reading debate.

The Country Party has decided not to press its amendments because of the agreement which has now been

*Sir Gilbert Chandler.*
reached. We are going to accept the period of two years and the consequential amendment to clause 12, which places the period on the highest one year of the two-year period. As the Minister has rightly stated, this is a compromise which leaves the position very much as is set out in the remainder of the Bill. There will be no amendments to the highest or the lowest—the minimum or maximum—figures although the Country Party had foreshadowed amendments. It would be farcical to submit those amendments following what has been put to the Committee by the Minister of Agriculture.

Having had experience of quotas, I realize that once a quota is fixed the industry will be tied to it forever. Quotas become a right which can be sold, are of commercial value and an asset to the person who holds them. Whilst minor amendments might be proposed by the review committee, from experience with the tobacco industry and the wheat industry, I agree that it is difficult to have quotas altered once they have been established. Of course, the farmer who has a quota is the proud possessor of that quota within a closed industry, and nobody else can get into the industry unless an existing producer is bought out or someone dies and in the distribution of the estate his quota is passed onto another member of the family. This is what is to be called the stabilization of the egg industry. Neither the Minister nor I are happy about what will happen under these circumstances but if an industry asks for something it is up to Parliament to try to resolve the problem for them.

I realize that the Minister has had a difficult problem over the past two or three years. All honorable members have received representations from various sections of the industry. This week there has been a spate of letters and telegrams from various sectors, some wanting further provisions, others wanting something else, and some wanting the Bill as presented. Certain organizations have tried to exert pressure to a greater or lesser extent. Representatives of the Victorian Farmers Union came to me earlier today and said that they had come to an agreement. I was with the Minister this afternoon when the commercial egg producers contacted him by telephone and conveyed their decision, and I heard what the Minister said in reply. In view of this the Country Party has decided not to proceed with its amendments but to accept reluctantly what it feels is a poor deal which, in the opinion of the Country Party, is not in the best interests of the egg industry.

I consider that it is loaded too much in favour of the person who has exploited the industry over the years. This is what happened in the tobacco industry and the wheat industry. Those who had exploited the situation and caused problems were the ones who came off best. The Government is refusing to cut back the quota below 100,000 hens. This is wrong but the Minister has been successful in convincing the industry that this is the best way. I do not agree with what is proposed, nor does my party. However, the Government and the industry have reached agreement, and the parties have accepted the proposal.

The Egg Producers Association of Victoria is the only organization which does not agree with the proposal, and that body represents the big poultry farmers around the metropolitan area, those mentioned in the schedule as not being allowed to purchase quotas from outside the area, and in the view of the Country Party that is not in the best interests of the country egg producer. The responsibility for this Bill is placed on the industry itself and the Minister. The Minister considers that the principle is right although Country Party members have not much faith in it. We do not intend to take any further part in the discussions on the Bill but will allow it to proceed on the basis of the agreement.
The Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province).—As all honorable members know, the Labor Party has always been vitally concerned with all aspects of primary production, particularly the stabilization of primary industries. Unfortunately, honorable members have to accept the realities of the situation in that this Bill represents a compromise. Its introduction was long overdue and circumstances have changed, as they will continually change, but, in accordance with the tolerance and cooperative attitude which members of the Labor Party always take, we are prepared to agree to this compromise. At least it enables a measure to be introduced which does establish some basis for stabilization of egg production and which, contrary to the pessimistic attitude of Mr. Swinburne, can be amended from time to time.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE.—Mr. Kent will learn from bitter experience.

The Hon. D. E. KENT.—I have had some bitter experiences, myself. It is possible to have change, and even change of Governments because I have noticed in the newspapers today that things are going to change in 1973.

The Hon. D. E. KENT.—I was indicating the reasons why members of the Labor Party accept this compromise Bill. We feel it is legislation which will go some way towards meeting the desires of the industry and probably save some embarrassment throughout the areas represented by Mr. Grimwade and Mr. Granter.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE (Bendigo Province).—It is true that the poultry industry has found it somewhat difficult to reconcile the conflicting views held on this measure. It is even more difficult for those who represent an area which has been predominantly egg producing for many years perhaps to try to put forward the view of those people in the face of opposition of others who do not wish to understand.

This legislation is the result of considerable work on behalf of my colleague, Mr. Granter, and myself, and many other people who have been concerned with this industry. I say here and now that this is what the industry wants. I should like to read a telegram which I received last Thursday from Canberra addressed to me care of Parliament House, Melbourne, Victoria; it reads—

Following telegram sent at request of Federal Council to Premier all State Poultry Associations represented by Federal Council of Poultry Farmers Association of Australia including Victorian Farmers Union and Commercial Egg Producers Association in session Canberra today unanimous in urging your Government enact egg production control legislation before House stop Victorian Farmers Union and Commercial Egg Producers Association unanimous in support of three years average as only amendment to legislation of paramount importance stop Federal Council concerned other States acted on Victorian commitment to control production and respectfully request Victoria honour earlier pledge in Australian Agricultural Council Watkins.

Mr. Watkins is a well-known egg producer in Bendigo. He is respected for his views and attitude in the industry. That is one side of the question.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—That is true.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWADE.—I put forward the views of the Victorian Farmers Union and the Commercial Egg Producers Association which, so far as I am aware—certainly at the time when I received this telegram—represented the views of the industry. Since then I have received another telegram which I feel I should read from the Egg Producers Association of Victoria which has been alternatively or commonly known as the "Big ten". This telegram is the first communication that I have received from the association. Although it

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. NICOL).—Order! The subject under discussion is not the coming State elections, but the amendment proposed to clause 3 of the Bill. I shall be obliged if honorable members remember that.
claims to represent a certain number of people who own a large number of hens, it has not bothered to contact me previously. The telegram reads—

Possible amendment to the egg industry stabilization Act namely quotas to be established over three years and increasing no cut back exemption to 5,000 hens will have direct and disastrous financial repercussions to our 60 members representing over 1 million hens in Victoria stop we urge your support for the Act as drafted recognizing it to be a reasonable compromise for all sections of the Victorian egg industry stop

A Peto Secretary Egg Producers Association of Victoria.

He gives an address. Honorable members can understand the position in which I find myself, in that the industry representatives had indicated unequivocally that three years was the period they felt should be fixed.

I make it absolutely clear that I was prepared to stake my political life on this three years. I felt that this was very important. Why should Parliament pass legislation if an industry does not want it? Parliament should pass the legislation that an industry desires to help it. It is not our prerogative to turn an industry into a disastrous turmoil or to upset it to such an extent that it goes back into the oblivion that is facing the poultry farmer today. My colleague, who will speak later, and I feel so strongly about this that we are prepared to take drastic action.

The Minister of Agriculture has referred to the meetings when this matter was discussed and a compromise agreement reached. We have been told in no uncertain terms that if we persist in our attitude regarding the three-year term the legislation might be lost. Because we have received advice from persons whom I listen to and who have said that they need the legislation and are prepared to compromise and to accept a two-year term, I am prepared to do what they suggest. I am prepared to accept the two years as proposed by the Minister.

I should like to feel that my colleague and I have played a small part. The Minister has been placed in a most invidious position, as it were, of a judge between competing groups who want his attention and want to persuade him to adopt one course or another.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—That is an understatement, too.

The Hon. F. S. GRIMWAD.—I am sorry, but the Minister has shown the strength of character which honorable members have come to know and to love. Nevertheless, if this agreement had not been reached by the Minister, and the producers were not prepared to accept the situation, things might well have been different.

As it stands, agreements have been reached and Mr. Granter and I have agreed to forgo the amendments relating to minimum price, maximum price and various other modifications to which I alluded during the second-reading debate. The Minister has agreed that, provided that the Bill is accepted as it stands and with the Minister's amendment, it will go through. This will be part of the legislation of the State and I hope it will provide a footing for the poultry industry to establish itself.

I am terrified at the thought of the Bill not being passed because all sorts of problems could erupt within six months. It takes only six months for a day old chick to develop into a pullet which is laying eggs and causing problems of over-production of eggs. I am prepared to accept the situation in the knowledge that the Bill will be passed.

I regret that it has not been possible to achieve the other amendments that we should like to have proposed. I have made my position quite clear and I shall allow my colleague to speak for himself. I propose to support the Bill.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Bendigo Province).—As one who spoke in opposition to the clause during the second-reading debate, I reluctantly accept the compromise that has been reached.
The Hon. J. M. Tripovich.—Mr. Granter was kicked into line; in other words, by public demand.

The Hon. F. J. Granter.—Not at all. The commercial egg producers who are based in Bendigo and have a number of members situated throughout the State have been in constant touch with Mr. Grimwade, Mr. Swinburne and myself, and I suppose with Mr. Kent at times, as well as the Minister. They requested that we endeavour to obtain a three-year period and that a base quota of 3,000 hens be fixed with an upper limit of 50,000 hens. Unfortunately the Minister could not accept our other requests, but after a lot of discussion with a number of parties and organizations the honorable gentleman has accepted a two-year period. I trust this period will be in the interests of the small producer.

The private enterprise egg floors which are also situated in the Bendigo area have been most concerned because, as I said during the second-reading debate, the Castlemaine egg receiving depot has closed, the one at Maryborough is on the point of closing and I understand that the one at Shepparton has almost closed. This is the state of the industry in country areas as we know it, and it is not good.

I support everything that Mr. Swinburne has said on behalf of the Country Party. I hate saying it, but I did tell the Minister that I would have to support a Country Party amendment for a three-year period if the commercial egg producers and other organizations had not informed me that they did not want to lose the Bill and that they would accept the two-year period in the hope that it would assist the small producer. I received a telegram in the same terms as that which Mr. Grimwade has read from the producers to whom I referred during the second-reading debate as the “Big ten”. Apparently, more than ten producers are involved because 60 are referred to in the telegram. I apologize if I did them an injustice but apparently the organization is larger than I thought.

In view of the number of hens that members of the organization control, I suggest that they have grown large enough and should not be allowed to develop further so that the industry can be situated in the country and be a truly decentralized industry.

I make a plea to the Minister that if it is at all possible he might perhaps give some direction to the review committee so that the small producer may receive justice when he appears before the committee for an increase in his quota. This is the only way in which a small producer can grow. I trust that he will receive sympathetic consideration.

I join other honorable members who have spoken tonight in thanking the Minister for the consideration he has given to the plea by myself and other honorable members and from the industry over a number of years. I also thank the departmental officers—Dr. Wishart, Mr. Harris, Mr. White, and a number of others—who have listened to our arguments. They have not agreed with us at times but neither have I agreed with them. Nevertheless, we have a Bill which the industry wants enacted. The industry needed something because it was drifting almost into a nonentity, and into the hands of a few. I hope the Bill will retrieve the position of the industry as I knew it 40 years ago.

Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture).—Mr. Swinburne stated that he agreed with my thinking on the Bill. Undoubtedly, once a system of licensing, quotas and appeals is instituted an industry becomes closed up. I know that some of my friends will not agree with that statement.

In 1967 the industry was warned by the then Federal Minister for Primary Industry on behalf of all Ministers of Agriculture in Australia that unless the price factor was used to lessen the industry’s attractiveness, there would be over-production and turmoil.
The egg boards of Australia and the producers were also warned. I do not intend to be unfair to the egg boards but they are producer-controlled and have endeavoured to get the highest price that they could for their product. This has happened in many other fields as well. Having done that, the boards attracted into the industry large sums of capital until the industry reached the stage where it was said that some people were making from 20 per cent to 50 per cent on capital in one year. No one can tell me that it was not attractive to get into the industry and that is what has happened.

In fairness I should say that if some of the amendments proposed were carried into effect the larger producers would be ruined.

The Hon. I. A. Swinburne.—The ones who caused the problem.

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—They partially caused the problem, but not wholly. They did it legitimately. That they acted within the law cannot be denied. If the production of some of these people were cut by 50 per cent this year, many would go bankrupt.

The Hon. I. A. Swinburne.—In the tobacco industry they brought in the 50 per cent.

The Chairman (the Hon. G. J. Nicol).—Order! At the moment the Committee is discussing the egg industry, not the tobacco industry.

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—A number of them were engaged in beef and other production as well. At any rate, I do not want to debate that subject. Once one starts on a scheme of this kind one encounters nothing but turmoil. This industry has to be particularly careful, and I say this advisedly. At present, one third of the eggs consumed in this State are sold outside the egg board. It would not take very much to make the whole industry collapse under its own weight. It will have to be carefully handled.

The Hon. I. A. Swinburne.—The feed mill people will win in the end.

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—Mr. Swinburne is making that assertion. I was confronted with an ultimatum from our two friends in the corner, Mr. Grimwade and Mr. Granter, that they intended to support the Country Party’s amendment. The result of that would have been that an amended Bill would have gone to the Assembly. In fairness to all sections of the industry, I was not prepared to accept the amendment, and the industry has now reluctantly agreed to the compromise. I hope this legislation will succeed. Victoria was the last State in Australia to come into this scheme, and I make no apologies for that. We were put under pressure by the Commonwealth Government to come into it. It stated that, unless Victoria joined in, it was not prepared to help the industry dispose of 20,000 tons of pulp which was then in storage. The stage has now been reached when the industry is pretty evenly balanced as between production and total consumption. I hope the legislation will work, but if it does not nobody can ever say that I encouraged the industry to enter a scheme of licensing quotas, appeals and so on. However, the decision having been made, I think this is a fair Bill taking into consideration the conflict of interests in this industry.

The amendment was agreed to, and the clause, as amended, was adopted, as were clauses 4 to 11.

Clause 12, providing, inter alia—

(1) For the purposes of this Act—

(a) a Group I. poultry farmer is a poultry farmer who, alone or as a partner owns or leases a place and who during the relevant period and during the period of one year ending on the 7th day of December, 1972, submitted in respect of hens kept by him at that place at least 20 notices in writing pursuant to Regulation 4 of the regulations made under the Commonwealth Levy Collection Act for each such period and was liable to pay an amount of levy imposed by the Commonwealth Levy Act in respect of hens kept at that place and paid all such amounts for which he was liable:

Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in paragraph (a) of sub-clause (1), the words “such period” be omitted with the view of inserting the expression “of the two
years of the relevant period and for the period of one year ending on the seventh day of December, 1972”.

The amendment was agreed to, and the clause, as amended, was adopted, as were clauses 13 to 16.

Clause 17 was adopted with verbal amendments.

Clause 18, providing, inter alia—

(3) For the purpose of sub-section (2)—

(a) the formula, in the case of returns submitted by or on behalf of the poultry farmer on his own account is—

\[ x = \frac{a}{8} \]

(b) the formula, in the case of returns submitted by or on behalf of a partnership of which the poultry farmer was a member at the time of submission of the returns is—

\[ x = \frac{a}{b - \frac{1}{8}} \]

where—

"a" represents the number arrived at by adding together the numbers shown as the numbers of hens in respect of which the poultry farmer or the partnership of which he was a member was liable to pay an amount of levy imposed by the Commonwealth Levy Act in those eight returns where the numbers so shown are highest; and

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in paragraph (a) of sub-clause (3), the expression “\( x = \frac{a}{8} \)” be omitted with the view of inserting the expression “\( x = \frac{a}{2} \)”.

This amendment brings into the consideration of the basic quota the two highest points of production in each of the previous two years.

The amendment was agreed to.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in paragraph (b) of sub-clause (3), the expression “\( x = \frac{a}{b - \frac{1}{8}} \)” be omitted with the view of inserting the expression “\( x = b - \frac{1}{2} \)”.

The amendment was agreed to.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in sub-clause (3), the words “those eight returns where the numbers so shown are highest” be omitted with the view of inserting the words “the return in each year of the relevant period where the number shown is the highest for that year.”.

This amendment carries into effect the agreement which was reached in regard to the two years.

The amendment was agreed to, and the clause, as amended, was adopted, as were clauses 19 to 21.

Clause 22, providing, inter alia—

(1) Subject to this section the hen quota of a Group I. or Group II. poultry farmer in respect of the first licensing season shall be calculated to the nearest whole number in accordance with the formula—

Provided that in no case shall the hen quota of the poultry farmer (including his proportion of the hen quotas of any partnership of which he is a member) or the total of the hen quotas of the members of a partnership exceed 150,000:

Provided further that where the poultry farmer is a corporation within the meaning of the Companies Act 1961, in no case shall the total of the hen quotas of that corporation and of corporations that by reason of sub-section (5) of section 6 of that Act are deemed to be related to the first-mentioned corporation exceed 150,000.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in sub-clause (1), after the word “member” the words “and, where he is a director of any corporation, the hen quota of that corporation” be inserted.

The effect of this amendment is to tie the individual to the limitations on production which are contained in the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN (the Hon. G. J. Nicol).—Mr. Minister, I wonder whether the reference to “the hen quota” should not refer to the “female domesticated fowl of the genus gallus.”

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—If it is desired to make it more complicated, I shall be happy to report progress to ascertain whether that is necessary. It may be desirable to have the position clarified by the draftsman.
The CHAIRMAN.—May I suggest that the appropriate stage to do that would be following the transmission of the Bill to another place.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—I bow to your ruling, Mr. Chairman.

The amendment was agreed to.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in sub-clause (1), the expression “by reason of sub-section (5) of section 6 of that Act” be omitted.

The amendment was agreed to.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That the following sub-clause be inserted to follow sub-clause (1):—

( ) For the purposes of this Act a corporation is deemed to be related to another corporation—

(a) if it is deemed to be related to that other corporation by reason of sub-section (5) of section 6 of the Companies Act 1961; or

(b) if any director of that corporation is also a director of that other corporation.

This amendment tightens up the ceiling to which an individual can aggregate quotas.

The amendment was agreed to, as was a verbal amendment, and the clause, as amended, was adopted.

Clause 23, providing, inter alia—

(1) Subject to this section where in respect of any licensing season subsequent to the first licensing season the State Hen Quota is varied the hen quota of a Group I. or Group II. poultry farmer for the relevant licensing season shall be calculated to the nearest whole number in accordance with the formula—

Provided that in no case shall the hen quota of the poultry farmer (including his proportion of the hen quotas of any partnership of which he is a member) or the total of the hen quotas of the members of a partnership exceed 100,000 unless the relevant base quota or base quotas exceeded 100,000, in which case the total hen quota of the poultry farmer or the total of the hen quotas of the members of a partnership shall not exceed the relevant base quota or base quotas or 150,000 (whichever is the least):

Provided further that where the poultry farmer is a corporation within the meaning of the Companies Act 1961, in no case shall the total of the hen quotas of that corporation and of corporations that by reason of sub-section (5) of section 6 of that Act are to be deemed to be related to the first-mentioned corporation exceed 100,000 unless the total of the relevant base quotas exceeded 100,000 in which case the total hen quotas of all the corporations so related shall not exceed the total of the relevant base quotas or 150,000 (whichever is the least).

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in sub-clause (1), the expression “by reason of sub-section (5) of section 6 of that Act are to be” be omitted with the view of inserting the word “are”.

The amendment was agreed to, as was a consequential amendment, and the clause, as amended, was adopted, as was clause 24.

Clause 25—

Where the Governor in Council by Order published in the Government Gazette declares that the Review Committee is dissolved, the members of the Review Committee shall cease to hold office as such and the dissolution of the Review Committee shall be deemed to have been effected.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That the expression “25. Where the Governor in Council by Order published in the Government Gazette declares that the Review Committee is dissolved,” be omitted with the view of inserting the following expression:

“25. When pursuant to sub-section (4) of section 7 the Governor in Council declares that the Licensing Committee is dissolved he shall in like manner declare that the Review Committee is dissolved, and thereupon.”

This amendment is necessary because, as it was drafted, it appeared possible that the appeals committee could be wiped out while the quota committee was still in operation. Therefore, the amendment was suggested by the industry itself so that there should be no uncertainty that whilst the quota committee was operating there would always be an appeals committee.

The amendment was agreed to, and the clause, as amended, was adopted, as were clauses 26 to 30.

Clause 31, providing, inter alia—

(2) The Review Committee may increase the base quota notified to an applicant or determine that he be allocated a base quota where it is satisfied that—
(f) the base quota of the applicant would be increased if the reference in sub-section (2) of section 18 to the relevant period were a reference to a period of one year ended on the 29th day of June, 1972; or

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in paragraph (f) of sub-clause (2), the words “one year” be omitted with the view of inserting the words “two years.”

The amendment was agreed to and the clause, as amended, was adopted.

Clauses 32 to 34 were adopted with verbal amendments.

Clause 35, providing, inter alia—

(4) The Licensing Committee shall not approve an application under sub-section (1)—

(b) in so far as such an approval would increase the hen quota of a person (including his proportion of the hen quotas of any partnership of which he was a member), or the total of the hen quotas of the members of a partnership to more than 100,000; and

(c) where the poultry farmer is a corporation within the meaning of the Companies Act 1961 in so far as the total of the hen quotas of that corporation and of corporations that by reason of sub-section (5) of section 6 of that Act are deemed to be related to the first-mentioned corporation would exceed 100,000.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in paragraph (b) of sub-clause (4), after the word “member” the words “and the hen quota of any corporation of which he is a director” be inserted.

As I indicated earlier, this amendment puts a ceiling on the quotas which a director or a corporation may aggregate.

The amendment was agreed to.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That, in paragraph (c) of sub-clause (4), the expression “by reason of sub-section (5) of section 6 of that Act” be omitted.

The amendment was agreed to, as were verbal amendments, and the clause, as amended, was adopted, as were clauses 36 and 37.

Clause 38 was verbally amended and, as amended, was adopted, as were clauses 39 to 44.

Clause 45 was verbally amended and, as amended, was adopted, as were the remaining clauses.

Schedule.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—In concluding this debate, I pay tribute to the officers in the Department of Agriculture, to Mr. Young and Mr. Harris, who, together with the director of Agriculture, Dr. Wishart and myself, have put many hours into this Bill in consultation with representatives of the industry. I thank the industry for its co-operation in creating a situation where this Bill will go to another place with the support of all sections of the industry. Some members were reluctant to agree to it and some would have liked to adopt different wording and different principles, but we closely studied the legislation in every other State of Australia and arrived at a compromise. I am sure Mr. Kent, who has given some thought to this matter, will agree that, considering all the influences in the industry, the adoption of the Bill as amended represents a fair compromise between the conflicting interests involved. I hope it will work.

I thank the industry again for its co-operation, and I thank the departmental officers and the Parliamentary Counsel, Mr. Keuneman, who has shown patience and skill in producing a Bill which I hope will work. From now on nobody can enter the industry unless he can buy a quota, because the industry is closed. This occurred in the tobacco and wheat industries previously.

Young people come into the office of the Department of Agriculture almost daily wanting to enter the closed industries, but they cannot do so. Recently the poultry course which has been held at the Burnley college every year had to be abandoned. Sometimes up to 60 were enrolled for that course, but this year there were only eight applicants.
Consequently the course has been discontinued.

I hope the consumers and the producers will be satisfied that what is proposed in the Bill is the right course to be adopted. Time will tell.

The schedule was agreed to.

The Bill was reported to the House with amendments, and the amendments were adopted.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a third time.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province).—I take this opportunity of congratulating the Minister of Agriculture on a very important feat which he has carried out today in having passed two important Bills affecting primary industries in this State. For many years the Minister has battled to have different types of Bills passed through this House. As he leaves the Chamber this evening, in spite of the words he said at the conclusion of the debate, he may feel that he has done a good day's work. The Country Party congratulates him on steering the Abattoir and Meat Inspection Bill and the Egg Industry Stabilization Bill through this House.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read a third time.

MARGARINE BILL.

The debate (adjourned from March 21) on the motion of Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province).—In dealing with the previous measure, the Minister referred to the politics of the poultry industry. One could discuss for hours the politics of the margarine industry and the red herrings that are drawn across the trail to direct attention to matters to suit the material interests of people involved. On 6th February, for the first time since 1940, the Australian Agricultural Council decided to amend Victoria's share of the quota restrictions for margarine. From 1940 to 1973 is a period of 33 years, which is definitely too long. The margarine produced in 1940, or even as late as 1955, was a vastly different product from that produced in 1972. Marrickville Holdings Ltd. was able to make such a sophisticated product that it was suitable for putting on the table at Parliament House, and some honorable members could not tell the difference between it and butter.

Margarine was put on the dining table of 50 per cent of the homes in Victoria. Some people ate margarine for dietary reasons, and when it was placed under quota in 1940 the principle was that margarine manufactured for cooking purposes had to contain at least 90 per cent animal fat. That legislation, which has been in force since 1940, now allows companies with suitable factories to manufacture a palatable table margarine with 89 per cent or less animal fat content. The advice of doctors to reduce the intake of animal fats and to substitute vegetable oils was lost because these people are manufacturing margarine fortified with vitamin A and B and the margarine has the same nutritive value as butter, but it has no effect on the dietary conditions associated with the use of animal fats and their effects on cholesterol in the blood stream.

Members of the Labor Party are delighted that margarine quotas are to be increased. We want the increase to go into the production of polyunsaturated margarine for table use rather than cooking margarine which is used freely for table consumption. In Victoria margarine is manufactured by two companies. The first is Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. which previously had a quota of 889 tons and now has a quota of 2,990 tons, an increase of 2,001 tons. The other company manufacturing margarine is Nuttelex Food Products Pty. Ltd., a much smaller company, which originally had a quota of 297 tons but now has a quota of 410 tons. I understand that through negotiation it has been possible for the Minister to decrease
the quota of Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. and increase that of the Nuttelex company to at least 650 tons. We do not object to that because Nuttelex Food Products Pty. Ltd., which has manufactured cooking margarine, over the past three years has produced wholly polyunsaturated margarine. It is our desire that the increased quota should be devoted not to animal fats but to products containing vegetable oils, and I ask the Minister to advise honorable members concerning this matter during the Committee stage.

I hope the increase of 2,000 tons in the quota for margarine will not all go to Daffodil and none to Meadowlea, which manufactures polyunsaturated products. Both are manufactured by the same company. The same problem will arise in the other States of the Commonwealth, because, overall, there is to be an increase of 37·8 per cent in the production of margarine in Australia.

The Minister has had to undertake difficult negotiations in this matter; as a matter of fact, I wrote to the South Australian Labor Minister of Agriculture and congratulated him on achieving this success, because nobody could doubt that a situation in which a person is told by his doctor to avoid butter and to eat only polyunsaturated margarine, and then finds that he cannot purchase it because of the restriction on its production, is wholly unsatisfactory and undesirable.

I am pleased that dairy farmers are considering the production of a blended product referred to as butterine, because just as occurred in the processing of citrus fruits for fruit juice and the blending of wool with other fibres, this blending of butter and margarine will lead to a solution of the problem with which dairy farmers are confronted. After all, butter is just another spread, just as milk is just another fluid. I shall be pleased if at the Committee stage the Minister will inform the House whether the increased quota will be allotted principally to manufacturers of animal fat margarine or the manufacturers of vegetable oil margarine.

When the original legislation to control the manufacture of margarine was introduced by the late Mr. Martin, an honorary Minister, and by the late Mr. Ned Hogan, the then Minister of Agriculture, it was for the purpose of protecting the creaming industry which was being threatened by the importation of coconut oil from New Guinea and palm oil from Malaya. Those commodities were being used in the production of margarine which had a high fat content. If the increased quota which is now proposed will benefit imports of that kind instead of benefiting the producers of Australian grown oil seeds such as safflower and sunflower, my party is not attracted to the measure.

I am certain that the Government has considered this matter. Unilever——

The Hon. W. V. Houghton.—Is that a small Australian company?

The Hon. J. M. Tripovich.—No, it is one of the biggest manufacturers of margarine, soap detergents and soap powders in the world. The two manufacturers of vegetable oil margarine in this State are Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. and Nuttelex Food Products Pty. Ltd.

The Hon. W. V. Houghton.—What percentage of the Victorian quota is allotted to them?

The Hon. J. M. Tripovich.—Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. has a quota of 899 tons which is being increased to 2,990 tons; Nuttelex has a quota of 297 tons, which is being increased to 410 tons. I understand that the Minister intends to take away 200 tons of the new quota of Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. and allocate it to Nuttelex, which will then have a quota of more than 600 tons. Unilever Australia Pty. Ltd. has a quota of 1,002 tons in New South Wales and that is being increased to 1,296 tons. It had a quota of 528 tons in South Australia, and that is being increased to 700 tons.

The Hon. J. M. Tripovich.
Its quota in Western Australia was 301 tons, and that is being increased to 527 tons.

Unilever produces a polyunsaturated product called "Flora"; Marrickville Margarine Pty. Ltd. produces a similar product called "Miracle"; Provincial Traders Pty. Ltd. produces "Dixie Bell"; and Nuttelex produces "Nutelex", which is a wholly polyunsaturated product manufactured in Victoria. Members of the Labor Party support the Bill, but we wish to hear what the Minister has to say concerning the way in which the quota increase is to be distributed as between cooking margarine and polyunsaturated margarine. We trust that it will not be distributed in such a way as to benefit oils which are imported duty free, but will be distributed in such a way that it will help Australian producers.

My party is of the view that there are many farmers in fringe areas who would be better off growing oil seed than persisting in dairy production.

The Hon. R. W. MAY (Gippsland Province).—I congratulate the Minister of Agriculture on the approach he has adopted to this proposed legislation. Many people look forward only to short-term benefits and ignore benefits in the long term. It is the long-term benefits that the Government has had regard to in introducing this measure.

Mr. Tripovich has ably outlined the history of this legislation which commenced on 13th July, 1942, and which was designed to restrict the manufacture and sale of table margarine. At that time the Minister, who was a member of the Country Party, said that the dairying industry was so important that anything which seriously affected its progress must have a serious impact on the economy of the whole country. I suggest that his opinion is equally true today, especially when one considers the tremendous investment and the amount of employment in the industry.

Under the provisions of this measure the margarine quota has been increased from 1,196 tons to 3,400 tons, but the increased quota is restricted to those companies which hold current manufacturing licences as at 30th June of this year.

Much can be and has been said about the effect and desirability of having increased margarine production, and conflicting views have been advanced by eminent authorities on the subject concerning its value to the community. In fact, the authorities are so eminent that one wonders how there can be a conflict of opinion.

The total increase in the margarine quota in Australia is 37.8 per cent. This decision was arrived at by the Australian Agricultural Council, which is composed of representatives of all States and the Commonwealth. Probably the increase in quotas is more dramatic in Victoria than in the other States. The Victorian quota has increased from 1,196 tons to 3,400 tons—approximately 200 per cent. I hope that in the long term, the measured quota will not have an adverse effect on the dairying industry which has done much for country areas and the national income.

Clause 2 limits the increased manufacture to those companies which hold a current licence for the period ending 30th June, 1973. I hope it will not make any great inroads into the butter industry. It is recognized that, in certain places, there is a demand for margarine. In the long term I hope that the dairying industry will not suffer, that employment in rural areas will not be affected, and that the national income will not be diminished.

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province).—This Bill is a step forward by the Victorian Government, and its general acceptance by the dairying industry is a sign that it has at last faced the realities of life and given up the obsession that it has had for years that the great threat
to the dairying industry was margarine, and that its economic stability was dependent to a large degree on the limited use of margarine in Victoria.

There has been an acceptance not only that the public has a right of choice but that the future of the dairying industry is dependent on many other factors of greater significance than the suppression of table margarine to the Victorian public. The spokesmen for the dairying industry in Victoria accept that this step is inevitable and that it will not have a detrimental effect on the industry. It could be said that the opposition of the dairying industry originated in its obsession of the effect of margarine on butter and that it has not taken adequate steps to develop new products and seek new markets.

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—The dairying industry has diversified quite a deal.

The Hon. D. E. Kent.—I do not say that there has not been diversification, but there has been the tendency for the primary producers to place reliance on the sale of butter on the home market and on the quota which previously existed in the United Kingdom. In recent years a welcome change of outlook has developed because the industry has accepted the necessity of seeking new markets and developing new products. It is no longer placing reliance on rigid margarine quotas. I congratulate the industry for accepting the realities of competition from margarine, which has assisted it in marketing other products. There has been a misconception of what constitutes table margarine. It is a product which contains less than 90 per cent of animal fat.

The general public and the dairy farmers believe that what has been made available to the public is largely polyunsaturated margarine manufactured from Australian-grown vegetable oil. It is on that basis that the opposition to the increase in table margarine quotas has subsided amongst dairy farmers and that the demands of the public for increased quotas for margarine have increased. They believe that they have been denied opportunities of obtaining quantities of non-animal fat foods which they believe are essential for their health.

Members of my party support this Bill; they believe it does not do what the public generally believes it is doing, that is, making available larger quantities of polyunsaturated margarine. It is to be hoped that with the development of the oil seed industry in Australia, which is a primary industry, more attention will be paid to a proper definition and perhaps a more adequate labelling of margarine so that the public will know exactly what they are getting. This Bill had to come. It is widely accepted by the public and I congratulate the Minister for having taken this action.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time and committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (Limitation of amount of table margarine to be manufactured).

Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture).—This could not be a much shorter Bill; if it was, only the title would be left. It means a good deal.

The Hon. R. W. May.—Can the Minister indicate by how much the increased margarine quota will reduce the butter consumption?

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—It could be said that the effect of the increased quota on butter would be approximately pound for pound if the quota increased from 16,000 tons to 22,000 tons. It is almost inevitable that it would affect the butter industry to that extent. I hope Mr. May has not asked a loaded question and if he thinks that I have negotiated this compromise in such a way as to be a
party to something being taken off the dairying industry, I do not appreciate the question.

The Hon. R. W. May.—No, I do not. I congratulated the Minister for his stand.

The Hon. J. M. Tripovich.—Has the Leader of the House looked at the population increase since the quota was originally fixed?

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—Mr. Tripovich has been long enough in politics to know that there are some things one can do and some things one cannot do. He is a pretty shrewd politician. The increased demand for margarine in Victoria reaches a climax for a period towards the end of the quota year when there is a shortage of polyunsaturated margarine. I have a grave suspicion, as have many other people, that this shortage is engineered. I need not say any more about that.

Towards the end of the quota year, the Government is blamed for this, that and the other. The allegations may or may not be right. Victoria has not altered its quota since it was established in 1940, but every other state in Australia has increased quotas. More margarine than the quota permitted was produced when New South Wales went from about 2,000 tons to 9,000 tons. I do not intend to go over the history of this.

Everybody connected with the dairying and the margarine industries knows what has gone on over the years. During the last meeting of the Australian Agricultural Council, Victoria was confronted with the position in which the new Minister for Primary Industry, Senator Wriedt, the new Minister for the Northern Territory, Mr. Enderby and the six State Ministers were deadlocked for many hours before agreement was reached on what the increase should be.

The Hon. S. R. McDonald.—Has the Minister for the Northern Territory always been entitled to take part in discussions at the meetings of the Australian Agricultural Council?

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—Yes. Mr. Hunt and Mr. Barnes have been there. Because of his administration of the Northern Territory, it has been recognized that the Minister for the Northern Territory should form part of the Australian Agricultural Council. I believe this is a sensible provision. Victoria was confronted with a demand for an increase, and when discussions take place one must ask: How much is the increase to be; who is to get the increase; and should there be a complete abolition of the quotas? These were the thoughts being debated.

It is true that the conference reached general agreement that the over-all increase in the quota of table margarine in Australia would be 37·8 per cent, involving an additional 6,000 tons being put on to the Australian market. In other words, 6,000 tons would be added to the present quota of 16,000 tons. That percentage was to apply only to the companies that were producing margarine at this time. When this is carried into effect, it will be seen that if the 37·8 per cent were added to the Victorian figures of 1,196 tons it would be a small increase for a fairly substantial consuming State. In order that Victoria might get more, agreement was reached that its quota would increase from 1,196 tons to 3,400 tons. The companies which would receive this increase in Victoria were Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. and Nuttelex Food Products Pty. Ltd., with which Mr. McNally is associated. Because of the increase to Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. it was agreed that that company could transfer from its New South Wales quota, or its quotas around Australia, the additional amount to make up the 3,400 tons in this State. Nuttelex Food Products Pty. Ltd. and Sunburst have a quota here of 298 tons. With the 37·8 per cent increase, it will be 410 tons.

Because Nuttelex Food Products Pty. Ltd. was a small manufacturer and Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. was a large manufacturer in Australia,
I made a plea that, even though the 37.8 per cent was to apply to each of the producing companies, I should be allowed to negotiate in this State, on behalf of Nuttelex Food Products Pty. Ltd., to transfer something from Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. The end result was that I was able to arrange for an increase in the quota of Nuttelex Food Products Pty. Ltd. from 298 tons to 650 tons. Nuttelex Food Products Pty. Ltd. is not very happy about this because it would like more, and Vegetable Oils Pty. Ltd. is not happy because it has lost something. But that is the course which has been adopted.

I believe that, with the production of this additional quantity of margarine for this quota year, there will be no shortage of the polyunsaturated product in this State. I come back to the question which Mr. Tripovich asked; there is some flexibility within these companies. They can produce polyunsaturated margarine or the other type of table margarine which must have less than 90 per cent of animal fats.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—Mr. Tripovich can say that from one end of Gippsland to the other, and from one end of the Western District to the other.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH.—It might not be feasible politically, but I point out that, at one time, the wool industry said that there was no substitute for wool, but the fibre makers showed that there was.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—Primary industry will have its ups and downs. Certainly, wool has had them but, at the moment, wool is up, and all Australia hopes that it will stay up. Prior to the second world war, 72 per cent of the milk production of Victoria went into butter. At present, the percentage is between 56 and 58. That is a big drop and there must be a further drop. The industry must be mindful of what is happening in the world and must diversify its production. It is endeavouring to do that. The dairying industry in this State is so far ahead of that in any other State that it is just nobody's business.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH.—But it has every advantage in this State, the climate and so on.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—Yes, and the Government as well. The increased quotas for margarine have been brought about by agreement between all States and the Commonwealth. I believe the agreement will meet the needs of the next few years. There is something I must say. One hears on the television and reads in various propaganda media about the suggested relationship between butter and coronary trouble. However, the medical profession has vast differences of opinion on this. It could be that this is one of the many factors connected with coronary troubles. I have suffered them and I have been treated by two specialists in Melbourne and two in Sydney, and also by specialists in London. When I put this question to them they said, "Too much butter, no, too much of anything, no. A balanced diet is
required.” They said that other factors could be involved, quite apart from this.

The Hon. I. A. SWINBURNES. It is a good selling point for margarine!

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER. Professor Yudkin, who came here from London, is one of the foremost authorities on diet in the world.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH. He was brought here by the butter industry.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER. If anyone delves too deeply into what is said on behalf of margarine, he might obtain some very strange information. Professor Yudkin said that, in his opinion, sugar could be a damaging factor. I say no more about that except that one is in a peculiar world when one argues on the causes of coronary trouble. It is eighteen years since I had it. I have eaten butter ever since and I think I am better off than many others.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Templestowe Province). The dairying industry in Victoria owes a debt of gratitude to the Minister of Agriculture and his predecessors. When margarine quotas were originally introduced, Victoria had 27 per cent of the total quota for Australia because it had 27 per cent of the population. Victoria still has 27 per cent of the population but only 15 per cent of the total quota. The dairying industry is extremely important and the community disruption which would follow any upset in the industry would be considerable; there would be effects on decentralized industries and the economy of country towns.

Three questions are unanswered and they will probably remain unanswered. Has the dairying industry in fact been protected, in view of section 92 of the Australian Constitution? How much of the additional quota will be applied to polyunsaturated margarine? In any case, is polyunsaturated margarine injurious to health?

The Hon. R. W. MAY (Gippsland Province). The Committee is indebted to the Minister for his exposition of the situation. I have not been actively engaged in the dairying industry for some time but I am quite confident that the Minister is conscious of the fact that, although a farmer may have a milk contract, he will not be immune from the effects of an increase in the production of margarine.

It is a matter of the total involvement of the milk industry. Whilst we produce milk, there will be a certain amount of butter on our hands. The industry has not reached the stage where it can produce milk without having some converted to butter. This is brought about by a number of factors. One is that certain areas of dairy land are not readily accessible for milk transport. Another is that there is a residue of butter fat from some milk. Because of factors such as these, any increase in the margarine quota must displace some butter which is a vital part of the dairying industry even though it is only a by-product.

As Mr. Houghton has said, anything which affects the dairying industry will have far-reaching effects on decentralization and the economy of country towns. I greatly appreciate the thinking of the Minister and the Committee is indebted to him for his explanation of the situation. I am sure that the dairying industry appreciates the stand of the Minister and his advisers, over the years, and their concern for its well-being.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province). I asked the Minister for an explanation of certain points and he was kind enough to give one. I thank him for the information he has provided. I remind the Committee that this is the first time that the margarine quota has been increased since it was introduced in 1940. It was then supported by the Labor Party and Mr. Cain, the late Leader of the Labor Party and Premier who, in another place, said exactly what has been said here tonight. During the years of the Labor Government, the quota was
never increased. This is a tribute to the Labor Party's recognition of the value of the dairying industry. There is no argument about that value and I want honorable members to be clear that I am not arguing against the industry in any way at all. I am merely giving voice to thoughts I have had for some time. Victoria has a flourishing dairying industry because of its climatic conditions which are different from those of Queensland and Western Australia, except in the southern areas of Western Australia. It is a vital industry of great importance.

The national quota for margarine has been increased on the basis of population increase. If in the case of the egg industry it is argued that markets should be allowed to find their own value, some consideration must be paid to similar arguments as applied to the dairying industry. I do not want to wipe out the dairying industry. I was reared in it and at one stage we hand milked 128 cows. Butter is another spread which can be improved and possibly popularized in some form of mix. I am not suggesting butterine. With additives milk can be made more attractive to children. Children can be encouraged to go to the refrigerator and get a bottle of flavoured milk instead of a bottle of coke. The industry must examine these matters. I am grateful to the Minister for his explanation and I commend his own arguments to him as they apply to marketing in the egg industry.

The Hon. H. R. WARD (South-Eastern Province).—The first margarine quota was introduced approximately 33 years ago. My observation of the dairying industry in West Gippsland is that it is now geared to accept increases in the margarine quota. The industry is going through a substantial revolution. Today many butter factories and milk-producing institutions come under the one banner. As a result of expertise in searching for its own markets, the industry will be able to stand the increased quotas of margarine. The time is right to increase the quotas.

The people who believe they should eat margarine should be catered for. I do not eat margarine but other people do. This group of people are under virtually two controlling interests to help lift the industry.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH.—Warragul has as much margarine as butter.

The Hon. H. R. WARD.—This is probably correct. The extension of the quota system is occurring at the right time. People will accept margarine because of its presentation and the efforts of the industry will result in increased sales.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—I am mindful of my defence of quotas for margarine on behalf of the dairying industry. This is something which I inherited. I did not hatch it. The Government is mindful of what the dairying industry means to the State. Dozens of towns depend on the welfare of the dairying industry. Not many people in this day and age would agree if the quota system was being introduced for the first time. I do not like restrictions but the quota system was introduced for a purpose and it is being administered to protect a vast industry in Victoria, on which many towns depend. The industry is mindful that as soon as possible it must diversify so that it is not so dependent on butter. The initiative displayed in Victoria is good. However, there are moves in the industry at present to restrict it by licence and allow nobody to enter it. I doubt whether that is good. The industry in New Zealand has appointed approximately 50 salesmen who are going out into the world and will capture our markets if we are not careful.

Victoria is far ahead of any other State in the Commonwealth in the efficiency of its dairying industry. If the industry retains its initiative and does not turn inward it will remain a great industry, but if it turns inward it will become almost a closed industry and overseas markets could be lost.
The Hon. J. M. Tripovich.—It is very hard to get into the dairying industry at present. One needs a lot of capital.

Sir Gilbert Chandler.—Yes, but at this stage it is not a closed industry and a licence is not required. A licence is obtained by right except for milking shed standards. I commend the measure.

The clause was agreed to.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

Education Department: Fawkner High School—Environment Protection Authority: Fees Payable by Local Authorities.

Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture).—By leave, I move—

That the Council, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday next.

The motion was agreed to.

Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture).—I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

The Hon. J. M. Tripovich (Doutta Galla Province).—Last night during debate I interjected on the subject of schools which are short of teachers and said that the Government should give one answer to a question raised by Mr. Mitchell. The answer is that every school is short of teachers. I want to convey to the Government that the answers that have been supplied to my confrère, Mr. Eddy, about the shortage of teachers are not satisfactory. I have not been inundated but I have been contacted by many worried parents about the shortage of teachers at the Fawkner High School. Tuition is not available to the children in the subjects which will mean so much to them in future years, such as mathematics and science, and it is already March. I want the Government to see what can be done for schools in the Doutta Galla Province. I notice a similar suggestion to one I made some five years ago was reported in a newspaper. It was that the Government could perhaps offer an additional $500 a year for teachers to go to schools in the western and northern suburbs. Some incentive is needed to attract qualified teachers to these suburbs. We want the Government to take some action or explain to the parents that nothing can be done.

The Hon. C. A. Mitchell (Western Province).—I draw the attention of the Government to two letters, one from the Horsham Sewerage Authority and one from the City of Horsham. The letter from the Horsham Sewerage Authority states—

It has been ascertained that this authority will be required to pay to the Environment Protection Authority a licensing fee of $500 per annum in respect of a point of discharge for wastes into any water from a sewerage treatment works.

The authority believes that it is totally wrong that one level of Government should impose a tax on another level of Government. The State Government states that it wants to assist local government but it is taxing local government in such ways. This is totally wrong and I should like the Minister to clearly indicate what is intended, because when the Bill was before the House I did not understand that the Environment Protection Authority would be another one to levy taxes on local government. Local government is being hit all the time. Is this the policy of the Government or is it prepared to act under the legislation and relieve local government from this tax?

Sir Gilbert Chandler (Minister of Agriculture).—In answer to the points that have been raised by Mr. Tripovich and Mr. Mitchell, if the honourable members will provide me with a draft of what they have stated, I shall investigate the matters.

The Hon. J. M. Tripovich.—Mr. Eddy has asked a question on each day that the House has been meeting regarding the shortage of teachers. I am aware of the difficulties of the Minister.
Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—Will Mr. Tripovich accompany me to discuss the matter with the Minister of Education?

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH.—I will be seeing the Minister tomorrow at 3 p.m.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—Apparently at present no further responsibility rests on me.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH.—No.

Sir GILBERT CHANDLER.—If Mr. Mitchell will provide me with a draft of what he has stated, I shall take the matter up with the Minister for Conservation.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.44 p.m., until Tuesday, April 3.

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Legislative Assembly.


The Speaker (Sir Vernon Christie) took the chair at 2.34 p.m., and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

The following answers to questions on notice were circulated:

PRISONS DIVISION.

CLASSIFICATION OF PRISONERS.

(Question No. 898)

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East) asked the Minister for Social Welfare—

1. What changes, if any, have been made in the system of prisoner classification since 1962?

2. Whether any steps are currently being taken, or are contemplated, to modify the system of prisoner classification in the light of modern penological theory and practice?

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Social Welfare).—The answer is—

1. The system as such has not changed, nor would I expect it to, in so far as it provides the study and understanding of prisoners to determine what form of treatment is best suited to their needs, potential and general interests.

2. Yes. The various forms of treatment open to the classification committee are already in course of being widened to provide for periodic detention, weekend imprisonment and work release. These and other modern practices are presently being studied by the Deputy Director of Prisons who is visiting New Zealand, the United States, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands for the purpose.

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YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS.

GRANTS.

(Question No. 1123)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation—

1. What grants are available to scout groups for building purposes and what are the conditions attaching to such grants?

2. What other organizations are eligible for similar grants?

3. What grants have been made to each scout group in the electoral district of Greensborough in 1971-72 and in this financial year to date?

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation).—The answer is—

1. As scout groups are recognized youth organizations they are entitled to apply for building grants. Building grants are made on the condition that the funds provided are spent on the youth project stated in the application.

2. Building and maintenance grants are available for all youth groups, youth clubs, associations or organizations.

3. The undermentioned scout groups received grants in 1971-72.—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scout group</th>
<th>Amount of grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Lower Plenty scout group</td>
<td>200 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Rosanna scout group</td>
<td>1,000 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Watsonia scout group</td>
<td>1,000 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,200</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No grants have been made to scout groups in this electorate so far this financial year. Applications from 2nd Greensborough scout group and 1st Greenhills scout group for building grants are currently being considered.
YOUTH WELFARE DIVISION.

INJURIES TO YOUTH AT MALMSBURY TRAINING CENTRE.

(Question No. 1127)

Mr. JONES (Melbourne) asked the Minister for Social Welfare—

1. If he will lay on the table of the Library the file relating to injuries sustained by Andrew Vassos at the Malmsbury Youth Training Centre on 17th December, 1972?

2. Who was in charge of the prisoners at the time of the accident?

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Social Welfare).—The answer is—

1. No, but the following is a summary of a detailed report of the incident:

On Sunday, 17th December, 1972, youth trainee Andrew Vassos sustained a fractured femur and lacerations to his arms and back in an accident which occurred in the course of a hike during which trainees participated in various outdoor activities including swimming and rock climbing.

Some weeks earlier, a group out hiking had found a tree to which a rope had been attached by someone not from the centre, at the head of a gorge. On 17th December, 1972, some of the trainees, despite warnings not to do so, swung on the rope out over the gorge. The accepted method of using the rope was to sit on a large knot at its end and grasp the rope overhead. Andrew Vassos gripped the rope too low and was unable to place his legs around it. In his attempt to raise himself higher on the rope, Vassos lost his grip and fell into the gorge below. He was quickly rescued and transported to hospital. The rope was removed and instructions issued forbidding any similar activity in future.

2. Two departmental youth officers were in charge of the party at the time of the accident.

TRANSPORT AUTHORITIES.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: APPRENTICES.

(Question No. 1144)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Transport—

1. What workers compensation or accident insurance coverage, sick pay entitlements and long service leave, respectively, are available to employees of—(a) the Railway Department; and (b) the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board?

2. How many apprentices were appointed by—(a) the Railway Department; and (b) the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board during the past twelve months, indicating the number in each trade?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—The answer is—

1. (a) Victorian Railways.

(i) Workers compensation or accident insurance coverage.

Full pay is paid in all instances where liability under the provisions of the Workers Compensation Act has been admitted, except—

(a) In journey and recess cases.

(b) Where the worker's own negligence contributed to his injury.

(c) Where there is a difference of medical opinion as to the worker's fitness to perform some type of duty.

(d) Where common law proceedings have been instituted by the worker.

In the above four instances, payment as prescribed in the Workers Compensation Act is made except that, in categories (a) and (d) above, staff may, if they so desire, have this payment built up to full pay as a debit to full sick pay credits.

(ii) Sick pay entitlement.

On the completion of three month's service, sick leave credits of one and a half days on full pay and one and a half days on half pay are granted, with a further half day on full pay and half day on half pay for each additional completed month of service.

On completion of two years' service an additional credit of twelve days on full pay and twelve days on half pay is given, and thereafter at the completion of each subsequent year a further eight days on full pay and eight days on half pay is credited.

After two years of service, credits of half days may be converted to half the number of full days, and all credits not granted as sick leave are fully cumulative to the end of an employee's period of service, when they lapse.

(iii) Long service leave entitlement.

A grant of long service leave becomes due on the completion of fifteen years' railway service as follows:

On completion of fifteen years railway service—19·5 weeks.

On completion of each subsequent five years—6·5 weeks.

(b) Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board.

(i) Workers Compensation.

In addition to the statutory payments provided by the Workers Compensation Act, for which the board is insured with the State Accident Insurance Office, employees of the board with over twelve months' service have their pay made up to their normal rate whilst receiving workers compensation.
Employees with less than twelve months' service are paid half the difference between their workers compensation payments and their normal rate of pay.

These additional payments are limited to a maximum period of twelve months in respect of any one accident.

(ii) Sick pay entitlements.

Daily paid employees
Eight days per annum fully cumulative.

Official and clerical
Two weeks on full pay and two weeks on half pay per annum.

Junior officers
Four weeks on full pay and four weeks on half pay per annum.

Other officers
Four weeks on full pay and four weeks on half pay per annum.

One-half of the full pay portion of the above entitlement is cumulative.

(iii) Long service leave.

All employees are entitled to nineteen and one-half weeks' long service leave after fifteen years' continuous service with a further six and one-half weeks' leave after each subsequent five years' service.

2. Apprentices appointed during the past twelve months—

(a) Victorian Railways.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boilermaker</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car and wagon builder</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compositor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coppersmith</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical fitter</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical mechanic</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitter and turner</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letterpress machinist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithographic machinist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor mechanic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moulder</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone technician</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinsmith and sheetmetal worker</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upholsterer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watchmaker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of apprentices appointed in 1970-71: 150

(b) Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade classification</th>
<th>Number appointed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electrical fitting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradesman painter</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitting and turning</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boilermaker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor mechanic</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodymaker</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical mechanic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mr. LIND (Dandenong) asked the Minister of Transport—

1. What amount was spent on repairs and renovations at the Dandenong railway station during the financial years 1969-70, 1970-71 and 1971-72 and what is the estimated cost of any work currently in hand, specifying which projects have been undertaken by railway employees and which have been let to outside contractors?

2. What is the status of the station?

3. What is the classification of the stationmaster and what staff he controls?

4. Whether it is proposed to rebuild the station; if so, when?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—The answer is—

1. The amounts spent on repairs and renovations at Dandenong railway station during the last three financial years were—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>$1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>$17,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Railway employees are at present engaged on the following works:

(i) alterations to the station buildings;
(ii) platform extensions to accommodate eight carriage trains;
(iii) a security compound and servicing area for cranes and forklifts;
(iv) painting of the station buildings.

It is estimated that $30,000 will be spent on the above works during the present financial year.

The only work carried out by an outside contractor was the excavation for the platform extensions.

2. Open for all passenger, parcels, goods and livestock traffic.

3. Classification of the stationmaster is class 1. He controls the following staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant stationmasters</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcels assistants</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station assistants</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signal assistants</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior station assistants</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading shunters</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shunters</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yard assistants</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number taker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods foreman</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods checker</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stowers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods truckers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fork lift drivers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile crane driver</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signalmen</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban guards</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. The Victorian Railways plan, within the next two years, to replace the existing facilities on the island platform with a new booking office and shelter. It is also planned to construct substantial modal interchange facilities at this station.

EXTENSION OF SERVICE BEYOND ALTONA.

(Question No. 1161)

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Minister of Transport—

Whether it is proposed to ultimately extend the rail service beyond the Altona station to Maidstone Street, Altona and to Laverton; if so, what are the proposed target dates for such works?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—The answer is—

The 1965 Melbourne Transportation Plan recommended the extension of the rail service beyond the Altona station to Westona. This work will commence as soon as funds can be made available. Additional services to Laverton will be provided by extension of electrification from Newport to Werribee and additional tracks between Newport and Melbourne.

MOTOR VEHICLES.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING SIZE.

(Question No. 1153)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Transport—

Whether it is proposed to alter the regulations controlling commercial motor vehicles for the purpose of allowing longer vehicles, wider vehicles and heavier vehicles and loads, respectively; if so, what alterations are proposed in each case, and what is the reason for such alterations?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—The answer is—

I am informed by the Country Roads Board, the authority concerned with the dimensions of vehicles—

(a) Length: An increase in the permissible length of articulated vehicles from 47 feet to 50 feet is at present being considered subject to certain conditions regarding dimensions of the vehicles. The increased length would permit the vehicle to carry one 40-ft. or two 20-ft. containers and give other general advantages to the transport industry.

(b) Width: No increase is proposed.

(c) Weight: The most economic permissible weights are at present being investigated on an Australia-wide basis by the National Association of Australia state road authorities and consideration of any increase in permissible weights is awaiting the results of this investigation.

EDUCATION.

COMMONWEALTH-FINANCED LIBRARIES.

(Question No. 1158)

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Education—

1. Which State and registered secondary schools had Commonwealth-financed libraries completed during 1972?

2. Which schools had such libraries constructed or commenced in 1972?

3. Which schools are likely to receive such libraries during 1973?

4. What progress has been made in respect of each school listed in the answer to part 2 of question No. 824 asked on 7th March, 1972, and for which tenders were to be called before the end of 1972, indicating reasons for delay in construction or failure to call tenders?

5. What criteria is being used to determine which schools will obtain Commonwealth-financed libraries?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

1 and 2. This information is being collated and the honorable member will be advised by letter as soon as possible.

3. The Education Department has adopted a policy not to publish its building programme in advance, due to the fact that on occasions circumstances arise which prevent anticipated programmes being met. On such occasions considerable concern results when a school’s expectation is not realized.

4. The secondary division of the Education Department found it necessary to adjust priorities to allow for the provision of Commonwealth standard library facilities to be incorporated in a number of multi-story class-room blocks so that the projects referred to have not yet gone to tender. Planning is however proceeding on the programme and it is anticipated that tenders will be invited during the current triennium.

The rate of progress being made on the library building programme is dependent upon a number of factors one of which is the limit placed on amount of expenditure that can be incurred at various points in time. To accelerate the programme the cost of libraries in a number of building projects have recently been transferred to loan funds.

5. The department establishes priorities on the basis of student enrolments and existing facilities.
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.
ROSANNA EAST HIGH SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1185)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Education—
1. When it is proposed to construct the next stage containing blocks C and D at Rosanna East High School?
2. Whether the ten portable class-rooms in use at this school will be retained until these blocks are ready for occupancy?
3. What is the student enrolment in each form and what was the intake this year?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—
1. The department's capital works programme is currently under review and no indication can be given, at this stage, as to when work on the next stage at Rosanna East High School will commence.
2. The portable class-rooms to remain at this school will be decided when the school occupies the additions currently under construction.
3. (i) Form I. 113
   Form II. 85
   Form III. 66
   Form IV. 52
   Total 216
   (ii) Intake this year was 111 in form I. and approximately ten in the other forms, totalling approximately 121.

Question No. 1187)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Education—
Whether an application has been made by East Rosanna High School for approval to proceed with ground development works financed by a co-operative; if so, when the application was made and when approval will be given?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—
An application to proceed with a grounds development project was received on the 23rd November, 1972. Plans and specifications which were submitted a short time prior to this letter were forwarded to the Public Works Department for examination. The advisory council has recently been informed that the documents are not entirely satisfactory and require substantial amendment. When amended documents have been received and approved by Public Works Department, approval to invite tenders will be given.

GREENWOOD HIGH SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1186)

Mr. FELL (Greensborough) asked the Minister of Education—
1. When tenders will be let for construction of the next stage at Greenwood High School?
2. Whether blocks C, D and G will be included?
3. Whether provision has been made for this work in the 1973-74 programme?
4. What is the student enrolment in each form, what was the intake this year and what intake is expected in 1974?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—
1 and 3. The department's capital works programme is currently under review and no indication can be given, at this stage, as to when tenders will be invited for the next stage at the Greenwood High School.
2. Yes.
4. (i) Form I. 166
   Form II. 143
   Form III. 122
   Total 431
   (ii) This year's intake was all of form I., plus approximately ten in the other forms, totalling approximately 176.
   (iii) Next year's intake is expected to be 180-200.

PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR DEER PARK NORTH.
(Question No. 1190)

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Education—
What plans there are for the establishment of a primary school at Deer Park North?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—
The provision of a primary school at Deer Park North is being considered in conjunction with the review of the department's capital works programme.

DEER PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1191)

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Education—
When the site works at the Deer Park Primary School will be completed?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—
The Public Works Department has advised that it is estimated that work should be completed in October, 1973.
CARETAKER RESIDENCES.
(Question No. 1192)

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park) asked
the Minister of Education—

How many State primary, secondary and
technical schools, respectively, have care­
taker residences on the school site and
where these schools are located?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of
Education).—The answer is—

Primary 98 Consolidated 1
High 64 Technical 28

The vast majority of these residences are
located on school sites or close nearby.

Primary schools.

3139 Northcote
2566 North Melbourne
1402 North Melbourne
4327 Oakleigh East
4366 Ormond East
4171 Parkdale
3081 Pascoe Vale
489 Portland
2932 Port Melbourne
2855 Prahran
3885 Preston West
4316 Preston East
3960 Reservoir
1396 Richmond
1567 Richmond
2798 Richmond North
4087 Ripponlea
2460 St. Kilda Park
4429 Sandringham East
1253 South Melbourne
583 South Yarra
3659 Spotswood
3113 Sunshine
3889 Thornbury
1743 Warnambool
4177 Westgarth
1689 West Melbourne
1409 Williamstown North
1406 Yarra Park
1501 Yarraville
2832 Yarraville West
2870 Elsternwick
2901 Moonee Ponds West
4220 Aberfeldie
1181 Albert Park (2)
4025 Ascot Vale West
2984 Auburn
4183 Auburn South
33 Ballarat
4309 Bell
4656 Bellfield
2083 Bentleigh East
4318 Bentleigh West
3631 Black Rock
1102 Braybrook
1213 Brunswick
3179 Brunswick East
3585 Brunswick North
4399 Brunswick North West
2743 Brunswick South
4364 Brunswick South West
2890 Brunswick West

Primary school—continued.

2853 Burnley
123 California Gully
4170 Camberwell South
2605 Carlton
1252 Carlton North
4315 Caulfield South
4314 Chatham
4712 Coatesville
484 Coburg
4260 Coburg East
3941 Coburg West
3942 Elwood
483 Essendon
4329 Fairfield North
450 Fitzroy
250 Flemington
253 Footscray
3890 Footscray West
3897 Gardenvale
2143 Geelong South
4683 Glenelg
1508 Glenferrie
3703 Glenhuntly
3754 Hampton
4055 Hartwell
293 Hawthorn West
294 Heidelberg
298 Horsham
4176 Hughesdale
2436 Ivanhoe
4386 Ivanhoe East
2374 Kensington
3988 Kingsville
4139 Malvern East
4224 Manifold Heights
4328 Merlynston
2784 Montague Special
3943 Mont Albert
3987 Moonee Ponds
2901 Moonee Ponds West
1111 Moorabbin
4687 Moorabbin
3449 Murrumbeena
1887 Newtown
1401 Northcote

High schools.

Alexandra
Altona North
Ashwood
Ballarat
Bayswater
Bell Park
Belmont
Bendigo
Bentleigh
Blackburn
Blackburn South
Box Hill
Brighton
Canterbury Girls
Dandenong
Drouin
Essendon
Fitzroy
Fitzroy Girls
Flemington Girls
Footscray Girls
Frankston
Heidelberg Girls
Huntingdale
J. H. Boyd Domestic College
KENSINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1193)

Mr. JONES (Melbourne) asked the Minister of Education—
1. When the five house properties in McCracken Street and Epsom Road adjacent to the Kensington Primary School will be—(a) acquired; and (b) demolished and used to extend the present school site area?
2. What is the total area of these properties?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—
1. (a) It is anticipated that notices to treat will be served shortly (3-4 weeks).
(b) Properties will be demolished as soon as practicable after price agreement with owners has been reached.
2. Total area of five properties is approximately 0 acres 1 rood 30 perches.

RESERVOIR HIGH SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1195)

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir) asked the Minister of Education—
If he will lay on the table of the Library the file relating to the structural weakness in gymnasium apparatus installed at Reservoir High School referred to in a letter dated 28th July, 1971, from the Education Department?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—Yes.

GOWRIE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1197)

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows) asked the Minister of Education—
Whether plans for improvements to the grounds of the Gowrie Park Primary School have been completed; if so, when the above works will be commenced and what is the estimated time for completion of the works?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—
No.

It is expected that plans and specifications will be completed and tenders advertised in about two months.

COMMONWEALTH-FINANCED LIBRARIES IN HIGH SCHOOLS.
(Question No. 1198)

Mr. BROAD (Swan Hill) asked the Minister of Education—
What conditions and considerations are taken into account in establishing priorities for building Commonwealth-financed libraries in Victorian high schools?
Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

The department establishes priorities on the bases of student enrolments and existing facilities.

SUNSHINE HIGH SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1199)

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park) asked the Minister of Education—

If he will lay on the table of the Library the files, correspondence and memoranda concerning a proposed agreement between the Sunshine City Council and the Sunshine High School and/or the Education Department regarding the maintenance of the playing area at the school?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

My department has no record of any correspondence concerning a proposed agreement between the Sunshine City Council and the Sunshine High School and/or the department regarding the maintenance of the playing area at the school.

Generally, such matters are handled by school principals in consultation with their respective advisory councils.

NORTH HAMILTON PRIMARY SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1217)

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Minister of Education—

How many acres of land the North Hamilton Primary School occupies and whether the Education Department intends to buy further land for future expansion; if not, why?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

Area of the school site is 5 acres 0 roods 9 perches.

The department does not intend to purchase any further land at present as the site already contains the standard area for a primary school.

FOOTSCRAY GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1231)

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Minister of Education—

When it is intended to undertake the following urgent works at Footscray Girls High School:—(a) replacement of the Bristol class-rooms; (b) replacement of the school gymnasium now in a state of disrepair; and (c) repair of the playing surface in the school grounds?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

(a) It is not intended, at this stage, to replace the Bristol class-rooms.

(b) The Public Works Department reported that the gymnasium has no unsafe elements, therefore replacement, at present, is not planned.

(c) Funds for repairs to the playing surface in the school grounds have been approved by this department. It is expected that work on site will commence within five weeks.

FOOTSCRAY TECHNICAL SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1232)

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Minister of Education—

What progress has been made in obtaining a new site for the Footscray Technical School?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

Feasibility of sites is being investigated but no firm decisions have been made.

FOOTSCRAY PRIMARY SCHOOL.
(Question No. 1233)

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Minister of Education—

What progress has been made in the construction of a new school block at Footscray Primary School?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

Tenders have been invited, closing on the 3rd April, 1973, for the construction of a class-room block at the Footscray Primary School.

BOOK ALLOWANCES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.
(Question No. 1245)

Mr. AMOS (Morwell) asked the Minister of Education—

1. What is the book allowance for form V. and VI. high school students and how long this allowance has been available?

2. Whether parents whose total gross weekly income did not exceed $51 plus $1.50 for the third and each successive child could claim an $18 requisite allowance for their children who were students in form V. during 1972 and who were not holders of scholarships?

3. Whether form V. students whose parents are in receipt of the requisite allowance are not eligible for the book allowance
Questions on Notice.

this year; if so, why and whether this has caused financial disadvantages to parents and students?

4. Whether the Education Department will consider changing the present ruling in order that the book allowance could be claimed in addition to the requisite allowance; if not, why?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The answer is—

Form VI. $20 1st January, 1972.

2. Yes.

3. No. The form V. book allowance was introduced this year to assist parents who formerly received no allowance. Parents receiving requisites allowances still receive $18 and are not disadvantaged.

4. This will be considered when the whole question of book allowances is being reviewed when budget estimates for 1973-74 are being prepared.

BUSH NURSING ASSOCIATION.

FINANCE FOR CAPITAL WORKS.

(Question No. 1220)

Mr. CURNOW (Kara Kara) asked the Minister of Health—

1. How many applications for capital works are before the Bush Nursing Association?

2. What projects these applications relate to and what is the estimated cost of each project?

3. How much has been allocated to the association for capital works in each of the past three years?

4. When it is expected that all current applications for capital works will be met?

Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health).—The answer is—

The Bush Nursing Association has regular discussions with its member hospital managements concerning the building programmes of the hospitals concerned but before making any recommendations that a capital grant be made available by the Government, the association satisfies itself that the local committee is able to raise its share of the finance and maintain local interest.

Consequently, while many proposals may be discussed from time to time there is no list of applications for capital works before the Bush Nursing Association.

No money is allocated to the association for capital works. However, on the recommendation of the association money is made available through the Department of Health direct to the hospitals concerned.

The following amounts are the totals of sums allocated on a $3 for $1 basis to bush nursing hospitals for capital works during the years stated—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>$320,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>$330,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>$450,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATE RIVERS AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION.

WATERWORKS TRUSTS: SALE OF WATER.

(Question No. 1221)

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas) asked the Minister of Water Supply—

Whether a water trust can sell water for recreation or market gardening purposes at the same rate charged to irrigators; if not, why, and what is the difference between the two rates?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Water Supply).—The answer is—

A waterworks trust is an independent statutory body constituted under the provisions of the Water Act for the supply of water to a particular area, as defined by Order in Council, but is predominantly for a town water supply.

Such a trust has power to make its own decisions, engage staff and construct and manage its own works. However, as the Government usually provides a substantial degree of financial assistance, its operations are supervised in a general way by the water commission.

A waterworks trust may make water available, within its district, for recreation or market garden purposes, at such price as may be agreed upon. A trust, may also, by agreement, and with the approval of the Governor in Council supply water outside its district.

A waterworks trust may also supply water for irrigation on the same basis as for recreation or market garden purposes as set out above. However, in times of water shortage the water requirements for domestic purposes would always take precedence over irrigation or market garden purposes in such cases.

DIVERSION OF THOMSON RIVER.

(Question No. 1240)

Mr. AMOS (Morwell) asked the Minister of Water Supply—

Whether water from the Thomson River is being diverted from the Cowwarr area to the Nambrok-Denison area; if so—(a) for what purposes; (b) what quantity is being diverted; (c) who recommended such diversion; (d) how long such water has been so diverted; (e) whether the Nambrok-Denison area is part of the Glenmaggie irrigation area; and (f) whether such diver-
Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Water Supply).—The answer is—

(a) Water from the Thomson River is diverted at Cowwarr weir via the Cowwarr channel for irrigation and domestic and stock supplies to the part of the Macalister district south of the Thomson River, to five outside district users supplied from the distributory channel system and for domestic and stock supplies to some properties supplied directly from the Cowwarr channel.

(b) The quantity diverted to the Macalister district is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>7,618 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-62</td>
<td>10,804 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>18,236 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>8,337 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-65</td>
<td>13,750 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>15,536 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>9,371 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>6,525 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>23,235 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>11,761 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>15,192 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>30,692 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>16,441 acre-feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cowwarr channel first operated 22nd October, 1960.

(c) Diversions from the Thomson River to the Macalister irrigation district was recommended by the Parliamentary Public Works Committee reports dated 6th April, 1943 and 15th November, 1951.

(d) Diversions from the Thomson River to the Macalister irrigation district first took place on 22nd October, 1960.

(e) The Nambrok-Denison area is part of the Macalister irrigation district.

(f) The area of land that can be irrigated by diversions in the Cowwarr area from the Thomson River is limited by the minimum flow in the river which can be below 20 cubic. Diversions from the Thomson River to the Macalister irrigation district are made only when the flow in the Thomson River exceeds 60 cubic at Cowwarr Weir, which is considered adequate for the requirements of diverters from the Thomson River in the Cowwarr area.

Mr. AMOS (Morwell) asked the Minister of Water Supply—

1. Who are the members of the Thomson River Advisory Committee and what is its function?

2. How such members are appointed indicating—(a) the date each member was appointed; and (b) the qualifications necessary for such appointment or election?

3. At how many meetings of the committee since 1967—(a) an officer of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission has been present; and (b) no such officer has been present?

4. How many applications for pumping licences the committee has considered since 1967, indicating—(a) who the applicants were; (b) the quantity requested in each case; and (c) which applications were successful?

5. Whether the committee has considered such applications for pumping licences from committee members; if so—(a) which members; (b) when such applications were made and considered, respectively; and (c) what is the total irrigated area of each member's property?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Water Supply).—The answer is—

1. The members of the Thomson River Advisory Committee are—

   Mr. E. Jones, Cowwarr.
   Mr. W. Drew, Heyfield.
   Mr. L. Nolan, Heyfield.
   Mr. B. J. Houston, Cowwarr.
   Mr. A. Anderson, Wandocka, via Heyfield.
   Mr. H. Riggall, Box 1, Tinamba.
   Mr. B. Lee, "Loyola", Stratford.
   Commr. H. Traill, Warruk, Box 77, Sale.
   Cr. B. Bowman, Guthridge Parade, Sale.
   Cr. D. Sunderman, Heyfield.
   Cr. N. R. Gooch, "Fulham Park", Fulham.

   The function of the committee is to secure close co-operation between the water users and the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission in regard to matters connected with the utilization of water from the Thomson River.

2. Members are appointed at a public meeting of water users.

   (a) The present members were appointed in October, 1969;
   (b) For appointment, a member must be an authorized water user on the Thomson River system.

3. (a) There have been ten meetings since 1967 and an officer of the water commission has been present on each occasion.

   (b) See answer to (a).

4. The information will take some time to collate and I will arrange for the details to be forwarded to the honorable member as soon as possible.

5. Yes, together with other applications on 5th December, 1972.

Questions [ASSEMBLY.] without Notice.

(b) The applications were lodged between April, 1968, and March, 1972, and considered in December, 1972.

(c) W. Drew ... 15 acres  
L. Nolan ... 26 acres  
A. Anderson ... 77 acres  
D. Sunderman ... 80 acres  
R. C. Traill ... 25 acres

ABSENCE OF MINISTER.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—The honorable Minister for Conservation regrets that he is delayed on State business and will be a little late.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Yesterday the honorable member for St. Kilda by a point of order asked me for a ruling and interpretation of what Standing Order No. 79 means on questions to a private member. A question to a member other than a Minister must be on the item of business standing in his name—that is stated in the Standing Order—and it may not anticipate debate on the matter. This means that no question may be made on content, purpose and merit of the matter. Therefore, questions under Standing Order No. 79 directed to a member other than a member of the Ministry should only relate to when and how the matter is expected to be handled in the House.

FREeways.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote).—I ask the Premier whether he is prepared to lay the report of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee on the table. I refer to the report of the review of freeway planning that he has referred to as recently as today.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—I have no such report and I have not referred to one, so far as I am aware.

BORTHWICK'S MEAT WORKS.

Mr. W. J. LEWIS (Portland).—In view of the fact that 40 persons were retrenched from Borthwick's meat works at Portland last week and another 60 are due for retrenchment this week, will the Premier ensure that rural unemployment relief money is made available to the Shire of Portland to provide employment for these men?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—I was not aware of that particular fact, but I certainly will ensure that if unemployment results from any retrenchments, even temporarily, at Borthwick's, then rural unemployment relief money will be made available to make up the leeway. It is an unfortunate fact, apparently, with abattoirs that employment is spasmodic and that there are alternate retrenchments and taking on of additional hands. It is the Government's task to ensure that the local community does not suffer from unemployment, even of a spasmodic character, and I shall do my best to ensure that it does not.

PRIMARY SCHOOL AT DONCASTER.

Mr. FELL (Greensborough).—I ask the Minister of Public Works whether an investigation has been made into why 8,000 new building bricks were ploughed into the construction site works at the recently executed contract at the Aird Street, Doncaster, primary school No. 5041? If so, what is the result of this investigation and will a repetition of such an occurrence be prevented?

Mr. DUNSTAN (Minister of Public Works).—I ask the honorable member to put this question on the Notice Paper tomorrow and I shall obtain an immediate reply.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds).—Can the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government inform the House whether the report on the amalgamation of municipalities is complete? If so, can the Minister also inform the House when this report will be released for public scrutiny?
Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—I am not able to inform the House whether this report is available, but I shall refer the question to my colleague, the Minister for Local Government.

ELECTORAL ROLLS.

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Dundas).—In view of the fact that advertising encouraging 18, 19, and 20-year-olds to register for electoral rolls has been undertaken in daily newspapers, will the Chief Secretary seek the approval of the Premier and Treasurer for the granting of finance to be allocated to enable similar advertisements to be placed in theatres, drive-in theatres and newspapers normally read by the youth of this State?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I assume that most eighteen to twenty-year-olds are literate and can read the newspapers, and also that members of Parliament are equally articulate in making the position known.

NATIONAL GALLERY REPORTS.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray).—Can the Minister of the Arts explain why the annual reports of the National Gallery for the financial year 1971-72 have not been made available? If the Minister is aware of the reasons for the delay, will he explain them to the House and give an assurance that the reports will be presented before the end of the sessional period?

Mr. HAMER (Minister of the Arts).—The honorable member is probably aware that the reports of the National Gallery fell considerably into arrears several years ago. This has been due mainly to the move to the new gallery premises and the extra work thrust on the director and staff at that time. The director has now brought the reports much more nearly up to date but it is true that there are still two outstanding. I have asked him to submit them as soon as possible, and I hope they will be here before the end of the session.

REMEDIAL TEACHERS.

Mr. SHILTON (Midlands).—I direct my question to the Assistant Minister of Education. Following the transfer of two of the three remedial teachers from the Kangaroo Flat Primary School consequent upon their promotion, and as a similar situation exists in many schools, will the Minister consider allowing remedial teachers to take promotion at their present postings within the framework of their group in the department?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister without Portfolio).—The question could be directed to the Minister of Education because the remedial teachers referred to would normally be on the primary teachers’ roll under the supervision and direction of the Director of Primary Education. The question that has been asked, however, is relevant to the powers of determination by the Teachers Tribunal. This matter has often been put to the Teachers Tribunal and certain provisions exist at present which would accomplish something or go some way towards meeting the request of the honorable member. I will certainly discuss the matter with my officers to see whether we can make some arrangements to cover the situation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne).—I direct my question to the Minister of Transport, representing the Minister for Local Government, following on the question asked by the honorable member for Moonee Ponds. Is the honorable gentleman aware that the Premier has already announced to the House that the report was completed in May, 1972, and, if so, will the honorable gentleman really make an attempt to find out from his colleague in another place the reason for the inexplicable delay?
Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—There are a number of matters I do not know about that fall within my colleague’s jurisdiction, of course. But I do know that there are two reports, one in the field of local government covering the amalgamation of municipalities and one which relates to the Voumard report, as it is known, which is quite different, and which refers to the ramifications of finance in local government.

The two questions asked by the honorable members for Moonee Ponds and Melbourne are not on the same matter, and the honorable member for Melbourne is a little off the track. I will refer his question to the Minister for Local Government and no doubt that honorable gentleman will be able to sort out what the honorable member means and will be able to comply with the request.

LAKES ENTRANCE SCHOOLS.

Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East).—Has the Minister of Education yet decided whether the Government will accede to repeated requests made by the residents of Lakes Entrance and district for secondary education facilities to form IV. standard in that town?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—The question of establishing additional secondary school facilities for 1975 will shortly be considered by the Education Department. That is one of the areas which will receive consideration.

FREEWAYS.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park).—As the Premier has made a statement indicating where freeways F9 and F14 will end, and in view of the fact that people in the South Melbourne area are concerned about the future of those freeways, will the honorable gentleman indicate where they will commence, as he has indicated where they will terminate?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—I inform the honorable member for Albert Park that they will commence at the other end.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON TERTIARY EDUCATION.

Mr. DIXON (St. Kilda).—Has the Minister of Education recommended that the Director of Adult Education should be added to the Advisory Council on Tertiary Education; if so, what was the result of his recommendation?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—At the last meeting of the council I raised this question, and as a result of the discussion which took place, the Director of Adult Education is to be invited to attend the next meeting of the council.

FREEWAYS.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—In view of the fact that the Premier has now established that freeways will begin at the other end from the finish, will the honorable gentleman inform the House of the municipalities which will constitute the “other end”?

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—There are twenty freeways in the over-all plan, some of which are very long—in fact, traversing the whole metropolitan area and passing through up to a dozen or fifteen different suburbs. I refer the honorable member for Broadmeadows to a map of the freeway system which I shall make available to him. From that the honorable member can work out the answer to his question for himself.

SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS.

Mr. FELL (Greensborough).—Can the Minister of Education inform the House whether it is a fact that the Huntingdale, Oakleigh, Caulfield and Murrumbeena high schools are suffering from a shortage of staff, and that, in one of the schools—at Caulfield—a class is being conducted in the canteen? Why should this situation be allowed to exist?
Questions [28 March, 1973.]

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! This question deals with two subjects, namely, staffing and space. I invite the honorable member to confine the question to one subject.

Mr. FELL.—I shall confine my question to the staffing position, Mr. Speaker. Is it a fact that these schools are suffering from extreme shortages of staff to the extent that many forms are not receiving instruction in mathematics?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—In reply to the honorable senator from Greensborough——

Mr. WILKES (Northcote).—My ears may have deceived me, Mr. Speaker, but I am not aware that the Minister of Education is addressing the honorable member for Greensborough correctly.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—I may have inadvertently promoted the honorable member for Greensborough. None of the schools that the honorable member has mentioned are suffering from extreme shortages of staff. Speaking from memory, and taking Caulfield High School as an example, I point out that according to the Teachers Tribunal schedule that school is entitled to 40 staff members and at present it has 50.

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! It is very much out of order for this sort of so-called support to be given to any speaker.

Mr. THOMPSON.—It is the belief of the Director of the Secondary Schools Division that any staff shortage in any of these schools could be covered at present because each enjoys a staff enrolment which is far in excess of the Teachers Tribunal schedule.

Concerning the problem of accommodation to which the honorable member referred, I point out that the principal of Caulfield High School earlier this year stated that a couple of portable class-rooms which were at the school were not required, and the department removed them.

YOUTH AND SPORTS AND RECREATION COUNCILS.

Mr. TREWIN (Benalla).—Is the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation in a position to indicate who have been appointed to the youth and sports councils? This follows my question to the Minister yesterday.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation).—I was a little over-optimistic yesterday when I indicated to the House that either last night or today I would be able to release the names. I was not aware that some of the persons would be in such far-flung places as Hall's Gap on a camping expedition. As a matter of courtesy, I think it would be desirable to notify them of their appointment before making a public announcement. We have only one more to contact and this should be achieved this afternoon. Therefore it will probably be tomorrow when the announcement will be made.

BALLARAT SPECIAL SCHOOL.

Mr. STEPHEN (Ballarat South).—Can the Assistant Minister of Education inform me when the buildings currently under construction at the Ballarat Special School will be completed, what the cost will be, and what additional accommodation will become available?

Mr. SCANLAN (Minister without Portfolio).—Further extensions to the school will be completed in May of this year at, I understand, an estimated cost of $103,000. I understand also that there will be no improvement in the accommodation at the school except that the permanent buildings will spell an end to the portable class-rooms that are at present located at the school.

FREEWAYS.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park).—In view of the Premier's coyness about the other end of freeways F14 and
F9, I ask the honorable gentleman whether these freeways will traverse the City of South Melbourne.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—The previous question related to the commencement of the two freeways whereas I understand that the honorable member now asks whether they will terminate in South Melbourne. Both of these freeways will enter South Melbourne. One is the West Gate Bridge and the associated Lower Yarra Freeway. The other, at the northern end, will join up with the Tullamarine Freeway, pass down the western side of the City of Melbourne and cross the Yarra River below Spencer Street bridge and then link up with F9 or the Lower Yarra Freeway.

INSPECTION OF SHOPPERS’ BAGS.

Mr. KIRKWOOD (Preston).—Is the Minister of Labour and Industry aware of the illegal practice in some supermarkets of managements requiring shoppers to have their shopping bags inspected? If so, is the honorable gentleman prepared to have the practice discontinued and require supermarkets to provide a place where shoppers can leave their baskets under lock and key or have someone look after them personally?

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Is this a matter for the Minister of Labour and Industry?

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry).—I think it probably is a matter for my department. I am not aware of the illegal practice referred to. If the honorable member for Preston will supply me with facts, figures and information, I shall certainly examine them. The matter to which he adverted does not appear to me to be illegal, but if he provides the necessary information I shall certainly investigate it.

FREeways.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North).—Is the Premier aware that local government authorities in the Geelong area are conducting meetings in camera with a view to plotting freeways through various built-up areas?

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Unfortunately, the question was first asked of the Premier on freeways which does not come within his Ministry. I direct that there have been adequate questions asked of the Premier on this subject and which appear to relate to some press statement. I suggest that the honorable member for Geelong North should address his question on freeways to the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government in this House.

Mr. TREZISE.—I ask the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government whether that Minister is aware that local government authorities in Geelong are holding meetings in camera with a view to plotting freeways through various alternative built-up areas in Geelong; if so, or even if he is not aware of this, will the Minister of Transport speak with the Minister for Local Government to ensure that proceedings are open to the public in future?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—I am not aware that any councils in the Geelong area are holding meetings in camera in relation to possible freeway routes.

Mr. TREZISE.—They are.

Mr. WILCOX.—I was not aware of it. I will direct the question to the Minister for Local Government. The Government believes that freeways have a place in our urban areas, but it does not believe that they have a place in built-up areas, and that would apply to Geelong just as much as to Melbourne.

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East).—I ask the Premier whether the review of Melbourne’s freeway plans has been completed.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! I must direct that any further questions on freeways should be directed to the Minister responsible.
Mr. BORNSTEIN.—I redirect my question to the Minister of Transport representing the Minister for Local Government. I ask the honorable gentleman whether the lengthy review recently undertaken of Melbourne's freeways has been completed? If so, when was it completed; and was the review presented to the Minister for Local Government and subsequently to Cabinet and discussed by Cabinet? If so, will the Minister table the results of that review in the Library?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—A review is being carried out by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee, of which I am chairman. I have not received that review. That review has not been presented to me or the committee.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE APPRENTICESHIPS.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir).—Is the Minister of Labour and Industry yet in a position to answer a question I asked of him on the motion for the adjournment of the House last night about two companies in Ballarat that are apprenticing people under a scheme called the Chamber of Commerce apprenticeship which, to my understanding, is completely outside the scope of the Apprenticeship Act?

Mr. RAFFERTY (Minister of Labour and Industry).—I understand that the honorable member for Reservoir directed a question to me last night. I was unaware at the time that it was being directed to me, and therefore I did not reply to him. I have since apologized to the honorable member and now I do so to the House. I am not aware of the circumstances referred to by him, but I have indicated to him privately that I will have the matter examined and let him know the result.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS.

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park).—Can the Minister of Education confirm that a high school for matriculation students is to be established in the Frankston district? If so, can he explain to the House the educational criteria on which this high school is to be established, whether it is a one-form—form VI.—high school as opposed to a form V. and form VI. division high school as was envisaged for the Glenroy-Broadmeadows area? Can he indicate to the House the reason for establishing this school in the eastern suburbs when it was recommended at one time that it should be erected in the northern and western suburbs?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—No decision has been made to establish a senior high school in the Frankston area. Some suggestions were made along those lines by senior members of the department in that area. They have also been opposed by other senior members of the department in that area. The matter is being investigated, but no decision has been made to establish a senior high school there or elsewhere.

PORT OF PORTLAND.

Mr. E. W. LEWIS (Portland).—Is the Minister of Transport aware that the port of Portland is facing a crisis because of a lack of cargo and because cargo is being transferred by rail to Melbourne? Will he investigate the possibilities of implementing a penalty rate on freight railed from Portland to Melbourne so that more cargo can be made available from Portland?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—In general terms I know that the port of Portland has its problems. I sympathize with those in Portland who are involved with the Portland Harbor Trust. It is an extraordinary suggestion to apply penalty rates on goods coming from Portland to Melbourne. I am sure members of the Country Party would be most interested in that proposal because many reduced freight rates apply to country areas.
The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! The Minister is debating the subject, which he may not do.

Mr. WILCOX.—I would not favour the imposition of penalty rates because it would open up all sorts of dreadful possibilities to the detriment of country areas.

OBSCENE LITERATURE.
Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray).—Will the Chief Secretary explain what action has been taken by the police following the seizure of 72 tons of allegedly obscene material over the past month or so? Have charges been laid in all cases? If not, what other proceedings have been taken in relation to this material?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—One charge has been dealt with by the courts and others are pending.

PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS.
Mr. FELL (Greensborough).—Can the Minister of Education inform me whether the current ratio of male teachers to female teachers in primary schools and undergoing primary teacher training is approximately 1:8, and does the Minister or the Education Department intend to attempt to correct this imbalance?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—It is true that there is a far greater number of women teachers in the Primary Schools Division of the department than there are males. It is the order of two to one. I do not know that this is necessarily a bad thing, because women do adapt very well to the teaching of the younger children. The matter has been discussed at length from time to time. The only way in which any imbalance could be corrected would be by giving preferential treatment to male applicants for primary studentships.

Mr. GINIFER.—Cut that out!

Mr. THOMPSON.—In view of the number of female applicants for primary studentships, in the words of the honorable member for Deer Park, it would be wise to “cut that out”.

ADVISORY SPEED SIGNS.
Mr. W. J. LEWIS (Portland).—In view of the increasing road toll each week, has the Chief Secretary any plans to have advisory speed signs erected along main roads similar to signs in other States?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—The whole question of road signs is under review. It is expected that the review will be completed by July of this year. I hope, as a result of that review, there will be a revised and complete set of signs which will be more effective than the present signs.

HIGH-SPEED CARS.
Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds).—Is the Premier aware that the New South Wales Government is examining ways of awarding Government contracts to car manufacturers to persuade——

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! Is this a matter for the Premier?

Mr. EDMUNDS.—I believe so—to persuade car manufacturers not to advertise and promote the sales of high-speed cars? If he is aware of this proposal by the New South Wales Government, will he consider it as a proposal for his Government to examine also?

The SPEAKER.—Order! The question must be directed to the Minister responsible. I ask the Premier whether the Chief Secretary or one of his departments is responsible for this matter.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—Mr. Speaker, I have some trouble in answering your question because I am not aware what the New South Wales Government may have in mind. If the honorable member for Moonee Ponds will put his question on notice, I shall either answer it or have it answered by the appropriate Minister.
FREeways.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North).—Did the Minister of Transport state that the Government would make a statement on freeways after it had received a report from the Metropolitan Transportation Committee? If he did make that statement, could he advise the House why the statement was made before the report was received?

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—I have never made any such statement.

MOTOR CYCLISTS.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park).—In view of the danger inherent in inexperienced persons riding motor cycles, will the Chief Secretary consider altering the test which is now imposed on persons who wish to obtain licences to ride motor cycles?

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I have asked the Police Department to carry out an exhaustive examination of the tests presently being applied for all types of licences, and I am expecting a report in the near future.

PUBLIC SERVICE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Public Service Act 1958 and the Mental Health Act 1959, and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

PETITION.

INDECENT LITERATURE, ENTERTAINMENT AND ADVERTISING.

Mr. CRELLIN (Sandringham) presented a petition from certain parishioners of Our Lady of Assumption Parish, Cheltenham, praying that action be taken to resist commercial interests exploiting the community through indecent literature, entertainment and advertising and to curb the declining moral trend in the community. He stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 479 signatures.

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

DECENTRALIZED INDUSTRY (HOUSING) BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of a Bill to establish a Decentralized Industry Housing Authority, to provide housing for persons employed in country industries and for other purposes.

The House went into Committee to consider the message.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I move—

That it is expedient that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of a Bill to establish a Decentralized Industry Housing Authority, to provide housing for persons employed in country industries and for other purposes.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds).—I ask the Chief Secretary to give an outline of the intention of the Bill.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—The purpose of the Bill is to set up an authority which can build houses to assist decentralized industry outside the normal provisions of the charter of the Housing Commission. This will be for houses that are required to assist in the decentralization programme.

Mr. GINIFER.—Are these executive type houses?

Mr. MEAGHER.—Not exactly executive type houses, but the types of houses required for people who do not qualify under the normal means test.

The motion was agreed to, and the resolution was reported to the House and adopted.

On the motion of Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary), the Bill was brought in and read a first time.
WANT OF CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote).—I move—

That the Government no longer possesses the confidence of this House because of its failure to provide adequate transport facilities and proper freeway planning.

The political hypocrisy of the Government in its freeway planning must surely be the laughing stock of every man and woman in Victoria. All it takes is a Federal election, several Gallup poll results, and the stark fear of losing a State election for this Government to act. I should like to elaborate for the benefit of the Minister of Transport. He says that what I have just said is not right and asks where I read it. Of course it is right. If there had not been a State election, a Federal Labor Government, and predictions from a Gallup poll there would have been no attempt made by the Government to alter the report of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee on freeways. When this matter was debated on 11th October, 1972, the Minister of Transport said that his Government was waiting before it would do anything to freeze freeway projects in the metropolitan area and beyond as was suggested by the Leader of the Opposition. According to the report of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee a review was being conducted by the Country Roads Board, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, which are represented on the Metropolitan Transportation Committee. The Government refused to act until the results of the review were made known.

The Minister denied this in the House today. He said that he did not say that. I shall direct the attention of the House to what the honorable gentleman did say, because it is not uncommon to have to remind Ministers in this lazy Government of what they did say not three or four months ago, but yesterday. The Minister of Transport is reported at page 838 of Hansard of 11th October, 1972, as having said—

That was a clear statement of the attitude of the Government. The Leader of the Opposition spoke of the importance of people. I agree with him. Or perhaps it is he who agrees with me.

The honorable gentleman then said that what was needed was a review of the suggested freeway network and indicated that the Government had—

asked for a review of the suggested freeway network with emphasis on minimizing its psychological impact and over-all cost.

That review is proceeding.

Mr. HOLDING.—By whom is it being conducted?

Mr. WILCOX.—It is being conducted under the auspices of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee by officers from the Country Road Board, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, and the committee itself.

Mr. HOLDING.—They are the people who produced the report.

Mr. WILCOX.—And they have been asked to review it. The review will be available shortly to the committee and, in due course, to the Government. These officers have been given clear instructions on what they are to review.

Mr. WILCOX.—I do not deny that.

Mr. WILKES.—The Minister does not deny it. The Government did not want the debate to be continued on 11th October last year for obvious reasons to which, because of their importance, I shall later refer and is lumping the responsibility on to the Metropolitan Transportation Committee to review the plan. It is not uncommon for the Government to say that when a review is completed it will take action. But today, before the review has been completed, the Premier made a press statement referring to an alteration in the plan for freeways in the metropolitan area.

If the Government believes that the report of the committee is so important, why was it panicked into taking action today by removing some of the freeways from the plan? The Opposition is delighted at the small effort that the Government has now made to reduce the number of unwanted freeways which are planned for the metropolitan area.

Apparently the fact that they are unwanted has seeped through to the mind of the Premier. The Opposition is not concerned whether the Government awaited the report of the committee or not, for it has always maintained that the committee's report would merely represent a fait accompli. What is the point in asking a committee to review its own plan of what it thinks is required until 1985?

The Government has proved today that it has no regard for any decision of this committee of review by deciding, from political fear, to take action regardless of the committee. The Opposition is not satisfied with the action proposed by the Government, nor will the people whose lives will be affected by this decision be satisfied. The situation of the construction of freeways in inner and outer areas of Melbourne has reached crisis proportions. The Government is well aware of that, and so are its back-bench supporters.

The Government stands condemned for failing to take steps to coordinate freeway planning and avoid duplication of works carried out by the Country Roads Board and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. It has failed to recognize the need for a comprehensive study of the sociological implications of its freeway plans. It has failed to freeze freeway construction in the whole of the metropolitan area until the plan has been reviewed and until an alternative method of public transport has been devised. The Government has reacted so quickly that it has even shamed its back-bench supporters.

In his scant press statement today the Premier said nothing about steps the Government proposed to take to prevent this diabolical plan by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee to swamp Melbourne with freeways. It is all very well to allow a committee to stomp around the metropolitan area drawing lines on a map through people's homes without considering the sociological effects. The Premier has not justified that procedure, and the Opposition is adamant that that situation should not continue to exist.

The reason that this motion has been moved should be obvious to the Government, because from 11th October of last year until today the Government has refused to allow this matter to be debated. The Government blatantly refused to permit members of the Country Party, the Opposition—and even its own back-benchers—to discuss this issue.

It is obvious that members of the Opposition have a far greater sense of responsibility for the people whose lives and property will be affected by this plan. In order to have the matter raised in the Parliament, the Opposition had to move this motion.

Today the Premier mentioned the Mulgrave Highway, a section of which is to cost $600,000; the Board of Works is proceeding with the Doncaster-Collingwood freeway; and planning is continuing for the F2 highway which will pass through Coburg, Northcote and Fitzroy. However it is now to end at Collingwood. It will still traverse electorates represented by members of the Opposition. It will not proceed to St. Kilda or Prahran.

Mr. HAMER.—Collingwood, Richmond?

Mr. WILKES.—The Premier does not know his own State. The freeway finishes in Collingwood at that suburb’s eastern boundary.

Mr. WILCOX.—It is at about the northern boundary of Collingwood.

Mr. WILKES.—It is not. The northern boundary is a good distance away; it is at Heidelberg Road.

Mr. WILCOX.—How far is that?

Mr. WILKES.—It is a long way from Queens Road. The fact remains that it passes through Collingwood and affects people who live there—but it does not affect people who live south of the Yarra in electorates such as St. Kilda and Prahran. The Opposition is glad of that, but I point out that it appears that in
selecting which freeways are to be cancelled the Government has leaned a little in favour of certain electorates. I will not suggest the reason for that.

Mr. Hamer.—Why not?

Mr. Wilkes.—I will if the Premier desires me to do so. The Premier panicked and thought that he should do something for fear of some electoral result.

Mr. Dixon.—Where do you think the freeways should go?

Mr. Wilkes.—I do not think there should be any freeways in the metropolitan area. The Labor Party is unequivocally opposed to them. Party members have promised to cease freeway construction. We do not want Freeway F2 coming through Coburg, Clifton Hill and Collingwood, and we do not want the Mulgrave Freeway to be upsetting people in the area through which it passes and which is represented by Liberal Party members.

Mr. Dixon.—And then what?

Mr. Wilkes.—We will then build a modern, fast public transport system to take the place of freeways. The honorable member for St. Kilda should examine opinions which have been expressed by experts.

Mr. Dixon.—You are unequivocally opposed to building freeways?

The Speaker (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! I invite the honorable member for St. Kilda to cease interjecting.

Mr. Wilkes.—The honorable member for St. Kilda does not mind freeways, so long as they are not in St. Kilda. He is not concerned about people in other suburbs, nor is the Premier.

The whole of the freeway plan of the transportation committee is based on a myth, namely, that population growth in Melbourne will be unlimited. The Opposition does not accept that as a sound basis for the committee’s reports. Opposition members contend that the population should be limited to between 3 million and 3·5 million.

Mr. Dixon.—You have gone up half a million.

Mr. Wilkes.—I should like to hear the views of the Premier and the honorable member for St. Kilda on unlimited population growth in Melbourne. If it is not the intention of the Government to limit the population of this city, it must quickly and clearly establish a plan for the creation of a modern transport system. It is not enough for the Minister of Transport to say, “We are buying 100 new trams”. The honorable gentleman knows that there has not been 1 foot of rail laid since he has been in office except for some duplication of lines, and that only 8 miles of new railway line has been installed since he came to office.

Mr. Wilcox.—What about the standard gauge line?

Mr. Wilkes.—A line was already there. Since the honorable gentleman came into office there has been no improvement in fixed-rail transport systems in Victoria. Therefore, the Government must consider the alternatives. Any Government can wipe off five or six freeways and do nothing about it until after the elections because its members think, “We might get by this way, if we are lucky”. I very much doubt whether the Government will get away with it.

The committee’s report recommended the expenditure of $1,675 million by 1985. It would be interesting to learn what amount the Government would approve because of its change of plans, or whether it is necessary to have a transportation committee. A committee may not be the answer. The Government may believe that freeways are unnecessary. Members of the Opposition are unequivocally of the opinion that they are not necessary. Perhaps it is advisable to have them in the periphery areas but they should not carve up the central city area.
Freeway F2 will cut a swathe through Coburg, Thornbury, Northcote, across the Merri Creek bridge and down to Clifton Hill and Collingwood. It will be proceeded with despite the assertion of the Premier in October, by interjection, that no work had been commenced in that area. Now he says that he is prepared to allow it to proceed. Why should it be given priority over other freeways? The tragic Eastern Freeway that is cutting a swathe through the Yarra Bend Park will continue to Doncaster. There is no suggestion that it will affect interests other than the Yarra Bend Park and people in Doncaster. This freeway was illegally commenced and should never have been proceeded with.

Since 1968 there has been a general surge of protest throughout the metropolitan area against the Government's plans for freeways. When these protests were confined to the inner-metropolitan areas it did not concern the Government but once protests emerged from areas around Dandenong and from Brighton, the Government was compelled to take notice.

Mr. JONES.—And Malvern.

Mr. WILKES.—That is so, and that involved the Mulgrave Freeway which caused consternation among people in that electorate. It could be referred to as "the freeway that was, the freeway that wasn't and the freeway that doesn't". The Minister for Local Government said that the freeway would not proceed. His decision was overruled, and it was decided to proceed with the Mulgrave Freeway despite protests, but to overcome that difficulty the stop-go freeway finished halfway and caused all sorts of consternation. The Deputy Premier, who is the Minister of Education, had strong views on whether it should proceed.

Mr. JONES.—He is not in the Chamber now.

Mr. WILKES.—Whether he is here or not is immaterial. The Malvern City Council sent me a lengthy but pertinent letter on this subject. Local government has always been the hack of this Government and it has done its work very well. When that municipality expressed opposition to the Government's proposals, the Government used the municipality for its own ends. The Malvern City Council resolved—

That this council is not prepared to tolerate the volume of traffic that would be channelled into the road system of Malvern by the extension of the Mulgrave Freeway as presently planned to Warrigal Road or Waverley Road, and its termination at either of these points, and the council continue to press for an immediate halt to the freeway works.

The Northcote and Coburg councils said much the same thing about Freeway F2. Both groups of people and local government authorities are protesting. The letter from the Malvern City Council outlined these further decisions—

That the council is totally opposed to any proposal for the construction of the Mulgrave Freeway through the City of Malvern or any highly developed area.

That the council is deeply shocked at the situation which would be created in any future continuation of the freeway through residential and other developed sections of the City of Malvern, whereby at least 320 homes would be razed and at least a further 570 homes could be rendered useless as quality homes because of noise and pollution resulting from their close proximity to a major highway facility; that such a project would create such disturbance to nearby land uses and road traffic movements that substantial urban redevelopment would be required in conjunction with any freeway development. (The number of properties to be demolished (i.e. 320) could be much greater depending on any ultimate design adopted.)

That the council demand that the practice of road planning authorities conducting investigations into freeway routes through urban areas without the knowledge of the local council be immediately abandoned.

How often does one hear of the views of a local council being taken into consideration by the Government, which is notable for its lack of planning? The only time a council is considered is when the Government wants to use the whip and carrot. The Malvern City Council can be complimented for taking this action. It is strange that this council is in the electorate of a blue ribbon
Liberal seat. The Government has taken a calculated risk and has said to the honorable members for Glen Iris and Malvern, "You ought to be able to hold your seats whether we plough down 320 homes or not". That is what the argument is about. I am concerned at the expression of opinion of the Malvern City Council towards this lazy Government. The council further decided—

That the Premier, Minister of Transport, Minister for Local Government and local parliamentary representatives be advised of the council's views, and in particular the local representatives be pressed for their support to the council's submissions and urged to take immediate action to protect the City of Malvern.

The Deputy Premier took immediate action. He said he did not want the freeway. The council continued—

A further public meeting was held on 8th February last, at which attendance was in excess of 1,000 people.

That is in Malvern. In my wildest imagination I could not say that these people supported a Labor Government.

Mr. EDMUNDS.—Or that they were radicals.

Mr. WILKES.—That is so. On 8th February a second public meeting was organized by the Malvern Anti-Freeway Association, which is an independent body formed to oppose the freeway. At this meeting resolutions were passed opposing the construction of the freeway through Malvern or any other highly developed urban area and demanding an immediate halt to the construction of the Mulgrave Freeway at Springvale Road.

On 20th February the Minister for Local Government issued a statement on the Mulgrave Freeway, obviously following consideration of the matter in Cabinet and by the Parliamentary Liberal Party. This provided—

(a) for the resumption of work on the freeway to Warrigal Road;
(b) proposals for extension of the freeway to Waverley Road to be shelved and all possible alternatives to provide for traffic needs west of Warrigal Road to be re-examined as part of the current review;
(c) there was no commitment whatever to extend the freeway west of Warrigal Road.

It can be noted that there was no suggestion to extend the freeway west of Warrigal Road. The letter from the City of Malvern further stated—

At its last meeting the council considered this latest statement and again expressed its concern at the decision of the Government to continue the construction of the freeway to Warrigal Road and the disregard of the previous resolutions of council on the matter and it was decided to continue to press for a halt to the works as indicated in previous motions.

That was because 320 houses would be demolished and more than 500 houses would be smoked out by pollution. The letter went on to state—

The council directed that its views on the matter be conveyed to all members of the Victorian State Parliament.

The council's deep concern at the present freeway proposal is amply illustrated above. The construction of the freeway to Warrigal Road can only create a situation of traffic congestion in the streets of Malvern, compounding a similar situation already existing at the western end of the municipality, and will create a demand for the extension of the freeway in a westerly direction through quality residential and business areas.

The council seeks therefore, a halt to all works on the freeway pending an over-all review of the transportation plan.

The Minister has not concerned himself about it further. That is the story of the Mulgrave Freeway. One would think that because of the effect of that freeway in that eastern and outer-metropolitan area, the Premier would have included references to the matter in his press statement. Freeways will carve up South Melbourne and affect Albert Park. Today the Premier was coy when he mentioned Albert Park, and it would be interesting to know the real effect of his statement. The effect of the Eastern Freeway, the Mulgrave Freeway and Freeway F2 is known. What is the alternative? What did the Premier offer when he made his press statement? He said—

The Government is concerned at the impact of the proposed network, especially in the inner areas of Melbourne, and in October, 1971, instructed the Metropolitan Transportation Committee to review the whole
plan with a view to minimizing its sociological and environment effects and the overall cost.

He walked away from that statement in an answer to an honorable member this afternoon in this Chamber when he said—

The Government is already engaged on firm policies of improving public transport as an alternative to the motor car, especially in the inner areas through the ordering of new trains and trams, the building of express railway tracks, and the construction of the underground. The goal is a system of balanced transport in which the motor car is not dominant, but each section has a role.

Mr. WILCOX.—You agree with that?

Mr. WILKES.—I agree with the underground rail loop.

Mr. WILCOX.—But you agree that each section has a role?

Mr. WILKES.—I agree with the general statement that each section has a role to play. What I find difficult to relate to the statement is that there has been no improvement in train or tram services and very little or no improvement in bus services. The railways lost $8 million in the first quarter of this year, and that indicates a further loss of passengers. One of the friends of the Minister—the honorable gentleman will know who I mean—was reported in the press recently as saying that he used to travel to work by rail but, because of the inconsistent service, bad trains, trains not properly serviced, and schedules which could not be kept, he had bought a second-hand car and was driving to work. He is one of dozens of people who previously used trains and who would be prepared to use them again if the service were properly conducted, fast and modern. There was no indication from the Premier that anything like that can be expected.

The honorable gentleman said that a few freeways planned for the inner metropolitan area would be abandoned. He also said—

There are still problems of “through” traffic to be solved. Increased weight is being placed on “outer-ring” freeways.
been done about providing a transport system to the quickly developing areas on the periphery of Melbourne.

As against that, the Government has, through the Board of Works plan, authorized a corridor development to Whittlesea. I have been to the area to see the results of the Government's planning, but there is no railway line there. One would expect, in any planning—corridor development or otherwise—that the first step would be to provide transport facilities, but there is no suggestion of their being provided. The line finishes at Epping and there is no service for Mernda, South Morang, Yan Yean, and Whittlesea. The reservation is still in existence and the Government should do something about that. There has been no mention of a proposal to construct a line there, as an election gimmick or otherwise. The outer-circle railway was disbanded by the Government when it took office in 1956.

Mr. WILCOX.—It was disbanded in 1890.

Mr. WILKES.—The reservation was disposed of by the Government in 1956. If it had been retained, it could have been used to make an impact on Melbourne's transport problems. But there has been no development in public transport, certainly none by the railways, and none by the tramways since 1955. Because of the failure of the Government to provide public transport facilities, people have been forced to use motor cars, and as a result the Government finds itself in a quagmire today.

The Opposition makes no apologies for what the Minister has done. It compliments the organizations which have spent so much time in examining the proposals of the Government until and including today—as they will examine those of tomorrow—on freeway planning, particularly members of the Carlton Association, the people in Brighton, and the people in Mulgrave. They have forcibly brought to the notice of the Government the stupidity of its freeway policy. The Labor Party offers these organizations its full support. It will not be satisfied until work ceases on the Mulgrave Freeway, Freeway F2, and the Eastern Freeway and a proper public transport system takes their place. I commend the motion.

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—I am happy that this debate is taking place, although I cannot say the same about the motion. One cannot support a motion of want of confidence. I do not object to an opportunity being given to honorable members to discuss the general transport question, and particularly freeways, upon which emphasis has been placed. To properly inform the House, the best I can do is to recount some of the history of the Metropolitan Transport Plan. Although the motion is in wide terms the debate is particularly related to the metropolitan area. I do not object to that. That was the context which the Opposition wanted to raise on other occasions, on questions relating to freeways, and I take it that the debate is being conducted in those terms.

The Government set up a Metropolitan Transportation Committee in 1963, and it started work in 1964. When I joined the committee in 1967, I thought there had been a great deal of study and that perhaps it was time that study stopped and a plan was produced. In the next couple of years, that happened. Many plans were considered and finally the committee made a recommendation on a total transportation plan. That involved all forms of land transport. When that report was presented to the Government it included an introduction by me, as chairman of the committee, and I particularly direct attention to three paragraphs in that introduction which, of course, had the full support of the committee. I said—

There must be flexibility when dealing with the complex problems of urban congestion and urban renewal. For any plan to be successful it must have the ability to meet and reflect the changing needs of the community.
I also said—

The need for flexibility leads me to people because it can only be through people that changing needs are expressed and, after all, that is what the plan is designed to meet—the needs of people.

People are what it is all about. People wish to move from place to place or they wish to have the goods which they use moved from place to place. But they are also subject to their environment.

That was written in December, 1969. At that time the word "environment" was not continually in use as it has been in the past few years. I continued—

We must remember that cities like Melbourne exist because people live in them and in implementing the plan, the relationship between environment and the quality of individual lives must be well considered—for example, great care will have to be taken to preserve those aspects of Melbourne which have character and distinction, such as our outstanding parks and gardens.

That is worth recording because it is part of the history of this continuing subject. The plan has served a useful service. It is a comprehensive plan, and the 50 miles of freeway which have been constructed were built in accordance with it. The freeways which will go ahead in accordance with the Government's policy are provided for in the plan. There may be a few variations in outer areas, but they will be in areas of broad acres, where it is easier to make variations.

The public transport segment of the plan is going ahead. I will not say that it is going ahead in leaps and bounds but it is starting to go ahead in that way. The plan provided for only four new rail lines. One was the Melbourne underground rail loop. Work on that project is well on schedule and I only wish that, for the good of the State, many other projects ran so well on schedule. A plan for an eastern railway was included and the Government is committed to that. Provision has been made for the same railway to run down the centre of the Eastern Freeway to Bulleen. All these projects are in the plan. The new trains were very much part of the plan, as well as the new trams which are coming.

Mr. Wilkes.—What about some new railway lines?

Mr. Wilcox.—Perhaps I should refer to a new rail track which has not been mentioned. It is the third line which has been completed in recent years between Flinders Street and Box Hill. Every suburban line which needs an extra track can have one, but that one was completed in recent years.

Mr. Wilkes.—That was not mentioned in your answer to me last year.

Mr. Wilcox.—That is not recorded as a new line. A new line is an extension. A second or third track is not regarded as a new line. I make the point that the plan is working. Through and through the plan, not just in my introduction to it, the need for flexibility was mentioned. I make no apology for being a member of a Government which responds to the needs of people. I thought that was what politics was all about.

I move on to October, 1971. The plan was released in December, 1969, a little more than three years ago. In October, 1971, the Government had to consider some of the freeway works. Irrespective of the number of reductions made by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee or any other advisory committee, the Government must make the final decision because, apart from anything else, it has to provide the money. I am glad that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition supports that remark.

Mr. Wilkes.—Neither I nor my party approved of that plan.

Mr. Wilcox.—There is a great tendency to think that because people are expert in planning they are the answer to all mankind's prayers. They are not. Planners often need to be taken with a grain of salt.

Mr. Doube.—Ministers, too.

Mr. Wilcox.—Yes, and all members of Parliament. In October, 1971, the Government asked the Metropolitan Transportation Committee to investigate the substantial modification
of the proposed freeway network with a view to minimizing its socio­logical impact and over-all costs. It also asked the committee to recommend measures to upgrade the public transportation system and thus attract people to it and away from road transport. Therefore, in October, 1971, the Government was mindful of the problem which is still in the course of being solved.

Since then the Government has been advised of the progress of the review. The Minister for Local Government and myself, as chairman, are members of the committee. Therefore, we are generally aware of the stages that have been reached with the review although it is carried out by officers other than members of the committee—particularly by road engineers of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works and the Country Roads Board in the case of the freeway review. I regret that the review has not been presented as quickly as I would wish, nor in my view has it followed some of the directions that it should have followed.

In 1972 the Government took another decision in this field on which the community is still working out its priorities. On 21st December, 1972, the Premier made a statement of policy on transport in Melbourne in which he said—

The State Government aims at achieving a balance between public transport and the motor car in the interests of the whole community.

To achieve this balance, the following general policy is being implemented:—

Freeways under construction will be completed.

No new freeways will be commenced in inner areas where their construction will involve substantial loss of housing and community disruption.

I relate those two parts of the statement of policy on transport in Melbourne, and cite them so that honorable members will realize that the Government's mind was directed to the matter.

Mr. DOUBE.—The words are ambivalent anyway, so what does that clear up?

Mr. WILCOX.—I was coming to that. It has been necessary to define those broader words and in the interim attention has been given to that matter. As a result the Premier made the statement he made earlier today.

Mr. DOUBE.—That is still ambivalent. Why is not the Minister explicit on what is going to happen to South Melbourne?

Mr. WILCOX.—If the honorable member for Albert Park studies the statement—I understand arrangements have been made to provide him with a copy of it—and examines the maps, he will have no difficulties.

The Premier's statement is a good one. It recapitulates the history of the Melbourne Transportation Plan, and the continuing review which has been taking place since October, 1971. It clearly spells out that freeways will be built in the outer-suburban and country areas and it indicates where those freeways will go.

Mr. DOUBE.—Some of the inner suburbs will still be gashed.

Mr. WILCOX.—If the honorable member looks at the statement and map, it will become clear to him that the Government's policy that no new freeways will be commenced in inner areas where their construction involves substantial loss of housing and disruption will be adhered to.

Mr. WILKES.—Is there any indication that shortly there will be another Gallup poll?

Mr. WILCOX.—If the honorable member reads the statement in its entirety, it will become clear to him that there is no indication that there will be another Gallup poll soon.

Mr. WILCOX.—I am not afraid of any Gallup poll prediction. Plans for considerable improvement in the public transport services have been strenuously pursued. I agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that rail services frequently are not as good as they should be. I have had continual conferences this year with the Railways Commissioners with the view of determining action to be taken to overcome certain weaknesses. I concede that there are problems of capital monies. The railways have not received nearly as much as they should. As I have said many times, the reason is
neglect by the community of this important area of public transport, and consequently by the Government, because Governments react to community demands. I do not know whether members of the Opposition would reduce the financial allocation for education and increase the expenditure on public transport. If they would be prepared to do so, I should be glad if they would so inform the House.

Mr. Wilkes.—We would have saved some of the money that the Government has wasted and spent it on public transport.

Mr. Wilcox.—Details of the improvements which are planned have been supplied to the Commonwealth Government.

Honorable members interjecting.

The Deputy Speaker (Sir Edgar Tanner).—Order! The Chair requests silence while the Minister speaks.

Mr. Wilcox.—Plans have been put into action for improvement in the public transport arena with the limited funds available. The Government has committed itself to the purchase of new trams and trains and the construction of the underground rail loop without one cent of assistance from the Commonwealth Government. The public finance structure of the nation being what it is, if the public transport system is to be improved—this applies to the country as well as to the urban areas—assistance is necessary from the Commonwealth. The present Commonwealth Government promised during the election campaign that it would apply massive funds to public transport. That promise was repeated and at a Transport Ministers' meeting in Hobart in February the Commonwealth gave a commitment that it would pay up to two-thirds of the cost of improvements. However, not a cent has been received. This will interest honorable members, because this is the first year in which Commonwealth money can be made available to carry out works that I shall mention.

Mr. Wilkes.—Which year?

Mr. Wilcox.—This financial year. Railway works that are listed are: South Kensington to Footscray—third and fourth tracks; Caulfield to Cheltenham—third track; Ringwood to Ringwood East and Heathmont—various works. These works could not be completed in the one year but they could be commenced.

Mr. Edmunds.—What is the Minister quoting from?

Mr. Wilcox.—I am quoting from material which was supplied on behalf of the Victorian Government to the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. Edmunds.—Will you table that document?

Mr. Wilcox.—I will not table it at present without the permission of the Commonwealth Government. Other works are: Sunshine and Deer Park West—duplication and electrification of new stations; Altona junction to Werribee—electrification of station; Macleod to Greensborough—duplication; the rebuilding of some new stations which certainly need it; the new eastern railway lines to which I have referred—land acquisition and park construction; for the Huntingdale and Fern Tree Gully lines and for the Frankston-Lyndhurst line—signalling. It should be borne in mind that signalling can have a tremendous effect.

Mr. Wilkes (Northcote).—I raise a point of order. The Minister is quoting from a document which he says he cannot make available to the House unless he can obtain permission from the Federal Government. That is most unusual in this Chamber. When a document has been quoted from in this Chamber in the past, previous Speakers and you, Sir, have ruled that they must be tabled.

Mr. Wilton (Broadmeadows).—I support the point of order. There are a number of precedents in the House to the effect that when a
Minister is not prepared to table a document, he should not quote from it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Sir Edgar Tanner).—Order! There would be occasions when a Minister of the Crown may have to give to the House information from documents which he is not at liberty to lay on the table. I will allow the Minister of Transport, if he wishes, to continue using the information he has, and I will confer later with the Speaker to see whether it should be tabled.

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—I have been reading from a list of headings. I have referred to various railway lines and improvements which are to be made. I am quite happy to give that list to honorable members but without the concurrence of the Commonwealth Government, with which I have had correspondence, I do not believe I should give figures. I will state the list of improvements that the Government has made.

I add to those I have already mentioned, the items of rolling-stock, new trains, new trams and new passenger modal interchanges. All of these items represent works which the Government can commence in the 1973-74 financial year. Some of them the Government has started or could commence immediately if the Commonwealth Government honours its promise to contribute two-thirds of the cost of urban transport improvement.

Mr. DOUBE.—Is this the first time that the Government has asked the Commonwealth?

Mr. WILCOX.—The Commonwealth Government has been asked since about the middle of last year and the request, accompanied by details, has been repeated not once but several times to the present Commonwealth Government. I did not start this debate. Members of the Opposition started it by moving a motion of want of confidence in the Government and by referring to inadequate transport facilities and freeway planning. I am simply detailing the action of this Government and making it clear that the Government believes that because of the public finance structure of this country the State needs assistance from the Commonwealth Government to carry out this work. If members of the Opposition are “fair dinkum” in their statements about improving public transport, they will urge the Commonwealth Government to support what the State Government has been proposing for twelve months or more.

I have dealt with that part of the motion and mentioned the comprehensive statement by the Premier which set out the policy of the Government on freeways. It is acknowledged freely by the Government—it has been said so on many occasions—that when it cuts out some of the planned freeways it has to make compensating movements, and these are being made in the public transport field. I agree they have not been made as fast as I should like, because it is not physically possible quickly to overcome the existing situation.

Various possibilities are opened up by considering the upgrading of arterial roads, the flow of traffic, substantial interchanges with proper amenities and cover, and escalators to provide a means of conveyance from a car or bus to rail facilities. The provision of express rail tracks on all suburban lines is a possibility because the land is already available and no problems of acquisition arise. Then there is the possibility of new, modern rolling-stock, the extension of some of the tramlines and particularly the placing of trams in their own right-of-way. These are all possibilities, and as the Premier has said in his statement they can be achieved. They may not be needed today but the time will come when it may be necessary to use air space over existing rail tracks and this will be considered. I make it clear that information about the plans of the Government and the action that it has taken is freely available.
The freeway aspect has been carefully worked out since the Metropolitan Transportation Plan was presented more than three years ago. The recent cutting down of the freeway proposals is completely in accord with what was said in the plan, that for any plan to be successful flexibility was necessary. As the plan has to meet the changing needs of the community, that is exactly what is happening. I make no apologies for being a member of the Government which meets the changing needs of the people. For reasons that will be advanced by other honorable members, I suggest that the House will have no option but to vote against the motion of want of confidence in the Government.

Mr. TREZISE (Geelong North).—It is ridiculous for the Minister of Transport to try to place the blame for the present failings of the railway system onto the recently-elected Whitlam Government. After 23 years of a Federal Liberal Government, which gave the State Government not one cent, the honorable gentleman realizes that although the Whitlam Labor Government has been in office for only four months he will receive finance and this State will be better off under the Federal Labor Government than it was during the 23 years of Liberal misrule in Canberra. He knows it in his heart, but will not admit that in future, under a Federal Labor Government, Victoria will make progress in railway and other public transport.

I support the motion ably moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The arguments advanced by the Minister of Transport do not answer the allegations in the motion of the failure of the Government to provide adequate public transport facilities and the proper planning for freeways. The honorable gentleman knows that those allegations are true. The Minister has been one of the main spokesmen in the press and at public meetings in criticizing the lack of support given to public transport in this State by the former Federal Liberal Government. I feel sure if a secret vote were taken on this motion the Minister of Transport would vote with the Opposition.

The latest statement by the Premier today on freeways in Victoria, and particularly in the metropolitan area, is typical of the Government's hypocritical attitude. The Government has a record of somersaulting on policies on election eve. The Government has already backed down on the construction of high-rise flats; it is now giving a vote to 18, 19, and 20-year-olds; it has backed down on Victoria's need of an ombudsman; and it has backed down on plans for Westernport. The Government is starting to agree that the population of Melbourne should be controlled and that new centres outside the metropolis should be established. On freeway policy, the Government now agrees with what the Labor Party has proposed. Its actions add up to a last-minute panic on election eve.

Over the years the Government has failed to grapple with many problems, but now tongue in cheek it expresses itself as being much concerned about many issues, and especially about freeways, which affect municipalities. The Government also voices concern for people whose homes may be destroyed because the land is required for freeways. On election eve, the Government is prepared to take action which, it still prays, will hoodwink the people to returning declining Liberal Party members so that they can return to this House and form another Liberal Government.

As the Gallup polls have shown for the past four months, in Victoria the people are fed up with this hypocritical attitude and changing from one policy to the other for purely political purposes. No one can benefit under those conditions. The motion being debated concerns the failure of the Government to provide adequate transport
facilities and undertake proper freeway planning. No person in the community, including a Government supporter, can in true conscience deny that public transport in this State has been allowed to decline rapidly over the past twenty years. They cannot deny also that the planning of freeways in this State has been inadequate, especially in view of the somersaulting statements made by the Government.

I invite honorable members to consider public transport and to refer to official figures extracted from Government reports. In the past twenty years, during which time there has been a Liberal Government for about 95 per cent of the time in this State, the population of Victoria has increased by over 1 million people. In the same period tramway passenger journeys have declined from 338 million a year to 140 million a year. In other words, despite an increased population, passenger trips have decreased by about 200 million a year. Rail passenger trips have declined from 165 million a year to 135 million a year, a decrease of 30 million.

I turn now to consider road transport in the past twenty years. The number of people who have obtained driving licences in this State has increased from 500,000 in 1952 to 1·5 million in 1972. All of those people have not been persuaded to transfer from public transport to the roads. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has said, many of them have been forced to go onto the roads because of the Government's inadequate support of the public transport system. The Liberal Party's policies are reviewed and dictated by many powerful interests in the community, both in Australia and overseas. Although it might be said that many of the oil companies, insurance companies and hire-purchase companies will support an open cheque policy for road transport, that does not suit the general public or the economic position of the State in that the Government allocates only "peanuts" for the public transport system.

It has been proved in the past that the pouring of huge amounts of money into unlimited roadways and freeways is not an economic proposition; it is much better investing much of this money in public transport. So the investment of money in public transport is a cost-saving alternative to unlimited road construction. The people are entitled to an adequate railway system without having to use antiquated rolling-stock. The present rolling-stock will not induce the ordinary citizen to leave his motor car at home. Victoria has the most antiquated tram and railway vehicles of any State in Australia. Victoria also has the highest tram and bus fares of any State in Australia.

Mr. Wheeler.—It is the only place with trams.

Mr. Trezise.—Melbourne also has tramway buses and other bus services. Currently, metropolitan railway stations are unmanned at night.

Mr. Rafferty.—Hear, hear!

Mr. Trezise.—The Minister of Labour and Industry does not care about pensioners or young people who have to travel on trains at night—he says "Hear, hear" when reference is made to unmanned railway stations. The Labor Party contends that people are entitled to be looked after on railway stations and that will be my party's policy.

People in Victoria have little alternative—they can travel by public transport in vehicles that are 70 or 80 years old or drive a modern motor vehicle. Melbourne has approximately 700 trams of which more than half are more than 40 years old. The Government expects a person to stand on a street corner in inclement weather waiting for a tram that may or may not arrive. When the person gets on the tram he has to put up with cold and windy conditions and pay an exorbitant fare. In the past
twenty years tram fares have increased by 66.6 per cent. In that time the two-section fare has increased from 3 cents to 20 cents.

Mr. BIRRELL.—What about wage increases?

Mr. TREZISE.—Both the honorable member for Geelong and the Minister of Labour and Industry blame every price rise on increased wages. In the twenty-year period to which I refer, the base salary of a conductor has increased from $15.80 to $54.90, an increase of 258 per cent. That explodes the argument which the Government so often raises that increased wages cause price increases. The same situation applies whether the employees work for the railways, for the tramways or for private industry. As I have said, tramway fares have increased 66.6 per cent and wages have gone up by only 25 per cent. I should like to hear the Minister of Labour and Industry explain that away, and also explain why railway stations should not be manned. No amount of laughing will get the honorable member off the hook.

Members of the Opposition are sympathetic towards the Minister of Transport because he has been a lone voice in the Cabinet in attempting to upgrade our transport services. Since the Government came into office, not one tram has been built at the Preston workshops.

Mr. WILCOX.—The honorable member should look at the latest prototype tram.

Mr. TREZISE.—The Minister knows that not one tram has been built at the Preston workshops since the Government came into office. I notice that the Minister of Labour and Industry is silent on that matter. On the other hand, thousands of dollars have been taken from the Tramways Board for the infectious diseases hospital at Fairfield and the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board.

Mr. HAMER.—Where?

Mr. TREZISE.—The honorable gentleman does not know, although he is the Treasurer of this State. The Treasurer should ask the Minister of Transport.

Mr. HAMER.—In the past?

Mr. TREZISE.—Yes, in the past under this Cabinet. Another matter which has led to a grave deterioration in the tramway service and the popularity of the Government is the discontinuance of all-night tram services.

Mr. RAFFERTY.—I thought the honorable member would be past travelling at that time of night.

Mr. TREZISE.—Neither the Minister nor I may travel on all-night services, but many people such as cleaners, policemen and shiftworkers travel at night. The all-night tram service should be restored to enable these persons, most of whom fall within the low-income group and can least afford the cost of a taxi, to use the service.

The railways have been the Aunt Sally for Liberal Governments over the years. Many times, the former Premier suggested that the guards were loafers who just went along for the ride, and were overpaid. At one time, Sir Henry Bolte suggested that the Federal Government should take the railways over. When the bluff was called, the State Government quickly backed away; it did not want to give away an important State instrumentality which provided a valuable service for the community. The former Premier said that he would give them away but the present Premier, on assuming office, rejected the offer. Perhaps the honorable gentleman can explain the change in the Government's attitude.

Honorable members often hear of the astronomical losses incurred by the railways, but how can it be otherwise? After all, the Railways Commissioners are given financial handouts, even less than they had in 1955, and when compared with other Government departments and
private industry they treat their employees like second-class citizens. It is no wonder that the morale of railway employees is at the lowest ebb.

Approximately two-thirds of suburban rail carriages in this State are more than 45 years old and many of them are 80 years old or more. How can the railways hope to compete with modern motor cars and aeroplanes? The trains were built to compete with the horse and buggy or the antiquated Southern Cross aeroplane which was built much later than the rail carriages currently in use. It is unnecessary for me to detail the numerous complaints that members of the Opposition have received, that one reads in letters to the newspapers every day, or in published articles and speeches made by citizens, other honorable members, and indeed the Minister of Transport himself. The Minister has often said that the railways have received a shabby deal from the Government. If any honorable member desires proof, I shall be quite happy to quote the statements. Again, the Minister of Labour and Industry knows nothing about this field and yet as a Cabinet member makes decisions which affect employees and patrons of the railways.

Although the population of the metropolitan area has spread rapidly in the past twenty years, as well as the steady increase in the State’s population, approximately 200 miles of railway line have been closed.

Mr. CRELLIN.—Where? In the country?

Mr. TREZISE.—In the country. Moreover, not one inch of new rail track has been laid in the new suburbs. It does not matter whether tracks are closed down or no new ones laid; there is still no service for the people.

The Government has adopted a disproportionate attitude as between road transport and public transport. The best example I can cite is the routes between Melbourne and Geelong. Road and rail run side by side. The Geelong-Melbourne highway is perhaps the most modern in Victoria. Over the past twenty years millions of dollars have been spent, and millions more will be spent on modernizing the highway. Vast sums of money have been spent on providing overpasses at Lara and Little River. These overpasses are used by very few vehicles when compared with the traffic on the railway line alongside.

The railway service between Melbourne and Geelong still runs on a single track, which caters for more traffic than any double track line in Victoria. The trains used on the service are antiquated and seldom run on time. Perhaps I should amend that statement and say that 5 per cent of the time they run on time. The time taken for a train journey between Melbourne and Geelong, according to official records, is longer now in many cases than it was 100 years ago. It is no wonder that the honorable member for Geelong, myself and the Minister of Transport constantly receive complaints from rail passengers about the conditions imposed on them by the Government. The Government cannot find the “peanuts” necessary to complete the duplication of that line although it will spend millions of dollars on the adjacent highway.

The Labor Party does not agree with the Government’s disproportionate allocation of funds in the transport fields. After 100 years of Government, it is about time that Victoria had an over-all co-ordinated transport plan. It is out-dated to have a separate tramway system, railway system and road system competing in opposition with one another in one area whereas other districts, particularly in the metropolitan area, have very little public transport.

As an example I shall cite St. Kilda Road, along which trams travel and pick up passengers. At the same time, a private bus line uses the same road and picks up passengers at the tram stops. This is duplication of
transport services. Surely the Minister of Transport will agree that such duplication can be avoided.

Mr. HAMER.—Should not the Brighton passengers be allowed to get off along St. Kilda Road?

Mr. TREZISE.—The St. Kilda Road trams should pick up people at the tram stops. I do not believe private buses should compete.

Mr. HAMER.—What about people coming from Brighton; do they have to travel right into the city before disembarking?

Mr. TREZISE.—The previous policy was that the private buses were not permitted to pick up along St. Kilda Road, but this policy has been changed in recent years and they are now permitted to pick up passengers at the tram stops.

Another example is Sydney Road, where a tram service operates within 100 yards of a railway line. Yet in outlying suburbs, residents complain that no public transport is available, particularly in off-peak hours.

With the introduction of co-ordinated planning, a more balanced transport system could be provided throughout the State, particularly in the metropolitan area, so that all people could have a balanced service instead of some people in St. Kilda Road benefiting from two or three services whilst others have no service. The present system should be thrown into the melting pot and some form of co-ordinated control introduced. Instead of services competing against one another, they should be co-ordinated. The Minister of Transport is on record as agreeing with this policy hook, line and sinker.

Members of the Opposition consider that there should be a genuine spirit of co-operation between the State and Federal Governments on the question of public transport. I say “genuine” irrespective of which Government is in power in the State or Federal spheres. The Labor Party considers that there should be more co-operation and less confrontation. After all, the people of Victoria are also Australians. The Government has stated that it does not want to co-operate with the Federal Government in many fields, and in the past it has not been prepared to co-operate with Federal authorities in relation to transport.

Mr. WILCOX.—We have been falling over backwards to co-operate with them.

Mr. TREZISE.—I wish to quote from the Economic Evaluation of Capital Investment in Urban Public Transport, which was published in June, 1972, by the Federal Bureau of Transport Economics. This study was carried out by the Federal authority to ascertain the cost needs of State public transport systems. The report states—

At the wish of the Victorian authorities, the list of investment items provided for Melbourne was not reviewed by the Bureau of Transport Economics, nor were data provided for project evaluation as in the other participating cities.

Mr. WILCOX.—Because we have it all in the metropolitan transportation plan, a copy of which had been provided to the Bureau of Transport Economics. Victoria was the only State which had a transportation plan.

Mr. TREZISE.—That demonstrates how dumb the previous McMahon Liberal Government was. Later in the report it is stated that the bureau had difficulty in obtaining data because of the unco-operative attitude of the Victorian Government. The Federal Minister for Transport, Mr. Jones, has said that unless the Government is prepared to co-operate in the interests of Victoria it will certainly be a long way behind the other States.

I turn now to the second point which was so capably dealt with by my colleague, that is, the somersaulting act of the Government on freeways. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition pointed out that in October last year the Minister of Transport stated or insinuated that no
Want of Confidence

[ASSEMBLY.]

statement would be made on freeways until the position was reviewed by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee. Today, the Minister said that a statement had been brought out, but he has not said on what basis the statement was made. Apparently, it was not made on the report of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee. What happens if the committee's report comes out next week and states that the panic statement of the Government today is totally incorrect? What happens then? We do not know, but we and the public want to be informed. The statement made today was purely an election-eve gimmick because it was not made on any basis.

The Premier and the Minister of Transport dodged the issue at question time when the honorable member for Albert Park asked questions without notice about the Government's present plans and on what basis they were made. The statement made today might attract a few votes to Liberal Party members whose seats in this House are in jeopardy, but what about the people in the northern suburbs? Are their homes still to be pulled down? Are they to live in fear of the bulldozer? It is about time a statement was made. Will no more homes be pulled down in the northern suburbs? A Government supporter said that, but the Premier remains silent.

The Government is too anxiously prepared to bulldoze the homes of working class people. How many homes of Government members have been bulldozed for the construction of freeways? Not one. Therefore, the Fitzroy and Collingwood councils are up in arms—not on the statements which are being made day by day by the Government but on the hypocritical and inconclusive statements which are being made. What will occur when the elections are over? Will the public have a say in the areas where freeways are to be constructed, as the people have in California? The public of Victoria has not had any say on this subject in the past.

Mr. Trezise.

The Labor Party's policy is that, before any freeways are planned or constructed, the people who are directly or indirectly affected should be consulted. The Government should not engage in back-room deals and then bring out two alternatives, plan A and plan B, and let the people argue about which route they prefer. This is a clever ruse of the oil companies—to produce a plan with two or three alternatives so that the people concerned fight among themselves. When the people are divided, they are beaten. That is how the Government has tried to defeat the people on the question of freeways.

Members of the Opposition ask the Government whether, in the future, if it occupies the Government benches—although it may be many years hence—and if freeways are planned, will the people in the areas affected be consulted. The residents in the areas concerned know what they want, whether they vote for the Liberal Party, the Labor Party or any other party. They want a say in the planning of freeways.

Again, members of the Opposition were correct in their predictions. The Government pulled down hundreds of homes and destroyed hundreds of acres of natural parklands now to no avail; it wasted millions of dollars and caused people to sell their homes because they were afraid of the bulldozer. No one wants to buy a home knowing that it will be acquired for a freeway or that a freeway will pass close to it. In other words, the Government has made a hell of a mess of the planning of freeways. Many of the problems which exist today could have been avoided if the Government had listened to the people years ago.

Mr. Birrell.—Some freeways are necessary.

Mr. Trezise.—That may be so, but before any freeways are constructed the people affected should be consulted. At Geelong today people are affected by the decision of persons who call themselves town planners and are deciding that a road
will go through hundreds of homes. The persons who make those decisions have no qualifications to enable them to do so. If meetings were thrown open to the public, trained engineers and planners in the community could contribute to the final decisions. Back-door deals should be done away with completely.

Now that the Government has decided to save millions of dollars on curtailing the freeway construction programme in the metropolitan area, I hope the next Government speaker will inform honorable members where the money which has already been allocated for specific freeway works will be spent. Is it to be channelled into public transport? The Government should state how much of this money will be used to update the public transport system, which is the only proper alternative to the suicidal trend to build unending freeways. The decisions made by the present Parliament will affect this State for ever. I trust that what the Government has said about its policy on inner-suburban freeways will be adhered to sincerely, whether it is returned to office next month or in years to come, because the people do not want to be hoodwinked about what is going to happen in Victoria.

The Victorian Government has two choices. The first is that it can pursue a suicidal policy of building unending freeways which will lead to the maniacal position which exists in Los Angeles where cars stall on freeways because of lack of oxygen, to say nothing of the effect on human life; or to the situation which exists in Tokyo where policemen on point duty need fresh air treatment every hour and kiddies have never seen stars because of pollution caused mainly by the unchecked patronage of automobiles. The second alternative is to adopt a policy of planning and constructing a co-ordinated and well-balanced road system along with the public transport system. Let us hope the generations of the future will not look back on this generation and the Parliaments of the 1970s as persons who desecrated the State. I support the motion moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I know the Minister of Transport, in his heart, would agree that the public transport system in this State has been neglected and, although the Government has the numbers, the conscience of Government supporters tells them that the motion is entirely justified.

Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer).—This motion must be rejected—not just on numbers, but on its merits. In his concluding remarks, the honorable member for Geelong North expressed in a few words the precise philosophy of the Government on transport planning policy. It is the precise view which the Government has taken over a number of years and which is now implemented in transportation policy for the whole State. I join in this rather limp debate for two principal reasons. One is to answer several ridiculous claims which have already been made, and the second is to point out that the transportation policy of the Government is exactly in line with what the honorable member for Geelong North has just said.

The ridiculous statements which have so far been made are these: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, in support of his motion, claimed that the Government had failed to co-ordinate freeway planning in Melbourne. I do not know whether he is aware—perhaps he is not—that representatives of the Board of Works and of the Country Roads Board are both members of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee. They plan together. On that committee there are representatives not only of the road authorities but also of the railways, the tramways and the planning authorities. They work together on this committee under an Act of this Parliament which was passed as long ago as 1962. The whole purpose of the Act was to co-ordinate transportation planning in Melbourne. I invite the honorable member to examine the proceedings of that committee and the reports which it has brought out from time
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to time, including its major report in 1969. He will see that there is co-ordination of the very kind which he has advocated. So the honorable member should not talk nonsense about the Government’s failure to co-ordinate transportation planning.

The second claim was that there has been some discrimination in arriving at decisions on elimination of freeways. The honorable member claimed that it was done in a way so that areas south of the Yarra and not those north of the Yarra would benefit. I ask the honorable member whether he still wants the freeways which have been deleted from Fitzroy, Coburg, Carlton, Richmond, Northcote, Preston and South Melbourne areas. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition claimed that there was some discrimination in the selection of the freeways to be discarded. A review has been undertaken of the inner areas of Melbourne, and that review has had no regard to who is holding seats or who will hold them. The position has been reviewed on the basis of what would be deleted from the freeway programme because of its intrusion into built-up areas, shopping areas, factory areas or into the community.

Mr. WILKES.—I asked the Premier to table the report and he denied that there was any.

Mr. HAMER.—I do deny it, yes. Therefore, the second of these ridiculous claims is discounted completely. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition really wants these matters reviewed again, let him say so. I suggest that he should accept the fact that planned freeways have been deleted from as many of the northern and western areas of Melbourne as from any other areas. In fact he complimented the Government on doing this very thing and said that it was in line with the Labor Party’s policy.

I have been asked about the review. This review has been continuous since October, 1971. It is now eighteen months since the Government ordered a review of the entire freeway network by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee. At that time—and it was well ahead of any expression of concern by many groups in the community—the Government became concerned at the impact of the proposed freeway network on the inner areas of Melbourne. I stress that no action has been taken to implement the freeway network in these areas by reserving land for freeways. The proposed plan was prepared by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee. When the Government considered the individual projects—and the F1 project brought this whole thing into the open—it became very concerned about the possible sociological effects on the inner suburbs of Melbourne and the disruption of established communities. It gave instructions for the committee to examine the network with a view to reducing the sociological effects on the community, the social disruption, and the over-all costs. That review has been continuous, and the Minister of Transport and the Minister for Local Government, who are chairman and vice-chairman respectively of the committee, have been reporting continuously to the Government on the review. The review is not complete. No one has said it is complete. But it has gone far enough for the Government to have made certain decisions on policy matters and to apply those policy decisions to the freeway network.

In December of last year, the Government issued such a policy directive. The Government made it quite clear that it would not countenance the construction of freeways in the inner areas where social disruption and substantial destruction of houses would be caused. Since then the Cabinet sub-committee, consisting of the Minister of Transport and Minister for Local Government, has applied this proposition to the freeway network because it is comparatively simple to do so. That has been the procedure, and the Government now makes these announcements.
The honorable member for Geelong North made a very mysterious claim, that Victoria did not supply details to the Commonwealth Government of the transport projects for which financial aid was sought. The honorable member read one paragraph of a report without giving the rest of the story, which was that Melbourne had the most comprehensive study and transport plan in Australia which had been provided through the Ministry of Transport to the Federal Minister for Transport. For that reason duplication was not required. I refer honorable members to the statement made last month by the present Federal Minister for Transport on Commonwealth assistance to transport throughout Australia, one paragraph of which reads—

As Ministers know, this council—

that is the Australian Transport Advisory Council—

requested the Bureau of Transport Economics to assess the investment needs of urban public transport over the next five years. State transport authorities provided details of public transport programmes for Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. The Bureau of Transport Economics analysed the available data and their report has now been considered by the Government.

Is it suggested that in making that statement Mr. Jones is being misled, or is it not a fact that the Bureau of Transport Economics has the material and the data it requires, has analysed it and has made its report? Does the honorable member for Geelong North ask honorable members to believe that the bureau would make a report without the data or without properly considering it? The answer is, "No". That is the answer to the claim that Victoria has not supplied proper details to the Commonwealth Government. It has supplied the details.

There have been continual discussions between the Federal and State officials and there is not the slightest ground for saying that the Commonwealth Government has not received all the details it requires to make a decision. The Victorian Government applauds the attitude of the Federal Government in coming to the aid of the States on public transport. This State has always argued that it was unfair and inequitable that considerable Federal financial aid should be given to other forms of land transport, for roads, airports, air control and shipping, and that nothing was allocated for fixed rail and public transport. This was the reason why all this material was supplied to the Federal Government last year. The Victorian Government had every reason to expect that irrespective of which party was successful in the Federal elections, financial aid would be made available for the public transport system. So I applauded the decision, as I would have expected to applaud the decision of a Liberal and Country Party Government if it had won the election.

Mr. WILKES.—The honorable gentleman would have been disappointed.

Mr. HAMER.—I would not have been disappointed. I would have expected something along the same lines, because similar promises were made by both parties.

The Metropolitan Transportation Committee produced a transportation plan for the metropolitan area. There has been considerable bias shown in the debate already against freeways, but the Government thinks that this city, like every other city of its size, requires a balanced transport system. There is a role for freeways, and a considerable and growing role for public transport. An unvarnished and unbiased examination of the metropolitan plan will show that it is a balanced plan, that it is not just a vast network of freeways straggling across the city.

Mr. WILKES.—To which plan does the honorable gentleman refer?

Mr. HAMER.—I am referring to the 1969 plan.

Mr. WILKES.—That has been altered now.
Mr. HAMER.—Certain sections of it have been deleted and greater emphasis has been changed to public transport, but I will come to that shortly. The Government believes in balanced transport; not just public transport, but a balanced system.

Mr. WILKES.—Is the Premier trying to say private enterprise transport?

Mr. HAMER.—The Government believes in a balanced system of public transport and roadways, and any other form of transport that can be devised. A comprehensive scheme is now in existence, and it has one outstanding characteristic built into it by the committee; it has to be flexible. It was well understood that the whole plan was based on a projection of where the population would extend, where people would work, go to school and shop. It was envisaged that the plan would be under constant review. There has been a shift in the attitude about freeways in inner areas. This has brought about this change and exercised this flexibility in the plan.

If portions of a freeway network are deleted, as has now happened, then alternative arrangements must be made. Other ways of getting the road transport through the areas where freeways are being deleted must be found. There are several alternative means of achieving this objective. Firstly, the standards of travel on which the freeway system is based are reduced. A freeway system is devised originally by estimating the number of vehicles to be provided for, setting an average speed at which they are to travel through the metropolitan area and providing the roads to fit those specifications. If portion of the network is deleted, the standards are reduced. People will not be able to proceed as freely and quickly through those areas as they would have on freeways.

Secondly, it is necessary also to enlarge the arterial system, to improve intersections, perhaps by underpasses and overpasses, to improve railway crossings and to increase the traffic flow on the existing road system. Other more exotic ways of dealing with the traffic flow can be attempted. Where necessary, tunnels can be used, if one is not prepared to invade a particular area and the use of air space above existing rail tracks can be examined because they are already an intrusion through the area.

Mr. TURNBULL.—I told the Government that when the Tullamarine Freeway was proposed.

Mr. HAMER.—I acknowledge that when there was a discussion on the Tullamarine Freeway the honorable member for Brunswick West suggested that it should be constructed over part of the railway track. There were good reasons why that proposal had to be rejected. I do not suppose the honorable member for Brunswick West would now advocate the abandonment of the Tullamarine Freeway. It has been one of the most successful freeways in this city. It is a great advantage not only to residents of the metropolis, but also to country people entering the city from the northern areas and interstate. That type of freeway is eminently desirable and justifiable. If one is prepared to pay the cost—and it is a high cost—of placing roadways above existing rail tracks, that might provide an alternative means of getting traffic through these areas. The scheme is worth examining. It was examined not only for the Tullamarine Freeway but also for the South-Eastern Freeway. There are ways of constructing such a freeway, but the cost is high. It may well be a cost which we should accept as the price for not disrupting existing communities in the inner areas.

I have spoken of the plans the Government has. It believes in balanced transport and not in the kind of biased attitude which has already been shown towards freeways. Freeways have a place in the community in areas where they can be planned...
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in advance and where reservations of land can be made so that the freeways do not disrupt the existing communities. There is a place for them in the outer areas and better planned parts of the metropolis and in country areas, as far out as they can be built and as quickly as they can be built. They are safe; the accident rate on freeways is less than one-fifth the rate on comparable arterial roads. They are convenient to people and attractive because they are pleasant to drive on without opposing traffic and there are no intersections to worry about. This provides for faster travel.

For all those reasons, freeways are popular. People will go miles to get on to a freeway. Over the past few years when the Government was looking at the problem of freeway traffic that particular attribute was striking, and has influenced the plan. If honorable members examine what remains of the freeway network they will see greater concentration on the outer-ring freeways and less concentration on inner-ring freeways. It is accepted that a good deal of traffic will migrate outwards to get on to a ring freeway so people can move more freely around the metropolis. The outer-rings will operate as distributors in a way that had not previously been comprehended fully.

This motion must be rejected. I believe Melbourne's freeway plan is the most comprehensive of any capital city of Australia. It has been produced as a result of the most comprehensive study and nothing has been rejected which cannot be replaced by more thought and a little more study.

Mr. Wilkes.—After the elections?

Mr. Hamer.—I can assure honorable members that it will go longer than that. It will still be flexible for the next Government and the one after. The transportation plans will still be adapted to the needs of the community. The Government has a basic plan which is workable and sensible and is based on a sensible principle. This sort of motion which claims that there has been no planning and no proper transport system must be rejected.

Mr. Doube (Albert Park).—The House has just heard a speech which is the death bed repentance of a person who is destined to become the next Leader of the Opposition. It is part of the "new look" public relations stunt in which the Government is engaged. I am sure that no action would have been taken if the Government had not received a notice to quit which stemmed from the result of the last Federal elections. This Government is on the skids, and it is prepared to do anything in an attempt to redeem itself in the eyes of the electorate.

The main theme of the advertising programme of the Premier, whose face looks at us from every newspaper, is that this year, as the honorable gentleman says, "Things will change"; in other words, it is an attempt to repudiate actions of the past eighteen years. It is an attempt to bury Bolte. Ministers now in the House were cowed by the former Premier. It is apparent that one-man Government in Victoria has finished.

If the Government did not fear the elections, the public would have heard nothing about the Government's so-called balanced approach to transport. It is an idle exercise for the Premier to imagine that we believe the Government has ever supported any form of transport apart from motor cars. The Government has been besotted with the proposition that motor cars—the shiniest, the biggest and most affluent-looking—could transport the public of Melbourne, and it has made no attempt to improve the public transport system. It is little wonder that the Government's besottedness has led it into attempting to hide the fact that there has been a lack of planning for transportation in this State.

The Government believed that cars and freeways would solve the problem of transporting the people, even
though years ago that policy was shown to be demonstrably untrue. It has long been well known that as a means of moving people the road system is hopeless, yet the Government has neglected the whole of our public transport system during the eighteen years in which it has been in office. Indeed, it assisted the Commonwealth Government to bring about its deterioration. Not one new tram has been built at the Preston workshops in the lifetime of this Government, and people have been forced to use cars simply as a result of the Government's failure to provide attractive public transport.

Mr. Stephen.—That is hogwash, and you know it.

Mr. Doube.—The honorable member knows more about that than I will ever know. He is a past-master at it. His record in this House is abysmal. All he ever does is blurt out insulting personal remarks about the contributions of other members. He knows that in his electorate he is regarded as the greatest dead loss ever. It is fortunate for us that he will not be here after the next election. It is even more fortunate for his present constituents.

People are not using public transport simply because it has been allowed to run down and is unattractive. Can the Minister of Transport advise why the railways and tramways charge a woman who travels with a baby in a pusher an extra amount? How much revenue do the departments make from that?

Mr. Wilcox.—I think that should be changed.

Mr. Doube.—Twenty years later the Minister decides to change that system. He is obviously frightened of the election results. It is obvious that the Government is prepared to do anything to get itself off the hook. It now agrees that there should be an ombudsman and it has adopted many other aspects of the Labor Party's policy. It is too late for the Minister to now say that the railways should never have been charging women with pushers.

Mr. Wilcox.—They do not pay for the babies. They pay for the pusher. Children are carried free.

Mr. Doube.—Children are not carried free. One would expect that the so-called Minister of Transport—the temporary Minister of Transport—would know better. The fact that they must pay for a child in a pusher drives many women away from public transport.

Mr. Wilcox.—The honorable member does not propose to talk about twins, does he?

Mr. Doube.—No. No charge is made for one child under four years of age, but if a woman has two children under four years, a fare must be paid for one of them. To avoid that payment a woman must either drive her car, or have her husband accompany her so that each person has only one child under four years of age.

Mr. Stephen.—If your brains were dynamite, you would not have enough to blow your head off!

Mr. Doube.—Here is the bleater again. He gets frantic when the idiocy of the Government is exposed. It is ridiculous that a fare should be charged for children under four years of age. The amount of revenue gained by the departments concerned must be negligible. There should be coordinated tickets. If a woman wishes to travel from Oakleigh—which is the electorate that I once represented in this House and which will soon be represented by a Labor member—

Mr. Stephen.—He will be a better representative.

Mr. Doube.—Yes, he will be better than the present one.

The Deputy Speaker (Sir Edgar Tanner).—I invite honorable members on the Government side of the House to cease interjecting.
Mr. DOUBE.—If the wife of the next member for Oakleigh wishes to go from that city to the university, she will probably have to pay a bus fare to the station, about 60 cents or 70 cents for the train journey, and another 25 cents for a tram journey to the university. That is too expensive. It is the responsibility of the Minister of Transport to coordinate transport services and to encourage people to use them.

As the number of people who use motor cars increases, so does the need for freeways which clutter up various areas of Melbourne. It is obvious that the Government lacks the ability to cope with the problem of public transport.

If the former Commonwealth Government had provided finance to permit the modernization of our public transport system, there would have been no need for the present problem concerning freeways to arise. Every suburban railway line in the State should have been duplicated.

Mr. McLAREN.—Is that the promise of the Federal Government now?

Mr. DOUBE.—We have just heard from the most frightened member on the Government side of the House. If two votes go the other way, he will be out of this place.

The Government did not go to Canberra to seek Commonwealth aid, because it was infatuated with the idea that cars could move the people. Instead it should have established parking stations near stations such as Caulfield, Oakleigh and Box Hill, with moving pavements, to allow people to leave their cars and make use of an attractive public transport system. The Government could not see that that was the correct course to follow; if it did, it did not have the courage to make a direct approach to a Federal Government which was composed of its Liberal Party colleagues.

It was so enthusiastic to help the Liberal Government in Canberra that it did not put the real interests of Victoria to that Government and get the money that was needed. The twenty years of Federal Liberalism and eighteen years of this Government have shown a lack of reality to come to grips with the problems of public transport. The Minister was astounded when he was told that in certain circumstances a child of four years of age had to pay a fare and the back-bench members of the Government looked like stunned plovers when they found that coordinated tickets could not be purchased. They will not be in power much longer. The Victorian people know that they are guilty; their silence in this debate has condemned them.

Government members are completely unwilling to take part in the debate, and time and time again they have refused members of the Opposition the opportunity to have this subject debated. In his death-bed repentance, in a frantic endeavour to hold on to Government, the Premier made a press statement which is fairly ambiguous. When I pointed out today where some of the freeways ended and asked the Premier where they began he made the type of frivolous comment that would come from a man who was trapped and knew it. He did not tell me what was going to happen to the two freeways that will cut the inside out of South Melbourne and Albert Park.

Honorable members should turn their attention to what will happen to Freeway F9, which is the South-Eastern Freeway. The section from Glen Iris to East Burwood in the east has been scrapped, but what will happen in the west? Was it not the duty of the Premier to make a clear statement on that aspect? Apparently it will continue to the west and cut through South Melbourne to link up with the new Johnson Street bridge and the Lower Yarra Crossing. South Melbourne is to be invaded by the freeway. Already it is cut in half by Kings Way.
I invite honorable members of the Government party to contradict me. Yesterday I presented a petition to the House from 2,000 people who live in South Melbourne and love that city. Many were born there and they like it the way it is. They do not want the sticky fingers of the Premier or anyone else cutting a great valley throughout their city or erecting an overhead above it.

Mr. Turnbull.—That is what they did in West Brunswick.

Mr. Doube.—That is so. Freeways are not needed in the inner-city area. The basic mistake made by this Government, because it was so full of its own importance and was imbued with the belief that it knew everything, was that it went ahead with the freeway proposal. The programme envisaged by the Labor Party is for a clean, rapid, efficient and cheap public transport system.

Mr. Burgin.—Subsidized.

Mr. Doube.—Of course, it has to be subsidized. Does the honorable member for Polwarth believe that the Tullamarine Freeway believes that the Tullamarine Freeway runs at a profit or a loss? Of course, it is subsidized and it is used by heavy transport which the Bland report said does not pay its fair share of the cost. The people who see public transport not as a community service but as a business undertaking are most dangerous. Unless public transport is accepted as part of community activity, Melbourne will be doomed, whether the Government looks at the matter through business eyes or not. I direct the attention of the House to what other countries in similar circumstances to Melbourne have done. The Government does not consist of people blessed with eyes so that they can observe. An article in the Victorian Railways Newsletter dated August, 1972, states—

Toronto, a city of similar size and habits as Melbourne, has just had a rethink on its city road building program. "In a momentous decision, taken in June last year, the Ontario Government stopped the building of Toronto’s $237 million Spadina Expressway and has abandoned its Urban Motorways Plans,” Mr. McAlpine said.

“ Their Premier said: ‘Toronto does not belong to the automobile.’ ”

The Premier is a guilty man in this situation. The honorable gentleman is unable to say how often he has had to bang on the door of Federal Treasurers of his own political colour. He was besotted by the motor car and was opposed to public transport. He and his colleagues hate public transport because they see it as the enemy of private enterprise.

Mr. Birrell.—You drive your motor car everywhere.

Mr. Doube.—No one can place the slightest faith in anything said by the honorable member for Geelong. Generally I use the tram to come to work. I have not the sort of car that I could use on long distances. I own a 1963 Austin Freeway, which indicates to the honorable member for Geelong how stupid it is to open his mouth without thinking—but of course, he is an expert at that! I shall also quote from the March, 1972, issue of Rydges, a publication highly regarded by business people in the Victorian community. An article states—

In the past 18 months, disillusioned city officials in New York and Philadelphia have simply cancelled formerly coveted expressways through the hearts of their cities, and Massachusetts Governor Francis W. Sargent called a halt to $800 million of Federal highway projects in Greater Boston that he had helped to get under way in his days as commissioner of public works.

The Government should have known about that. It is a private enterprise Government which at all costs somehow hoped that the privately-owned motor car would be able to get people in and out of the city, which is an impossibility. One train can carry 1,400 passengers, which is the equivalent of 1,000 cars, which would extend on one lane of a freeway for eleven miles. That illustrates the problem. Now the Government is pretending that it understands the situation perfectly and that it has a co-ordinated plan.
It has not. The elections are around the corner. Apart from one or two exceptions, the Ministers are utterly incompetent; they are self-satisfied individuals who are utterly afraid to argue their proposals in this House. They are prepared to stay amongst their own kind and imagine what they are doing is right. The day of reckoning has come; they have discovered, perhaps too late, that the electorate has seen through them. Instead of talking about "Hamer will make it happen" members of the Opposition are pointing out what he does not make happen. When the Premier was Minister for Local Government, all this idiotic business of freeways went on.

Mr. WILKES.—He defended them tonight.

Mr. DOUBE.—That is so, and he is responsible for the mess on freeways. I am not happy with the Premier's electoral statement. It has nothing to do with the problems of freeways but it has a lot to do with the Government's problems electorally. The freeway to which I have referred will cut across St. Kilda Road and link up with the new Johnston Street bridge and the Lower Yarra Crossing. It will divide one part of the City of South Melbourne from the other. I am also concerned with what will happen in connection with Freeway F14 which I understand was to be located in close proximity to Canterbury Road. This House has not had an assurance of the type I could take to the people I represent and say that that freeway has "gone". I refer honorable members to the November, 1972, issue of the journal of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria. It refers to an examination of traffic problems by the president of the club Mr. J. Derham. The report states—

Mr. J. Derham, RACV President, spent two hours over Melbourne in a helicopter during a morning peak traffic period last month and was surprised to find that the traffic flowed freely without any great delays.

He made the inspection to see whether the RACV could suggest better ways of using the existing road space.

The helicopter flew over all main traffic arteries in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Derham said that the pictures from the air showed the waste space on our freeways during peak periods. The flow was all one way with little traffic going in the opposite direction but still occupying as much road space as the main flow of traffic.

Mr. Derham said that while it would be difficult to have off-centre operations on existing freeways, road designers could give this more consideration when building future freeways.

One of the great failures of freeways is pinpointed in that statement—only half of a freeway is in use during the peak period. The Government has failed to consider the better use of existing roads. It has failed to impress the Opposition with its arguments and it is high time that it was removed from office. This motion will indicate to the community the sort of a Government Victoria has. People will not be convinced by the advertising rubbish of the Government. They will examine the record and know that the Government has failed repeatedly. That is why the Government party is saying that, this year, things will be changed; it is ashamed of the past.

Mr. BIRRELL (Geelong).—If one examines the wording of the motion, one realizes that much of what could have been raised during the debate has not been touched. The motion is—

That the Government no longer possesses the confidence of this House because of its failure to provide adequate transport facilities and proper freeway planning.

So far, the debate has been virtually confined to conditions in the metropolitan area. Admittedly, freeways are more used in the metropolitan area but they exist throughout the State. Transport is of concern to all Victoria, not just Melbourne. I expected more contributions from members representing country electorates.

The crux of the problem is that we are living in a new era. In the total transport field, circumstances exist which never existed before. This is true of Victoria, of Australia,
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and of the developed, developing, and undeveloped world. There are completely new circumstances everywhere which impinge on the transport of people and goods. This Parliament is not unique in talking about changes in transport and transport needs. These changes are inevitable.

Between 1950 and 1973 there has been a marked change in attitude to the types of transport available to all citizens. It is the age of affluence which causes the problems. Thirty or 40 years ago the number of people who owned motor cars made up less than 10 per cent of the population. Today, in Victoria, there is one car to every two citizens and the ratio goes up slowly year by year. Almost everyone in the community, including the factory worker at the bench, has the means to own a car.

It should not be forgotten that the car provides a comfortable and convenient method of travel. It has been denigrated but, if there were free transport running past our doors, we would still use our cars. Some time ago, the Government provided transport services at half fares on selected lines, but the scheme was a complete flop. Even the provision of completely free public transport would not necessarily bring people back to public transport. I do not know whether it was during the incumbency of the present Minister of Transport or a predecessor but the scheme I have mentioned operated for some time but failed to achieve its objective.

Fewer and fewer people want to travel by train and tram, irrespective of the types of trams and trains in service. I am speaking broadly and I shall refer later to particular matters. These are reasonably unarguable facts. Honorable members know that what I am saying is basically correct. I apologize to the honorable member for Albert Park for a rather quick remark I made, but I emphasize that this House has only two genuine users of public transport—the honorable member for Brunswick West and the honorable member for Williamstown.

Another key to the problem is that we are living in a democracy. Every honorable member believes that each person should be allowed to choose for himself how he moves, what food he eats, where he spends his holidays, and for whom he will vote. He also has the choice of whether he will use his car or public transport. People use cars for various good reasons best known to themselves. The Government must not harshly tell people to shove their cars in the garage for certain months of the year but, by better and cunning techniques, woo them back to public transport. That will be a long and costly job and the battle may not be won for many years. The car will be around as a means of transport for John Citizen for a long time to come. That brings us to various types of vehicles which must be considered to persuade people to use public transport.

The freeway has its place in the city. Every driver is pleased when he can use one. He says to himself, "This is the sort of road I like; I hope it never ends". However, in built-up areas, there is a reaction against freeways, as the Premier and the Minister of Transport have said. It is now too difficult to establish freeways in heavily built-up areas. In addition, they are costly, particularly when built-up land must be resumed.

If this debate had taken place in 1963 instead of 1973, very few honorable members would have condemned freeways. Fashions change. It was once the mode for men to wear their hair short; now they wear it longer. In the same way, once freeways were in and now they are out. All honorable members are jumping on the bandwagon. We must be honest and admit that this is dictated by political necessity in the electorates. If we cannot be honest on this, we will not find the right answer to the problems.
Although there is a strong move to cut back on freeways in built-up areas, it must be realized that throughout the State there is a great demand from all sections of the community for the continued construction of freeways. The first real freeway in Victoria was the Geelong-Melbourne highway. Soon, it will not be accessible to cross traffic from any source as a result of the construction of overpasses and so on. That road has proved a tremendous success, not only from the point of view of transporting people and goods but also from the point of view of road safety. With its construction, accident figures plummeted to a new low. I can remember when, every time I opened my local newspaper, I read of accidents on the road between Geelong and Melbourne. The railway crossing at Corio, 6 miles from Geelong, claimed lives regularly. Now, a modern highway runs over the railway there and drivers hardly realize that the railway exists.

There are two distinct problems relating to freeways. One relates to freeways in the metropolitan area and one to freeways in the country. The problems should be approached differently. The human element is not involved in one but it is greatly involved in the other. I hope that the result of any discussions here does not react against the provision of freeways outside urban areas.

As the honorable member for Geelong North said, there is a trend in the Geelong area which seems to indicate that the policy which the Government has adopted for Melbourne will have to be implemented there. Some engineers are thinking of cutting a swathe through the old built-up area in the municipality of Geelong West. As the honorable member for Geelong North said, we are not too sure of what is planned but we know that talks are going on about freeways. Most of the area concerned is in the honorable member’s electorate.

An honest examination of the situation requires a consideration of the remarks of the honorable member for Albert Park. It is wrong to countenance huge losses on public transport. This year the railways will probably incur a deficit of between $40 and $50 million. If the fares are kept at the present level, the deficit will escalate. The best part of $50 million will be written off by the stroke of a pen and it will be said that that is the cost of subsidizing the railway system in Victoria.

This loss of between $40 and $50 million cannot be disregarded as it is coming out of the State Budget, and can be sustained only at the expense of many other phases of State activity that require money. The Socialist outlook is uniform throughout the Commonwealth. It is an airy-fairy notion of free transport and "do not worry about the cost". However, nothing in life is free except the air we breathe. Someone has to pay, whether or not the railways are used. This deficit will be met from taxation in some form. It would be better to make these services balance their budget or at least reduce the astronomical figure that is developing at present. The sum of $50 million could do much for environmental protection, decentralization, hospitals and schools, and what it could do spread over other Ministries would be a revelation. Every Minister will agree.

Mr. DOUBE.—Is the honorable member suggesting that fares should increase?

Mr. BIRRELL.—There are two ways of handling this problem. Much of the public transport system runs at extremely heavy losses. In the report of the inquiry into the Victorian land transport system, there was a suggestion that the arterial or trunk line system of railway lines in Victoria should be maintained and that many of the small supporting services could be gradually closed down and eventually the lines
handed over to road transport to be feeder services. I agreed with the submission at the time.

Mr. TREZISE.—Would the honorable member close the Queenscliff line?

Mr. BIRRELL.—Yes. The Queenscliff line is typical. Twenty miles of railway line is being maintained for a handful of tourist services in the summer months, plus the transport of a small amount of shell grit—this is going out of production at Queenscliff. The line virtually relies on twelve tourist services a year.

Mr. DOUBE.—On the honorable member’s argument he would have to close down the Geelong-Melbourne line because it does not pay.

Mr. BIRRELL.—It does pay.

Mr. DOUBE.—Can the honorable member demonstrate that it pays?

Mr. BIRRELL.—It is hard to break a State’s railway system into portions and say that one part of the line is a success and another part is not.

Mr. DOUBE.—The honorable member has just said that the line pays.

Mr. BIRRELL.—Of all the lines in Victoria, the Melbourne-Geelong line is probably the most economic. I shall rephrase my previous statement. The Melbourne-Geelong line is less of a liability than any other line in Victoria. If there are losses, they are less than the losses sustained by other lines, but I think the line may be making a profit. If an arterial series of railway lines were introduced, there would be only six or seven radiating from Melbourne basically, with one or two feeder lines elsewhere. It may be possible to cut this tremendous loss. I wonder how long fares can be maintained at the level which has been operating in recent years. The Government has deliberately kept fares at that level for a long time, but I doubt whether they will remain at the present scale in another seven years, with the escalating wages and costs.

The pattern of railway activities needs modernizing to present needs. Road services will have to fill the gap. Outside of Melbourne the road will remain supreme whatever happens. Roads and freeways must be upgraded to meet the State transport system. Within the confines of Melbourne the underground rail loop is an attempt to upgrade the fixed rail system of transport. Without the initiative of the Minister the metropolitan service would be more behind the times in 1976 than it will be. The underground rail loop complements and makes 100 per cent effective the metropolitan railway services.

Mr. FELL.—That is not true. It is not designed to do that.

Mr. BIRRELL.—I believe it is. It is a feeder underground railway which can, on a circle of tracks, cope with all trains coming in from either side and return them in any direction desired.

The current programme being undertaken by the Victorian Government is not only realistic but will improve the Victorian transport system. I do not limit this entirely to Melbourne. Members of the Opposition are incensed because the Government has made a quick decision.

Mr. MUTTON (Coburg).—This is an important debate. As a representative of the community whose electorate has been almost carved into three equal portions, I compliment the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for providing honorable members with the opportunity of voicing their approval or disapproval on this important subject. During the debate two members have made statements with which I totally disagree. The first statement was made by the honorable member for Geelong, who said that he was happy about freeways and about travelling along them, and hoped they would continue forever. The honorable member possesses the ability to drive a motor car on the freeways but I am concerned at the personal sacrifice and financial hardships that have
been endured by many people in providing that valuable asset to the honorable member for Geelong. Honorable members know that progress must be paid for, but in my electorate many people have paid dearly to provide other citizens with the desired progress. The honorable member for Essendon will agree.

The Premier stated that he was pleased with the close co-operation and the co-ordination of the various authorities responsible for planning road construction and road transportation. The honorable gentleman said it was probably due to this close co-operation that the State today has freeways and bypass roads, and he added that Victoria should be proud of what has been achieved. I differ from those statements. Because of lack of co-operation and co-ordination by the Government Victoria is in chaos and confusion. Many people, not only in the metropolis but also throughout the rural areas of the State, do not comprehend what is contemplated by the Government. In 1954 the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, which was established by an Act of Parliament, commenced operating as a planning authority. In its administration it was charged with the responsibility of providing public open space and road reservation, and was authorized to pay compensation for lands acquired. In 1956 the Country Roads Board embarked for the first time upon the construction of bypass roads. It was not until 1969, as a result of an amendment of the Country Roads Act, that the expression "by-pass roads" was changed to "freeways".

In 1964 by an Act of Parliament, the Metropolitan Transportation Committee was established. It was proposed that the activities of the committee would not run counter to the activities of the Board of Works or the Country Roads Board. The committee was set up for the sole purpose of trying to co-ordinate the activities of those two bodies. However, in its activities as a co-ordinating agent it created chaos. I remember that in 1970 many people in my electorate had been held in suspense for nearly eleven years through the activities of the Board of Works, which had produced a planning scheme. Actually three planning schemes affecting Coburg were prepared, each with consequent road reservations. One was the Tullamarine Freeway, another the Sydney Road bypass and the third Freeway F2.

I am concerned at this stage only to illustrate what happened with the Sydney Road bypass. The Board of Works, carrying out its procedure, put a blanket over the area with a road reservation which was to be known as the Sydney Road bypass. For nearly eleven years this blanket order held in jeopardy 300 people who lived along that road reservation. The Metropolitan Transportation Committee, at a meeting with officers of the Board of Works and the Country Roads Board, decided that there was no need to proceed any further with the future development of the Sydney Road bypass. Accordingly, the Board of Works lifted its blanket order, which added further chaos in the minds of those poor unfortunate people who had been subjected to so much frustration. This was caused undoubtedly by the activities of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee and admittedly even though it had a most disturbing effect on many people in my electorate, it probably saved the homes of 300 people who were living there as my constituents.

The Board of Works had commenced its over-all planning scheme in 1954 but it was discovered in 1970 that the Sydney Road bypass road was no longer needed. I would say that the Metropolitan Transportation Committee had performed a good job and its activities justified its establishment. It showed that something which had been done in the past was no longer required in 1970. This is one of the most disturbing features of the Government's planning, and this has been admitted.
by the Minister of Transport and the Premier. Both honorable gentlemen and other Government supporters probably realized the immense authority exercised by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee and suggested, in 1971, that it was time the committee made a thorough and complete investigation of the freeway construction programme throughout Victoria. A sad feature and probably one of the most sorrowful acts of Government administration is that the Government has not forced the Metropolitan Transportation Committee to submit its report in sufficient time to enable it to be debated before Parliament is dissolved and honorable members have to face up to the voters at the coming State elections. I am positive that if honorable members knew what was in the minds of the officers of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee, they would be able to go out to their constituents in their electorates and tell them what is or is not going to happen. In other words, the electors of this State could be given a clearer picture which would enable them to formulate an opinion when they go to the polls on 19th May. The approach adopted by Government supporters is indicative that everything is not as good as the Government would have us believe and is an attempt by Government supporters to defend the Government and its activities.

Recently I raised in this Chamber a problem connected with the planning of Freeway F2, the eastern sector of which crosses my electorate. I refer particularly to East Coburg where there is a problem arising from the activities of the Board of Works as the planning authority. Everyone knows that the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works should never have been set up as a planning authority; it should have been wholly and solely concerned with sewerage and water supply. However, the Board of Works was set up as a central authority to carry out the planning of the metropolis and it has endeavoured to do this. The road reservation for Freeway F2 in East Coburg was planned in the early days by the Board of Works as the planning authority. This is another typical case in which the Board of Works as a planning authority can be classified as a toothless tiger because the board had no financial resources with which to carry out its planning programme or the construction of road works. The Country Roads Board had to come to the protection of the Board of Works by saying that it would carry out the construction of Freeway F2 if the Board of Works would be prepared to assist with providing land from the existing road reservation. The board actually did this; it had to prepare and maintain planning schemes which would blend in with the requirements of the Country Roads Board. When the Board of Works embarked on preparing an amended scheme, one would have expected it to be over the whole area, but the board in a parochial manner produced an amended scheme which provided that the major portion of the road project would be on the western side of Nicholson Street.

People living on the eastern side of Nicholson Street naturally thought their properties would not be acquired when the freeway was constructed, but they now find that the reverse position applies. These people have had to negotiate with the Board of Works to ascertain whether or not their properties were affected. They have received letters to the effect that their properties were not affected by the programme of the Board of Works. However, when these same people have approached the Country Roads Board they have been informed that their properties would be required.

So, there is utter confusion with the Board of Works saying that people on the eastern side of Nicholson Street are not embraced by any proposed amendment to Freeway F2 and the Country Roads Board saying that
they are. As the Board of Works has not sufficient funds, those people who desire to negotiate compensation for their properties have to approach the Country Roads Board which in turn must approach the Minister to get Ministerial consent to pay the compensation which the Board of Works should be paying. This is most confusing and is persisting. I have raised this matter in the House on previous occasions. I raised it on the motion for the adjournment of the sitting one evening but I failed to obtain a reply from the Minister.

If the Government were sincere and prepared to provide better transport facilities for the people of this State, it would not have started the underground railway project first. It would have been far more profitable to encourage people in the outer suburbs to use the railway system and to provide a better form of service than is now provided. It is ridiculous that the Government intends to spend $112 million on the development of an underground railway when some of the train carriages which will be used on the underground railway were built in 1880. Mr. Brown, the Chairman of the Railways Commissioners, has stated that he was utterly disgusted that the people of this State had to sit in antiquated carriages which were built in 1880.

I represent an electorate of 25,000 people and I am concerned for the future and the welfare of those people. My constituents have been hit hard by the effects of progress. They have been forced to leave their good homes and move out of the district and in some cases this has disrupted family life and resulted in broken homes.

I have been heartened by the statement of the Premier that the Government is considering helping those people who have been or will be affected by land acquisition for freeway constructions. I was very pleased to read in the Herald of Friday, 23rd February, a joint public statement by the Premier and Minister for Local Government under the heading "New Deal on House Grabs", in which the Government's policy on land acquisition was stated. It was the Government's intention to introduce during this sessional period a Bill which would have the purpose of ensuring a larger amount of compensation to those people who would be affected by a decision to proceed with the construction of freeways and who would be forced out of their homes through no fault of their own. Up to this stage of the debate no honorable member on the Government side has taken up this point and I trust that a Bill will be introduced during this sessional period to assist those people who have been affected in the past and will be affected in the future by land acquisition for the purpose of freeway construction.

Is the Government going to introduce this legislation? It is very hard today for people who have had their homes acquired under the terms of compulsory acquisition. They receive only the current valuation, which is small compensation for the time they have spent in those homes. In many cases the amount received as compensation is insufficient to enable them to find alternative accommodation. I shall cite a case in Coburg involving an acquisition for the now defunct Sydney Road bypass road. A pensioner couple were induced, after great efforts had been made by the Board of Works, which was the acquiring authority at the time, to accept the sum of $10,000 for their home. They were elderly people, the husband being 74 years of age and the wife 73.

The sitting was suspended at 6.30 p.m. until 8.6 p.m.

Mr. MUTTON.—Prior to the suspension of the sitting, I cited the case of an elderly couple whose property was acquired for the proposed Sydney Road bypass road. After negotiations between the Board of Works and the people had been
Want of Confidence in Government.

finalized the couple, who were 73 and 74 years of age respectively, received $10,000 compensation. They placed the money in a State Savings Bank account, and immediately the Commonwealth Department of Social Services reduced their pension by $5. Subsequently they had to take urgent action to accommodate themselves. To accomplish this they took out a second mortgage loan of $2,500. It was a harrowing experience for an elderly couple suddenly to have to take out a second mortgage to obtain a new home at their time of life.

I mention these facts to indicate the approach adopted by the Government, which made a public announcement that it would assist with compensation payments people who were likely to be affected by freeway proposals, and the problems that confront many persons when they find that their homes are compulsorily acquired by a Government department or authority.

The article on the front page of tonight's Herald indicates that the Premier has almost the same guile and political astuteness as his predecessor. The honorable gentleman has acted most undemocratically, probably as part of a political strategy. The Premier has made the public disclosures and is now bathing in the publicity. I am wondering whether the honorable gentleman intends to submit to honorable members the report by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee. At least the Premier should have had the courtesy to submit the report to Parliament so that honorable members could peruse it while he made his public statement with the idea of capitalizing electorally.

I have tried to indicate the chaos and confusion that is rampant throughout the State because the Government has lost contact with the people and the departments. I query whether freeway proposals have been properly investigated and whether they are a last resort to cope with modern transport needs.

According to the Premier's statement in the press today, it appears that my earlier suspicions were correct, that freeways do not solve the problems of modern transport. Evidence of this is available in the cities of Los Angeles and San Francisco in the United States of America, where the authorities have had to build above existing freeways to overcome the traffic problems. Even these steps have not been successful. It has been the policy of the Labor movement that any Government should try to provide better public transport facilities so that the public will receive the benefits and relish the opportunity of using a modern public transport system. If this policy had been carried out, there would not be so much chaos at peak hours with the motor car more or less taking complete control of our destinies on the road.

Somewhere in the statement by the Premier in tonight's Herald mention is made of the utilization of the permanent way for an elevated roadway. I well remember in 1935 or 1936 when the late John Cain was a member of a deputation concerned with a proposal to relieve the stress on rolling-stock travelling up the Pascoe Vale hill. A learned German engineer was engaged to inform certain members of Parliament of the best methods to relieve the stress on the rolling-stock, and he suggested that wear and tear on rolling-stock would best be reduced by the construction of an elevated railway. He advised the deputation that in the future consideration might be given to putting an elevated roadway over the permanent way.

To expedite the traffic flow, Melbourne's early surveyors picked out the most natural direct route from one point to another, hence the siting of our railways and trams. Suffice to say that if our planning authorities had given more consideration to the utilization of Crown lands and the building of elevated roadways over the permanent way,
less compensation would be payable, less hardship would be caused, and less embarrassment would be suffered by the people.

The idea of an elevated roadway is not new. To my knowledge it was mentioned in 1935 and it could still become a modern method of overcoming traffic problems. The Government and its planning and road transport authorities should give further thought to the proposal to ascertain whether it is feasible, and a possible method of meeting the needs of modern transport.

As I said earlier, the Board of Works is a toothless tiger. As a water and sewerage authority, the board has my wholehearted support, but as a planning authority it has caused more embarrassment than enough. I should like to see the Country Roads Board set up as a State road authority with full power to construct all roadways throughout the State both in rural and metropolitan areas, and then leave the municipalities to maintain the roadways. Every municipal councillor who is a member of this Chamber must agree with my suggestion. The Country Roads Board should be reconstituted as the State road authority and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works should be deprived of its planning powers with regard to road reservations and the payment of compensation.

A glaring anomaly with the present administration of the Board of Works is that any person who is unfortunate enough to live within the planning boundaries of the metropolis pays twice for his services. At present he pays a planning rate to the Board of Works and he also pays taxation as a taxpayer. It seems to me to be unfair that a person who lives in a rural area outside the planning boundaries of the metropolis makes no contribution to the planning activities carried on by the Board of Works. Nevertheless, although that person may live 100 miles from Melbourne—I know many people come from as far away as Traralgon to shop in the city—he may frequently use a motor car in the metropolitan area, taking advantage of the planning which is undertaken by the Board of Works.

The board has not sufficient money to acquire property, to pay compensation and to undertake construction works. What greater confusion could there be than for the toothless tiger, the Board of Works, to be acquiring property for the Country Roads Board to undertake construction works and to pay compensation which the Board of Works should be doing but cannot undertake because it has insufficient finance?

Members of the Opposition have made sound contributions to this debate. Irrespective of whether this Government is returned to office following the elections, it is time the Government gave consideration to the matters I have raised. Too many authorities are concerned in the construction of freeways, land acquisition and the payment of compensation. This situation is adding to the confusion and chaos. The Government should heed my advice and reconstitute the Country Roads Board as a State road authority. If this were done, there would be more happiness within the community and more common-sense legislation in this State.

Mr. BILLING (Heatherton).—The general attitudes and comments on transportation have been viewed and reviewed, and many statements have been made about the failure of the Government to take public transport and freeways into consideration.

Honorable members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Sir Edgar Tanner).—Order! The honorable member for Coburg was heard in silence, and I expect the same respect to be shown to the honorable member for Heatherton.
Mr. BILLING.—The Opposition attacks the Government because it desires to improve public transport. On one occasion, the Opposition wanted all work on freeways stopped in the metropolitan area. They were not concerned about the chaos which would have been caused or about existing contracts, and as late as yesterday evening the “shadow” Minister of Transport, on behalf of the Opposition publicly stated—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER.—Order! I point out to the honorable member that there are no members of this House who are “shadow” Ministers.

Mr. BILLING.—I apologize to the Chair for my misstatement, and will content myself with saying that a Labor Party spokesman, according to a report in last night’s Herald stated that if the Labor Party were elected to office it would dishonour existing agreements.

As far back as 1971 the present Premier made public statements about the Government’s concern to provide better public transport facilities and about the needs of the people in regard to freeway proposals in closely settled areas. Since then, additional statements have been made. Today a statement was made, in line with that policy, but with certain modifications.

I wish to refer to two freeways which particularly affect the Heatherton electorate. The first is Freeway F7 which was proposed along Westall Road, on a widened roadway.

Honorable members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Sir Edgar Tanner).—Order! I direct the attention of honorable members to Standing Order No. 100 which states, in part—

No member shall presume to make any noise or disturbance whilst any member is orderly debating, or whilst any Bill, order, or other matter is being read or opened.

I ask honorable members to observe that Standing Order.

Mr. BILLING.—The freeway was not to proceed through the existing road reservation which had been in existence since 1954. A local newspaper—the Dandenong Journal—yesterday contained statements by a Labor Party spokesman, to the effect that, quite untruthfully, no consideration had been given to the residents of Westall in regard to this proposed freeway.

Mr. FORDHAM.—Go home, you mug!

Mr. BILLING.—Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take exception to that remark.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Sir Edgar Tanner).—Order! I call on the honorable member for Footscray to withdraw his remark.

Mr. FORDHAM (Footscray).—In deference to your judgment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I withdraw the remark concerning the honorable member for Heatherton.

Mr. BILLING (Heatherton).—The statement, which was publicly made by the spokesman, asserts that the local member was not concerned with the interests of the people of Westall. I deny this statement and point out that right from the outset of this proposal I called public meetings, and I also presented to the planning authority objections to this freeway because it was not in the interests of the people of the area whom I have the privilege to represent. Practically every resident of that area opposed this project—in my opinion, rightly so. It was refreshing for me to read in this evening’s Herald, and also in the statement issued by the Premier, that the Government does care about the needs of the people and that it has cancelled this freeway.

Honorable members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Sir Edgar Tanner).—Order! I shall read further from Standing Order No. 100—

and in case of such noise or disturbance, Mr. Speaker shall call upon the member making such disturbance by name—

It goes further, and honorable members realize what that means. I call on the honorable member for Heatherton.
Mr. BILLING.—By following its policy the Government has not, as alleged by the article in the Dandnong Journal of 27th March, 1973, "brushed aside this freeway until after the elections". The question of objections to this freeway has been the subject of representation by me and community organizations in the area. I am pleased publicly to acknowledge the Government's plan to contain future roadworks in this area within the existing road reservations. Despite the rabble on the Opposition side of the House——

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Sir Edgar Tanner).—Order! The honorable member for Heatherton should withdraw that remark.

Mr. BILLING.—I withdraw the remark. I also wish to refer to Freeway F6 which traverses the Heatherton electorate south from South Road and the junction of Warrigal Road. It was proposed by a planning authority and engineers who I publicly assert have little regard for anything but their engineering projects. Again, it is to the credit of this Government that it has listened——

Honorable members interjecting.

Mr. FELL (Greensborough).—I take a point of order. The honorable member is raising points which are clearly refuted by the Government adopting such a scheme.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER.—There is no point of order.

Mr. BILLING (Heatherton).—It is to the credit of the Government that it has listened to the representations of the people whom it should represent, does represent and does care for.

Mr. CURNOW.—You are the biggest bulldust artist I have ever heard.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER.—Order! I call on the honorable member for Kara Kara to withdraw that remark.

Mr. CURNOW.—I will not withdraw the truth.

Mr. BILLING. — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish that remark to be withdrawn unreservedly.

Naming and Suspension of Member.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie) resumed the chair.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Sir Edgar Tanner).—Mr. Speaker, I regret that I have to report to you that the honorable member for Kara Kara caused continuous and disorderly interjections.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! On the report of the Deputy Speaker, I take it that he named the honorable member for Kara Kara.

Mr. FLOYD.—No, he did not.

The SPEAKER.—Order!

Mr. FORDHAM.—He did not.

The SPEAKER.—Order! For disorderly and continuous interjection, as reported by the Deputy Speaker, I name the honorable member for Kara Kara, Mr. Curnow, for disregarding the authority of the Chair, and I ask the Minister in charge of the House to take the proper course to support the Chair.

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—One always does this with reluctance.

Mr. FLOYD.—You are a jib if you do.

The SPEAKER.—Order! I ask the honorable member for Williamstown to cease interjecting. I do not wish to name anybody else. I call on the Minister of Transport.

Mr. FELL (Greensborough).—On a point of order——

The SPEAKER.—There can be no point of order.

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport).—The Standing Orders are clear. Accordingly, I move——

That the honorable member for Kara Kara, Mr. Curnow, be suspended from the service of the House.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—Mr. Speaker, may I address you on the motion?

The SPEAKER.—Order! There can be no debate on the motion. It would be most unusual.
Mr. FLOYD (Williamstown).—On a point of order, as one who has had experience of being thrown out of this House—

The SPEAKER.—Order! There is no point of order. A division has been called for.

The House divided on the motion (Sir Vernon Christie in the chair)—

Ayes 42
Noes 20

Majority for the motion 22

AYES.
Mr. Austin Mr. Rafferty
Mr. Balfour Mr. Reese
Mr. Billing Mr. Ross-Edwards
Mr. Birrell Mr. Rossiter
Mr. Borthwick Mr. Scanlan
Mr. Burgin Mr. Smith
Mr. Dixon (Bellarine)
Mr. Dunstan (Warrnambool)
Mr. Evans Mr. Stephen
Mr. Guy Mr. Suggett
Mr. Hamer Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hayes (Balwyn)
Mr. Jona Mr. Thompson
Mr. Loxton Mr. Trethewey
Mr. McCabe Mr. Trewin
Mr. MacDonald Mr. Wheeler
Mr. McDonald (Glen Iris) Mr. Whiting
Mr. McDonald (Rodney) Mr. Wilcox
Mr. McLaren Mr. Wilts.:hy.
Mr. Maclellan Mr. Broad
Mr. Meagher Mr. Taylor
Mr. Mitchell (Gippsland South).

Tellers:

Mr. Broad Mr. Carr
Mr. Loxton Mr. Turner.

NOES.
Mr. Amos Mr. Lind
Mr. Bornstein Mr. Lovegrove
Mr. Curnow Mr. Mutton
Mr. Doube Mr. Shilton
Mr. EDMUNDS Mr. Simmonds
Mr. Floyd Mr. Trezise
Mr. Fordham Mr. Wilkes
Mr. kirkwood Mr. Wilton.
Mr. Lewis (Dundas)

Tellers:

Mr. Lewis (Portland) Mr. Jones.

PAIRS.
Mr. Crellin Mr. Ginifer
Mr. Stokes Mr. Turnbull
Mr. Templeton Mr. Holding.

Mr. Curnow withdrew from the Chamber.

The debate was resumed on Mr. Wilkes’s motion.

Mr. BILLING (Heatherton).—I was stating that the Government is to be congratulated for its consideration and review of the F6 freeway which was proposed to proceed—

Honorable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! Interjections are very disorderly, and that one sounded extraordinarily disorderly.

Mr. BILLING.—The freeway was proposed to proceed in a southerly direction from South Road and Warrigal Road to the intersection of Springvale Road and Wells Road. Representations have been made on this matter and consultants have begun an investigation on whether this freeway is required. If it must proceed the proposed route should reflect the Government’s stated policy that any future freeways built in the outer-suburban areas will be built without major disruption to residential areas and with provision of adequate compensation for the land acquired. I have made my thoughts on this matter known within the electorate. No freeway through this area should follow a route through the residential areas of South Oakleigh, Cheltenham East and Mordialloc East while there is vacant land available to the east of the residential settlement. It would be a travesty of justice and a gross intrusion into the rights of hundreds of home owners if this did happen.

The policy of the Government is not to route freeways through residential areas to the north of South Road. The Government now proposes that instructions will be given to the consultants that if this freeway is to be built it will not follow the originally intended route but will have a new alignment which will not involve substantial loss of homes or community disruption. This is a realistic approach to a problem which must be studied so that thousands of motor cars may cross the metropolitan area. The Government has stated that as a result of the report of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee,
from 1971 onwards it will consider the needs of people living in houses as well as those who drive motor cars. The Government has publicly stated that it will develop public transport services to alleviate many problems caused by congestion on the roads, and that road traffic and rail heads will be united with arterial roads so that commuters may travel on improved public transport. This will occur if succeeding Federal Governments will honour their obligations to give taxation reimbursements to the States. It is to be deplored that the blank cheque promised by the present Federal Government still remains blank.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds).—The motion, for the edification of the House, is that moved by the acting Leader of the Opposition. It states—

That the Government no longer possesses the confidence of this House because of its failure to provide adequate transport facilities and proper freeway planning.

Honorable members have heard a considerable amount of theorizing and plaintive pleas from members such as the honorable member for Heatherton. The honorable member is in a tight political situation.

Before I begin my remarks in support of the motion, I point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that during the reply of the Minister of Transport to the motion moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Minister quoted at length and tediously from a document which, in reply to a point of order, he said was a copy of a submission that had been made to the Federal Government. He was asked to table this document, but he refused to do so. The Deputy Speaker suggested that he would confer with you on the subject, Mr. Speaker. I refer to May, 18th edition, at page 421.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—I take it the honorable member is really speaking now on the point of order?

Mr. EDMUNDS.—No, I am starting my remarks by drawing attention—

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—To help the Chair?

Mr. EDMUNDS.—Yes, by drawing attention to what is contained in May in respect of this matter. At page 421 May is very clear in its instruction to Parliamentarians on what the practice is with documents used by Ministers of the Crown. It states—

A Minister of the Crown is not at liberty to read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House, unless he be prepared to lay it upon the table. This restraint is similar to the rule of evidence in courts of law, which prevents counsel from citing documents which have not been produced in evidence. The principle is so reasonable that it has not been contested.

In this debate, the Opposition finds itself in the position of being unable to rebut or verify the comments of the Minister of Transport. The Minister is an honorable gentleman but, under the forms of the House, the Opposition desires to avail itself of the information contained in this document.

As a result of extreme political pressure which is being imposed upon the Government by the community, a purely political decision has been made to stop work on the construction of freeways. However, it has left the public up in the air as well as the planners and others who are involved in the construction of freeways and those who are responsible for the allocation of funds. The electorate generally has been left in a great deal of doubt concerning the bona fides of this Government in connection with transportation and freeways.

As far back as September last year, the Opposition contended that this action should not have been taken in isolation and under the pressure of an imminent election, but should have been taken at a time when the Government's policy and philosophy could be explained to the public so that no one would be in doubt about the proposed development of freeways in this State. The Government is alarmed because it has much at stake. For example, the future of the honorable member
for Heatherton is in doubt; indeed there are twelve Government-held seats at stake in the elections on 19th May and they could very well be decided on the freeway question, about which, I am certain, the public has made up its mind. The twelve seats constitute the Government’s majority in this House and, Mr. Speaker, I shall list them. They are Bentleigh, Moorabbin, Mentone, Malvern, St. Kilda, Prahran, Hawthorn, Heatherton, Oakleigh, Mitcham, Ivanhoe and Mulgrave. The honorable members representing those seats have been under intense pressure from the public at meetings at which up to 1,000 people have attended to exhibit their anger and to seek information concerning the Government’s programme in relation to freeway planning.

The duplicity of the Government in leaving its decision to hold in abeyance the matters of transportation and the construction of freeways is nothing short of political chicanery. It is noticeable to everybody that, after notice had been given of this motion yesterday, the Premier moved to pull the teeth out of the motion by making a statement. I draw attention to the statement itself which was issued under the name of the Premier on 28th March, 1973. Although it is marked by a good deal of embellishment, it names the freeways that will not be proceeded with and those which will continue to be constructed.

The Premier's press release states, *inter alia*—

The Government is concerned at the impact of the proposed network, especially in the inner areas of Melbourne, and in October, 1971, instructed the Metropolitan Transportation Committee to review the whole plan with a view to minimizing its sociological and environmental effects, and over-all cost.

Regardless of that statement, the Government has decided, having regard to the number of Liberal Party seats which are in jeopardy, that it must make concessions of some sort to the electorate, without regard to all who are concerned with transportation and the construction of freeways. The Government has acted irresponsibly and, for that reason, the motion moved by the Opposition ought to be accepted.

I remind the House that this has not always been the policy of a Liberal Government, but it has suddenly become the policy of a Liberal Government which has the dubious luxury of administering Victoria at this time. In May, 1971, Sir Henry Bolte, in delivering his policy speech, outlined the Liberal Party's policy in relation to freeways; and the action which is now being taken by the Government is in direct contravention of the policy that the former Premier enunciated.

If a Government makes a promise, the public are entitled to expect it to be honoured. The public is entitled to expect the Government’s policy to be continued until it is finally rejected. In the section of his policy speech which dealt with the transport situation, Sir Henry Bolte said, *inter alia*—

Road traffic has increased by more than 100 per cent in the last fifteen years.

To meet this problem the Government embarked on a programme of freeways, dual carriageways and grade separation. This has made a remarkable difference to the pleasure of motoring and has contributed greatly to the economical transport of goods by road.

The Government now finds, through electoral fear—and, the fact that the honorable member for St. Kilda will go into involuntary retirement—that it must change its whole policy in relation to freeways, despite the fact that considerable sums of money have been expended on feasibility studies. It was the conclusion of the body which carried out the transportation study that it would cost $2,616 million to avoid Melbourne coming to a standstill by 1985. That is the amount of money which would have to be spent out of public funds in order to provide freeways in and around the metropolitan area to enable motorists to travel from point A to point B with greater ease.

The Government is unable to decide which way it should move

*Mr. Edmunds.*
concerning transportation in Melbourne. In the early 1880s Melbourne was described as a magnificent city with magnificent gardens and public buildings and with numerous outlets for pleasure. In fact it was called "Marvellous Melbourne." But today, nine decades later, after two decades of Liberal Government, there is nothing but chaotic conflict in the community, and most of it is the result of the inadequacy of public transport. Instead of "Marvellous Melbourne" it is muddled Melbourne.

The situation has forced the Government to the point where it is unable to explain its future plans for transportation. The Premier and the Minister of Transport said only that they relied on the Federal Government. The State Government will use that device as long as it can. Members of the Opposition will not permit the Government to get away with it on this occasion because it is guilty of duplicity in its political intentions. It is interested only in getting out of the House and announcing policies to the public that were stolen from the Opposition.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! The honorable member is getting wide of the subject.

Mr. EDMUNDS.—I appreciate your direction to head me nearer to the point, Mr. Speaker, but I was carried away by the Government’s intentions on freeways and I was getting emotional. I will come back to the point. The House has heard the honorable member for Heatherton, but on the figures he is a "goner" at a stage in his political career that is most embarrassing. When one looks at the map and reads what the Premier proposes in connection with plans for the development of freeways, as distinct from public transport which has been dealt with fully, one can see, as depicted by the artist in the Herald, that a number of freeways disappear into nothing.

The Premier should obtain the final edition of tonight’s Herald and look at the maps. Freeway F12, which was to provide access to the city, dies at a point about which we have no explanation, and honorable members do not know what is to become of it. In his press release, the Premier has stated that Freeway F5 will continue, but it just dies. This freeway is shown as a series of dots, but it will not proceed. What does the present position mean to people in the community living at the end of Freeway F12? Will they ever lie in their beds wondering whether the Government will acquire their properties?

In his plea to save his seat, the honorable member for Heatherton showed that he was worried about freeways F7 and F6. From what I can see from the map, there has been a considerable amount of line drawing and colored printing. Some people think that at some time in the future their properties will be acquired, and they have made their plans accordingly. Since 1969, this transport plan has been available for public scrutiny. Freeways F7 and F6 have been dumped. One could go through the list that the Premier has supplied to the press of freeways that are not now to proceed. They read like a table in the back of a kiddy’s exercise book. One can see freeways F1, F2, F5, F6, F9, F18 and so on.

Mr. WILKES.—It sounds like Tatts-lotto.

Mr. EDMUNDS.—If they took these combinations, it is the only way that members of the Government could win on this job. There are enough numbers on the sheet. One can see freeways F4, F9, F14, F19, F35 and F38. No Government in the history of Federation has ever produced such a remarkable set of plans for the future used solely for political purposes in an attempt to save its skin. It is no wonder that Government supporters are uneasy.
about the whole matter, particularly those members in areas where they are worried about Democratic Labor Party references.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! The honorable member should get on with the motion before the House. I invite the honorable member for Ballarat South to cease interjecting.

Mr. EDMUNDS.—The original plan was for thirteen expressways, motorways, bypass roads or whatever they may be called, covering a distance of more than 370 miles, to be implemented by 1985. Approximately 55,600 parking spaces were to be provided in the city at a cost to the community of $2,616 million. All this had to take place before 1985 or Melbourne would come to a standstill. As everyone believed, the Government was elected with the responsibility for doing something about transport and freeways but it will now have to explain its intentions to the electors. In areas such as Brighton, Malvern, Mentone, Bentleigh, and Prahran—where Government seats are on the slips—large communities are concerned with planners. The community does not know the intentions of the Government. They will not be satisfied with what has occurred to the present time. The motion moved by the Opposition proposes to put the Government firmly in a position in which it must state to the House and to the public what it intends to do with public transport and freeways.

In the early days of its development, in the 1920s, Melbourne had probably the most efficient electrified rail service in the civilized western world. It also had the best fixed-rail tramways system in the southern hemisphere. These high-class systems were developed in the 1920s but there has been no real development since then. Not the least of the Governments involved in this decline in public service is the present Government of eighteen years' standing. The Opposition has moved this

motion to force the Government to debate the matter because the motion relating to freeways has been on the Notice Paper since 11th October, 1972. The Government is acting only with political motivation to ensure that its neck is saved on 19th May. The House should carry this motion because it is a true reflection of the public’s opinion of the Government’s standing on freeway planning.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—I rise to a point of order. Before the suspension of the sitting for dinner, when addressing the House the Minister of Transport quoted from a document. At the commencement of his remarks, the honorable member for Moonee Ponds quoted from May and referred to this situation. The Opposition believes that it is unsatisfactory to have this matter unresolved. Because the Minister of Transport quoted from the document, he is obliged to table it. I will not quote from May again because the honorable member for Moonee Ponds quoted the appropriate passage.

There are precedents for this. It is my recollection that there are rulings on the matter. The Minister should table the documents before the debate proceeds any further. Members of the Opposition are placed at a disadvantage until they are able to examine the document from which the honorable gentleman was quoting.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—In answer to the honorable member for Broadmeadows, the Deputy Speaker did, as he promised the House, talk to me about this. I am sorry I was under the impression that he would give a ruling. As I have been asked to, I know he will agree that I should give it. Page 421 of May, eighteenth edition, reads, in part—

It has also been admitted that a document which has been cited ought to be laid upon the table of the House, if it can be done without injury to the public interests. A Minister who summarizes a correspondence, but does not actually quote from it, is not bound to lay it upon the table.
At page 5224 of volume 224 of Hansard of 27th May, 1947, Mr. Speaker Knox gave the following ruling:—

The honorable member for Ballarat has raised a point of order which is important and might affect future procedure in this Chamber. The honorable member has asked that the files and other documents from which the Minister has quoted should be laid on the table of the House. The honorable member is in order in making that request. It is a rule that documents from which quotations are made, extensively or otherwise, become the property of the House and are therefore laid on the table, except where that would not be in the public interest or when the matter is of a highly confidential character.

The Deputy Speaker was kind enough to call for the transcript of what was said and I have read it. At 4 p.m. today, the Minister of Transport said—

I am quoting from material which was supplied on behalf of the Victorian Government to the Commonwealth Government.

Later the Minister said—

I have been reading from a list of headings. I have referred to various railway lines and improvements which are to be made. I am quite happy to give that list to honorable members but without the concurrence of the Commonwealth Government, with which I have had correspondence, I do not believe I should give figures. I will state the list of improvements that the Government has made.

The point of this is that if extensive quoting has taken place it is the rule that the document should, in the interest of the House and of the debate, be tabled. But there is a natural and sensible provision that, if the Minister considers that he has, in fact, a file of a confidential nature, firstly, he ought not to be quoting from it. That is another matter of some concern to the House. The second is of equal concern to public business. That is whether a confidential document ought to be tabled. So that it is a difficult situation. It really must in this case, in my view, be left in the hands of the Minister. The document may, in fact, be highly confidential. As he said, it could well be the type of document which should not be tabled here without the agreement of the Commonwealth Government.

So I would not formally and definitely rule that it should be tabled. I think that, if it has been quoted from extensively, the Minister might consider tabling that portion which would help honorable members and the debate, and retain that portion which he thinks might be confidential.

Mr. WILCOX (Minister of Transport) (By leave).—The position is simply that I made no extensive quotations from the document. I referred only to a portion of a list of improvements in the rail system. I did not quote the whole of the rail improvements. There was other material in the document which would certainly be in the confidential class. But as to the list of improvements—of which I quoted only some—I shall be happy to supply it to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who is in charge of the debate for the Opposition, when I can obtain copies tomorrow.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote) (By leave).—I may have misunderstood the Minister, and if I did I apologize to him. I understood the honorable gentleman to be quoting at great length from a document, almost to the extent that it could be suggested that he was reading from it. When attention was directed to the document, the Minister was kind enough to say that he was quoting from headings only. I accept the explanation of the honorable gentleman that he was not quoting from the first page of the document or the preamble. I shall be pleased to have the document as soon as the Minister sees fit to make it available.

Mr. ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the Country Party).—This has been one of the most remarkable debates I have listened to in this House. The motion refers to transport facilities and freeways, but up to the present no honorable member has referred to anywhere outside the metropolitan area. Speakers from both the Government and Opposition benches have confined their interest to the
metropolis. For some reason they seem to want to debate Melbourne’s transport system and to forget about the rest of Victoria.

There are two vital freeways in Victoria—the South-Eastern Freeway and the Tullamarine Freeway. It would be difficult to understand any argument from the Labor Party in opposition to either of those. The Tullamarine Freeway is unique inasmuch as it takes traffic right from the metropolitan area to country Victoria. Obviously the South-Eastern Freeway must be completed; it cannot be left as it is. I should be surprised if the Labor Party said it would leave it as it is. I hope the Labor Party will make a firm statement that that freeway will be completed so that it can serve Gippsland and other areas. But all the House hears from the Opposition is that freeways must be stopped dead.

There are fundamental problems relating to freeways which must be solved. The Opposition must put up some positive propositions, not only to the House but also to the people of Victoria. It cannot just say that work will be stopped and that it does not know what will be done in the future. Freeways will have to be built in Melbourne in the future and if the Opposition is ever to be a Government it must have some positive policy. It is easy for the Opposition to criticize the Government, but although it sets itself up as an alternative Government it has no policy on freeways.

The Government is open to criticism inasmuch as it has changed its policy. In future, freeways will avoid the inner areas of Melbourne. Naturally, the pressure of many people in Melbourne on the Government, because of their concern about the devastation of houses and commercial properties, has had an influence on the thinking of the Government.

The problem in Melbourne today is a reflection on the administration of the Government during the past eighteen years. It has created the huge population of metropolitan Melbourne, which is growing at the fantastic rate of 55,000 people a year. Melbourne is reaching such a size that the transport situation has become desperate. It cannot be solved by creating freeways for cars. The only solution is for the Government to tackle the decentralization problem and try to put a limit on the transport using highways, freeways, and any other sorts of roads in the metropolitan area. The traffic flow will not be reduced, but an attempt should be made to keep the increase to a minimum. The Government should consider using the money saved by not building freeways to encourage people to settle in the country by providing them with decent facilities and by providing better facilities for people who want to travel to and from Melbourne.

Melbourne’s problems cannot be overcome if, every time the population increases significantly, the water supply is doubled, the sewerage facilities are doubled, and an underground railway is built or extended, or a freeway system is enlarged. The Government has encouraged the people who are now ratepayers to come to Melbourne. Educational facilities and job opportunities are provided in the metropolis and people are like flies around a honey-pot. The Government has created this mess and now it does not know what to do about it.

I agree with the Opposition that the people of Victoria must decide how much longer this ridiculous state of affairs can continue. At present neither the Government nor the Opposition knows where it is going on freeways. If the Opposition is to have credibility as an alternative Government, it will have to do a lot better than it has done up to date.

Mr. JONES (Melbourne).—The Leader of the Country Party said that the Opposition did not know where
it was going and did not have a sensible alternative plan on freeways. Thirteen years ago, in the United States of America, Jane Jacobs, the great writer on town planning, made the point that there were two types of freeways, or expressways as they are called there. There are “dumpers” and “by-passers”. By-passers—for example, the freeway which bypasses Dandenong—are sensible freeways and we of the Opposition would continue them. Dumpers attract cars from a huge catchment area and bring them to the centre of a metropolis where there is a war of attrition between cars and the city itself.

Obviously, members who have taken part in the debate have been concerned with an event which is to take place on 19th May. In the past 24 hours we have seen the greatest highway conversion since the conversion of St. Paul on the Damascus road. On 11th October, 1972, the Opposition put forward a motion on the subject of freeways. When the motion for the adjournment of the debate was moved by the honorable member for Sandringham, who is strangely absent now, the Country Party voted with the Labor Party in an attempt to prevent the debate from being adjourned. On numerous occasions since, the Labor Party has sought to have the debate brought on again.

What has been the chain of events within the past 24 to 36 hours? Yesterday, 27th March, the election date was announced. Again yesterday, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition gave notice of a motion of want of confidence in the Government. Today, 28th March, we had the long-awaited freeway statement of the Government. I emphasize that that was delivered on the day after the date of the election was set and the day after notice was given of the want-of-confidence motion. It was such a brilliant document that it omitted a number of significant items.

Honorable members should consider the way in which it was presented to the House. Since October no other single issue has had more attention from honorable members than that of freeways. There was the debate on freeways to which I have referred and numerous attempts by the Opposition to have it continued. In the circumstances, one might have expected that, when the Government made a significant policy decision, it might have been announced to the House, that the Premier might have thought it worth while—in his capacity as Ministerial overlord with oversight over all the political implications on freeways—to take the House into his confidence, read his statement, and make copies available to all honorable members.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Is it possible for the Chair to obtain a copy?

Mr. JONES.—The Australian Security Intelligence Organization provided me with a copy of this document. I should not like to think that the Speaker of the House did not have the same facilities which I enjoy. I invite you, Mr. Speaker, to examine page 2 of the remarkable document and the check list of the ins and outs of the freeway world. There are not just two categories, in and out; there is a third category, limbo. The limbo category affects my electorate so I have more than a casual interest in it.

It will be recalled that one provision was that Freeway F14 was to run from the western end of the city and join the link to the West Gate Bridge and the South-Eastern Freeway—that is the extension of Freeway F9. Freeway F14 was to be a linkage between that point and the Tullamarine Freeway. The Premier’s statement says that F14 has been cut from the Lower Yarra Freeway to Warrigal Road, Chadstone. That is, in a south-easterly direction. However, we find that it is to continue as the Mulgrave Freeway from Stud Road to Warrigal Road.
What I, as the member for Melbourne, would very much like to know is what has become of the mysterious 2 miles between the intersection where F9 cuts across what was the proposed line of F14 and its connecting point up towards Ascot Vale with the Tullamarine Freeway. We have always thought in the electorate that this was to be a particularly damaging freeway from a sociological point of view because the effect of Freeway F14 at that point would be to cut off Flemington and Newmarket from the remainder of the city. In effect, it would put it in a kind of sociological island with the only facilities sharing its isolation being the Flemington racecourse and the abattoirs. We still do not know what is going to happen.

Mr. Ross-Edwards.—But you were talking about Tullamarine.

Mr. Jones.—In reply to the interjection by the Leader of the Country Party, the point at which F14 ran up from the F9 extension and joined—

Mr. Ross-Edwards.—Put it on the blackboard.

Mr. Jones.—That is very difficult to do without a blackboard. F14 was to join F12 where F12 connected with the Tullamarine Freeway. It is that road of which absolutely no mention is made. The lack of mention is simple confirmation that the Government has not thought the situation through. The Premier has obviously said, "We have to say something fairly substantial, it does not matter terribly much what it is, but get it out quickly". This statement is not a product of deep and thoughtful consideration. The issuing of it has been determined by purely political considerations, and it will have no more validity after 19th May. That is why the whole exercise has been contemptible and a fraudulent operation.

We know that enormous pressure has been exerted on certain members of the Government and on certain Government instrumentalities and members of those instrumentalities from the road contracting lobbies. Perhaps we should at least be grateful that there has been some cut-back on the original freeway plan which was produced in 1969. We might at least be grateful for the sloth of the Government which has had the result that of the 307 miles originally planned, after four years only 50 have been built. But, as I say, this wretched document still does not reveal what will be the fate of Kensington and Newmarket—whether these places will be cut off in a sociological island by the extension of F14. Perhaps something could be casually raised on the motion for the adjournment of the sitting to find out whether the Premier has a supplementary statement. He may produce something fresh, his fingers dripping with ink from the roneo machine.

The Metropolitan Transportation Committee and the other disastrous committees associated with the Government’s transport policies have always thought too late. Criticisms such as those submitted by members of the Opposition have been commonplace in the United States of America for 10, 12 and 15 years and they are accepted in the most unlikely quarters. I was struck, as no doubt you were, Mr. Speaker, by an advertisement in the New Yorker, of 25th November, 1972. It contains a photograph of a long stream of traffic and an excellent abstract by Victor Vasarely. It contains statements comparing “the real” with “the ideal”. Under the heading of “The Real” it states—

Our cities have been tied up in stifling automotive congestion because we have emphasized cars at the expense of other methods of transportation.

The statement under the heading of “The Ideal” is—

We will build diverse, balanced transportation networks that move people quickly and comfortably to, from and within our cities.

Our love for the automobile has blinded us to the total transportation needs of our metropolitan complexes. We have refused to see that cars alone are not the total answer to these problems.
It's time we opened our eyes to the urgent need for balanced mass and private metropolitan transportation networks. Developing them will take innovative planning, public support and cooperation among all levels of government.

But we must begin now to untangle our growing metropolitan complexes—even if it means banning the car from certain parts of our cities.

The extraordinary thing is that the origin of the advertisement is not, as one might expect, from the Ecological League or the Town Planning League, or the New York equivalent of the Carlton Association. No, the advertisement has been put in by the Atlantic Richfield Oil Company. Even the oil companies in the United States of America are forward-thinking enough about sociological issues to realize that history is moving against them, and that there will have to be severe limitations on the role of the motor car inside the inner parts of metropolitan areas. The only alternative to restricting the amount of private vehicular traffic inside the metropolitan area would be to turn the inner part of the city into a gigantic inner-city parking lot, which would be absurd. As Jane Jacobs said in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*—

Too much dependence on private automobiles and city concentration of use are incompatible. One or the other has to go. In real life, this is what happens. Depending on which pressure wins most of the victories, one of two processes occurs: erosion of cities by automobiles, or attrition of automobiles by cities.

Sometimes an odd situation occurs where a city is really constructed around the freeway system. This, of course, is the case in Los Angeles. In his recent book *Los Angeles, the Architecture of Four Ecologies*, Reyner Banham offers quite persuasive argument in favour of freeways. He is by no means completely hostile to them but says that Los Angeles is probably the only major city in the world the shape of which was really only developed after the freeway system was planned. But trying to do it the other way round, which is to impose a freeway network on an already existing urban complex, makes for destruction of the inter-related network of institutions and human relations inside that city. The author makes the point that there is a lot of self-deception about freeways and the illusion that they give of greater freedom. I am sorry that the honorable member for Geelong, who spoke so glibly of the delights of driving on a freeway, is not present. Professor Banham writes—

The private car and the public freeway together provide an ideal—not to say idealized—version of democratic urban transportation: door-to-door movement on demand at high average speeds over a very large area. The degree of freedom and convenience thus offered to all but a small (but now conspicuous) segment of the population is such that no Angeleno will be in a hurry to sacrifice it for the higher efficiency but drastically lowered convenience and freedom of choice of any high-density public rapid-transit system.

Yet what seems to be hardly noticed or commented on is that the price of rapid door-to-door transport on demand is the almost total surrender of personal freedom for most of the journey.

The watchful tolerance and almost impeccable lane discipline of Angeleno drivers on the freeways is often noted, but not the fact that both are symptoms of something deeper—willing, acquiescence in an incredibly demanding man/machine system.

When a Government such as this Government makes a decision or a policy one can be certain that there is an election in the offing and that the decision has not been brought about because they have considered the environmental, philosophical, psychological or sociological concept involved. If I cause a certain amount of irritation by emphasizing those concepts practically every time I speak, it is because I think all honorable members—and this does not just apply to one side of the House—have to stop making plans purely in terms of personal advantage for a political party or faction.

In the long or short run, all people on "space ship earth" have to maximize the degree of human contact we have with one another. We have to make the cities places where we can live, work and breathe decently.
This is why the object of the exercise of a worthwhile and humane transport system that does not kill people is simply to move people to and from their places of work. Obviously there must be much more emphasis on public transport. There are certain people inside the State Government who have been campaigning in their ineffectual way for better public transport but it has been a long time coming.

The pressures that have proceeded from the motor car lobby and the freeway lobby have been very much greater. There was enormous anxiety before the 1970 election to get the South-Eastern Freeway completed. Again the thing that determined the day of the opening of the freeway was not something that arose from a long and deeply thought out plan for proper transport in the metropolitan area. It was essentially because the object of the exercise was to have something tangible finished before the State election of 1970. No doubt if by some terrible mischance at the polls this Ministry in its present form or in a reconstructed coalition form was to be returned there would be a significant shift of policy somewhere around May, 1976, and another one around May, 1979.

Mr. McCabe.—You will not be here.

Mr. Jones.—You will be observing from a long way off.

The Speaker (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! The honorable member should address the Chair.

Mr. Jones.—The same can be said for you, Mr. Speaker. The extraordinary lengths to which the Government has gone to avoid debate on the freeway question since October is comment enough on the hollow sham of the document that the Premier made so much of today. Every trick in the Parliamentary book and every form of the House has been used to prevent us from discussing that subject. Now they give us their gummy smiles and say, “We don’t like the freeways either.

We were with you all along. It has just been a kind of game in the past five months. There is no difference of opinion; we are all anti-freeway men here”.

But after 19th May what strange new shift of policy will take place? As the Premier wittily observed today about the freeway at South Melbourne, that freeway begins pretty well where it starts. He was not prepared to say precisely where it would begin or end. We are worried that work on freeways will be resumed and that different kinds of pressures will apply if the Labor Party is not elected to govern in Victoria. I am confident that if the Labor Party forms the Government the freeways that will be proceeded with will be freeway “bypassers”. I imagine there would be a number of freeway “bypassers”.

Mr. Whiting.—Will they bypass Melbourne?

Mr. Jones.—That is perfectly all right with me because above all I want to see the inner part of Melbourne remain as an area of mixed usage. It ought to be. But if freeways continue, with a vast metropolitan freeway network rushing towards the centre of Melbourne, they will destroy the centre of Melbourne as an area of mixed usage. Unless the sustained increase in population in this city is stopped, ultimately the centre of the city will be crushed to death. The increase in population each year in Melbourne is equivalent to the total population of Bendigo. Let honorable members think of a new Bendigo being added year after year—eighteen Bendigos being added in the life of this present Government. It has to stop. Members of the Opposition believe very much in decentralization. It is very important for the health of this city. There is no other area in Australia where there is such an unhealthy imbalance between a bloated metropolitan area and a relatively depopulated country area.
Honorable members will soon be going to the polls. I believe the electors have already tried the Government and found it wanting on its transport policy. It has done too little too late. The underground rail loop system should have been started many years earlier than it was. At least the Government is doing something about it, but it is too late. Members of the Opposition believe the freeway system should have been reconsidered some years ago. I am dismayed at the slipshod way it has been handled by the Government. The Opposition has clearly shown that the Government lacks the confidence of the House and I call on all honorable members to vote in support of the motion proposed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. FELL (Greensborough).—I support the motion of want of confidence in the Government moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on the two aspects, failure to provide an adequate transport system and failure to provide proper facilities for freeway planning. There are a couple of points I must refer to before turning to those two matters. The first is the salient point raised by the honorable member for Melbourne. One cannot help but realize the problems which exist in Melbourne with traffic passing through from east to west. Only in the past 24 hours has the Government made a statement on a new policy concerning freeways. No consideration has been given to the effect of the Government’s action. It will result in existing roads through the cities of Melbourne and South Melbourne being the actual bypass roads to connect the two freeways. If that is good planning, I am a Dutchman.

However, I come to the crux of the matter and refer firstly to public transport. I suggest to members of the Government that they give up the luxury of their black limousines provided at taxpayers’ expense, get into public transport and travel by train, bus or tram as the people in the community must do. Then they will realize that something must be done. The first point I make is that the Government adopted a transport system which discriminates against the inner-suburban areas and which is not of benefit to the whole community. The second point I make is that the Opposition placed on the Notice Paper on 11th October last year a motion aimed at obtaining a complete revision of the public transport system and freeway network. The Government did nothing about it for five months, but on the very day the Opposition moved a motion of want of confidence in the Government it presents a haphazard statement on its freeway proposals.
I invite honorable members to examine the public transport system. It will be found that single-track railway lines have existed in Melbourne for 90 years. Our forebears designed and built an excellent public transport system through Melbourne which was then of a much smaller size. Our forebears used a little common sense and planning, which is more than can be said of the present Government. It has done nothing to update the transport system which has existed for the past century. I invite honorable members to consider the three examples of the Heidelberg-Hurstbridge railway line, the Thomastown-Lalor railway line and the Altona railway line.

Those three railway lines are single tracks and pass through electorates represented by members of the Labor Party. There were more single-track lines but they have now been duplicated because they are situated in electorates represented by members of the Liberal Party. If that is not a blatant act of irresponsible political bias I do not know what it is. In 1964 I had the privilege of being part of a deputation to the Minister of Transport seeking the duplication of rail services on the Heidelberg to Hurstbridge rail line. At that time the deputation produced the priority list prepared by the Victorian Railways, which, in 1964, showed that these three lines were to be duplicated. However, not one of those three lines I have mentioned has been duplicated. I wonder what would have happened if those lines had been in electorates held by members other than members of the Labor Party? Would the Government have acted?

Honorable members have heard during the debate that a 700-ft train can carry 1,400 people. That number is as many as can be fitted into cars covering 11 miles of single-lane freeway. This is a statement of fact which cannot be denied by Government supporters. It could not be suggested that it is more economic to provide 11 miles of freeway than one railway train! Honorable members do not dare debate that point. The honorable member for Geelong, whose electorate is not affected by freeways, has the audacity to suggest he has some rights in this matter. What are his rights? To demolish homes within the Melbourne metropolitan area so he can drive his black limousine through to the city?

At present 80-year-old dog boxes are still rattling along the metropolitan railway lines. I give full credit to the Victorian Railways for being able to keep these "rattlers" going on the meagre financial allocation it receives from this Government. It would be appreciated if some of the blue Harris trains, let alone the silver trains the Minister of Transport boasts about, were used in electorates represented by members of the Labor Party. People living in my area saw only the demonstration model, and I doubt whether they will see it again. They cannot even get blue Harris trains to serve their outer-suburban area.

I invite honorable members to consider the financial position of the public transport system. In 1964 the Government allocated $16 million to the Victorian Railways for capital works. This year the figure has risen to $16.75 million and with the rise in the cost of living and associated services one can readily appreciate that the Government is not really interested in fostering public transport at the expense of private enterprise. The Government is now between the devil and deep blue sea. It has to make a decision whether to allow its freeway network to continue at heavy cost to the inner-suburban areas or abandon the system. A decision has been made, but it was published in the press prior to being submitted to Parliament. That fact proves that the Government is not the least bit interested in the Parliamentary system.
All the Government is interested in is cashing in on a few votes if it can get them.

The electors will not be fooled by this act as they know that this Liberal Government brought about the problems created by freeways and downgraded the public transport system. The public will not be fooled by the fact that on the day a motion of want of confidence is presented to the House, the Government endeavours to relieve the situation by making a statement on freeways. Honorable members know that chaos exists throughout the metropolitan area with the transport system because trains are cancelled and made to stop at all stations during peak hours, which in turn causes problems to the following trains. Some trains are so packed that intending passengers cannot even get on. People who wish to travel to the city by train do not have the same flexibility as some members of the community who travel in their black limousines. Some of these people who travel on public transport have to get to work at a specified time. By fooling about with the public transport system the Government is not helping those members of the community. If they do not get to work on time they do not get paid and honorable members can understand what that could mean to their families.

Workers in outer-suburban areas will do what they did on 2nd December last year when they were as disgusted with the previous Federal Government as they now are with this State Government.

The SPEAKER (Sir Vernon Christie).—Order! I think that is slightly off the subject.

Mr. FELL.—I hope it will be relevant on 19th May.

The SPEAKER.—It might be then, but it is not now.

Mr. FELL.—The loss of $30 million incurred by the railways cannot compare with the $2,000 million proposed to be spent on freeways. The Government has sought to retrieve the position by conducting surveys on certain railway lines. The surveys revealed the problems but the only action taken by the Government has been the reverse to that which has been required by persons who wish to use the public transport system.

If it is cheaper to use a motor vehicle to travel from Greensborough to the city than it is to buy a single ticket on the railways, naturally a person will take advantage of the convenience of the motor vehicle and drive to the city. For a public transport system to be used it must be clean and at least as economical to use as a motor vehicle. Losses on the railways must be balanced against the immense cost of freeways.

To summarize on public transport, I submit the following points for consideration: The use of 80-year-old railway carriages will not encourage people to use the railways. Poor services will not encourage patrons, nor will unmanned stations at night or the non-running of scheduled trains. The use of public transport will be encouraged by the provision of a competitive, clean and economical system which will be a fair competitor to private motor vehicles.

The problems of public transport operate in conjunction with the freeway problems. Honorable members now find that the much-desired ring road around Melbourne does not exist. In his statement to the press today the Premier said that the proposed freeway network had been reorganized so that there would be less impact on inner-suburban areas. They will still proceed in the outer-suburban areas.

Mr. J. A. TAYLOR.—Does not the honorable member want freeways in his area?

Mr. FELL.—Most certainly the people want freeways there but the Premier has been hypocritical in his approach. The honorable gentleman has carved the outer-suburban freeways to such an extent that Freeway F5 running from Tullamarine in an
easterly direction through my electorate goes nowhere. It does not link with another freeway because the other freeways which were to be inter-connected with it have been axed. Where is the logic in that?

The proposed freeways F9 and F14 to allow travellers from eastern Victoria to get to the Western District have also been axed. One wonders what has happened to the Government's logic. Proposed Freeway F9 went from the city towards Warrigal Road, but under the new proposal it will not extend to Warrigal Road any more. The same problems about which complaints were made previously concerning the South-Eastern Freeway spilling traffic into a congested area at Grange Road bridge will again apply. Naturally members of the Government party will seek to sweep these facts under the carpet. In demolishing sound planning, the Government has acted in haste, and after 19th May I am sure it will repent at leisure.

The Opposition opposed the Bill relating to the proposed Eastern Freeway and its suggestions at that stage are now being proven correct. The Minister of Transport contended that the desecration of the Yarra Valley for the construction of the freeway and the damage to the Yarra Bend Park were justified on the basis that the freeway was needed for two other outlets, one from Doncaster and Doncaster East and the other from the Greensborough freeway. Now, piously, the Premier has the audacity to say that the proposed Greensborough freeway will be scrapped. The argument of the Minister of Transport to support the desecration of the Yarra Valley that 50 per cent of the traffic using the Eastern Freeway would come from the Greensborough Freeway has gone down the drain.

If these things had not occurred it would have been much more difficult for the Opposition to produce a good argument on this motion. The ridiculous statement by the Premier has left his Ministers high and dry.

Within my electorate, the Diamond Valley Shire Council conducted a detailed study of the redevelopment of a regional shopping centre to serve the north-eastern suburbs at a cost of more than $8,000. The council incurred considerable cost in preparing plans based upon a promise by the Government that the Greensborough bypass road—that is part of the whole complex, with the connection of freeways F18 and F5—would proceed. This plan is useless without the freeway to bypass Greensborough. The breaking of the promise will produce chaos in the north-eastern suburbs, some of which are represented by members of the Liberal Party who ought to support my opposition to the Government on this point.

Serious problems have been caused by the dumping of this bypass road. This is not an over-statement but one of fact. The traffic will now be expected to go through the main shopping centres. Anyone must realize that this cannot be allowed. The community has tolerated the Road Safety and Traffic Authority, which has been frustrated through lack of staff. The local residents have put up with the position because they believed the Government's promise to construct the Greensborough bypass in two years would be fulfilled. I should like to know what the Government will say about the broken promise. We are on the eve of an election and the electors are entitled to know. I invite any Minister or member of the Government party to fill in the gaps.

The statement by the Premier today lists a number of freeway proposals that will not now proceed. They include, freeways F1, F2, F4, F5, F6, F7, F9, F12, F14, F18 and F19. I have referred to the problems in my own area as well as those elsewhere in Melbourne. Not one of the points I have raised can be adequately answered by the Government. The Government cannot deny that people from eastern Victoria will not have a satisfactory freeway to bypass Melbourne to reach the...
western areas of Victoria. This proposal has been left completely undone.

The Government cannot deny that the proposal for a ring road around Melbourne has been dumped. So much for the Premier's statement that outer suburbs are not affected. Nor can the Government deny the chaos that has been caused in the northeastern suburbs by the abandoning of certain freeway proposals. These are undeniable facts and will certainly be important topics during the coming election campaign. Whether it likes it or not, the Government has chosen an issue for the election, and it will be thrust down its throat because the community will not stand for this blundering.

I roundly condemn the Government for its inaction. The action of the Premier deserves the utmost censure, as does the failure of the Government to heed the warnings that were issued over many years by the Opposition and particularly those implicit in items on the Notice Paper over the past five months. Obviously the Government has chosen to make the decision now for political reasons. Honorable members representing inner-suburban areas have been successful in stopping the destruction of their areas.

I have been the only speaker who represents an outer-suburban area. Residents in those areas have the same rights but they do not go to the extent of denigrating the rights of the inner-suburban areas. I am prepared to support any scheme for freeways which will give a sensible and balanced transit in inner-suburban areas, or the outer suburbs where land can be acquired and has been acquired in many instances. However, I oppose the desecration of the natural beauty of the Yarra Valley and damage in suburban areas which hurt people's hearts and their homes.

One can only put the sensible and balanced suggestion that has been made over many years. All the railway lines radiate from the centre of Melbourne. Why has the Government not heeded Labor Party suggestions to roof the existing railway reserves and provide roadways above the railway lines? This would avoid the mutilation of people's homes and the desecration of natural river valleys and the like. The least the Government could have done was to study the suggestion.

The case for the motion of want of confidence has been well proven and members of the Government have done nothing to rectify the situation. The Government stands condemned.

Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows).—When the Minister of Transport led the reply to the argument advanced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who moved the motion which relates to the failure of the Government to provide adequate transport facilities and proper freeway planning, the honorable gentleman used as the basis of his case extensive quotations from a document which he informed the House was the material which his Government had submitted to the Federal Government as its case for Federal finance to assist in the upgrading of public transport. When the Opposition raised the point that the honorable gentleman should table that document, the Minister gave a disgraceful exhibition in seeking refuge behind the argument that parts of the document were confidential and that therefore the material could not be tabled.

The Minister has destroyed his credibility, not as a junior backbench member but as a responsible Minister of the Crown who is the Ministerial head of the department which would have prepared that material for submission to the national Government. The Minister would know as well as any other member with some experience in the proceedings of this Parliament that, having quoted from a document, he was
obliged to table it. The honorable gentleman has indicated that he will make that part of the document from which he quoted available to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition tomorrow. It was a disgraceful exhibition for the Minister to bring into Parliament a document which he knew was confidential, deliberately quote at some length from it and then hide behind the argument that because it was confidential he could not table it.

As I said, the honorable gentleman has destroyed his credibility as a responsible Minister of the Crown because he has hidden behind the nebulous excuse that he will make copies of it available tomorrow. This action demonstrates that the Minister and his Government are in such a mess over the planning of public transport and freeways that they will stoop to any level to cover up their inefficiencies and inability to cope with the problem.

This situation has arisen not just in recent months or recent years; it goes back to the time when this Government first came into office. The Government has continued its neglect year after year and has made no effort to provide the Victorian Railways with the capital which it needed to enable it to discharge its responsibilities to the community by providing a modern and adequate transport system. One has only to study the railway loan application Bills which were introduced annually and in more recent years the Railway Works and Services Bill. In the explanatory memorandum to last year's Bill it was stated that the funds allotted to the department for the year amounted to $15.75 million. That was in 1972, although in 1954, through the Railway Loan Application Bill, this Parliament allocated to the Victorian Railways the sum of $14 million. The Government, as part of its policies, has deliberately confined the railways to that level of finance over the whole of the eighteen years it has been in office. A number of public statements have been made by the present chairman of the Railways Commissioners, and his predecessors, pointing out to the public what this Government has been doing to the railways—financially strangling them.

In a publication entitled Railways of Australia—which all honorable members receive—for April, 1971, it was stated—

Victorian Railway works restricted: The Victorian railways will be forced to curtail their works and services programme this financial year due to the cutback in money allocated for general works. No new works of any magnitude will be tackled.

The article went on to say—

Expressed in 1951-52 money values, this year's allocation is just over one-third of that year.

That is the situation with which the railways were confronted in 1971. This Government—nobody else—determines the amount of works which the railways are able to carry out in any financial year because it controls the allocation of funds through legislation introduced into this Parliament. The amount allocated to the railways in 1971 was equivalent to only one-third of what they received in 1951-52. When one considers the increased population of Melbourne and the increased development in the outer-suburban areas in the twenty years between 1951 and 1971, one can see what a hopeless position this Government has placed the Railways Commissioners in.

The article to which I referred also stated—

The Minister of Transport, Mr. Vernon F. Wilcox, M.P., has blamed the Federal Government for the railway works cut-back. He said that the Commonwealth was keeping the States in a financial strait-jacket, but he believed changes were on the way.

The Minister made that statement in 1971, and for once in his political career he was correct—changes were on the way, and they occurred on 2nd December, 1972.

Now the Minister of Transport finds himself in a situation where he no longer has to carry his colleagues in Canberra and he can attack the Federal Government with impunity.
He is endeavouring to establish some sort of a case that the Federal Government will not honour its undertakings. The honorable gentleman has no grounds on which to make that assertion against the national Government. When one examines the actions of the Minister in this House today, when he quoted from a document which he knew was confidential and then hid behind his refusal to table the document by asserting that he could not do so because it was confidential, one sees what sort of person the Minister of Transport is. Is it any wonder that members of the Opposition challenge the Minister's sincerity and his credibility? The honorable gentleman, through his actions, has contributed to the destruction of that credibility.

In 1971, when the House was debating the Railway Works and Services Bill, I raised with the Minister the extension of the suburban railway service to the northern part of the City of Broadmeadows. I gave the honorable gentleman information, accompanied by a map, showing the development that has taken place in recent years in the area, and I quoted population figures. I received a letter from the Minister on 22nd December, 1971, in which he said that he would confer with the Railways Commissioners on the points I had raised. On 8th February, 1972, he again wrote to me and informed me that he had discussed the matter with the Railways Commissioners on the points I had raised. I have now discussed this matter with the Railways Commissioners. They have advised me, however, that having regard to the funds that are available to them and the number of other works of greater urgency to be carried out, they regret they are unable to indicate when the electrification of the line and the provision of new stations beyond Broadmeadows can be undertaken.

The Railways Commissioners have received no increase in the yearly financial allocation since 1954, so that for almost twenty years they have been forced to labour under severe restrictions. They are men bordering on geniuses to achieve what they have achieved on the pittance which has been handed to them by this Government. When one visits the various railway centres and observes what has been done, one can have only the greatest admiration for the administrative ability of those men, their staff and the great army of dedicated workers who make up the railway service of this State. But what is the problem? This unimaginative, ignorant, irresponsible Government has been sitting at the head of this great community organization, this Public Service instrumentality which has served the State so well for a long time but has had the misfortune to suffer this Government for the past eighteen years. The Minister of Transport in 1971 forecast that changes would be introduced, but the Government now states that the position which obtained in December, 1972, will not continue. The Government cannot justify its record on public transport because it is such a shameful record of neglect and arrogance.

The Leader of the Country Party argued that the funds that will be saved by all the hacking, chopping and slashing that the Premier has done in the past few weeks should be directed to rural areas. The honorable gentleman has been chopping off freeways here and there in the hope that a few Ministers will not get their heads chopped off. Under public transport system for the benefit of this State, but because they are financially strangled by the Minister of Transport and his Government it is impossible for them to discharge their responsibilities. In 1972 they were provided with $15 million to cope with the problem of establishing a modern transport system. Has any honorable member ever heard anything more ridiculous?
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a Labor Government the Victorian railway system would be brought back to the powerful enterprise it was before these honorable gentlemen got their fingers on the purse strings and kept them so tightly closed that it was impossible for the commissioners to do what should have been done.

The second part of the motion deals with freeway planning.

Mr. DUNSTAN.—The honorable member is struggling to keep the debate going.

Mr. WILTON.—I do not consider that I am struggling to the degree that the Minister is struggling. The Minister knows full well how serious his struggle is. I assure the honorable gentleman that the people of his electorate will deal with him on 19th May and will spell out loudly and clearly that the honorable gentleman is no longer wanted. He will be persona non grata. I assure the honorable gentleman that flattery will get him nowhere. He is wasting his time beating the air.

Mr. DUNSTAN.—That was the first nice thing I said to the honorable member all day.

Mr. WILTON.—The honorable gentleman does have some endearing characteristics, but unfortunately when the electorate is in a vicious mood, even his endearing charms will not be enough, because the electorate needs more than that.

The Premier has the hatchet out and he has been chopping and slashing in all directions to try to prevent some of his colleagues from getting their heads chopped off. He has been acting almost hysterically in the election gloom. There has been a complete funk on the part of the Premier and his Ministerial colleagues. The Premier has only compounded the mess which the Government had already created. The freeway plan was originally launched by the Government with usual fanfare of trumpets and splurge of publicity but many people realized that their homes would be affected by the plan and after negotiations with the authorities they sold their homes. The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works has acquired many homes and is now a substantial landlord because the homes have been rented. These homes are scattered all over the city. What use are they now that the land is no longer required for freeways? If the Premier is sincere and means that these freeways will not be proceeded with, what is the Government going to do about these houses. Will it reinstate people in their homes? This is the sort of mess the Government has created in the community.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has made it clear that freeways will not be built in the inner metropolitan area because freeways are not the answer to the problems there. This is supported by ample evidence from around the world. The Premier referred to Tullamarine Freeway, which is a wonderful freeway to travel on between 9 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. However, from 4.30 p.m. onwards the conditions of the Tullamarine Freeway are chaotic, particularly where Flemington Road joins the freeway, because of the bank-up of traffic. This has been the history of freeways throughout the world. I invite honorable members to go to the Tullamarine Freeway at 4.30 p.m. and they will see that it takes half an hour to get onto it. The whole pattern of freeway development in the metropolitan area under this Government has been a hit and miss affair. I recall when the Government had the grand idea of constructing a railway line out to the jetport. The Opposition did not oppose that.

Mr. WHEELER.—You did opposed it.

Mr. WILTON.—I deny emphatically that the Opposition opposed that proposal. The honorable member for Essendon is not correct in saying that. I cannot call the honorable member a liar because you, Mr. Speaker, would name me. Out of deference to your office and to
the Standing Orders of the House, I refrain from calling the honorable member for Essendon a liar. However, I state emphatically that members of the Opposition did not oppose that legislation. We challenged the Government on the route which it proposed and suggested that it was not necessarily the best one. The matter was investigated and the Minister for Civil Aviation at the time supported the Opposition completely.

The records clearly show that we moved that the matter be referred to the Public Works Committee, which has been the long-standing practice in this State. Every railway line that had been constructed up to that time had been investigated by the Public Works Committee. The original title of that committee was the Standing Railway Committee. When it was first established in the 1920s its functions were related to the railways. I handled the Bill on behalf of the Opposition and I made it quite clear that members of the Opposition did not oppose the principle of connecting the jetport to the city by rail but we questioned the proposed route. The then Minister for Civil Aviation was asked in the Federal Parliament whether there had been any consultation between the Victorian Railways and the Department of Civil Aviation on that matter. The Minister's reply was given in detail and is recorded in Victorian Hansard for the honorable member for Essendon to refer to.

At that time the Department of Civil Aviation challenged the proposed route and pointed out to the Victorian Railways that because of the layout of the jetport it would be better to serve the maintenance area and not the passenger terminal. Members of the Opposition had grave doubts whether the route proposed by the Government was correct, but we did not oppose the principle of connecting the jetport with the city by rail. We now know that the Government had no intention of proceeding with the scheme. It was merely flying a kite, because if it had been sincere it would have followed the long standing practice adopted by previous Governments of referring the matter to the Public Works Committee. The Government set that precedent for itself, because when it was suggested that the Preston tramline be extended—another form of public transport—the Government referred the matter to the Public Works Committee without hesitation. The proposal to construct the railway was purely a political stunt on the eve of a State election, and it blew up in the Government's face.

Mr. Scanlan.—The honorable member has one minute.

Mr. Wilton.—The Minister without Portfolio has only six weeks, and he had better make the most of it. The Government has not refuted the arguments put forward by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the honorable members for Geelong North, Albert Park, Greensborough and other honorable members on this side of the House who have spoken. The Government has attempted to extract itself from a ridiculous situation, a mess of its own making. The Government has created a mess of potage and will now have to eat it.

On 19th May the electorate will make it quite clear that it is fed up with this stop-start, fits-and-muddling Government. It seems to be beyond the capacity of the Government to get any sort of regulated programme off the ground, despite all the expertise and resources of departments and instrumentalities available to it. The Minister of Health has been in a blue funk for weeks over the freeway proposal that will rip the heart out of Brighton. The people in that area have made their attitude to that project quite clear. The Minister would have been banging on the Premier's door pleading with him to do something. The Premier, slow as he may be to move, moves in the customary manner of people who are blinded by a lack of sense. He just lashes out wildly.
It has been suggested by members of the Opposition that a significant point to remember is that most of the freeways which have been cut-off are those affecting electorates represented by Government supporters. I suppose those honorable members are relieved to some extent because they will now be able to go out into their electorates and tell the people that they have no worries as they, the honorable members, have had the freeway projects abandoned. What proposal does the Government intend to bring forward now to cover the situation which the Premier has created with his press statement today? Honorable members have not been informed. This debate would have afforded the Government an excellent opportunity of spelling out in detail how it proposes to rectify the current mess.

The motion moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition should be carried. Honorable members know what will happen, because numbers decide issues in this Chamber and for the time being the Opposition has not sufficient numbers. I daresay the Premier has been able to stiffen up a few of his back-bench supporters sufficiently to have the motion defeated. However, I believe the record will clearly show the arguments put forward by the Opposition provide justification for the moving of the motion.

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East).—This is a unique debate because the case for the motion which the Opposition has moved—

that the Government no longer possesses the confidence of this House because of its failure to provide adequate transport facilities and proper freeway planning—

has been fully proved by the Government itself. It was fully proved today, if this House was not aware of it sooner, by the statement issued by the Premier in which he indicated the slashing of 150 miles of freeway in Melbourne. That alone would be proof. As the Opposition had given notice of the motion it was compelled to go on with it, and by this argument the Opposition has put the final nail in the coffin.

There are many reasons why the Government was forced into this panic measure—that is exactly what it is. It was forced to take this action because of concerted pressure exerted on it for a considerable time by the Opposition, pressure from which it sought to run away at every conceivable opportunity. The Government also faced tremendous pressure from the ordinary man in the street, and from many organizations in electorates which Government supporters represent—and pressure which they in turn put on the Government to take this action because of the fear they had that they would lose their seats on 19th May.

Another reason for this panic measure was outlined by the Federal Government on the night of 11th December at the Melbourne Town Hall at a large rally organized by several residential groups against the then existing freeway plans. This was meeting at which I was pleased to be present, as was the honorable member for Melbourne. The newly appointed Federal Ministers for Urban and Regional Development and Transport spelt out the Federal Government's stand on freeways contemplated for Melbourne. Those honorable gentlemen pointed out very clearly to the State Government, which was represented by officers from the Country Roads Board, that the Federal Government would not tolerate the so-called freeway planning and proposals which had been recommended by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee. That is another reason why the Government decided to take this action—that is one Federal–State confrontation that this State Government will not have a bar of. The Government knows it has no hope of calling-off the Federal Government and will not attempt to do so. The State Government is running away from the Federal Government as it
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is running away from the Opposition. The decision announced by the Government today is a complete reversal of a policy adopted three years ago and the statement that the construction of 150 miles of freeway is to be discontinued is clearly contrary to the Government's previously stated intentions on Wednesday, 13th December, 1972.

I refer to an answer furnished to me on that date by the Minister of Transport, who represents the Minister for Local Government in this House. I had asked a comprehensive series of questions about Melbourne's proposed freeway network. It embraced every freeway proposed under the metropolitan transportation plan. The answer I received stated, *inter alia*—

The whole network is currently under detailed review designed to bring about substantial modification with a view to minimizing sociological impact and economic cost.

The review has entailed intensive investigation and analysis of alternatives to date and is proceeding satisfactorily but substantial further studies and testing need to be undertaken before firm proposals can be placed before the Government. Until this is done and resultant determinations are made followed by the allotment of priorities and detailed design, any general statements regarding prospective freeways, their routes and possible construction dates would be purely speculative save in so far as commitments already existing.

That statement does not leave anything to the imagination. What it says in a few words is that the Government had allocated to the Metropolitan Transportation Committee the job of reviewing the existing freeway programme it had gone ahead with, and until the report was made, and the evidence was furnished to the Government, no statement would be issued and no substantial alteration would be made to the existing freeway network. In fact, a significant departure from that stand has been stated in the House. As a panic measure the Government has taken a political decision before the review by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee is completed, before any recommendations have been made by that committee and before any report has been furnished to either the Minister of Transport, the Minister for Local Government or the Government. Naturally it was not discussed by the Cabinet because the report is still in course of preparation, as was admitted earlier today, in answer to a question I asked of the Minister of Transport, who was a little more effusive about freeways during question time than the Premier. By bypassing the Metropolitan Transportation Committee in this blatant political way the Government has, in the view of the Opposition, destroyed the credibility of the committee, and in view of the Government's decision it should immediately terminate the services of the committee.

I challenge the Government to do that, because that is a logical extension of the contemptuous manner in which it has treated the committee on these proposals. It is no longer interested in what the committee decides; it now believes in the view which has been expressed by the Opposition that, in fact, any review of freeway proposals should not have been undertaken by the body which first proposed those freeways.

The Government's actions now and in the past show how incapable it is of carrying out freeway planning as part of an over-all transport system. A few years ago the Government was quite happy to slice Melbourne into various sections—and that is what the effect of those freeways would have been. They would have caused untold destruction to vast tracts of the metropolitan area, particularly in the inner suburbs, which have a high-density population.

The Government accepted the proposals of the committee without qualms. Voices may have been raised at Cabinet meetings against the proposals, but they were certainly in the minority. It is interesting to recall that this plan was proposed when the Premier was Minister for
Local Government and inextricably linked with the committee's programme. He was happy then to go along with the proposal of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee, but now he is a changed man.

The plan of the committee was a most defective and deficient one, but it has taken the Government a long time to realize that. It was a plan which was produced not on the basis of the social needs of the metropolitan area or the State, but simply as an exercise in transport engineering. It involved tremendous expenditure of public moneys. Indeed, according to the report of the committee, it contemplated an allocation of $2,126 million by the year 1985 for freeways. Against that proposed allocation, it suggested the allocation of $385 million for public transport, or only one-sixth of the amount allocated for private transport. Is it any wonder that the Opposition has felt compelled to move a motion of want of confidence in the Government because of its neglect of the public transport system. From the figures I have quoted, the Government's neglect is self-evident.

The Government began to re-examine its transport policies while pressing on with freeway construction, but it was having the re-examination carried out by the same body which recommended the proposals with which the Government became dissatisfied—a case, virtually, of appealing from Caesar to Caesar.

The Opposition on many occasions strongly urged the Government to halt freeway projects, particularly those proposed for inner-metropolitan areas, pending an over-all review of Melbourne's transport needs. In view of the Premier's statement today the Government, by acceding to the proposition made by the Opposition, would not have involved itself in any great difficulties, but because the suggestion emanated from the Opposition it chose to treat it simply as a political exercise and did not examine it on its merits. It has left its decision in the matter until two months prior to the elections, and it can be said that in making this decision the Government has commenced its election campaign. In its approach to this matter the Government has brought about much destruction in the metropolitan area, not only by the construction of freeways, but also by the acquisition of hundreds of shops, factories and houses on the routes of proposed freeways.

On 13th December I asked the Minister of Transport, for the Minister for Local Government, what was the state of the acquisition of properties for proposed freeways in Melbourne and the metropolitan area. In answer, the honorable gentleman said—

No land has been purchased in respect of F12. On other possible routes, varying amounts of property have been purchased. From that answer one is led to believe that on the routes of all proposed freeways except for F12 the Government has purchased properties of various kinds. In many of them the tenants have probably been evicted, and some houses have probably been demolished. Unfortunately, the answer was not as detailed as I would have hoped. Information of that kind ought to be released by the Government in the public interest. Unfortunately the Opposition is unaware of the extent to which the Government has purchased land and properties along the routes of these proposed freeways, just as it is unaware of the number of blocks that the Government has had razed. One would have have expected members of the Government to comment on this matter during this debate. Within the next few weeks will certainly demand more information concerning the future of acquired properties.

For some time the Opposition has believed that a halt should have been called to the freeway system proposed for Melbourne because it was poorly planned, based on false assumptions, inordinately expensive, too destructive of the community fabric and self-defeating in its pur-
Want of Confidence [28 March, 1973.]

The Government did not see it in that light at the time. It was content to proceed with the freeway network and to accept the assumptions that were made by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee.

Crucial to the thinking of the committee was the concept of a Melbourne unlimited. That was proudly stressed in the document produced by the committee with a foreword signed by the Minister of Transport. Major changes in political thinking have taken place since then and the Government has come to realize how unrealistic it is to continue with the concept of Melbourne unlimited. Therefore that assumption on which the freeway plan was based has already been proven to be false.

Another assumption on which the plan was based was that the administration of public transport would be conducted as a business venture in the same way as business ventures are conducted in private enterprise. Of course, crucial to and inherent in that kind of thinking are measures such as increasing fares for public transport and the thinning out of services as an economy measure. That is the type of thinking which was displayed by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee and which the Government has not rejected; it still adheres to it. That is another reason why the want-of-confidence motion is justified. It is an area in which the Government will find itself in clear conflict with the Federal Government, and it will not win that battle either.

Another assumption on which the committee’s plans were based and which the Government accepted at the time was that public transport exists solely to move large numbers of people during peak hours to and from the inner-city area. This was the Government’s proud planning body for transport and the kind of thinking which was adopted by that body, which the Government adhered to and which one suspects it still adheres to. It does not seem to be possible to get into the heads of Government members that public transport is essentially a community service—indeed, a community welfare service—and must be provided as such. Any attempt to administer public transport generally along the lines of a business venture is doomed to failure if one considers success as meeting the transport needs of the community.

The fourth assumption which characterized the report of the committee and which was readily acceded to by the Government at the time was that public transport could be upgraded in conjunction with freeway development. In the report it was referred to as a concept of balanced transport development. The figures to which I referred were used as projected levels of expenditure by 1985. That assumption, which was so readily accepted by the Government, has also proved to be false, and even the Government now recognizes its falsity. The Government realizes that the amount of money that was needed to develop two systems, a freeway network and improved public transport facilities, is impossible to secure. It has taken the Government a long time to recognize that, but at last it has done so.

The tremendously high costs of freeway construction would have made it inevitable that public transport would continue to languish. The new Federal Government realizes that, too, and also the destructive nature of freeways, particularly in inner areas of capital cities. It has decided therefore that it will not follow the path of the previous Federal Government and allocate to bodies such as the Country Roads Board large sums of public money simply to assist in the destruction of capital cities. That Government has decided to divert the money either to public transport or other much-needed community facilities. The State Government has been forced to accept the proposition, although for political reasons no mention of the Federal Government’s policies was made in the Premier’s statement. That is understandable.
The final assumption to which I refer and on which the previous freeway plan for Melbourne was based was that the community at large could be expected to accept the large-scale destruction of the Melbourne metropolitan area, particularly inner-suburban areas, so that freeways could be carved through them. In fairly bland terms the Metropolitan Transportation Committee said that so many acres of land would be required for Melbourne’s freeway needs. I have not the report with me, but I am paraphrasing the sentiments expressed therein. Those views were accepted with very little demur by the same Government that is responsible for today’s unique statement. The Government has realized how false is the assumption which it accepted only three years ago. It has taken the combined forces of the Opposition, the community and the Federal Government representing the whole nation, including the community of Victoria, to bring the Government to its senses.

Today there is a freeze on the disastrous freeway plan which was recommended by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee and which was blindly accepted by the Government—a Government which has changed very little since, because few members of the Cabinet have retired. Its composition is almost the same. Of course, Ministers have been forced to make this decision because of the justifiable fear by several honorable members of the Government party that their seats will be lost to the Labor Party in two months’ time. The Government has left it too late to save those seats. Although the subject of freeways is exercising the minds of people in those electorates, they are also disgusted at the attitude of the Government over a whole range of other areas of administration.

In view of the hopeless mess in which this Government has placed the transport system—if one can grace it with that title—it is incumbent on the House to carry the motion of want of confidence in the Government so ably moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The House divided on the motion (Sir Vernon Christie in the chair)—

Ayes . . . 20
Noes . . . 42

Majority against the motion . . . 22

AYES.
Mr. Amos Mr. Lovegrove
Mr. Bornstein Mr. Mutton
Mr. Doube Mr. Shilton
Mr. Edmunds Mr. Simmonds
Mr. Floyd Mr. Trezise
Mr. Fordham Mr. Wilkes
Mr. Ginifer Mr. Wilton.
Mr. Jones
Mr. Lewis (Dundas) 
Mr. Lewis (Portland) Mr. Fell
Mr. Lind 
Mr. Kirkwood.

Tellers:

NOES.
Mr. Austin Mr. Rafferty
Mr. Balfour Mr. Reese
Mr. Billing Mr. Ross-Edwards
Mr. Birrell Mr. Rossiter
Mr. Borthwick Mr. Scanlan
Mr. Burgin Mr. Smith
Mr. Dixon Mr. Smith (Bellarine)
Mr. Dunstan 
Mr. Evans (Ballaarat North) Mr. Stephen
Mrs. Goble Mr. Suggett
Mr. Guy Sir Edgar Tanner
Mr. Hamer Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hayes (Balwyn) 
Mr. Jona Mr. Thompson
Mr. Lexton Mr. Trehewey
Mr. McCabe Mr. Trewin
Mr. MacDonald Mr. Wheeler
Mr. MacDonald (Glen Iris) Mr. Whiting
Mr. MacDonald (Rodney) Mr. Wilcox
Mr. McDonald Mr. Wiltshire.
Mr. McLaren 
Mr. Rafferty
Mr. Maclean Mr. Broad
Mr. Meagher Mr. Taylor.
Mr. Mitchell (South Gippsland) 
Mr. Rees

Pairs:

Mr. Holding Mr. Templeton
Mr. Turnbull Mr. Crellin.

POLICE OFFENCES (PUBLICATIONS) BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to establish a State Advisory Board on Publications and to make provision with respect to the sale and exhibition of certain publications and for other purposes.
The motion was agreed to.
The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

SOCIAL WELFARE (AMENDMENT) BILL.
Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Social Welfare) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Social Welfare Act 1970, the Crimes Act 1958, and the Maintenance Act 1965 with respect to the service of terms of imprisonment, the custody and treatment of prisoners, work-release from prisons, and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.
The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

TEACHING SERVICE BILL.
Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend provisions of the Teaching Service Act 1958 relating to the Teachers Tribunal and to its functions and for other purposes.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park).—I ask the Minister whether this is a Bill of substance. Does it amend the Teaching Service Act to a major extent? If so, does the Minister intend to proceed with it in the few remaining weeks of this Parliament?

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education) (By leave).—It is the Government's intention to proceed with the Bill. All that it seeks to do is to allow the alternate Government representative to operate in all areas of the tribunal and not merely in appeals.

The motion was agreed to.
The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

BENDIGO AERODROME BILL.
Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to empower the committee of management of the Bendigo aerodrome to borrow moneys and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

THE CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT (PRESIDING OFFICERS) BILL.
Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of a Bill to make further provision with respect to the term of office of the presiding officers of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, to amend The Constitution Act Amendment Act 1958 and for other purposes.

A resolution in accordance with the recommendation was passed in Committee and adopted by the House.

On the motion of Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer), the Bill was brought in and read a first time.

VICTORIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BILL.
Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer) presented a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of a Bill to constitute a Victorian Development Corporation to encourage and assist in the establishment, expansion and development of certain industries and the provision of tourist facilities in this State and for other purposes.

A resolution in accordance with the recommendation was passed in Committee and adopted by the House.

One the motion of Mr. HAMER (Premier and Treasurer), the Bill was brought in and read a first time.

ABATTOIR AND MEAT INSPECTION BILL.
This Bill was returned from the Council with a message relating to an amendment.

It was ordered that the message be taken into consideration next day.
VALUATION OF LAND (VALUERS) BILL.

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

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

EGG INDUSTRY STABILIZATION BILL.

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

MARGARINE BILL.

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

DECENTRALIZED INDUSTRY (HOUSING) BILL.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to establish a Decentralized Industry Housing Authority whose responsibility it shall be to provide housing for persons employed in country industries. It will not in any way lessen the responsibilities of secondary industry to house its own employees and employees must still retain a responsibility to house themselves.

Many of the homes required by industry to house its work force are already provided by the Housing Commission, provided that the employee’s income does not exceed $80 exclusive of overtime. However, the greatest difficulty which a decentralized secondary industry has had to contend with up to this stage has been to find suitable houses for key personnel and technical staff who are earning more than $80 a week exclusive of overtime and for whom there are no houses available in country towns. In certain circumstances, houses have been built by the Housing Commission, with the full agreement of all political parties, for key personnel but the proposed Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement for 1973-77 could prohibit this type of assistance in the future.

Under the provisions of this Bill, a Decentralized Industry Housing Authority will be appointed. It will comprise three members. One member, who shall be chairman, shall be nominated by the Minister of Housing, one member shall be nominated by the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, and one member shall be nominated by the Treasurer. They shall be appointed for a term of five years. Subject to the Public Service Act 1958, there may be appointed a secretary and such other officers as are necessary.

The moneys required by the authority to build homes for key personnel and technical staff employed in industry will be completely separate to that which is already made available under the Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement and which is used to build homes for needy people.

There will be established and kept in the Treasury in the Public Account, as part of the Trust Fund, a trust account to be called the Decentralized Industry Housing Fund into which will be paid moneys which may from time to time be appropriated by the Parliament for the purposes of the Act, moneys borrowed by the authority under the powers conferred by the Act, and moneys which are received by the authority as rent for properties and as instalments for the sale of houses and land pursuant to the provisions of the Act, and also moneys obtained under the leasing provisions of the Act.

However, the main source of funds will be moneys borrowed from the State Savings Bank of Victoria by the authority or on the authority’s behalf by the Victorian Development Corporation for this purpose. These funds will be over and above those which the State Savings Bank is already lending privately for housing purposes.
At this stage it is difficult to assess the number of houses that will be built with these funds each year. This will be known only after a complete survey has been undertaken of the housing needs of all country industries which are in receipt of an approved decentralized certificate or which are firmly committed to establish in a country town. It is contemplated that the authority would require a minimum of $3 million annually for this purpose.

A Division of Industrial Housing will be established within the Ministry of Housing and experienced officers will discuss its housing needs with decentralized industry. A programme will be arranged which will assess the number of houses which the industry or its employees should provide themselves, how many houses could be provided by the Housing Commission and how many houses could be provided by the authority. It may be necessary in some cases to programme houses to be built over a number of years.

The powers of the authority are very wide and it will be able to do all things relative to the provision of housing for country industry. It will be able to purchase land and houses, lease land and acquire land for houses, subdivide and resubdivide land purchased, lay out and construct streets on land so purchased, leased or acquired, and expend moneys on works and operations to render this land suitable for housing. It will be able to erect or cause to be erected on this land houses which may in turn be sold, leased or rented to industry. It will be able to sell land and houses or lease land to industry for housing purposes, make loans under terms and conditions as it thinks fit for the provision of housing to persons employed in country industry, and also make loans to a country industry to enable the industry to build houses for its employees.

The authority will be empowered by the Bill to enter into an arrangement or agreement with the Housing Commission constituted under the Housing Act 1958 whereby the commission shall be and act as the agent of the authority for the purposes of this Bill upon such terms and subject to such conditions as are agreed upon by the authority and the Housing Commission. This means that the full services of the Housing Commission will be made available to country industry and the architectural and engineering branches of the Housing Commission will be of great assistance to industry in the designing of these homes.

The commission will buy individual blocks of land if necessary, or will use the land which could be made available by the particular industry itself, will call tenders, will contact builders and will give as complete a service to industry to house their key personnel and technical staff as it is already doing in the day-to-day operations of the Housing Commission in providing homes for needy people. The Housing Commission is already geared to do this work as part of its day-to-day operations. There will be no interference with or overloading of the commission's responsibilities under the Housing Act.

The five main clauses of this Bill are clauses 4, 12, 13, 14 and 15. I will now deal with each of these main clauses in turn. Clause 4 authorizes the establishment of the Decentralized Industry Housing Authority, which, as I have already stated, is to consist of three members appointed by the Governor in Council. The members of the authority shall hold office for a period not exceeding five years and shall be eligible for re-appointment.

Clause 12 sets out the powers of the authority which are generally summarized as being all things necessary for the provision of adequate housing for persons employed
This clause also confers on the authority the power to apply the provisions of this clause subject to such terms and conditions and restrictions as the authority thinks fit.

Sub-clause (3) of this clause incorporates the Lands Compensation Act 1958 in order to provide machinery for the compulsory acquisition of land along the lines of similar powers granted to other State instrumentalities. Sub-clause (4) adapts the provisions of certain sections of the Housing Act 1958 relating to the closure of roads and the extinguishment of easements and restrictive covenants, which will be required to be utilized by the authority in any subdivision of land. In addition, in sub-clause (5) a further provision of the Housing Act 1958 is adapted to permit the granting of easement rights on subdivisions of the authority to adjoining privately owned lands. Sub-clause (6) obliges the authority to comply with the provisions of the Uniform Building Regulations only in so far as standards of construction are concerned.

Clause 13 empowers the authority to enter into agreements with the Housing Commission whereby the commission shall act as the agent of the authority to implement any of the authority’s functions as set out in the Bill.

Clause 14 authorizes the authority, with the consent of the Treasurer, to borrow money for the purpose of implementing the provisions of this Bill. This clause further empowers the Governor in Council to approve of the Treasurer guaranteeing money loaned to the authority by any person or institution and authorizes the Treasurer to guarantee repayment of such money. This clause also stipulates that in fulfilling any guarantee the Treasurer may pay such moneys out of the Consolidated Fund.

Clause 15 provides for the establishment of a trust account in the Treasury which will be part of the
trust fund and will be known as the Decentralized Industry Housing Fund into which shall be paid any moneys appropriated by Parliament or moneys borrowed, earned or otherwise received by the authority. The fund so established will be available to the authority to enable it to carry out its functions under this Bill. I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Moonee Ponds).—I move—

That the debate be now adjourned.

The Bill contemplates the spending of $3 million annually and contains eighteen clauses. It provides for a new authority with wide powers although they appear to be a duplication of the powers in the Housing Commission Act. An adjournment of the debate for one week would barely afford the Opposition an opportunity of studying the ramifications of the Bill. As I understand the programme of the Government on the issuing of writs, only seven days remain on which Parliament will meet. If the Opposition is not prepared or is unable to proceed with the measure next week, I suggest to the Minister that additional time should be provided.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I assure the honorable member that the Government will cooperate to the fullest extent.

The motion for the adjournment of the debate was agreed to, and it was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, April 4.

SOCIAL WELFARE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Social Welfare).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Before explaining the Bill in detail, it is important that I should explain for the benefit of honorable members the Government's approach to problems in the Prisons Division. This will throw more light on three systems of imprisonment that the Bill outlines as alternatives to full-time imprisonment. Since the establishment of the new Social Welfare Department, it has been a matter of great importance to the Government and the department that we look forward and plan for the future, particularly in the Prisons Division. There has not been much planning in this division since its inception in Victoria well over 100 years ago. The Government does not accept that it is good enough to continue with the traditional methods of punishment without balancing them with some form of rehabilitation. The Government has come under intense criticism from time to time, particularly in the media, for apparently not doing anything towards altering the systems as they stand. If a Government makes decisions off the top of its head without some sort of planning, invariably it ends up regretting them. This has not been done and apparently there have been some delays to some people.

At present the Deputy Director of Prisons is overseas studying prison systems. A system that particularly interests the Government is the Dutch penal system where very few people are incarcerated full time but where extensive community programmes are in operation. The Government has also undertaken a study into one of the systems mentioned in the Bill, the system of periodic detention. The type of periodic detention proposed is unique in the world. In New Zealand a similar system already operates, and in California there is one for young offenders. In Victoria, although it has been a low key, unpublicized operation, a system of periodic detention has been in operation for young offenders from youth institutions. It has been so successful that we feel justified in extending the system to adult offenders with some modifications which we believe are improvements that can be implemented for adult prisoners. The aim is to provide for the courts and the Social Welfare Department sufficient alternatives
to imprisonment so that the numbers of people in prison will decrease. Then we can seriously consider removing Pentridge Gaol. This cannot be done in the short term, and I would be foolish if I put a time limit on it. It all depends on the success of these three new systems and the study being undertaken by the Deputy Director of Prisons.

Mr. Bornstein.—Is the Minister foreshadowing the sale of the land on which Pentridge Gaol is situated?

Mr. I. W. Smith.—No, I am foreshadowing—much of this has already been announced in the press—the construction of a new security prison in a locality outside Melbourne where the community and the municipality are receptive to having this facility constructed. We propose that a security prison shall be constructed to remove the most difficult prisoners from the environment of Pentridge Gaol. This will enable security arrangements at Pentridge to be scaled down and the provision of an atmosphere that is more conducive to rehabilitation and work programmes. At the same time, as we have previously announced, we are studying the feasibility of splitting Pentridge Gaol into three separate prisons. Clearly the difficulties we have had over the past two years have stemmed largely from a lack of communication, where because of the numbers of prisoners—about 1,200 at any one time—and the number of prison officers—about 350—relationships between the staff and prisoners have not been in the best interests of running what might be called a happy institution. We had these difficulties, and I foreshadow a lowering of the intensity of operations at Pentridge Gaol, a splitting of it into two or three separate prisons, and ultimately, if our proposed systems as outlined in the Bill are successful, instead of having between 2,000 and 2,500 people in prison we should have only approximately 1,500, or hopefully even fewer. The new security prison and the planned new youth prison will take up the numbers making the difference between 1,500 and what we now hold in our total prison system, thereby obviating the need for Pentridge. The remand section still remains a difficulty. However, we are trying to plan some satisfactory solutions to that.

The purpose of the Bill is to introduce modern methods of dealing with some types of offenders—open to the courts when sentencing and, with the approval of the Minister, to the Director-General for those already in custody. It provides for the establishment of periodic detention centres, week-end prisons and a work release scheme. Because further changes in the social welfare legislation will be introduced in the spring sessional period, the debate on this Bill will be confined to these matters.

The Bill provides for the establishment of periodic detention centres at which an offender may be permitted, under an order by a court, to serve a sentence of imprisonment, if the term of imprisonment is not less than one month or not more than twelve months, and provided that the offender so consents.

The desired effect of the legislation is that although periodic detention should to some extent be punitive it should also be free of the stigma of imprisonment and provide opportunity for therapeutic and re-habilitative treatment. An offender selected to serve detention will not be separated from his family, the general community or his employment.

The Bill provides that the times specified for periodic detention shall, as far as possible, avoid interference with an offender’s normal employment, education or training.

During periods of detention an offender may be directed to engage in unpaid work at such places as a hospital or educational or charitable institution; to participate in activities; or to attend classes or groups
or undergo such instruction as is considered conducive to his rehabilitation.

Provision is made for an order for periodic detention to be cancelled or varied on the application of an offender, or of the Director-General, because of changed circumstances from the time the order was made, or if an offender fails to fulfil any of the obligations under the order.

The court may issue a warrant for the apprehension of an offender breaching any condition of an order, as well as impose penalties for an offence.

To further the aims intended by the Bill, provision is made for the Director-General, with the approval of the Minister, to permit the transfer of any prisoner undergoing a sentence of imprisonment to serve the balance of his sentence by way of periodic detention.

As a further alternative to imprisonment, the Bill provides that a court may also permit an offender, who has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of not less than one month or not more than twelve months, to serve the sentence at a week-end prison, provided the offender so consents.

A person permitted to serve a period of week-end imprisonment shall be obliged to observe the regulatory provisions of a prison and to engage in any education or work programme scheduled for his rehabilitation. The programme in a week-end prison will be less orientated towards treatment than the programme in a periodic detention centre. The prison will be residential.

As for periodic detention, penalties are provided for a breach of the conditions of a permit, and provision is made for the cancellation of a court order and the issue of a warrant of apprehension.

The Bill also provides, under clause 5, for the Director-General, with the approval of the Minister, to permit the transfer of a prisoner under sentence of imprisonment to a week-end prison.

As another important and desirable step towards the rehabilitation of a prisoner, and his acceptance in the community, it is proposed to introduce a work release scheme by amending sub-section (1) of section 179 of the Act to allow the Director-General to permit a person in his custody to take temporary leave of absence to engage in outside employment.

For this purpose, the legislation also provides that prisoners may be permitted to live in work release hostels to be established and supervised by the department.

Necessary amendments to the Crimes Act and the Maintenance Act to provide for the introduction of periodic detention and week-end imprisonment, are also introduced by the Bill.

On the motion of Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East), the debate was adjourned.

Mr. I. W. SMITH (Minister for Social Welfare).—I move—

That the debate be adjourned until Thursday next.

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East).—Notwithstanding the Minister’s comments that further changes in the Social Welfare Act are contemplated in the spring sessional period—that is an optimistic viewpoint expressed by the honorable gentleman—and his statement that the debate on this Bill should be confined to these matters, the Minister allowed himself a deal of latitude and canvassed many issues not directly related to the provisions in the Bill. Members of the Opposition would expect to be accorded the same latitude in view of the fact that the debate on the Bill could become a relatively major debate on prisons in Victoria. I ask the Minister to give the Opposition an assurance similar to that which was given
by the Chief Secretary to the hon-
ororable member for Moonee Ponds on a
measure which was introduced a short time ago.

**Mr. I. W. SMITH** (Minister for Social Welfare) (By leave).—I am
not aware of the assurance given by my colleague while I was attend-
ing to another matter. If the Oppo-
sition is having some difficulty, doubtless the Government will agree to some latitude within the confines of the time announced for the rising of Parliament.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until Thurs-
day, April 5.

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE (OSTEOPATHY, CHIROPRACTIC AND NATUROPATHY) BILL.**

**Mr. ROSSITER** (Minister of Health).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

For some considerable time past rep-
resentations have been made by orga-
nizations for some form of recog-
nition of practitioners of sundry arts associated with the treatment of human ailments. Generally speaking, these arts are not recognized by the medical profession. One of the very real difficulties associated with any form of recognition is that there are a number of organizations each representing one or more of these arts, and in some cases one organiza-
tion, will have nothing to do with the others and, in fact, will decry the abilities of members of the other organizations at every opportunity.

The Government has decided, therefore, to set up a joint Select Committee of the Parliament to in-
quire into and make such recommenda-
tions as it considers necessary concerning the practice of osteo-
pathy, chiropractic and naturopathy in Victoria.

Clause 4 sets out in considerable detail the functions of the committee and the various points which it will have to take into consideration in carrying out the inquiry. Not the least of these points are those cov-
ered by paragraph (e) of clause 4—
whether treatment in accordance with any of those practices is either generally or in any particular case or cases beneficial de-
trimental or harmless;

Under clauses 5 and 6 of the Bill the joint Select Committee to be set up will be given power to send for persons, papers and records and to hear, receive and examine evi-
dence on oath and to exercise all powers normally exercised by Select Committees.

Under sub-clauses (1) and (2) of clause 3 each member of the com-
mittee will be entitled to receive an attendance fee at the rate of $10 for every attendance at a meeting at which a quorum is present and also will be entitled to further fees and expenses for travelling and other charges incurred by him in the course of his duty as a member. Sub-clause (3) of clause 3 will make the cost of operation of this com-
mittee a charge on the Consolidated Fund.

The committee to be set up will consist of three members of the Legislative Council and three mem-
ers of the Legislative Assembly appointed according to the practice of Parliament in regard to the ap-
pointment of joint Select Committees.

On the motion of **Mr. WILKES** (Northcote), the debate was ad-
journed.

**Mr. ROSSITER** (Minister of Health).—I move—

That the debate be adjourned until tomorrow.

**Mr. WILKES** (Northcote).—It is impossible to comply with the Min-
ister’s request and nobody should know that better than the honorable gentleman. It will require a party meeting to select the representative of the Opposition, and no doubt the Country Party is in a similar position. As party meetings are not held until next Tuesday, I request that the debate be adjourned until next Tues-
day.
Mr. ROSSITER (Minister of Health) (By leave).—I will concede the point.

By leave, the motion was withdrawn, and it was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, April 3.

The sitting was suspended at 12.14 a.m. (Thursday) until 12.46 a.m.

TEACHING SERVICE BILL.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It makes three changes to the Teaching Service Act. At present the Teachers Tribunal consists of a chairman, an alternate chairman, three teacher representatives, a Government representative and an alternate Government representative. The alternate Government member is a part-time member who sits on the tribunal when appeals are being heard, and he also takes the place of the Government member when that member is absent.

Because of the growth of the Teaching Service in recent years—there are now 40,000 teachers and 17,000 student teachers—it is imperative that the second Government representative should be allowed to work full-time and deal with any matter which is before the tribunal for consideration. The amendment contained in clause 2 of this measure makes this possible.

If this proposed legislation is enacted, it will make possible the greater use of simultaneous sittings of divisional tribunals. As a result, the tribunal will be able to handle its work more expeditiously.

Although the functions of the two Government representatives will be determined from time to time by the Governor in Council because that method allows some flexibility, it is the intention that the second Government representative should specialize in the work of the secondary and technical tribunals.

Clause 4 of this measure makes two minor changes. The first is consequent upon the changed method of classification of teachers brought about by the award of the Teachers Tribunal last year and the second, contained in paragraph (b) of clause 4, which substitutes new sub-sections (4) and (5) in section 27 of the principal Act, makes it clear that members of committees of classifiers can remain in that position only whilst they remain in the section of the service from which they were elected in the first place. I commend the Bill to the House.

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

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—I move—

That the debate be adjourned until Thursday next.

Mr. DOUBE (Albert Park).—I think there should be a longer period of adjournment to allow the Opposition to consult people who are interested in amendments of this nature. One week is insufficient to permit that. If the Government wishes to act in this manner in the dying hours of this Parliament it has the numbers to do so; but Teachers Tribunal legislation is not easy, and the debate on the Bill will not be made easier if the Opposition is prevented from discussing it with the teachers' unions concerned. I suggest that instead of an adjournment of one week the debate should be adjourned for a fortnight.

In suggesting that the debate should be adjourned for one week, the Government demonstrates its lack of interest in the working of this Parliament. It is all very well for members on the Government side of the House to laugh at what I am saying, but I point out, for example, that the Minister of Labour and Industry rarely makes a contribution to the debate in this House even though he has officers of his department to advise him. Members of the Opposition have no such assistance;
and when some members who are now on the Government side of the House cross the floor of the Chamber to become the Opposition in this Parliament in the near future, they will appreciate the difficulty of contributing to a debate when inadequate time for research is allowed.

If the Minister intends to insist upon an adjournment of only one week, and will not allow an adjournment for at least ten days, he will find himself talking to the sycophants of his own party and not to the Opposition.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education) (By leave).—As the Bill makes only a minor change, I suggest that an adjournment of the debate for one week is sufficient. If the Opposition is in trouble at that stage, the Government will be cooperative.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until Thursday, April 5.

BENDIGO AERODROME BILL.

Mr. BORTHWICK (Minister of Lands).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bendigo aerodrome comprises an area of some 312 acres of Crown land which was reserved in 1969 as a site for an aerodrome. The reserve has been placed under the control and management of a committee of management consisting of seven persons; one being a Government representative, two being councillors and the elect of the council of the City of Bendigo, and the others being councillors and the elect of the councils of the Borough of Eaglehawk, the Shire of Strathfieldsaye, the Shire of Marong and the Shire of Huntly. The reserve was created after many years of investigation by the local municipal councils into the need for aircraft services at Bendigo.

The airfield has been developed to the standard of an authorized landing area. An air training school, a charter service and an aircraft hire service are in existence. However, local demand now warrants the upgrading of the facilities. Traffic is at present of the order of between 600 to 1,000 movements a month and is increasing, and there is a good measure of air ambulance operation. It is also apparent that businessmen have a requirement for night-flying operations.

The committee is, therefore, desirous of upgrading the reserve to a class "C" licensed airfield suitable for all weather day and night operation. The cost of the project has been estimated at about $78,000 of which one half would be provided by the Department of Civil Aviation by way of a grant. As to the balance the committee has approached its five representative councils and each has undertaken to pay annually to the committee a certain contribution sufficient to meet any loan repayments and maintain the airfield.

In view of these arrangements the committee has applied to its bankers, the Commonwealth Savings Bank of Australia, for a loan of $39,000 for the project. The bank is prepared to make a loan of that amount to the committee, repayable over a term of fifteen years, on the strength of a grant from the Department of Civil Aviation and the undertakings of the councils. The purpose of the Bill is to give the committee of management the necessary authority to borrow moneys for the project.

Clause 1 of the Bill cites the short title. Clause 2 gives the interpretation of "aerodrome" for the purpose of the Bill. Certain small areas of Crown land are proposed to be added to the present reserve and provision has been made accordingly.

Clause 3 authorizes the committee of management to borrow a sum not exceeding $40,000 for the purpose of making improvements to the aerodrome. Clause 4 authorizes the five councils represented on the committee to guarantee the repayment of any moneys borrowed by the committee for that purpose. I commend the Bill to the House.
One the motion of Mr. SHILTON (Midlands), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, April 5.

PUBLIC SERVICE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time. It represents part of the Government’s policy of removing the last vestiges of discrimination against women. Two provisions in the Public Service Act—sub-section (3) of section 35, which provides for assured progression in the lowest or the second lowest classes of the Administrative Division and the Professional Division to male officers only, and section 37, which prohibits the employment of married women in the Public Service except with the approval of the Governor in Council in special cases—appear to discriminate against women. The Bill now submitted repeals both of these provisions.

The distinction between male and female officers arising from sub-section (3) of section 35 is now, in practice, more apparent than real. After the Public Service Act 1946 came into effect, the then First Schedule to the board’s regulations prescribed scales of salaries for females in certain identical classifications which were lower than for males. This practice has been discontinued.

The apparent distinction could be removed by the deletion of the word “male”. However, as adequate provision exists under section 39 of the Public Service Act 1958 for the prescription of scales of salary and annual increments, the opportunity has been taken of deleting the whole sub-section.

All honorable members will know that in practice there is no impediment placed in the way of the employment of married women in the Public Service. In the Government’s view there is no purpose served in retaining this now outmoded provision.

The proviso to section 37 has in recent years been readily used to seek the sanction of the Governor in Council for the appointment or employment or the continuance in office or employment of married women in a large number of classifications. It has become the general practice to extend permanent appointment to married women or to permit women, on marriage, to retain their permanency.

Section 37 of the Public Service Act is extended and applied by section 21 of the Mental Health Act 1959 to medical officers of the Mental Hygiene Branch of the Department of Health. Accordingly, it is necessary to remove the reference to section 37 in the latter Act.

The policy of the Government is to remove discrimination against women from all Victorian statutes. Accordingly, I have pleasure in commending the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. SIMMONDS (Reservoir), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, April 5.

COAL MINES (PENSIONS INCREASE) BILL (No. 2).

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister of Mines).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time. It has three purposes; firstly, to increase coal mine pensions because of the recent increases in Commonwealth social services pensions; secondly, to provide that increases of this type be made automatically in the future; and thirdly, to give coal mine pensioners a straight-out increase not in any way related to social services pensions.

Honorable members will be well acquainted with the Bills which come before this House to satisfy the first of these purposes. They are made necessary because of the important
connections between coal mine pensions and social services pensions, the principal one being that any pension a coal mine pensioner receives from the Commonwealth is a deduction from his mine pension. It follows that if a mine pensioner is also a Commonwealth pensioner he has to get an equivalent increase in his mine pension every time there is an increase in his Commonwealth pension otherwise he does not benefit from a Commonwealth increase.

In the latest such increase the Commonwealth rates have been increased by $1.50 so that coal mine pensions have to be increased by $1.50 and this amount is part of the increases shown in the new rates in the Bill. The second purpose of the Bill is the reintroduction of automatic provisions for making such increases, and, to give a better understanding of the proposal, I briefly refer to the history of the coal mines pensions scheme.

When it came into existence in 1942, rates of pensions were fixed at higher rates that the corresponding Commonwealth pensions. The difference, or margin, was preserved until 1960 by passing amending coal mine pension Bills every time Commonwealth rates were increased. In that year the Coal Mines (Pensions) Act 1960 changed the system by making provision for automatic adjustment of the rates of coal mine pensions whenever there was a change in the social services age pension. For a time the automatic provisions worked well, but when in 1963 and 1966 the Commonwealth gave different increases to different classes of married pensioners it was found that the automatic provisions presented difficulties.

The crux of the problem was that the coal mines legislation presupposed that there would be only one rate of Commonwealth age pension whereas in 1963, and again in 1966, there was more than one rate. The registrar applied the provisions in the manner that he and the Coal Mine Workers Pensions Tribunal considered most appropriate but, when doubt was raised as to the correctness of the registrar’s action, the matter was referred to the Crown Solicitor. He stated that, in his opinion, the differential increases in the rates of age pensions effected by the Commonwealth Acts of 1963 and 1966 did not attract the operation of the automatic provisions of the Coal Mines Act and that therefore no increases should have been made in any mine pensions in those years.

No action was taken to recover the amounts wrongly paid because it was considered that they had been paid in accordance with the spirit of the legislation, if not the letter. The automatic provisions, however, were revoked in 1967 by the Coal Mines (Pensions) Act 1967. At that time the Government gave an undertaking to the miners’ union that any future increases in Commonwealth social services pensions would be passed on to the coal mine pensioners even though it meant the introduction of special legislation. Since then, there have been seven amending Acts dealing solely or mainly with pension increases caused by increases in the rates of social services pensions.

It seems likely that there will continue to be periodic increases in Commonwealth pensions. It is proposed, therefore, to revert to a system of automatic adjustment similar to that which existed previously but with appropriate changes so that it can be applied whatever the type of increase granted by the Commonwealth. I hasten to point out that this is not Government by regulation in the true sense of that phrase. It is merely a reasonable and expeditious method of giving effect to the promise made by the Government to the miners’ union. Both the Government and the pensioners have come to regard these increases as a formality, and, as such, the implementation is considered to be not appropriate business to occupy the time and attention of the Parliament. It does not properly represent new or amending legislation.
I will now deal with the third purpose of the Bill, to increase the pension rates over and above those corresponding to the social services increases. For some time now the Wonthaggi Retired Mineworkers Pensioners Association has been making representations to me for increases. I have not been unsympathetic to their requests nor have I been unmindful of the struggle that pensioners generally have to live within their limited income. However, I have found it hard to recommend any increase for a number of reasons, the principal one being my concern for the solvency of the Coal Mine Workers Pensions Fund.

The Coal Mines Act provides that at least once in every three years the fund shall be examined and a report prepared by an actuary as to the state and sufficiency of the fund. These examinations have been carried out periodically by the Government Actuary and the contributions of the Treasury and the State Coal Mine and the mine workers have been assessed and paid according to the estimated amounts required to keep the fund solvent. After the mine closed at the end of 1968, the Government Actuary estimated that there probably was enough money in the fund to meet all future commitments but that any additional new payments should be financed by the Treasury.

Naturally, I was reluctant to place a further burden on the Treasury, particularly as the pensioners were receiving all the benefits, and more, that had been provided for originally in the pensions scheme. Nevertheless, after carefully considering the case put to me by the Wonthaggi Retired Mineworkers Pensioners Association I have been convinced that some coal mine pensioners, particularly those under the age of 65 years, are relatively badly provided for when compared to Commonwealth age pensioners. The Government, therefore, proposes not to discriminate but to lift all pensions by giving a $2 increase to single pensioners and $3.50 increase to married pensioners.

These are additional to the increases consequent on the recent social services increases. The net result is that single rates are increased by a total of $3.50 and married rates by $6.50. All increases are to be retrospective to 15th December, 1972, the date of the commencement of the first pension pay period after the date from which the Commonwealth social services increases are being paid. The Bill provides for the proposed changes in clauses 2, 3 and 4.

Clause 2 provides for the increases in the rate of pension and wife's allowance. In sub-clauses (1), (2) and (4) the rates payable to retired and disabled pensioners and widows is increased by $3.50. In sub-clause (3) the allowance for a wife or dependant female is increased by $3.

Clause 3 provides that the new rates shall be payable retrospectively as from 15th December, 1972, the commencement date of the first coal mine pension pay period after the date from which the new Commonwealth increases are being paid.

Clause 4 adds four new sub-sections, to be numbered (3), (4), (5) and (6), to section 110 of the Coal Mines Act. Proposed sub-section (3) provides that, whenever there is an increase or decrease in the rates of age, invalid or widow's pensions or in dependants' or other allowances under the Commonwealth Social Services Act, the corresponding coal mine pensions and allowances are increased by an equivalent amount. Proposed sub-section (4) provides that future increases of this type will be made from the beginning of the first coal mine pension pay period after the date of the commencement of the Commonwealth increases.

Proposed sub-section (5) provides that for the purpose of sub-section (3), that is, for determining the rates that will be affected by any future
automatic increases or decreases, the rates shall be those specified in the relevant sections of the Act, namely sections 104, 105, 106 and 107, or those rates as varied subsequently by the operation of sub-section (3). This means, in practical terms, that the next social services increase will result in increases being made to the rates proposed in clause 2.

Proposed sub-section (6) provides that, when automatic increases or decreases are made, they will be set forth in an Order in Council made by the Governor in Council and published in the Government Gazette. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, April 5.

CATTLE COMPENSATION BILL.

Mr. BALFOUR (Minister for Fuel and Power).—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Government has decided to introduce amendments to the Cattle Compensation Act 1967, the Swine Compensation Act 1967 and the Stamps Act 1958. These amendments cover two separate matters. The first relates to the further use of compensation funds for building and equipping veterinary diagnostic laboratories in this State. The second relates to a reduction in the amount of stamp duty payable under the Stamps Act for purposes of the Swine Compensation Act.

In 1967, the Cattle Compensation Act and the Swine Compensation Act were consolidated and amended. The amendments provided that the moneys from these funds, which are derived from contributions in the form of duty paid by cattle owners and pig owners at the time of sale of cattle or pigs, should be applied not only to the payment of compensation but also towards the cost of erecting and equipping veterinary diagnostic laboratories to be established by the Department of Agriculture. At that time, an examination of the funds disclosed that, through reduction in expenditure because of effective disease control procedures, and through increase in receipts from rising stock numbers and good market prices, the balances in the funds had reached a level well above that considered to be a safe minimum to cover any demands which might be made through outbreaks of disease.

Since that time, the balances in the two funds have continued to rise, even though considerable payments have been made from these funds for purposes of erecting and equipping diagnostic laboratories. The balance in the Swine Compensation Fund at 30th June, 1968, was $872,172.83. This balance had increased to $1,183,325.60 at June last and, at the end of February this year stood at more than $1·28 million. The balance in the Cattle Compensation Fund at 30th June, 1968, was $1,300,317.67. By June, 1972, this had increased to $1,829,787.70 and, on 28th February this year stood at more than $1·9 million.

The legislation introduced in 1967 authorized the expenditure on veterinary diagnostic laboratories of an amount not in excess of one-third of that standing to the credit of the funds on the day the legislation received the Royal assent. The result of this legislation was that $264,055.97 became available for this purpose from the Swine Compensation Fund and $407,599.59 became available from the Cattle Compensation Fund.

Since the legislation was introduced, the programme of veterinary laboratory development has progressed very satisfactorily. The veterinary research laboratory at Westmeadows has been built, equipped and staffed and animal houses and other facilities are being provided. This laboratory stands on 160 acres which were transferred to the Department of Agriculture from
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the Police Department for this purpose. The capital cost of this laboratory, including equipment, has so far amounted to $649,000. The laboratory has a staff of 65, and the annual running cost, including salaries, is $443,760.

A regional veterinary laboratory has been built, equipped and staffed at Hamilton. The funds for this laboratory were provided by the State. The capital cost of this laboratory, including equipment, has so far amounted to $539,700. It has a staff of 29, and the annual running cost, including salaries, is $197,350. A second regional veterinary laboratory is under construction at Bendigo and this facility also is being mainly financed out of State funds.

Following legislation enacted last spring, arrangements have now been completed for the transfer of the Veterinary Research Institute from the University of Melbourne to the Department of Agriculture. This laboratory has a staff of 62 and the annual running costs, including salaries, are expected to be $484,300. The intention of the department is that, as and when funds are available, this relatively old laboratory will be rebuilt on the same site and become the Central Veterinary Diagnostic and Research Laboratory of the department.

Land has been purchased at Bairnsdale and Benalla for purposes of establishing a further two regional veterinary laboratories. The laboratories which have been developed so far are making a significant contribution to the animal disease control programmes and to the welfare of the livestock industries in this State. These laboratories will become more important as time goes by, in providing a diagnostic resource and back-up to the State meat inspection services and in providing facilities for the testing of blood samples and other specimens from livestock in a co-ordinated disease control programme.

Overseas countries importing meat from Australia are becoming increasingly demanding, particularly in relation to the cattle industry, requiring certification that meat entering them is derived from animals free of diseases including tuberculosis and brucellosis. These specifications, in some instances, also apply to dairy products being exported. Many overseas countries have made great progress in eradicating important diseases such as brucellosis and the Government of the United States of America has announced that that country will be free of brucellosis by 1975.

It is now important that programmes such as the national brucellosis and tuberculosis programme should be accelerated and, as millions of blood samples and other specimens must be tested annually, there is every reason to proceed as rapidly as possible with the establishment of regional veterinary laboratories at Bairnsdale and Benalla.

Discussions have been held with representatives of primary producer organizations and, recognizing the need to secure the present markets for their products and the requirements which will be placed on them in the future, these organizations have indicated their agreement to the proposal that further funds for veterinary diagnostic laboratories be provided from the cattle and swine compensation funds and that the laboratories should be established, equipped and staffed as soon as possible.

The Bill proposes to authorize the use of one-half of the net amount standing to the credit of each of the funds at the time the legislation receives the royal assent, for purposes of establishment of veterinary diagnostic laboratories, the net amount in each fund being the total amount standing to the credit of the fund less unspent commitments authorized for veterinary diagnostic laboratories and for the University.
of Melbourne for research at Mount Derrimut under the previous legislation.

The position, as at 28th February, was that, of the $264,055.97 available from the Swine Compensation Fund for veterinary laboratories, $143,977.62 had been paid out and there was a commitment of $120,078.35 in relation to equipment and buildings under construction. In the Cattle Compensation Fund, out of the original allocation of $407,599.59, payments of $334,616.33 have been made, leaving a residue of $72,983.26, which is also fully committed against equipment, animal houses and other facilities under construction.

Of the $50,000 authorized for use from the Swine Compensation Fund by the University of Melbourne for pig research and training at Mount Derrimut, $40,000 has been paid out and the residue of $10,000 under the existing legislation must be paid out before 30th June this year. Any residual amount in respect of the Derrimut project will also be deducted from the Swine Compensation Fund prior to determining the net amount standing to the credit of the fund.

It is expected that an amount of the order of $550,000 will be available from the Swine Compensation Fund and of the order of $910,000 from the Cattle Compensation Fund, making a total of $1,46 million. The expected capital cost of each of the two new laboratories at Bairnsdale and Benalla is of the order of $500,000 and the cost of equipment $150,000 for each laboratory. Each of these two new laboratories will have a staff of 25 officers and the estimated cost of operation will be $175,000 of which $125,000 will be for salaries and $50,000 for operating expenses. These recurring amounts of $175,00 will in each case be provided from State funds.

The second important amendment to the legislation will permit a reduction in the amount of stamp duty payable under the Stamps Act for purposes of the Swine Compensation Act. For some time now, pig producers have been concerned that the amount accruing to the Swine Compensation Fund from stamp duty each year has far exceeded the amount expended in compensation for swine diseases.

The present rate of stamp duty which is paid on the sale of any pig is 4 cents for every $5 or any part of $5, up to a maximum of 32 cents for each pig. The income to the Swine Compensation Fund in 1971-72 was $211,655.80 and the expenditure for purposes of swine compensation was $48,971.67. This means that the income to the fund was more than four times the expenditure on compensation.

Pig producers have indicated that the present balance in the Swine Compensation Fund is very much more than sufficient to cope with any outbreak of disease which might occur, and the view of departmental officers administering the fund is that the amount of duty payable could safely be reduced by a half. This would mean that the new duty payable would be 2 cents for every $5 or part of $5 on the sale of any pig, up to a maximum of 16 cents duty payable for any one pig. It has been calculated that, at this rate of duty, the income to the fund is expected to exceed $100,000 a year, which will still be of the order of twice the expected outgoings for swine compensation. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, April 5.

**MOTOR ACCIDENTS BILL.**

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).

—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time. The purpose of the Bill is to provide a scheme of insurance under which benefits will be available without
delay to victims of motor car accidents. This is a very technical Bill and if I were to explain it in detail the explanation would tend to obscure the over-all scheme.

In order to assist honorable members, an explanatory memorandum has been prepared and is attached to the Bill. I commend this memorandum to honorable members for their earnest consideration. For these reasons I will confine myself to an explanation of the main principles of the Bill.

At present, persons injured or killed by the use of a motor car may obtain damages under what is generally known as the tort system. Briefly stated, tort is the infringement of a right vested in a person whereby the infringement causes damage to that person. This system depends upon the plaintiff showing that the damage to him was caused by the negligence of the defendant. If the plaintiff has failed to take reasonable care for his own safety then he may be held to have contributed to the damage. In such a case the defendant would not be entirely at fault.

In support of the tort system, legislation was enacted in 1939 to require that every owner of a motor car shall obtain a contract of third-party insurance with an authorized insurer at no greater cost than the premium prescribed. The basis of the legislation was to ensure that every person who obtained judgment for fault by negligence under the tort system would be assured of receiving the fruits of any judgment he may obtain.

With the rapid technical development of the motor car, notably in speed and power, with the changes in the social habits of the community, and with the growing complexity of our society, there has been an increasing desire, and probably a necessity, to claim the amount of the loss suffered by the injured party from the party whose fault or negligence caused that loss. This has brought about substantial pressures on the tort system from which it is evident that although the system is still satisfactory in many ways it does have certain deficiencies. The main deficiency in the system is the delay in settling claims. More than 50 per cent of the moneys paid out to claimants is paid more than three years after the accident. In some cases, it is as long as seven years after. The result usually is that the victim goes on social services, and accounts for the treatment, other than for hospitals, remain unpaid until settlement is made.

Another deficiency is that compensation under the tort system is not available to persons injured by the use of a motor car unless another party is at fault. For example, in a single car accident where the motor car ran off the road and hit a tree indemnity is not available to the injured driver. The system also creates difficulties for the injured person in that often the amount of the claim is reduced, sometimes substantially, because the negligence of that person contributed to the accident.

A significant deficiency in the present system is that a substantial proportion of third-party insurance premiums is paid in legal fees. An analysis of components of third-party insurance claims indicates that of the total amount paid out for claims approximately 17 per cent was paid out in legal fees. This is an over-all figure and naturally for small claims the percentage is much higher. For claims up to $1,000 the percentage is possibly as high as 40 per cent.

Having regard to these problems in the present scheme, the Government established a committee representative of the following organizations and comprising the following personnel to examine the position:—

Mr. V. H. Arnold, Government Statist and Actuary, Chairman.

Mr. A. K. Clarke, Deputy Insurance Commissioner.

Mr. J. C. Finemore, Q.C., Chief Parliamentary Counsel.

Mr. K. H. Marks, Q.C., nominee of the Victorian Bar Council.
Mr. N. E. Mutton, Nominee of the Fire and Accident Underwriters Association.

Mr. W. K. Nevin, Assistant Under-Secretary.

Mr. J. C. Richards, nominee of the Law Institute of Victoria.

Mr. D. C. T. Robertson, nominee of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria.

Mr. D. J. Watt, Secretary.

Briefly stated, the terms of reference of the committee were to examine the feasibility of introducing a scheme of periodical payments similar to that applicable under the Workers Compensation Act and on the basis of no-fault liability.

The committee has performed its task with the utmost fidelity and on behalf of the Government, and myself in particular, I thank every member of the committee for the thought, time and energy he has devoted to the project. I thank them all for a job well done.

The Bill is the result of the work of the committee. Basically it retains the present tort system of liability for negligence and establishes a complementary no-fault liability scheme under which payments are made—

1. to road accident victims without delay and without consideration of possible negligence;

2. directly to hospitals, doctors, ambulance bodies and other bodies providing similar services.

A body corporate to be known as the Motor Accidents Board is to be established under the Bill. This board will consist of three persons appointed by the Governor in Council for a period not exceeding five years and members are to be paid such remuneration, travelling allowances and other allowances as are fixed by the Governor in Council.

With the approval of the Minister, and subject to such terms and conditions as are approved, the board may appoint a general manager, deputy general manager and such other officers as are necessary. The remuneration, travelling allowances and allowances to be paid to the officers shall be fixed by the board with the approval of the Minister.

The board is liable to make payments provided for in the Bill to—

(a) a person resident in Victoria who sustains injuries that were, or whose death was, caused by or arose out of the use in Victoria of a motor car;

(b) a person who sustains injuries that were, or whose death was, caused by or arose out of the use in Victoria of a motor car which is registered or required to be registered under the Motor Car Act 1958 or of the use of a motor car in accordance with a permit granted under the Motor Car Act;

(c) a person who sustains injuries that were, or whose death was, caused by or arose out of the use in Victoria of a motor car the identity of which cannot be established.

However, the board will not be liable to make payments of any kind to a person who is injured or dies as a result of an accident if, when the accident occurred, he was in a railway train or a tram car, tram motor or omnibus and the operator of such train or tram car, and so on, as the case may be, did not have an agreement in force with the Motor Accidents Board to contribute to the funds of the board.

So far as loss of income is concerned, the board will not be liable to make payments to any person who is injured as the result of an accident which occurred while—

(a) he was driving a motor car under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs and he was convicted of that offence;

(b) he was driving a motor car whilst he was unlicensed and had never held a licence to drive under the Motor Car Act 1958 or the corresponding law of any other State or country. A person shall not be
deemed to have driven whilst unlicensed if he fulfils one of the conditions referred to in sub-clause (2) of clause 16.

(c) he was driving a motor car whilst his licence was suspended or cancelled.

(d) he was in an uninsured motor car owned by him.

(e) he was using a motor car in connection with or in the commission of an indictable offence, stealing or attempting to steal a motor car, resisting or preventing the lawful apprehension of himself or any other person or inflicting or attempting to inflict injury to another person;

(f) taking part in a race competition or trial in a place other than on a highway or in testing the motor car in preparation for a race competition or trial.

The board is not required to admit any claim which is for loss of income of less than $40 or for a period of incapacity of two days or less. This limitation is to prevent the board from being overburdened with very small claims.

Under the Bill a person who is injured by the use of a motor car may apply to the board within three years after the date of the accident for payments in respect of loss of income. Basically such payment will be 80 per cent of the loss of net income, after allowing for income tax, for a period of not more than 104 weeks during which income is lost, but no payment is to exceed $120 a week.

Clause 25 defines the benefits payable by the board for loss of income. The effect of this clause is that the payment will be 80 per cent of the net amount earned, after tax, having regard to the period of incapacity, any loss of capacity to work and any net income received as an employee during the period.

In the event of the death of the income earner, periodical payments may be made to a dependent spouse or to children who are wholly or mainly dependent. The basic amount will be five-eighths, that is 62\(\frac{1}{2}\) per cent, of the gross income of the deceased but in no case will the benefit exceed $93.75 a week.

The maximum period during which payments will be made to a dependent spouse or a dependent child is 104 weeks less any period during which loss of income benefits were paid to the deceased person between date of accident and date of death. Where there are no dependent children or the children are living with the spouse, the spouse will receive the basic amount. Where the dependent children are not living with the spouse, the dependent spouse will be entitled to receive one-half of the basic amount and the other half will be divided amongst the children. However, if there are fewer than three children each child will receive one-third of the amount available for the children and the other third or two-thirds, as the case may be, will be paid to the widow.

Provision is also made in the Bill for the dependent spouse to receive a lump sum payment representing 15 per cent of the total payments which would be payable to a dependent spouse on the basis that there are no dependent children. The future income of the dependent spouse after such lump sum payment would be correspondingly reduced.

The board may, with the consent of the person who has been injured, settle matters in dispute in relation to the liability of the board to make payments relating to loss of income and may make a lump-sum payment in settlement of that liability. The making of such a payment by the board will constitute a discharge of the liability of the board for income payments.

The board may enter into agreements with hospitals, ambulance organizations and doctors for the payment of reasonable expenses of an injured party. Where no such agreements are entered into, the board may make payments within the period of five years after the date of the accident of 70 per cent of reasonable
costs of hospital services; 70 per cent of reasonable costs of ambulance services; 80 per cent of reasonable costs of medical services.

The board may also pay 80 per cent of reasonable costs incurred in Victoria of the burial or cremation of the injured person where the person injured dies within 104 weeks; 80 per cent of reasonable costs of nursing and therapeutic services for up to five years; 100 per cent of reasonable costs of medicines or other materials obtained from chemists on prescription of medical practitioners for a period of five years; 80 per cent of reasonable costs of employing a housekeeper, where the cost of employment exceeds $20, to compensate for loss of services of a full-time housekeeper who did not receive salary. The period of payment is limited to five years and the total amount is limited to $2,000. The board may also pay 80 per cent of other reasonable costs or expenses incurred in Victoria within a period of five years and as determined by the Board.

The Bill establishes a Motor Accidents Tribunal consisting of persons who are barristers and solicitors of not less than seven years' standing and who will hold office for not more than five years but may be reappointed. The number of persons constituting the tribunal will be determined by the Governor in Council.

Appeals may be made to the tribunal where—

(a) the board has refused an application for payments on the grounds that it is not liable to make that payment;

(b) the board, after receiving an application for payments, has not within one month made a part payment with respect to the application or has notified the applicant that the board is not liable to make such payment;

(c) the board has refused or deferred an application for payment on the grounds that there has not been a material loss of income by reason of the injury;

(d) the board has made payment but there is a dispute as to the amount of the payment, the period of the payment or the liability of the board for other payments.

The tribunal may also by consent, upon such grounds as appear to it to be sufficient, hear appeals with respect to lump sum payments in settlement of the board's liability in relation to income payments. Appeals which concern income payments may be made at any time within six years after the accident, but appeals with respect to payment in relation to expenses other than loss of income must be made within three months of the payment of the decision of the board giving rise to the appeal. An appeal may be made by any injured person, a dependent spouse or dependent child or by the legal personal representative of any of those persons.

Where a question of law arises in proceedings before the tribunal, the tribunal may of its own motion, or where a party to the proceedings so requests, refer the question to the Supreme Court for determination.

The board is empowered to enter into an agreement with a hospital in respect of the payment within five years of the accident of the reasonable fees or costs of the hospital for or in respect to hospital services provided by it in Victoria in respect of an injury of a person resulting from an accident and such agreement shall—

(a) include an agreement by the board to make to the hospital payments in respect of reasonable fees in accordance with a scale of fees specified in the agreement;

(b) include an undertaking by the hospital that it will not make demand on a person other than the board for payment of costs which the board has agreed to make;

(c) be subject to such other conditions as the board specifies in the agreement.

Mr. Meagher.
Similar agreements may be made by the board with ambulance services and medical practitioners.

The Bill enables the board to recoup payments where the victim has received compensation under some other scheme. Additional premiums for third-party insurance will be prescribed and will be payable to insurance companies. From their total premium incomes, authorized insurance companies will be required to make payments to the board to meet the cost of benefits paid under the Act and the cost of administration.

The Bill also amends the Motor Car Act in two particular respects. Firstly, it repeals paragraph (b) of sub-section (2) of section 46 of the Motor Car Act 1958. The effect of this amendment is that the owner or driver of a motor car who is injured by or arising out of the use of a motor car will be indemnified under a policy of third-party insurance. Secondly, it extends the definition of "owner" to include any person who has a motor car under a leasing agreement and that agreement requires the motor car to be registered in the name of the person who is in possession of the motor car under the agreement. This amendment has consequential effects upon paragraph (d) of sub-clause (1) of clause 16 of the Motor Accidents Bill in that a person who is the owner of an uninsured motor car is not entitled to benefits under the Bill. Many persons have motor cars under long-term leases and are virtually in a position of having all the privileges and responsibilities of being the owner but they are not the legal owners of the motor car, hence the earlier provision in the Bill. I commend this Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park), the debate was adjourned.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary).—I move—

That the debate be adjourned until Thursday, April 5.

I assure honorable members that the usual consideration will be given to an extension of the period of the adjournment.

Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park).—The Government has submitted a large Bill together with an extensive memorandum. In addition many pages of explanatory notes have been supplied by the Minister. I wish to indicate that the honorable member for Sunshine will be handling this Bill on behalf of the Opposition. In his usual thorough way, the honorable member will want to match up the second-reading speech of the Minister with the actual clauses in the Bill. I asked the Minister to give consideration to a longer adjournment than a week. The Opposition accepts his undertaking but hopes the honorable gentleman will accommodate the honorable member for Sunshine because I am sure the honorable member will not accommodate me when I present him with this Bill in the morning if it has to be debated next week.

Mr. WILKES (Northcote).—On the question of time, the Bill has 89 clauses and although the Government is calling the tune as to when this Parliament is to be dissolved, there are still two working weeks left. If this Bill is adjourned until Thursday of next week it could quite easily be adjourned until Tuesday week which would give the Opposition and the Country Party more time. I appreciate the Chief Secretary's suggestion that he will accommodate the Opposition, but I ask him to consider adjourning the debate until Tuesday week because that would give the Opposition reasonable time in which to make the necessary comparisons and to receive any assistance it may need to formulate an opinion upon the measure.

It is not the fault of the Opposition that the Government decided to introduce this measure within the last week or two of the sessional period. The Premier knew that the election would be held on 19th May.
and obviously the honorable gentleman should have considered his legislative programme before fixing the date of the election. This evening the House has been considering Bills like sausages and all the adjournments of the debates have been for one week only. I strongly suggest to the Government, to the Minister in charge of the House and to the Chief Secretary that Tuesday week would be a reasonable date to which to adjourn complex Bills to allow proper consideration to be given to those measures. It is useless trying to consider measures if the House is going to churn them out like sausages. This should not be the intention of Parliament. Parliament should not be forced into a situation where it has to consider Bills in this manner. I urge the Minister to consider, irrespective of the consequences, adjourning the debate until Tuesday week which would be a more reasonable approach.

Mr. MEAGHER (Chief Secretary) (By leave).—At the outset I deeply regret the delays which have occurred and which have caused the introduction of this Bill to be delayed. After the Bill had been received and originally printed it was found to include an insertion which should not have been there which meant it had to be redrafted and reprinted. My purpose in suggesting one week was to keep the Notice Paper under control but I imagine no matter what circumstances the House is working under next week, it will probably be Tuesday week before the debate on this Bill is resumed. I offer the honorable member in charge of the Bill every co-operation and assistance in understanding the Bill and the use of any officers he requires. If the Opposition is prepared to accept an adjournment for one week, I assure it there will be no attempt to force the resumption of that debate before Tuesday week.

The motion was agreed to, and the debate was adjourned until Thursday, April 5.

ADJOURNMENT.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: MACLEOD HIGH SCHOOL—DAYLIGHT SAVING: REFERENDUM.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—I move—

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until this day, at half-past Ten o’clock.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. THOMPSON (Minister of Education).—I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. FELL (Greensborough).—I raise with the Minister of Education what I consider to be a very important matter, namely, the non-payment of school teachers. Four teachers at the Macleod High School did not receive their pay last pay day and I call on the Minister to immediately investigate what is causing the problem. In fact, one teacher, Mr. Harris, had been at the school five weeks before receiving any payment. He received payment on the sixth week and then missed out the following pay day. This is in addition to the four other teachers I previously referred to. Mr. Harris is now at the Keilor Heights High School and I have been informed that he has still not received any pay there either. Another person, Mrs. Norster, was forwarded a cheque although she had resigned from the department at the end of last year.

In addition, this school has had its senior English co-ordinator removed from the school on transfer to the Melbourne College of Education. Last year five senior teachers were transferred from the school which is now in a desperate situation. With the loss of the senior English co-ordinator there is now no English co-ordinator at all and in fact the school had previously been without an English co-ordinator for years. It is about time the Minister of Education took some positive action to end discrimination against this school.

Mr. BROAD (Swan Hill).—I have a request for the Government which is of considerable importance and