The Governor

The Lieutenant-Governor
The Honourable Sir John McIntosh Young, K.C.M.G.

The Ministry
(At the Opening of the Session)
Premier, and Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism
The Hon. R. J. Hamer, E.D., M.P.

Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Chief Secretary, and Minister for Police and Emergency Services
The Hon. L. H. S. Thompson, C.M.G., M.P.

Minister of Education
The Hon. A. J. Hunt, M.L.C.

Attorney-General, and Minister for Federal Affairs
The Hon. Haddon Storey, Q.C., M.L.C.

Minister for Local Government
The Hon. D. G. Crozier, M.L.C.

Minister for Minerals and Energy
The Hon. J. C. M. Balfour, M.P.

Minister of Health
The Hon. W. A. Borthwick, M.P.

Minister of Agriculture
The Hon. I. W. Smith, M.P.

Minister for Conservation, Minister of Lands, and Minister of Soldier Settlement
The Hon. W. V. Houghton, M.L.C.

Minister of Housing, and Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation
The Hon. B. J. Dixon, M.P.

Minister of Water Supply, and Minister of Forests
The Hon. F. J. Granter, M.L.C.

Minister of Transport
The Hon. R. R. C. Maclellan, M.P.

Minister for Community Welfare Services
The Hon. Walter Jona, M.P.

Minister of Labour and Industry, and Minister of Consumer Affairs
The Hon. J. H. Ramsay, M.P.

Minister of Public Works, and Minister for Property and Services
The Hon. T. L. Austin, M.P.

Minister for Planning, and Assistant Minister of Health
The Hon. L. S. Lieberman, M.P.

Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, and Assistant Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism
The Hon. A. R. Wood, M.P.

Minister of the Arts, and Assistant Minister of Education
The Hon. Norman Lacy, M.P.

Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet
The Hon. Glyn Jenkins, M.L.C.

1Until 2 September 1980
Premier, and Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism
The Hon. R. J. Hamer, E.D., M.P.

Deputy Premier, Treasurer, and Minister for Police and Emergency Services
The Hon. L. H. S. Thompson, C.M.G., M.P.

Minister of Education
The Hon. A. J. Hunt, M.L.C.

Attorney-General, and Minister for Federal Affairs
The Hon. Haddon Storey, Q.C., M.L.C.

Minister for Local Government
The Hon. D. G. Crozier, M.L.C.

Minister for Minerals and Energy
The Hon. J. C. M. Balfour, M.P.

Minister of Health
The Hon. W. A. Borthwick, M.P.

Minister for Economic Development
The Hon. I. W. Smith, M.P.

Minister for Conservation, Minister of Lands, and Minister of Soldier Settlement
The Hon. W. V. Houghton, M.L.C.

Minister of Housing, Minister for Employment and Training, and Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation
The Hon. B. J. Dixon, M.P.

Minister of Water Supply, and Minister of Forests
The Hon. F. J. Granter, M.L.C.

Minister of Transport
The Hon. R. R. C. Maclellan, M.P.

Minister for Community Welfare Services
The Hon. Walter Jona, M.P.

Minister of Labour and Industry, and Minister of Consumer Affairs
The Hon. J. H. Ramsay, M.P.

Minister of Agriculture
The Hon. T. L. Austin, M.P.

Minister for Planning, and Assistant Minister of Health
The Hon. L. S. Lieberman, M.P.

Minister of Public Works, Minister for Property and Services, and Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs
The Hon. A. R. Wood, M.P.

Minister for the Arts, and Minister of Educational Services
The Hon. Norman Lacy, M.P.

Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet
The Hon. Glyn Jenkins, M.L.C.
(From 3 February 1981)

Premier . . . . . . . . . . The Hon. R. J. Hamer, E.D., M.P.
Deputy Premier, Treasurer, and Minister for Police and Emergency Services The Hon. L. H. S. Thompson, C.M.G., M.P.
Minister of Education . . . . The Hon. A. J. Hunt, M.L.C.
Attorney-General, and Minister for Federal Affairs The Hon. Haddon Storey, Q.C., M.L.C.
Minister for Local Government . . . . The Hon. D. G. Crozier, M.L.C.
Minister of Health . . . . . . . . The Hon. W. A. Borthwick, M.P.
Minister for Economic Development, and Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism The Hon. I. W. Smith, M.P.
Minister for Conservation, Minister of Lands, and Minister of Soldier Settlement The Hon. W. V. Houghton, M.L.C.
Minister for Employment and Training, and Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation The Hon. B. J. Dixon, M.P.
Minister of Water Supply, and Minister of Forests The Hon. F. J. Granter, M.L.C.
Minister of Transport . . . . . . . . The Hon. R. R. C. Maclellan, M.P.
Minister for Community Welfare Services The Hon. Walter Jona, M.P.
Minister of Labour and Industry, and Minister of Consumer Affairs The Hon. J. H. Ramsay, M.P.
Minister of Agriculture . . . . . The Hon. T. L. Austin, M.P.
Minister for Minerals and Energy, Minister of Mines, and Minister for Planning The Hon. L. S. Lieberman, M.P.
Minister of Public Works, 4Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, and Minister for Property and Services The Hon. A. R. Wood, M.P.
Minister for the Arts, and Minister of Educational Services The Hon. Norman Lacy, M.P.
Minister of Housing, and 4Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs The Hon. J. G. Kennett, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet . . The Hon. Glyn Jenkins, M.L.C.

1 Also Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism, and Minister for Economic Development from 15 March 1981 to 17 March 1981
3 Until 17 February 1981
4 From 17 February 1981
# Members of the Legislative Council

**FORTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Province</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baxter, W. R.</td>
<td>North Eastern</td>
<td>Jenkins, Glyn</td>
<td>Geelong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baylor, Mrs H. G.</td>
<td>Boronia</td>
<td>Kennedy, C. J.</td>
<td>Waverley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block, P. D.</td>
<td>Nunawading</td>
<td>Kent, D. E.</td>
<td>Chelsea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bubb, Clive</td>
<td>Ballarat</td>
<td>Knowles, R. J.</td>
<td>Ballarat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butler, G. A. S.</td>
<td>Thomastown</td>
<td>Landeryou, W. A.</td>
<td>Doualla Galla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell, W. M.</td>
<td>East Yarra</td>
<td>Lawson, Robert</td>
<td>Higginbotham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamberlain, B. A.</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Long, R. J.</td>
<td>Gippsland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coxsedge, Mrs Joan</td>
<td>Melbourne West</td>
<td>Mackenzie, R. A.</td>
<td>Geelong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crozier, D. G.</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Radford, J. W. S.</td>
<td>Bendigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunn, B. P.</td>
<td>North Western</td>
<td>Reid, N. B.</td>
<td>Bendigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy, R. J.</td>
<td>Thomastown</td>
<td>Saltmarsh, D. N.</td>
<td>Waverley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans, D. M.</td>
<td>North Eastern</td>
<td>SGro, G. A.</td>
<td>Melbourne North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foley, Dr K. J.</td>
<td>Boronia</td>
<td>Stacey, N. F.</td>
<td>Chelsea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granter, F. J.</td>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
<td>Storey, Haddon, Q.C.</td>
<td>East Yarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grimwade, F. S.</td>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
<td>Taylor, J. A.</td>
<td>Gippsland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest, J. V. C.</td>
<td>Monash</td>
<td>Thomas, H. A.</td>
<td>Melbourne West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton, H. M., E.D.</td>
<td>Higginbotham</td>
<td>Trayling, I. B.</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hauser, V. T.</td>
<td>Nunawading</td>
<td>Walker, E. H.</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayward, D. K.</td>
<td>Monash</td>
<td>Walton, J. M.</td>
<td>Melbourne North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houghton, W. V.</td>
<td>Templestowe</td>
<td>Ward, H. R.</td>
<td>South Eastern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard, Ralph</td>
<td>Templestowe</td>
<td>White, D. R.</td>
<td>Doualla Galla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunt, A. J.</td>
<td>South Eastern</td>
<td>Wright, K. I. M.</td>
<td>North Western</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**President:** THE HON. F. S. GRIMWAD

**Chairman of Committees:** THE HON. W. M. CAMPBELL

**Temporary Chairmen of Committees:** The Honorable P. D. Block, B. A. Chamberlain, D. M. Evans, V. T. Hauser, R. J. Long, I. B. Trayling and J. M. Walton

**Leader of the Government:** THE HON. A. J. HUNT

**Deputy Leader of the Government:** THE HON. HADDON STOREY

**Leader of the Opposition:** THE HON. W. A. LANDERYOU

**Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** THE HON. E. H. WALKER

**Leader of the National Party:** THE HON. B. P. DUNN

**Deputy Leader of the National Party:** THE HON. W. R. BAXTER
# Members of the Legislative Assembly

**FORTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arnos, D. G.</td>
<td>Morwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin, T. L.</td>
<td>Ripon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balfour, J. C. M.</td>
<td>Narracan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birrell, H. W.</td>
<td>Geelong West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borlwick, W. A.</td>
<td>Monbulk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, A. J.</td>
<td>Westernport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgin, C. W.</td>
<td>Polwarth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cain, John</td>
<td>Bundoora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathie, I. R.</td>
<td>Carrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambers, Mrs J. H.</td>
<td>Ballarat South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coghill, Dr K. A.</td>
<td>Werribee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman, C. G.</td>
<td>Syndal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collins, P. C.</td>
<td>Noble Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cox, G. H.</td>
<td>Mitcham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crabb, S. M.</td>
<td>Knox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croll, M. L.</td>
<td>Sandringham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culpin, J. A.</td>
<td>Glenroy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dixon, B. J.</td>
<td>St Kilda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunstan, R. C., D.S.O.</td>
<td>Dromana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebery, W. T.</td>
<td>Midlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmunds, C. T.</td>
<td>Ascot Vale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernest, G. K.</td>
<td>Geelong East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans, A. T.</td>
<td>Ballarat North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans, B. J.</td>
<td>Gippsland East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fogarty, W. F.</td>
<td>Sunshine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fordham, R. C.</td>
<td>Footscray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gavin, P. M.</td>
<td>Coburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginifer, J. J.</td>
<td>Keilor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamer, R. J., E.D.</td>
<td>Kew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hann, E. J.</td>
<td>Rodney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayes, G. P.</td>
<td>Wantirna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hockley, G. S.</td>
<td>Bentleigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper, K. S.</td>
<td>Murray Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jolly, R. A.</td>
<td>Dandenong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jona, Walter</td>
<td>Hawthorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennett, J. G.</td>
<td>Burwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King, K. F.</td>
<td>Springvale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkwood, C. W. D.</td>
<td>Preston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacy, Norman</td>
<td>Warrandyte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieberman, L. S.</td>
<td>Benambra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McArthur, P. S.</td>
<td>Ringwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCance, K. R.</td>
<td>Bennettswood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClure, D. H. R.</td>
<td>Bendigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McGrath, W. D.</td>
<td>Lowan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McInnes, N. M.</td>
<td>Gippsland South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKeil, D. K.</td>
<td>Portland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackinnon, D. J.</td>
<td>Box Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maclean, R. R. C.</td>
<td>Berwick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathews, C. R. T.</td>
<td>Oakleigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, R. H.</td>
<td>Prahran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick, Mrs J. T.</td>
<td>Brighton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plowman, S. J.</td>
<td>Evelyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsay, J. H.</td>
<td>Balwyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remington, K. H.</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds, T. C.</td>
<td>Gisborne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richardson, J. I.</td>
<td>Forest Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roper, T. W.</td>
<td>Brunswick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross-Edwards, Peter</td>
<td>Shepparton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowe, B. J.</td>
<td>Essendon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidiropoulos, Theodore</td>
<td>Richmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simmonds, J. L.</td>
<td>Reservoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simpson, J. H.</td>
<td>Niddrie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skeggs, B. A. E.</td>
<td>Ivanhoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Aurel</td>
<td>South Barwon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, I. W.</td>
<td>Warrnambool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spyer, P. C.</td>
<td>Heatherton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stirling, G. F.</td>
<td>Williamstown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanner, E. M. P.</td>
<td>Caulfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Templeton, T. W.</td>
<td>Mentone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson, L. H. S.</td>
<td>Malvern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toner, Mrs P. T.</td>
<td>Greensborough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trewin, T. C.</td>
<td>Bentleigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trezise, N. B.</td>
<td>Geelong North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaughan, Dr G. M.</td>
<td>Glenhuntly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsh, R. W.</td>
<td>Albert Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weideman, Graeme</td>
<td>Frankston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiting, M. S.</td>
<td>Mildura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilkes, F. N.</td>
<td>Northcote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams, M. T.</td>
<td>Doccaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilton, J. T.</td>
<td>Broadmeadows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood, A. R.</td>
<td>Swan Hill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Resigned 28 April 1981

**Speaker:** THE HON. S. J. FLOWMAN

**Chairman of Committees:** MR A. T. EVANS


**Leader of the Liberal Party and Premier:** THE HON. R. J. HAMER, E.D.

**Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party and Deputy Premier:** THE HON. L. H. S. THOMPSON, C.M.G.

**Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Leader of the Opposition:** MR F. N. WILKES

**Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** MR R. C. FORDHAM

**Leader of the National Party:** MR PETER ROSS-EDWARDS

**Deputy Leader of the National 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, B.D.

Library—Librarian: Miss J. McGovem

House—Secretary: Mr R. M. Duguid
Questions without Notice

GARBAGE COLLECTORS’ DISPUTE

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province)—I ask the Minister for Local Government: In view of the apparent legal technicality preventing the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission from settling the eight-week long Waverley City Council garbage dispute, in particular the refusal of that council to agree to return to the status quo as a prelude to negotiations and especially in view of the cost report of the independent and respected economist, John Hill, which reveals that the council has over-estimated the cost of using its own employees on garbage collection by at least $109,700 resulting in private contractors actually costing more, not less, as originally claimed, has the Minister considered recommending to the Waverley councillors that they resign in order that fresh elections could be held aimed at resolving the long-running dispute? If he has not, will the honourable gentleman consider such a recommendation and, if not, why not?

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER (Minister for Local Government)—I inform the House and Mr Landeryou that I certainly have not considered such a proposition and I will not consider such a proposition in the future. In summary, my reason for not doing so is that, as I have stated publicly, the Government entirely supports the right of the Waverley City Council, or any other council, to determine alone, without prior consultation with any union or other outside party, whether to make a decision to employ outside contractors. That situation still stands. In spite of the cost analysis Mr Landeryou provided that was carried out by the economist, John Hill, I reaffirm the Government’s view that the Waverley City Council, as a responsible and proper body of management and arm of government, is the proper authority to make these decisions—even if the cost analysis happens to be correct, which I very much doubt.

CORELLAS

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North Western Province)—My question to the Minister for Conservation relates to the spread of and damage caused by corellas in the west Wimmera area and some other parts of Victoria.

The Hon. D. E. Kent—They are galahs.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN—Mr Kent is a bit off the mark, but he is close; they are birds. Has the Minister considered introducing an open season for corellas based on municipal areas, instead of a State-wide application? If the honourable gentleman has given consideration to this, what action does he propose to take to try to reduce the adverse effects being caused by the large numbers of corellas in the State?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—Since this matter was raised in the House and the media, and with individuals in Parliament and outside, I have consulted the Victorian Farmers and Graziers Association and indicated that I was currently examining with the Fisheries and Wildlife Division a simplified system for the control of these specific pests. The Government proposes to introduce an open season, but in a restricted sense. It will be restricted to a farmer and his property, to certain species and at certain times in specific areas of the State.

That proposal is currently under examination and if, as I anticipate, it is eventually approved, that will be the problem will be overcome.
TECHNICAL SCHOOLS
APPRENTICESHIP COURSES

The Hon. B. A. CHAMBERLAIN (Western Province)—What action has the Minister of Education taken in relation to the advice received by a number of country technical schools yesterday, such as those at Ararat, Maryborough and Stawell, that they will have no apprentice training classes next year and a number of other schools such as those at Portland and Hamilton which were told that the apprentice numbers would be severely curtailed in 1981? Is the Minister aware that this decision was taken without any consultation whatsoever with the schools and is he also aware of the opposition to the move by schools, employers, instructors, students and local members of Parliament?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I learned yesterday from honourable members in several parts of Victoria that a number of technical schools had received circulars relating to the rationalization of apprenticeship courses.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—Does that mean no apprentices?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT—No, but if Mr Landeryou bears with me, I shall answer his question more fully. The circulars were sent out by the Technical Schools Division last Friday. Naturally, this has caused concern to schools affected and to honourable members representing those areas. I immediately contacted the Technical Schools Division and obtained a sample of the circulars. I have had discussions with the Acting Director of the division and am due to have a further discussion with him later this afternoon.

It appears that in a number of areas, apprenticeship classes are small and occasionally as low as two or three pupils in a single class. The objective of the Technical Schools Division is to ensure that where schools are in reasonable proximity to each other, rationalization should occur to enable reasonable sized classes and sensible use of available resources.

However, I am disturbed that decisions should have been made without any consultation with the schools concerned or with me. I have therefore made arrangements to ensure that appropriate officers of the Technical Schools Division visit all areas concerned and convene meetings to discuss the position at the earliest possible date. The Acting Director assures me that he will then immediately review the advice contained in his circulars in the light of available resources and the information that emerges from those consultations. Certainly that will be done as quickly as possible.

I certainly accept that it is not generally possible to continue classes of only two or three students. It may be possible to get over that situation either by using adjacent schools for parts of a course or by combining different years of an apprenticeship course.

The objective is to ensure that country students are in no way disadvantaged in obtaining technical education. To achieve that objective will also require the co-operation of employers. In some country areas insufficient numbers of employers have been offering apprenticeships to warrant certain apprenticeship courses. The Government will be looking for co-operation from employers in country areas.

BOARD OF WORKS BUILDING

The Hon. D. R. WHITE (Doutta Galla Province) —Can the Minister of Water Supply inform the House what progress has been made in replacing the bluestone slabs with aluminium cladding on the Board of Works building in Spencer Street? When will the building be completed and at what cost to the ratepayers?

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply)—Progress is being made in the replacement of the bluestone slabs with aluminium cladding on the Board of Works building but certainly not as fast as one would wish. I have expressed my disappointment to the Chairman and the Engineer of the Board of Works. As to when it will be completed, I cannot give a date to the House.
The Hon. D. R. White—After Melbourne is sewerred.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER—I do not think it will take that long. I have no real date to advise Mr White.

As a court action is pending on this matter, the cost will be determined when the matter is brought before the court.

DISABLED PERSONS
The Hon. H. G. BAYLOR (Boronia Province)—Can the Minister for Local Government explain to the House what action has been taken by the Government to provide specific access and facilities in buildings for the disabled?

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER (Minister for Local Government)—As honourable members would be aware, next year—1981—has been designated by the United Nations as the Year of the Disabled. In response to this initiative, the Victorian Government is proposing to amend the Uniform Building Regulations to require provision of access and certain facilities for the disabled in new buildings, other than houses, flats and buildings administered by the Health Commission of Victoria.

The proposed amendment has been drawn up by a widely representative working group of the Royal Institute of Architects (Victorian Chapter). The proposed termination date for final comment on these proposals is 5 December this year.

SMORGON CONSOLIDATED INDUSTRIES
The Hon. JOAN COXSEDGE (Melbourne West Province)—Can the Minister for Conservation inform the House why the Environment Protection Authority has not joined the Footscray City Council in its legal action against Smorgon Consolidated Industries and other polluters of the western suburbs? Is the Minister aware that the council has approached the Environment Protection Authority on several occasions over prosecution of the Smorgon company but unfortunately has not received the desired co-operation of that body?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—No, I do not know why the Environment Protection Authority has not joined the Footscray City Council in this action against Smorgon’s.

FIRE-SPOTTING TOWER
The Hon. W. R. BAXTER (North Eastern Province)—Is the Minister of Forests aware that a fire-spotting tower in the Strathbogie Ranges was destroyed by fire last weekend, presumably as a result of a lightning strike? Is he able to give the House an assurance that the tower will be replaced before the onset of the forthcoming fire danger period?

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Forests)—I am not aware that a fire-spotting tower was destroyed by fire as the result of a lightning strike in the Strathbogie Ranges last weekend. I will certainly make inquiries and ensure, if it is at all possible, that it is restored for fire spotting during the summer period as I know it to be most essential in that area.

AVAILABILITY OF INSTRUCTORS
The Hon. D. K. HAYWARD (Monash Province)—As the availability in certain categories of skilled personnel seems to be a constraint on the development of the State, could the Minister of Education tell the House if there is adequate co-ordination and communication between those who are responsible for forecasting the demand for skills and those who are responsible for providing training resources for those skills?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—If the question refers to the technical area, the answer is that manpower planning and forecasting is done by the Industrial Training Commission which advises technical schools of the anticipated requirements for positions in industry and the likely demand by students for education. The Education Department thus endeavours to provide for courses, instruction of students accordingly.
In other fields of skills the Planning Services Division of the Education Department and the planning section in the Technical Schools Division both undertake planning and make forecasts for those purposes. Of course, at times requirements for new skills may develop or there may be an unforeseen demand for a new course, such as the horticultural course which has quickly become exceedingly popular, and the availability of instructors is insufficient to meet the demand. That has certainly happened in horticulture. We are currently advertising in all States and overseas with a view to obtaining more instructors to meet the demand.

LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE (Geelong Province)—Following a question in the House on 23 April last to the Minister for Conservation in regard to the Land Conservation Council recommendation for the Corangamite study area and, in particular, the national park, and following the reported stepping up of logging operations in that area, is the Minister now able to tell the House when the proclamation of this national park will take place? Will the final recommendations of the Land Conservation Council be implemented and, if not, what changes have been made to those final recommendations?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—I will be introducing a Bill during this sessional period which will indicate to the House the date on which the recommendations regarding the Corangamite area will be adopted, particularly with respect to the national park.

DARTMOUTH TOWNSHIP

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North Western Province)—Is the Minister of Water Supply aware that the River Murray Commission is concerned that the Victorian Government has taken over three years to decide if it wishes to acquire the Dartmouth township. That has never been communicated to me.

The Hon. K. I. Wright—They told me that last week-end.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER—I will be interested to know who related that information to Mr Wright. The Victorian Government will make a decision very shortly on the Dartmouth township. I, personally, believe the Dartmouth township should be retained as a tourist area, and I have always said that.

WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION

The Hon. D. M. EVANS (North Eastern Province)—I draw the attention of the Minister of Education to the intense interest created by the Green Paper on Education, and the intense interest which has been directed towards the forthcoming White Paper. Can the Minister inform the House whether the White Paper will be published and forwarded to those who have responded to the Green Paper on education? Will there be an executive review and will there be a shortened version of the White Paper available? Will there be further public discussion prior to legislation being introduced, in which discussion all respondents will have the opportunity to take part?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I have had a most chastening experience during the last week in reading more than 500 of the submissions to the Green Paper on Education, of which there are many more still to be read. I have been disturbed by the degree of alienation which exists in many schools and the extent to which they feel that massive re-organization is desirable within the department.

The honourable member can be assured that my colleague and I will take into account all the submissions that have been made. We have a timetable which envisages that the White
Land Transfer

Paper will be presented on Wednesday, 10 December. That is the objective and we will certainly work towards it.

Many of the submissions have indicated that schools, teachers and school communities desire the opportunity to provide further input on many of the educational aspects as distinct from the organizational aspects of the White Paper. We will certainly make provision for there to be continuing consultation on those educational issues.

The White Paper will be prepared in such a way as to indicate a clear sense of direction rather than foreclosing discussions upon the working out of those educational issues. So far as organization of the department is concerned, it is, however, important to remedy deficiencies which hamper the achievement of its real objectives as quickly as possible.

The question whether summaries will be available at the same time as the document itself becomes available, is a matter to which consideration will need to be given, but certainly summaries will be available in the New Year.

My colleague and I have also taken into account the earlier suggestion of Mr Sgro that copies of the paper be prepared in the major ethnic languages used in our schools and arrangements will be made for translations to be available for that purpose with a view to assisting parents who find English difficult or impossible to read with adequacy.

There will certainly be opportunity for further consultation on the major educational issues arising from the Green and White Papers.

LAND TRANSFER

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province)—I wish to move the adjournment of the House and I propose to speak to the subject of the failure of the Government to take action to ensure that an efficient economical system of effecting land transfer operates in Victoria.

Approval of the proposed discussion was indicated by the required number of members rising in their places, as specified in Standing Order No. 53.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province)—I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

The reality is that in 1980 it costs more to effect the transfer of ownership of a property from one person to another in Victoria than in any other State of the Commonwealth. Apart from Victorian Government taxes applying at the relevant stages, the cost in Victoria is the highest in Australia.

In addition there is an incredible inefficient procedure at the Titles Office. I have often heard Government spokesmen apologize for the inefficiency in the Titles Office and the failure of the Government to centralize that operation. I understand that the Government is in the process of introducing a computer programme. I do not know whether that is because of the actions of certain members of the legal profession, but it has been a painfully slow process. I assume and concede from the outset that it is an important process, but it does seem that the Government has been slow in its implementation.

Apart from that incredible inefficient type of office procedure, the reality is that some lawyers in this State are using the position which is presented to them by privilege from this Parliament to rip off Victorian consumers.

I refer the House to a publication entitled Cost of Housing, a report of the committee of inquiry, volume 1 report, July 1978, printed on 19 September 1978, Parliamentary Paper 270/78. It is the Commonwealth report of a committee of inquiry into housing costs.

Although the figures could stand some updating, it is the latest official compilation of a comparative nature, but other figures will be referred to by my colleagues during the debate.

On page 138 of that report there is a table headed transaction costs which relates to a house and land package costing $30,000 with a first mortgage of $20,000. Honourable members should remember that I am speaking about 1978, and if one looks at Government charges and makes a comparison State by State, one finds that the Government charges on a property of that price was
$736 in Victoria. In New South Wales it was $463, in Queensland $564, in South Australia $483, in Tasmania $571, in the Australian Capital Territory $320 and in the Northern Territory $152. As I indicated in opening, the reality is that the Victorian Government charges more than any other State Government.

I shall examine the fees charged by solicitors State by State. In Victoria it is $386, in New South Wales $382, in Queensland $330, in South Australia, which is in a special category to which I shall refer later, $157, in Western Australia $90, in Tasmania $264, in the Australian Capital Territory, between $300 and $350 depending on the nature of the transaction, and in the Northern Territory, $328.

Those figures were derived from information provided to the committee by various State and Commonwealth authorities and institutes of professional bodies.

Without doubt, it is clear from those figures that Victoria charges more than any other State for transferring the ownership of a piece of property from one person to another, both in terms of Government charges and in terms of the so-called conveyancing charges of solicitors.

The Leader of the Opposition in another place made the position of the Labor Party quite clear in early 1978 when he stated publicly that the Labor Party has consistently argued for a new approach to conveyancing charges along the lines of the South Australian system.

I refer the House to the growth in this State of what has been called, for want of a better term, the conveyancing kit. It seems quite apparent to me that the growth in the use of conveyancing kits is directly related to the excessive charges currently levied by some solicitors. As I indicated, the authority for that charge arises from an Act or Acts of this Parliament.

My colleague, Mr Walker, will supply the House with examples of what it costs to have a title registered in the Titles Office. In addition to the charges there is unnecessary delay and presumably the delay caused in the office is caused by a lack of centralization of its operations. But, the question of conveyancing costs associated with the transfer of property ownership is one in which Parliament has some say. Although an Act of Parliament gives to a section of the legal profession the opportunity of determining its own conveyancing fees and, for that matter, the other services which the profession provides from time to time, the Governor in Council has the power to intervene and waive decisions that are made either by its tribunal on disciplinary powers, on procedures or on some of its decisions.

In March 1980 the Law Institute of Victoria recommended to its members that they refuse to co-operate with home buyers or sellers who use the so-called do-it-yourself conveyancing kits instead of paying a solicitor to act for them. I do not contend, nor does the Labor Party contend, that there is a procedure that one can adopt by the use of either the so-called Australia Party conveyancing kit—which ran into some problems and, I understand, created difficulties for certain purchasers—or the use of the far more comprehensive and up-to-date Consumer Law Reform Association kit, which will be without problems.

Probably because I am a product of our society that teaches people to be fairly conservative in these matters or because of the successful propaganda of the legal profession, on the two or three occasions that I have sold my property I have taken the cautious way out and consulted a solicitor. I do not suggest that that is not the proper course to take.

What I am suggesting is that a monopoly has been created by the Parliament which is being abused by certain solicitors, and, in my view, outrageously and hypocritically abused by a recent decision of the so-called disciplinary tribunal of the lawyers themselves. I shall come to the details of that later.

I was referring to the do-it-yourself conveyancing kits. The rapid increase in the use of those kits is the consumers answer to the huge fees that solicitors are now charging for conveyancing, and...
this has become one of the most popular causes in consumerism. If members of the legal profession really believe their own propaganda that says there is danger in using those sorts of kits, the profession ought not to be in a position, given the paramount of force and authority that Parliament has given it to act in the interests of consumers and the public, to abuse that power and authority.

If one reads the second-reading speeches that gave rise to the creation of these laws and even if one goes back to the standing orders that were agreed to by the Attorney-General at the inaugural meeting—which I found in one of the drawers in this House—to determine what should happen with the organization which became the Law Institute, one sees that the whole purpose of that body was supposed to be to protect the public.

Recently I raised the matter of a solicitor who was dealt with prima facie by his own profession and fined thousands of dollars. This case was almost shamelessly defended by the Attorney-General in response to a simple question by me. He was the second such solicitor to be dealt with in this way and had to give an undertaking that he would not continue to do whatever it was that was offending the members of his profession.

The solicitor's only recourse was to appeal, and when I asked the Attorney-General to review the situation, his response was that the solicitor had recourse to appeal and that he should run the risk of incurring all the costs involved in doing so, which, I am told, could exceed $50,000. That solicitor is guilty of nothing more than doing what hundreds of solicitors in this city and State do regularly, and that is acting for clients who in one way or another, publicly or privately, advertise the use and availability of free legal advice.

I recall that on the first occasion when I purchased a property, the building society of which I was a member suggested that I did not really need my own solicitor and should use the society's solicitor, and that is what I did. That seems to me to be a normal business transaction. That is what happens when one talks with banks. One assumes that the bank is acting in accordance with legal advice—although I am not sure that was so in the case of the Bank of Adelaide. One assumes that institutions that provide funding, such as mortgage houses and building societies operating in Victoria, have this sort of relationship with the legal profession, yet what the Law Institute did in the case of this gentleman was to single him out because he was supposed to have been guilty of touting. I shall come to the details of that shortly.

The reality is that under the State law, solicitors have a monopoly on paid conveyancing work. It is not possible for someone else to charge a fee that is enforceable by law for conveyancing. I assume that the lawyers in this House, together with other members of the House, will have as much knowledge as, if not more than, I have on the step-by-step procedures involved in conveyancing, but the gross annual income that that monopoly gives to the legal profession is in excess of $70 million.

In my view, in recent years that position of privilege and monopoly has been abused. Between 1971 and 1978 the conveyancing fees charged to a buyer of an average home rose from $126 to $523, and the legal fees on an average home mortgage similarly rose to another $500 or so. Therefore, an average home buyer—and the great Liberal Party has often told us that homeowners vote for the Liberal Party—have to pay something like $1000 to a solicitor for what is generally acknowledged by those whom I asked, particularly solicitors who share my philosophy, to be basically paperwork. This work is done in the main by, admittedly, trained and to some extent qualified people, but they do not have to have expert legal training. It is small wonder, therefore, that the consumer movement, perhaps spurred on by the Australia Party, has produced a layman's do-it-yourself kit.

Because the paper work, as is asserted to me by all manner of members of the legal profession, is moderately complex, it is therefore natural that people will make mistakes. It is not usual, but it
does occur that even lawyers make mistakes in conveyancing. One could say that a mistake was made in the electorate I represent, where the Housing Commission bought land for which it paid twice the price at which it had been valued twelve months earlier. Perhaps a mistake was made there by a few experts.

It may well be that the houses that were built on Crown land in the City of Chelsea involved a number of legal mistakes. It may also be that the houses that were built on sunken land in Sunshine also involved a number of mistakes by the legal profession.

We are all capable of making mistakes. However, if the poor in our community are forced by their circumstances to try to save possibly $1000 by seeking to use a conveyancing kit, one would have thought that if a mistake were made, the legal profession, in its position of privilege by virtue of an Act of this Parliament, would act on their behalf. Although it may be in the interests of their client to do so, the Law Institute, in an article entitled, "A Protect-your-Client Kit" in the Law Institute Journal, suggested that lawyers refuse to correct any mistakes made or to go out of their way to complete a job that may have been started by someone using a conveyancing kit. The article also suggests that lawyers threaten to sue for damages the do-it-yourself conveyancer if he or she fails to complete the job in time. The institute suggested that occasionally its members should charge their client for work done for the other party.

It seems patently obvious to my party that the Law Institute leadership is quite out of touch with public and community views on the issue. In my view, the growth of conveyancing kits has been caused by the excessive growth in the standard legal fees that are charged. It was always my belief—and I believe I am correct in my assertion—that in the past the Law Institute has defended the practice of over-charging for conveyancing by arguing that such a system enables the subsidization of the generally unprofitable work most law practices have to carry out.

In other words, at the risk of offending some of my capitalist friends opposite, I refer to the Socialist principle of the many carrying the few who have a problem! In effect, the Law Institute, in what must be construed by any fair-minded citizen to be an outrageous abuse of its privilege, has not only said that it will charge the sort of fees I mentioned earlier, but it has also said to its members that if they form a partnership, a co-operation or are in a position where it appears they will receive less than the prescribed fee, that member runs the risk of losing his ability to practise the profession.

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—it should be if members are seen to be doing so!

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—the reality of the interjection is illustrated in the recent decision by the Law Institute with respect to the Bentleigh solicitor which is one of the most outrageous decisions made by any professional organization. I can imagine the debate that would take place in the House if a normal trade union had adopted the same course.

Earlier, honourable members heard the Minister for Local Government say that he was not even prepared to examine a cost report with respect to a stupid decision by a pig-headed councillor. Yet, when it comes to the legal profession it is a different matter.

The Hon. R. J. Long—that is your opinion.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—Of course it is my opinion and I will debate it any way the honourable member wishes. The Attorney-General asserts that we should allow the legal profession to look after its own affairs. Shortly I shall put to the House the considered views of my party with respect to the issue.

Since the initial development of the conveyancing kit by the Australia Party in, I think, September 1976, the concept has grown. I am assured by reputable lawyers that considerable problems arose from the initial kit. However, this is acceptable given the fact that any
set of procedures laid down is not mistake-proof and foolproof, particularly when it relies on human judgment. Since it is a legal problem, if people strike difficulty, one would expect the Attorney-General to instruct the Law Institute to handle it. Members of the Opposition do not expect the Law Institute to take the high-handed and stupid attitude that the person who created the difficulty has to suffer the consequences.

Every barrister who defends his right to defend his client, regardless of his attitude as to whether he thinks the client is guilty or not guilty in the criminal courts, always puts the argument to me that his client is entitled to the best legal defence available. A barrister defends his position on that basis. However, on the question of home ownership, when the same poor wage-earner wishes to use a conveyancing kit, the legal profession forgets about that ethic and says, "Not only will we impose our own fee structure, but also we will impose our own internal discipline on those members of the profession who have the temerity to charge less or who act in a way which threatens the monopoly control over this privilege". To me that attitude is outrageous.

In March 1980 the Consumer Law Reform Association launched its latest kit called "The Home Buying and Conveyancing Kit". It did so in the face of the advice given by the Law Institute to its members not to help do-it-yourself conveyancers. Therefore, the crazy position exists where the Consumer Law Reform Association, in good conscience, claimed in a letter to the Attorney-General that it wished to employ legal advice for the benefit of the people who purchased its kit. The association wants to be in the position where it can advise intending purchasers that it can protect their legal interests. Yet, the Law Institute has said that, not only will it penalize those members who abuse or threaten to abuse the privileged monopoly, but also it will make sure of it by advising lawyers that those people who have created a problem can fend for themselves. What sort of attitude is that?

Even if one steals a book from the library, presumably one can obtain another copy if one confesses one's crime! However, the legal profession, under the protection of the Parliament, sets itself aside. As I stated earlier, I do not believe this to be true of all lawyers. Many lawyers are reputable businessmen and ideal citizens. The Law Institute is out of step not only with public interest and opinion but also, I would have thought, with its own membership.

The Consumer Law Reform Association conveyancing kit contains all the information found in the previous kit plus an additional fifteen chapters covering most conveyancing problems from contracts, certificates, deposits and so on to advice on hidden clauses and other possible traps that do-it-yourself conveyancers may face. Although the kit explains step by step and detail by detail how one should handle one's own transaction rather than have it handled by a solicitor, problems can arise. So long as the Law Institute takes the view it does, the rights of the consumer suffer. Even if a person follows the details set out in the kit step by step, conscientiously trying to save his hard-earned dollars, and makes a mistake, under the privilege and protection of the Parliament, the Law Institute has advised its members to leave that person with his problem. As I said, faced with the flaw in the kit that mistakes can occur before a solicitor becomes involved, or that there are clarifications necessary from time to time in the steps that have to be taken, the Consumer Law Reform Association wanted to engage the services of a solicitor but is prohibited from doing so.

Why is it prohibited from doing so? The most recent example is a case involving a solicitor who was involved with a company called the Land Transfer Company. I understand that the company was started in 1978 by a group of people who had worked in a solicitor's office. They understood the mechanics, the paper work, and all the procedures necessary and associated with conveyancing. They saw, as their task, finding a way around section 93 of the Legal Profession Practice Act.
In order to do this they broke up the procedure whereby the Land Transfer Company did the clerical work, and engaged solicitors to do the legal work. That seemed a fairly free enterprise, business-like approach, which was, after all, a complicated typing and clerical task. The solicitors charged by item remuneration—a permissible alternative to the normal scale fee for conveyancing under the Solicitors Remuneration Order. I hold no brief for the Land Transfer Company as a commercial proposition, but it was motivated by trying to prevent the vendor or the purchaser, from being ripped off in the market place.

I am not sure of that fact mentioned by Mr Chamberlain. I invite him to participate in the discussion. There are ways in which I can get a title search undertaken without paying a fee; the Parliament kindly has given me a gold pass. The Land Transfer Company, as I understand it, enables a purchaser or a seller to halve the cost of conveyancing. That is a fairly attractive proposition to any seller or purchaser, and in the three or so years that the company has been operating—perfectly legal, I am assured—

The Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal was set up to protect the community against unscrupulous lawyers, but the Law Institute of Victoria is now using its privileged position to protect the incomes of solicitors rather than the rights of the community. That is what is happening, and I believe it is an outrageous proposition.

The Governor in Council has a right to act on this matter. The Attorney-General could have taken steps to ensure—

The Hon. Haddon Storey—What steps?

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU—The Attorney-General could have made sure that the Governor in Council ensured that the procedures adopted by the tribunal on this matter were not acted on.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—I had better examine the Act.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU—Yes, and the Attorney-General should read his correspondence, because the Consumer Law Reform Association wrote to the Attorney-General.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—I have not given Mr Landeryou the reply.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU—The Consumer Law Reform Association told me as late as this afternoon that the Attorney-General had not replied. My experience has been that when I give a letter to the postman, he usually delivers it. The Land Transfer Company, conscious of these problems with the legal profession, sought legal advice on whether the method it was adopting was correct, and it was told that it was. Of course it has been able to act in accordance with that advice, and reduced by hundreds of dollars the cost of conveyancing transactions. If the Attorney-General and his Government felt a sense of responsibility to the community, they would have acted on this matter despite the comments of their own appointed inquiry.

Mr Roger Stevenson, who happens to be the solicitor I was talking about earlier, was fined for dealing with the Land Transfer Company. The Consumer Law
Reform Association wrote to the Attorney-General on September 12 this year expressing its concern at the Law Institute bringing before a full hearing of the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal, Mr Stevenson, whose only misdemeanour was that he had accepted work from the Land Transfer Company.

A standard advertisement was inserted in the daily press by the Land Transfer Company, and it appeared on numerous occasions. It reads:

The Land Transfer Co.
Solicitor protected property transfers up to 50% off standard solicitors' fee.

Solicitor handled

Things can go wrong when you buy or sell property. And because the Land Transfer Co. is not a Solicitor we appoint one on your behalf to draw the documents and give legal advice. This means you get all the usual full legal protection.

Then it states its prices and the fact that people involved in a $40,000 property purchase will save $243, and on a $60,000 property purchase $319. When the Consumer Law Reform Association put that point to the Attorney-General as I indicated, he made no response. Mr Stevenson, a Bentleigh solicitor, who was the second solicitor to be stood over in this way by his own institute, had to give a written undertaking, as did a Mr Robert Lewis prior to him, that he would have no further dealings with the Land Transfer Company.

Mr Stevenson's only crime is that he acted as their solicitor—in the same way as any other institution engages the services of a solicitor he was engaged by them and acted for them, for all legal requirements at charges varying from scale fees to retainers. They had a private arrangement. Presumably, he was perfectly satisfied with that. No one has suggested that he was being starved and exploited. Mr Robert Lewis is in an identical position. However, Mr Stevenson was found guilty of four charges of misconduct because of that association.

The Hon. J. V. C. GUEST (Monash Province)—On a point of order, I do not wish to stop discussion on legitimate matters but the motion moved by Mr Landeryou is directed to the failure of the Government to take action to ensure that an efficient economical system of effecting land transfer operates in Victoria. After some considerable time I have heard only of the misdemeanours of the Law Institute of Victoria—I am not a member of the institute—and Mr Landeryou's remarks do not appear to be on the same subject as the motion.

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—Order! I, too, have been listening with a great deal of interest to Mr Landeryou's comments—perhaps he will soon relate his remarks to the motion.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province)—I would have finished had Mr Guest not interrupted me. It is important to stress the four charges of which Mr Stevenson was found guilty. They were: Attracting business unfairly; failing to stop advertising which benefitted him; holding himself as being willing to work at less than the minimum fee fixed by the Solicitors' Remuneration Order; and allowing himself to be held willing to do this work. Those crimes are far less than heinous. Despite Mr Guest's defence of the Attorney-General, it would cost $50,000 for Mr Stevenson to defend himself; similarly, Mr Lewis and any other member of the profession.

Section 32D of the Legal Profession Practice (Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal) Act, dealing with the Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal, states:

The Governor in Council may make regulations for or with respect to the practice and procedure of the Tribunal, the enforcement of its orders and appeals against orders made by the Tribunal.

The Attorney-General had the power to make such a recommendation. If a company is prevented from acting at half the cost that would normally apply in the market place for a transfer of land from one member of the community to another, it is obviously of great relevance to go into the detail associated with the abuse of a privilege granted by Parliament to certain members of the community in preventing that company and others from giving the community an economical method.
of transferring the ownership of land. Section 24 (2) of the same Act empowers the Governor in Council to revoke any of the by-laws or rules of the institute. It is patently clear that the Attorney-General, who is now brushing up on this aspect, had power to make such recommendation to the Governor in Council, which had the authority under law to correct what was a miscarriage of justice.

The Hon. J. V. C. Guest—That is not correct, as the Attorney-General will explain to you.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU—Given the records of Mr Guest and the Attorney-General, I am not sure that I will accept that. The reform of the laws relating to sale of land in this State, in simplifying conveyancing procedures and in protecting purchasers of land in Victoria is long overdue. The Labor Party advocates that vendors should be required to make a full disclosure in writing of all relevant title details and land use information prior to entering into or making an enforceable agreement.

I have heard the Attorney-General on one occasion, publicly—talk of a cooling-off period for an enforceable agreement. The Labor Party supports a period of cooling-off after the signing by parties of an enforceable agreement for the sale of land during which time either party may withdraw from the obligation contained in the contract or agreement.

The Labor Party also advocates a simplified—and it is not impossible—language for a contract of sale and a simplification and centralization of procedures for searching of titles and land use information. The cost of conveyancing, including stamp duty, the fees charged by solicitors and real estate agents and the desirability or otherwise of the introduction of land brokers, similar to the system already operating in South Australia, should be examined by an inquiry which should be established after it has been established in law the criteria I have outlined.

I do not intend taking the House through the details of the South Australian system other than to take issue with the Government's report on that procedure. The land brokerage system has been in operation in South Australia since the last century. It has taken years to develop. Those wanting to become brokers undertake a three-year course of study. Regardless of the procedures adopted by Victoria now, for a conveyancing transaction occurring, for example, in Mount Gambier and Portland, the cost for Portland is twice as much as that for Mount Gambier, which is across the border. That is crazy. The system is obviously in need of review. The Labor Party believes there should be an inquiry on that basis. Because the Attorney-General and the Government have refused to take the steps necessary to introduce an efficient and economical system of the transfer of land in Victoria, the House should adjourn.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General)—I welcome the motion moved by Mr Landeryou. It gives me and other honourable members the opportunity of pointing out the steps that are being taken by the Government to ensure that there is an efficient, economical system of effecting land transfer in Victoria. It also gives me the opportunity of correcting some statements, not only those of Mr Landeryou but also of other persons, which seem to be founded on outdated figures and lack of appreciation of how the system in South Australia, which is the system offered as an example, really operates.

The House is aware that the Government appointed a Committee of Inquiry into Conveyancing and that already an interim report has been made by that committee. The committee has made several observations and recommendations to which I shall refer later. They illustrate the importance of this issue. I am certain that no honourable member doubts that this is an important issue. The question of the system of conveyancing and the costs involved affect so many people in the community that we must strive to have the most efficient and effective system, but there are many facets which must be considered and examined carefully. Only after such careful examination should
reforms in the law be introduced to ensure that the system works as efficiently and as economically as possible.

The committee of inquiry which was appointed and whose report was tabled in this House examined the question of whether solicitors ought to maintain the position under the Legal Profession Practice Act that they are the only persons entitled to charge a fee for conveyancing work. There is no restriction upon the development of conveyancing kits and no reason why people cannot purchase those kits and use them. No law prohibits that in any way.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—Do you agree with the advice given by the Law Institute to its members?

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—Whether people use those kits is a matter they must determine for themselves.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—My question is whether you agree with the advice of the Law Institute?

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—I will answer that question in my own way. The committee of inquiry commented on conveyancing kits and it is worth pointing out to the House what the committee said. It said that the observations made to it were that persons using the conveyancing kit were almost always people possessing the intelligence, time and patience to persevere, and that even then the transaction would break down if there were not a solicitor on the other side. The committee says, in effect, that a person with the necessary intelligence to follow the kit—and it is not easy to follow—and the perseverance to follow it through, which requires a great deal of time during the day when most people are working, can get through the transaction but usually only because there is a solicitor on the other side. Where two parties use a conveyancing kit, it is questionable whether a transaction will be successfully accomplished.

The committee also points out that a person using a conveyancing kit ordinarily relies upon the staff of the Titles Office to give assistance which is not part of the ordinary course of the duties of the Titles Office staff.

The committee also considered the question of solicitors acting in this area and pointed out that every attack upon the proposition of solicitors retaining the exclusive right to do conveyancing work is based upon the assumption that it costs more to have a solicitor do it than to have somebody else do it. The example invariably given is that of South Australia which was referred to by Mr Landeryou. The committee examined that question and pointed out that, in most cases, there are three elements of cost in a conveyancing transaction—the estate agent's charges, the solicitor's or land broker's charges and Government fees. If one compares the charges made by a land broker in South Australia with the charges made by a solicitor in Victoria, one is not comparing like with like. In South Australia the land broker does not do all the work done by a solicitor in Victoria. In South Australia the practice has developed over many years that the estate agent draws up the contract as part of the transaction, something which in Victoria is normally done by the solicitor.

The committee of inquiry examined the costs in South Australia of those three areas of an average transaction—say, a $40 000–$50 000 transaction—and found that the commission paid to an estate agent was higher than in Victoria. That perhaps reflects the fact that in South Australia some work done by an estate agent is in Victoria not done by the estate agent but by the solicitor. The committee also found that the stamp duty charged by South Australia was higher than that charged in Victoria.

That leads me to question the figures quoted by Mr Landeryou from the 1978 report because the figures now show that the stamp duty is higher in South Australia than in Victoria for the typical transaction. The net effect of adding together the three components of charges for the typical conveyancing transaction led the committee to the
view that there was no appreciable difference between the costs in South Australia and those in Victoria.

I should like to quote to the House from page 7 of the committee's report. Earlier in the report the committee had pointed out that there were no precise parallels able to be drawn as between South Australia and Victoria. The report then says:

What Attachment 2 demonstrates is that the claim that conveyancing costs in South Australia are appreciably cheaper than in Victoria cannot be sustained. Indeed, if the comparison is made upon the basis that both the solicitor in Victoria and the land broker in South Australia act on behalf of both vendor and purchaser, over-all costs in Victoria in the common range of transactions are cheaper.

The oft-quoted proposition that it is cheaper for a person to purchase property in South Australia fails because to compare the land broker's charges in South Australia with the solicitor's charges in Victoria is really not to compare like with like; and when the full range of costs of the transaction is examined, the claim is not borne out.

That does not answer the question raised by Mr Landeryou but it indicates that this proposition cannot be dealt with simplistically by picking up one thing from one State and another thing from another State and drawing comparisons without taking into account the full range of the transaction.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—If your argument is right, how is it that land brokers happen to be employed in South Australia?

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—I know how they happen to be employed in South Australia. It is because of the conservative and obstructive nature of the legal profession in South Australia. In the nineteenth century the introduction of the Torrens Title system was a signal advance on the old system of general law and the South Australian legal profession refused to be a party to it. The Government of the day said, "If you refuse to be a party to it, you will have it anyhow except that you will lose your right to the exclusive operation of conveyancing", and that is what happened.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—My question is really this: With solicitors and land brokers acting in South Australia, if the costs are the same, how is it that people chose to go to land brokers rather than to solicitors?

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—The answer to that had better be given by somebody in South Australia. I do not know why they chose the land broker rather than the solicitor.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—They are cheaper.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—They are not cheaper. The charges made by the solicitor in South Australia are the same as those of a land broker in South Australia. There is no difference between them. I do not understand the honourable member's point.

The Hon. D. R. White—The charges are less in South Australia than in Victoria.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—I have just demonstrated that that is not the case. The report of the committee of inquiry shows that that is not so in the common range of transactions in Victoria.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—The committee was comprised entirely of solicitors, if I remember rightly—vested interests.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—It was comprised entirely of solicitors. I concede that it had more lawyers than others on it. It was chaired by the Solicitor-General and included two representatives of the Law Institute, who were the only two practising solicitors on the committee. It also included a legally qualified person from the Law Department and a representative of the Titles Office.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—It was a fairly closed shop.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—It included an accountant, a business systems analyst and the Chairman of the Consumer Affairs Council. The report was not unanimous. One of the representatives of the Law Institute of Victoria delivered a minority report, but the other six members agreed with those parts I have provided to the House.
On that occasion the committee delivered an interim report, but the final report will be tabled in the House very soon, hopefully during this sessional period. The final report will cover a number of matters which are important for improving the conveyancing system in Victoria.

The committee will cover such questions as a cooling-off period. Mr Landeryou has mentioned that aspect and I have referred to it before, but that is one of the matters being examined by the committee and it will make recommendations on a cooling-off period.

The committee has also been asked to examine and make recommendations on the procedure that is adopted in conveyancing practices now; where the responsibility is placed on the purchaser to ascertain information about the land that the purchaser is buying. The committee has been looking at a reversal of that procedure and placing the obligation on the vendor to provide the information so it will be available to any purchaser and the vendor would be bound by that information so provided. It appears that system could be fair and if it works in practice it will lead to an appreciable reduction in the cost of conveyancing transactions.

The committee is also looking at the question of vendor terms and other matters relevant to the conveyancing transaction. The final step in the conveyancing transaction relates to Titles Office procedures and in Victoria, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, for many years the Titles Office has not worked effectively. It can be improved and I agree it should be improved.

It is not an easy system to operate and perhaps I could illustrate some of the difficulties by quoting an example of what has happened in New South Wales where the Government introduced the preliminary step in the computerization of the Titles Office system in that State. It has developed all sorts of bugs and problems and even after several years apparently it is still not working as it should.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—A computer system will only work if the information put into it is right. If you start off with wrong information, no computer will work. That is the problem.

The Hon. D. R. White—The Government should have attempted to remedy the situation by installing a computer ten years ago.

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—Order! Perhaps the Attorney-General could make his speech without any help.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—I am able to inform the House that in the Budget this year the Treasurer provided funds for the commencement of two essential systems which will in time lead to the eventual computerization of the Titles Office.

The first covers the unregistered dealing system, which will enable people to obtain ready access to any unregistered dealing which is in the Titles Office when they are searching a particular title.

As honourable members would appreciate, there are two important aspects to title searching. One is the actual title itself and the other is whether or not there are any other dealings which have been lodged but which have not been registered on the title itself. At any one time in the Titles Office there are hundreds of thousands of dealings in the system. In the Titles Office process there are approximately 1 million dealings a year, so it is a large and important operation and it is desirable to have a system to ascertain whether or not there are unregistered dealings and, of course, what they are.

That project will commence in this financial year as the funds have been provided in the Budget, but it will take two and a half to three years for the programme to be completed. When it is completed there will be ready and, hopefully, immediate access to unregistered dealings and this will considerably cut down the time and expense of people involved in that part of title searching.
Funds have also been provided in the Budget for the photo-copying of all titles. Ever since the Titles Office has been in operation, since the last century, the original titles have been produced for title searching. That means they become dog-eared and damaged and it also means there is a great deal of handling of these documents. If honourable members visit the Titles Office, as I understand Mr Walker has, they will see the register books and therefore obtain some idea of the enormous volume and space occupied by the titles and the difficulty involved in having them searched.

The Hon. R. A. Mackenzie—The system has not been altered since 1870.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—Agree, but the titles are now being photo-copied under a programme which will commence this financial year.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—Photocopied or micro-filmed?

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—I am indebted to Mr Landeryou for his assistance; the titles will be micro-filmed under a programme commencing this financial year. This programme will take over four years and cost in excess of $1 million, but the end result will be that we will have all titles micro-filmed and unregistered dealings computerized.

Those two steps will make a tremendous difference to the efficient and economic functioning of the Titles Office, and I am pleased that the two programmes will get under way this financial year. They represent the culmination of many years of study and research by various teams looking into these areas and represent critical steps which will inevitably improve the operations of the Titles Office.

The ultimate is to have the whole of the Titles Office procedure on computer. To do that it is necessary to have what is called a parcelization programme, a need to develop the smallest single unit or parcel of land. That information will be available, not just for Titles Office procedures but for all land data purposes used within the community. It will be available for the fixing of rates, for Lands Department operations or anywhere else in the community where it is necessary to refer to and search for particulars of land.

At the moment, every Government body, and I suppose every private body that has a land information system, seems to use a different base as the description of land. It is necessary to have something which is able to be used for all data bases and it is the smallest parcel of land that can be effectively used. The programme for developing these parcels has been continuing for some time and I am led to believe it will take many years for it to be developed, but it will apply in the future.

I am hopeful the two steps which have been taken and which I have mentioned will be of assistance. There has been a recent announcement that the Lands Department is developing a land data base reference system which will depend on the use of this parcelization programme and which will mean that this programme can be considerably expedited.

Much is required to be done to ensure that Victoria has an efficient and economical system of effecting land transfers. The Government has taken considerable steps to examine this area, from the point of conveyancing transactions between the parties and in terms of the dealings in the Titles Office—the registration of that system. Those steps have led to an interim report of the Conveyancing Committee, the reports that I said I will be tabling later in this sessional period and the two steps I mentioned which will be commenced in this financial year in the Titles Office. The end result will be a much more effective and efficient system of land transfer in Victoria. Members of the Opposition have highlighted problems of which the Government is already aware and on which it has already taken action. I see no point in adjourning the House on this matter.

The sitting was suspended at 6.21 p.m. until 8.4 p.m.

The Hon. W. R. BAXTER (North Eastern Province)—Mr President, at the outset I must apologize, if I took you somewhat by surprise by suggesting the House adjourn early for dinner.
thank you for your courtesy in agreeing to the adjournment. I confess that I was not quite ready to proceed and it seemed an opportune moment to adjourn.

As usual, members of the National Party listened to the debate objectively. However, they have still not quite made up their minds. This is what democracy is all about. If all honourable members were to come into the Chamber with preconceived, rigid ideas and refuse to change those ideas after hearing debate, this forum would be a waste of time.

Members of the National Party have listened with much interest to the reasonable contribution made to the debate by Mr Landeryou. I agree with the bulk of his remarks. Likewise, honourable members heard an interesting contribution from the Attorney-General, although I hardly thought the honourable gentleman answered the terms of the motion of Mr Landeryou. The Attorney-General certainly outlined the progress being made towards computerization in the Titles Office. However, in answer to a question from the Labor front bench, the honourable gentleman admitted that the procedures had not changed since 1870 which suggests to me that it is high time some form of modernization was introduced in that office.

I concede that the Titles Office handles a huge volume of complicated and technically detailed work. The move to computerization should facilitate an improvement and this is the aspect Mr Landeryou proposes in the motion. Perhaps in the past conveyancing was so complicated that it required the expertise of a solicitor. If honourable members go back in history perhaps 50 or 100 years they would find that there were probably not many educated people in the community except for solicitors and some other people in the professions. In those circumstances it was natural and desirable that they be the people to carry out this complicated task.

It seems to me that that is no longer the situation. Many people in the community today possess skills and expertise in many fields. Computerization of the Titles Office could simplify the whole concept of conveyancing and it should therefore be simple and possible for other people besides solicitors to undertake such work.

I was interested in a claim made by the Attorney-General that if people other than solicitors carried out conveyancing it would not cost any less than the fees charged when using a solicitor. I find that a disappointing remark and I believe the charges for conveyancing are far too high. Also, the fees charged do not take account of the work involved. In other words, on the one hand one can have a sale of land involving a cost of $50,000 which is extremely simple and, the solicitor's remuneration order states that the fee is x number of dollars. On the other hand, one could have a sale of land at a cost of $50,000 which comes under old law title or for some other reason is complicated and may involve much more time and effort. It seems incongruous that the same fee is charged. It is a peculiar basis on which to set conveyancing charges. For instance, if I take my car to the garage I do not expect to pay the same bill if the labour adds up to one hour or ten hours. I expect there to be some differential. Perhaps an examination should take place on the setting of charges for conveyancing.

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—It depends whether it is a Holden or a Mercedes.

The Hon. W. R. BAXTER—The situation I am illustrating is where one has two land sales at a cost of $50,000 which are both "Holdens" and yet one is charged the same fee for what, in one case entails mending a puncture and, in the other case entails replacing the gear box. The whole fee structure seems to be out of kilter.

Solicitors have long claimed that it was necessary for their profession to carry out conveyancing work because of its technicality. Solicitors claim that other people could not undertake such work because they would make errors. I wish I could say that solicitors always did the work as well as they claim to do it. Mr Landeryou pointed out a number of cases in his experience where he has
employed a solicitor and the work has not been done properly. Nevertheless, Mr Landeryou was still charged the set fee.

Regrettably, I have shared the experience of Mr Landeryou in that work undertaken by solicitors has not always been undertaken to the satisfaction of the client. In a case of mine, I was subsequently landed with rate arrears and the mistake would have been discovered had the solicitor been doing the job properly.

I do not contend that all solicitors are lax, but that particular one was. I am saying that solicitors are not failsafe either. If we were to change the method of conveyancing, we should not make it an open go so that anyone can set himself up as a conveyancing agent or land broker. Some sort of accreditation bureau would need to be established so that people could go to such an establishment with confidence, knowing that it had the skills and qualifications in conveyancing. I do not support opening up the field to the extent we have seen in recent times with the so-called "conveyancing kits". They may be all-right, or they may not be. There is no benchmark upon which I can measure them. If there is to be a widening of those who are able to do the work, there needs to be accreditation so that the users have confidence that they are getting the right product.

Another problem I envisage is that if conveyancing is taken out of the realm of solicitors, in many country towns where conveyancing is the bread and butter of the local solicitor who provides service to all the people of the town in many fields of the law, there would be insufficient business to keep him in operation if he no longer had conveyancing. On no account am I suggesting that we should be opening up the field to people who can come and take that business away. There could be a case, as suggested in the motion moved by Mr Landeryou for re-examining the whole position of who is to do it, who is able to do it, the level of charges to be set and who is to set the charges.

I appeal to the Government for some differential to be used in the charging system. I cannot see how one charge can cover all types of cases, whether simple or complicated. I was interested in the comments made by the Attorney-General on the South Australian scene, of which I knew very little, that costs are similar to Victoria. The message had probably escaped all of us, as we listen to the publicity which suggests that the land broking system is much cheaper.

The Government has been in office for 25 years and there is a demand amongst the people for lower priced conveyancing. In the old days, it was perhaps only the landed gentry who could afford to buy homes. Virtually everybody buys a home today and many are surprised that after paying $30,000 to $40,000 for a dwelling, that is not the end of the costs. By the time stamp duty and conveyancing costs are added, quite a substantial additional amount is involved. The demand from the people is evident from the popularity of conveyancing kits.

If nothing is done, those sorts of activities will expand and may get out of hand. Notwithstanding what the Law Institute may attempt to do to coerce its members into not dealing with people who use the kits, sooner or later some solicitor will kick over the traces and go it alone against the Law Institute. I would not be surprised if he won against the institute.

I appeal to the Government to get on with the job and accept the sentiments advanced by Mr Landeryou. He has not been overly critical of the Government, but suggested it is time to streamline the system. I look forward to further contributions by honourable members, some of whom are in the legal profession, to see what their suggestions may be towards providing a more economical and efficient system in Victoria.

The Hon. E. H. WALKER (Melbourne Province)—I remind the House of the motion moved by Mr Landeryou relating to the failure of the Government to take action to ensure that an efficient and economical system of effective land
transfer operates in Victoria. Like Mr Baxter on my left, physically speaking, I agree that the debate has been worthwhile. Mr Landeryou covered the topic carefully and in a sane fashion. I listened with care to the response of the Attorney-General. He always sounds eminently reasonable and appeared to answer many of the points Mr Landeryou raised.

Mr Baxter rambled on somewhat, but he was very kind in his comments and I am glad he looks forward to further debate on the subject. I do not consider that the Attorney-General really addressed himself to the essential issues raised. I also consider—I stand to be corrected—that some of his information on costs was misleading. I shall cover that in more detail later.

I shall make a few comments about the response by the Attorney-General. He said that the kit can be difficult to follow. I believe the document issued by the Consumer Law Reform Association is useful. I have had a look at the kit. The Attorney-General made the case, advanced by many people in the legal profession, that this sort of kit is too sophisticated for most people and is really only applicable to a few people in the community, making it sound as though the legal profession deals in some sort of magic which only members of the profession can handle. As an architect, I can remember trying to convince members of the public that architects also deal in that kind of magic so that they would always use our services. The medical profession does exactly that—they like to deal in what appears to be marvellous magic that only a qualified practitioner can handle. It is not true in the architectural profession; there is a great deal that the ordinary citizen can do and know. It is not true either in the legal profession.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—I said that intelligent people can follow the kit.

The Hon. E. H. WALKER—The Attorney-General implied that only a small proportion of the community can handle conveyancing kits. That was a wrong assumption. This style of conveyancing kit is a useful document for a large proportion of the community.

The Hon. R. J. Long—The legal profession has no objection to their use.

The Hon. E. H. WALKER—They can be difficult and the legal profession offers no assistance to people who may appear to be undercutting them. The Attorney-General suggested that sometimes the other party’s lawyer helps the person involved. Perhaps that does occur. I make the point that the kit is a useful device. It came on the scene because a problem existed and it is crazy or wrong to suggest that a problem does not exist. The Attorney-General must agree with that.

The honourable gentleman said that South Australia is different from Victoria and he advanced the case clearly. He put forward the historic case that from the last century a different system has prevailed and the reason for that was made clear. He suggested that a committee was brought together by Daryl Dawson, the Solicitor-General, who came up with the statement that he read to the House. The Minister said there was little difference between the two States. The information which I have is different from that.

I suggest that the figures are more illuminating if one considers the rising values of property purchases. I am not saying that the Attorney-General was totally misleading, but it is interesting to see what occurs.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—I was quoting what the committee said.

The Hon. E. H. WALKER—The committee may be misleading. I shall quote from the National Times of 2 June 1979. It includes a table which is verifiable and appears to me to be a proper table. I am not referring to opinion; it is fact, as far as I can tell. The table compares solicitors’ fees for conveyancing and stamp duty in all States. What interests me is that it is true, if all valuations for properties are averaged out, that there would be little difference between Victoria and South Australia. South Australia had properties of lower costs and the difference is up to $50,000, which is quite marked. I will give an example.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—Does that include the estate agents?
The Hon. E. H. WALKER—From reading the article, I understand it does. I understand the point that in South Australia the broker’s fee and the estate agent’s fee must be added. In Victoria that job is done by the solicitor. I understand the figures are comparable. The figures indicate that in Victoria at $50,000 the solicitors’ fees for conveyancing, plus the stamp duty on conveyancing, are $582 plus $1125, making a total of $1707. In South Australia at the $50,000 figure, the fees are $189 plus $1180 for stamp duty, which added together total $1369. There is something like $250 difference. That is by no means the greatest difference. The range at which most people purchase property is between $20,000 and $50,000. These are the people who suffer the most because of the charges applying. The two figures in South Australia are $162 and $430. In Victoria they are $346 and $500. There is a significant difference.

If the purchase price of property is $80,000, the figures appear different. In South Australia they are $229 and $2230 which add up to $2459 on that property. In Victoria the figures are $757—certainly more on solicitors’ fees but less on stamp duty—the stamp duty is $1800 making a total of $1557. There is a marked difference at the $80,000 level.

I make the point that at the level which affects by far the bulk of the population, the people for whom money is not easy to find who want to buy houses and land in the outer suburban areas of Melbourne, say, in the $50,000 bracket, where money is tight, there is a significant difference.

I simply make that point so that what was read from the Dawson report can have a little substance, because the difference is quite marked. It works both ways. The Attorney-General indicated that he had begun three steps to upgrade the whole system. I accept the fact that he has found the matter embarrassing. He came in as Attorney-General at a time when one of the first things that must have come to his attention would have been the difficulty at the Titles Office and the whole matter of conveyancing I accept that he has probably undertaken a number of initiatives to try to get some action. The difficulty is that we do not actually see anything happen. We have a report and another is coming but the conditions have not altered. One wonders how long it will take.

I make the point that the Attorney-General is not the first member of either of these Houses of Parliament or of this Government to understand the problem. I direct the House’s attention to the Hansard report of 21 March 1972 in which Mr Mutton, the honourable member for Coburg in another place at the time, asked a series of questions. I will not read them all because there are too many, but I will read those which are germane to the issue. Firstly, Mr Mutton asked the Premier:

1. Whether he is aware that in September, 1971, it was stated by fire-fighting experts that the Titles Office was a fire trap?
2. What fire protection systems are operative at the Titles Office?
4. Whether the Titles Office holds approximately 14 million documents, many of them irreplaceable; if so, what plans the Government has to adequately protect these public documents from total destruction by fire, or alternatively, to provide a system to duplicate existing records and store them safely and permanently?
6. Whether documents of the Titles Office can be stored on computer tape thereby providing a duplicate system of vital public records; if so, why this system has not been implemented?

I remind you, Sir, that I am reading a question by Mr Mutton in March of 1972. That is eight and a half years ago, which is interesting because those questions go to the heart of this issue. The redoubtable Premier of the day, Sir Henry Bolte, in response to the first part of the question, said:

1. It is understood that the Herald newspaper of 4th September, 1971, reported a statement to this effect by the acting secretary of the Victorian branch of the United Firefighters Union.
This may not be as credible as the statement by Mr Mutton because it comes from the United Firefighters Union. Sir Henry Bolte then talked about a comprehensive installation of fire hydrants
and extinguishers. In answer to the sixth question which dealt with computers, he said:

6. Many of the present documents in the Titles Office are not in a form suitable for computer application. This was recognized some time ago and special staff was provided in 1968 to commence the preparation of a "parcels index" which is an essential prerequisite to the storage of title information by computer.

The year 1968 is actually twelve years ago. I remind honourable members that the Attorney-General told us an hour or two ago, as if it were a new idea, that this notion of parceling information was one of the more difficult computer applications and that it was not one of his. He went into some detail. I understand that the same thing is being referred to as a parcels index. If I am wrong I stand to be corrected. The Attorney-General talks about a parcelization programme.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—I was talking about a minimum parcel description of land.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—Yes, I understood that. The Attorney-General went into some detail.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—The parcels index was in operation.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—The computer programme, which I understand was not in operation, was being prepared for in 1968. One imagines from this answer that it was well under way. Sir Henry Bolte went on to talk about the huge number of items and complexities of the operation. Then he said:

Commencing in April, a detailed review of the present system will be undertaken by the Law Department, the Titles Office and the Organization and Methods Section of the Public Service Board.

That would have been in April 1972. I will not continue, but I wanted to point out that this matter was certainly not of recent date. The matter of the danger within the Titles Office was clear. The reports were there and the promises that we continue to get from members of the Government party were being made. There was to be a report and action in some short order and already some computerization had been followed by a number of press articles that suggested that action was under way. This is one that is entitled "Allowance for the Titles Office" and it was on March 1972 following the question in the House and talked about a 20,000 thermal detector and alarm system and of all the good things that were coming. Apparently at the time nothing happened.

To come to more recent days, I have not made a detailed study of the fabric of the Titles Office. The Attorney-General considered that I had been through the matter carefully but my colleague, the Honourable Rod Mackenzie, in his capacity as Labor spokesman for public works, considered he should look at the building because he was worried about reports. He made a detailed report of conditions within the Titles Office and it is a somewhat fearsome report. He is not a man who is given to exaggeration but, in the report on his visit, and I am quoting from a press release of his dated 9 October of this year, he stated:

The Titles Office is an appalling example of Government neglect.

I made the point that the honourable member is not given to exaggeration and that is a fair statement of the situation that exists. Later in the report, he says:

The Government showed a total disregard for the welfare of the staff.

Therefore, his comments are not merely related to the fabric of the building but the work conditions of the staff, and apparently they are very poor. Mr Mackenzie thought they were some of the worst working conditions he had ever seen.

The Hon. J. V. C. Guest (Monash Province)—On a point of order, I do not want to be a spoiler as I enjoy listening to Mr Walker, but the conditions of the staff in the Titles Office is a little remote from the question of whether the Government has taken action to establish an efficient economical system of effecting land transfers.

The President (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—I am afraid I cannot see a point of order.
The Hon. E. H. WALKER (Melbourne Province)—I remind Mr Guest that it was the Attorney-General who suggested that there were two essential ways to streamline or cheapen the method. One was to look at the law in relation to conveyancing and the costs therein and the second was to try to make the Titles Office efficient in its operation. I am talking about efficiency within the Titles Office. It is clear that when working conditions and physical conditions are poor efficiency must suffer.

Mr Mackenzie said a number of things about the Titles Office. One point in his press release that interested me was his reference to the fact that in his view—he is an expert in this regard—the Titles Office building did not comply with health regulations, fire regulations or the Uniform Building Regulations. It is interesting to note that this is not uncommon in Government buildings. There is an essential point to be made. For many years I and others have been saying that this same situation exists in many Government buildings, not the least of which, and this worries me, is schools. It is true, and I put this in inverted commas, that “the Queen can do no wrong”.

If one had practised architecture, as I have, and had tried to get local government, health and fire authorities interested in State schools one would have found that they do not give a damn. Although the Premier said years ago that he was putting out a statement to the Public Works Department and other Government departments that from 1977 onwards all Government buildings should comply with health, building and fire regulations, it was a suggestion rather than a direction. Not one school in Victoria complies with all of the Uniform Building Regulations.

Parliament House is one of the worst examples. I referred to that matter in the Budget debate last year which gave rise to a committee which, I hope, will do something about working conditions. The Government is remiss. This motion reflects poorly on the Government. It is not the answer to continue to use dangerous buildings.

I understand that it takes time to get a computer system going, but it is not acceptable to maintain unhealthy and unsafe buildings. Complaints have been made for since at least 1947. For 25 of those years we have had the one Government. One might imagine that in a quarter of a century something could be done. People and valuable documents are at risk.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—Did Mr Mackenzie tell you about the programme that was started?

The Hon. E. H. WALKER—Yes, but it is slow. The Attorney-General has talked about a snail’s pace. With the best will in the world, we are not getting anywhere. This motion addresses itself to that fact. I suggest that more can be done. The matter should be treated more critically.

Poor working conditions are bad enough, but to risk documents is a risk we cannot afford. A fire would put us out of business. As far as titles are concerned, we would have to freeze the transfer of land for goodness knows how long. The micro-filming of documents must be carried out as rapidly as possible. Important documents must be stored in at least two places, one of which must be fire-proof. That does not happen now.

Mr Mackenzie emphasized a number of other facts in his press release. It staggered me to learn that the Titles Office probably makes a profit of between $6 million and $7 million a year. That is probably a conservative estimate. I have read that the figure might be as high as $12 million, but I accept the estimate of $6 million or $7 million.

I understand that the cash flow in the Titles Office is $20 million a year. With that sort of income it is not as though the Titles Office puts a call on the exchequer. That office has been making money for the State. It almost has a licence to print money, if it is making between $6 million and $7 million a year! One would imagine that in that case it would be possible to spend $1 million to bring the building into a reasonable state of repair. We would be better off if there were an increase in the efficiency of the operation.
A huge amount of information goes through the Titles Office every year. It is increasingly frustrating for those who use that office. There are those who have learned how to use it. Title searches are difficult because the place is in a mess. One wonders whether it is not of particular interest to some to keep it in a mess so that the ordinary layman does not know where anything is. It is possible for an ordinary citizen to carry out a search himself.

I wanted to point out that a careful study of the conditions in this office has been made by a member of my party—the spokesman on Public Works. It is important that these issues be brought into this debate. It is all very well to be given assurances but this has been going on so long and so little has been achieved that this matter should be dealt with more critically.

It is perhaps a pity that we are dealing with this motion in a gentlemanly fashion. This is one debate where we should be yelling at one another. It is true that if we make a fuss in this House sometimes something is done. Government by reaction is exactly what we get—if one makes a fuss, one gets action.

The Attorney-General makes it sound as though he has all the programmes under way, but that is not so. Why did the committee start on the cost issue rather than on conveyancing? The Attorney-General is putting a band aid on the whole issue. Had the committee looked at the law of conveyancing first the matter of costs would have been in a different perspective. Not only does the Attorney-General not do it quickly enough, but he does it back to front. He told us that the Government has taken considerable steps. Sir Henry Bolte said the same in 1972. We are getting the same answer now. That is not good enough. The manner in which this Government works is to quell a fire—a fire in terms of public opinion—when it cares. Journalists make a fuss in the newspapers, the Attorney-General answers in a letter or article next day and then the matter is forgotten.

In an article which appeared in the *Age* on 3 January 1979 headed "Land fee revolt gathers ground" which I consider a thoughtful piece by Tim Colebatch, he talked about the solicitors' monopoly in regard to conveyancing. I shall read one or two comments contained in that article. One of Victoria's responsible journalists was endeavouring to get action going. We are talking about two years ago. He talks about a monopoly in regard to solicitors and states:

Under the monopoly, the cost of transferring a land title is three times as much in Victoria, where it is a lawyers' monopoly, as it is in South Australia and Western Australia, where it may be performed by trained laymen.

I will not go into this at length but I shall quote his figures because I believe he is a responsible journalist. He talks about a figure of $45 000, and a title figure of $1039 in Victoria and $335 in South Australia.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—He made a submission to the inquiry. It is a responsible body, too.

The Hon. E. H. WALKER—Yes, it is. I may have been sidetracked from the point I was making but here was another of those public statements exhibiting concern about the whole system and the conditions in the Titles Office.

Directly following that article, there was a response from the Attorney-General. One or two days later, in January 1979, there was a response which was supposed to make the community feel better about the fact that a lot was going on.

I come now to 2 August 1980 where in an article which appeared in the *Age*—John Lethlean was the journalist—again the conditions in the Titles Office and the cost of conveyancing were brought up. The title of the article was, "Titles Office under fire". The article referred to the dangerous conditions in the Titles Office and the cost of conveyancing.

That article appeared on 2 August this year and immediately following, on 4 August, an article appeared in the *Herald* under the title "Modern look for Titles Office". That article stated:

The Titles Office is to be computerized, the Attorney-General, Mr Storey, said today.
He said the Government had approved a system to facilitate processing and searching of dealings in land lodged for registration.

The new system will keep track of all titles and unregistered dealings to avoid separate searches.

Mr Storey said the modernization project would begin this financial year.

He said the proposals stemmed from a review of Titles Office procedures conducted over several years.

In other words, the response from the Attorney-General indicated that there was no cause for concern. Then a day later, the Australian Financial Review took up the matter and quoted the Attorney-General. On 9 August, an article appeared in the Age titled “Titles Office on the Move”. A nice picture appeared of the Attorney-General, which is good stuff. It is interesting to note that in the article this statement appeared:

The Attorney-General, Mr Storey, said this week that there were more than 70,000 unregistered dealings at the Titles Office. He said 471,000 dealings were lodged for registration during the past financial year. About 3000 title searches were required each day.

The Titles Office is probably the largest manual clerical office in Melbourne. The most sophisticated machine in the building is a cash register.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—that was not my statement.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—I suspected that, but it appears to be a statement made by the journalist, that the most sophisticated machine in the building was a cash register. The article continues and indicates that there was no cause for flurry; that the Attorney-General was indicating in his usual manner that there was no cause for concern, no need to worry and that is what the honourable gentleman has been trying to inform honourable members this evening.

I come then to 3 October and to an article entitled “Titles Office staff decides to put its house in order”. The article states:

“We are forced to work in conditions that a Slobbovian yak herder would deem inadequate for his beasts, let alone himself.” That’s how one worker at Melbourne’s Titles Office describes the building.

The 150 members of the staff consider the conditions in the two-storey building in Queen Street are so bad that they have imposed work bans to try to increase the pace of the renovations.

The tea-rooms in the 19th century building are decrepit and the tea-making facilities are choked with dust.

Pot-holed concrete is exposed where tired, old lino yawns. Yellow paint is peeling off the walls. And the cellars which house millions of ageing deeds and documents are as dim and dirty as a neglected crypt. Lice and rats infest cellar shelves.

The article continues in a similar vein and indicates that the staff was talking about imposing work bans. I come now to the point that the demands made by these people who work at the Titles Office are not unreasonable. The article indicates:

In 1978 the Attorney-General, Mr Storey, inspected the building and told Parliament: “Something needs to be done. I will speak to the Treasurer about it.”

Renovations have begun but are proceeding at a slow pace. On 22 September the staff voted to apply the bans and will not lift them until the Attorney-General guarantees that the renovations will be completed within five years. That is hardly what one would call an unreasonable demand. I submit that it is a very reasonable request. The workers know that it takes the Government a long time to do something and all they wanted was an assurance that something would be done within five years.

The Hon. Haddon Storey—if Mr Walker can produce a quicker way of carrying out the work, I should be happy to hear of it.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—I am happy to take up the invitation and if the Attorney-General needs assistance to get the job done within a reasonable time, I should be pleased to give him advice, because the matter is serious. The problem has been going on for years and it is no good saying that these things will be done; it is necessary to do something quickly. I would be willing to speak to the Attorney-General and make suggestions on how the work could be done efficiently and quickly, which in turn would reduce the cost of conveyancing. It has to be done quickly because, as Mr Landeryou succinctly pointed out, the costs charged by lawyers are out of all proportion and taken in conjunction with this grossly inefficient building, it is no wonder the cost of conveyancing is so high. It is time action was taken by the Govern-
ment to improve the conditions in the Titles Office, especially its procedures, and thereby help to reduce the costs of conveyancing.

It must be remembered that the Government is receiving between $6 million and $7 million profit from the operations within that building so it should spend more money on it to ensure that the system operates at a more efficient level and is upgraded quickly. If the Attorney-General wants advice, I am happy to offer it. The work should be done expeditiously and as soon as possible which is requested in the motion moved by Mr Landeryou.

I consider that this is one of the most important adjournment motions moved by the Labor Party because it calls for action and I urge the Government to take that action as quickly as possible. It is time we received action and I commend the motion moved by Mr Landeryou.

The Hon. R. J. LONG (Gippsland Province)—As Mr Baxter pointed out, many years ago the buying of land was probably done by the landed gentry whereas today many people are purchasing land and therefore are interested in conveyancing.

I could not help but think, as I listened to Mr Walker who is an architect, of the analogy which exists between architects and solicitors. If we take an ordinary house, worth say $40,000 today, which would be a fairly minimal type of house, the architect would receive 10 per cent of the cost as a fee, so the architect would receive $4,000 in architectural fees.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—that is not a compulsory fee; a person can build without paying a fee. Mr Long’s argument is hopeless so he should not make it.

The Hon. R. J. LONG—What would Mr Walker’s speech have been like if the motion had read “The failure of the Government to take action to ensure an efficient economical system of building houses in Victoria.” What would have been the response of Mr Walker in those circumstances?

The Hon. E. H. Walker—Architects deal with only 2 per cent of the houses built. Mr Long’s argument is not worth pursuing.

The Hon. R. J. LONG—I come to the point made by Mr Landeryou, that solicitors have been given a monopoly by this Parliament, but I suggest architects have also been given a monopoly by the Parliament.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—that is nonsense, just as is Mr Long’s argument.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—Does Mr Long agree with my comment about the Law Institute of Victoria?

The Hon. R. J. LONG—Mr Landeryou made exactly the same point. As was indicated earlier, the Law Institute of Victoria was recognized by the Parliament, but I also remind Mr Landeryou that trade unions are recognized by the Parliament. Mr Landeryou went on to say that the Law Institute of Victoria was set up to protect the public and then Mr Landeryou complained bitterly that the members of the Law Institute of Victoria had been given a monopoly. I also remind Mr Landeryou that trade unionists have a monopoly.

The Hon. H. R. Ward—not to protect the public!

The Hon. R. J. LONG—I could not get a job to help build a power station at Loy Yang unless I belonged to a union. It shows the hypocrisy of the Opposition that Mr Landeryou will recognize trade unionism and its monopoly but will not recognize the Law Institute and its monopoly.

Mr Landeryou also complained about conveyancing kits. I want to make a point quite clearly: I do not know of any solicitor who would ever complain about any member of the public using a conveyancing kit.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—What about the Law Institute?

The Hon. R. J. LONG—the institute does not complain about it either. If we take, for instance, architects, according to Mr Walker, everybody ought to be able to walk into an architect’s office and get advice as to how to build his own home.
**The Hon. E. H. Walker**—They can do that for free at the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

**The Hon. R. J. LONG**—I would love to test it out and get the result. What Mr Landeryou wants solicitors to do is, when a person makes a mistake in a transfer of land, to correct it. If a solicitor does six settlements a day and spends time correcting the transfers, that would be all he would ever do.

What the Law Institute has said to its members—and, I think, quite properly—is that if people choose of their own volition to do their own legal work, which we do not complain about, why should we go out of our way to try to correct the errors that they make?

I know that does not apply generally throughout the legal profession; there are many solicitors who correct those errors. The important thing to bear in mind when we talk about this sort of thing is what is meant by the word "conveyancing". Conveyancing involves the preparation of a contract of sale, and thereafter the transfer of the title is completed and registered in the Titles Office.

It was pointed out that in South Australia the land brokers and solicitors do not have anything to do with the contract—that is done by the estate agents—whereas in Victoria the estate agents seldom deal with that side; it is left to the solicitors to prepare the contract and exchange the parts. I have had a fair amount of experience in that field, and I believe the most important part of a conveyancing transaction is the preparation and exchange of the contract because, unless all the terms of the dealing are incorporated in the contract of sale, one is heading for disaster later. Therefore I used to spend a considerable amount of time in making absolutely certain that the contract was in order.

Tonight mention has been made of conveyancing and land transfer companies. The legal profession has no objection to land transfer companies, except if they hold themselves out as charging less than the prescribed fee. In other words, touting is the thing that the legal profession complains about.

I do not have to charge the fee that is set down in that scale; I can charge any figure less than that that I like. There is no compulsion to charge fees according to that scale; it sets out the maximum fee that can be imposed. However, if prior to a transaction I hold myself out as charging less, I could properly be brought before the Law Institute and dealt with as touting for business. There have been many occasions in my practice where I have charged less than the scale fee.

It is simple to say that conveyancing should be cheaper, and we should all like to think that was the case. The most difficult thing to say is what the appropriate charge for the conveyancing should be, and that is the hub of this debate. One can argue all day whether that charge should be made on a time basis or an item remuneration basis or whether a fixed scale should apply, as it does at present, but somebody has the job of fixing the charge that a solicitor can make. I would not mind even if it were the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission that was given the task of fixing what that remuneration should be, because solicitors have tremendous overhead expenses.

One of the gripes that I have had in my years of practice is the amount of wages paid to typists of age, say, 21 years. The wages can be something like $170 a week. To me that has always appeared to be completely unreasonable, because there are many married men with children, working in a trade or business, who do not receive that amount of money. It seems completely unrealistic to fix a typist's wage at age 21 years at such a figure.

We can criticize the legal profession in many ways—I can do so, and I have worked in it. There are many solicitors who adopt the attitude that they want to get rich without working, but they do not influence me. There are others who deliberately set out to provide a service to the community at a reasonable fee, and I suggest the great majority of solicitors are in that category. This motion should be completely rejected by the House.
The Hon. B. A. CHAMBERLAIN (Western Province)—First of all I declare my interest as being a very occasional member of the legal profession, which derives a considerable degree of its income from conveyancing—almost all of which is done by qualified solicitors, I hasten to add.

The House has to thank Mr Lander-you for bringing up this subject-matter because it is important, but I believe many of the important issues involved in conveyancing have been missed by all sides of the House. To some extent it is a reflection on the complexities of society. It is an example of the planning processes and decision-making processes which Parliament, through the regulation-making process, has imposed on the community—all, presumably, with justification, but it has led to a very complex situation in which any conveyancing system must operate.

The first thing to look at if a person wants to buy a property is what he wants to do with it. For instance, if Mr Walker wants to buy a property in suburban Melbourne, it is not merely a matter of obtaining a titles search. All that shows is that there is a property with certain dimensions in a certain street. To find out what can be done with that property or what sorts of encumbrances are on it, an extraordinary series of steps has to be undertaken.

The first thing to be done is to apply to the local municipality to see whether it has a planning scheme and, if so, what that planning scheme permits one to do. One ascertains what the rating charges are and what charges are imposed for street construction or other purposes. One must also ascertain the basis on which the municipality runs its garbage scheme.

One must then apply to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works for a zoning certificate and a certificate as to encumbrances. It might be found from that certificate that there are easements or proposed easements which would affect some particular development.

Application must then be made to the Housing Commission for a certificate to make sure that there are no Housing Commission orders on the property. An application must also be made to the Land Tax Office for a certificate, and the remarkable situation is that the information which that office provides is two years old and despite this somehow or other the financial arrangements between the parties must be finalized.

So this extraordinarily complex set of steps has to be undertaken before a solicitor could properly advise Mr Walker whether that property could be used for the purpose for which he is buying it.

All these matters ideally need to be completed before a person buys the property. The ideal situation is that which operates in some States in America whereby all matters relating to rating, capital charges, zoning and other charges on the property are available in a central computer bank with the title information. In America, particularly California, they work on an insurance system so that at the same time as a person enters the contract, he or she buys a land insurance contract. That protects the purchaser in case any deficiencies exist along the way in the title of the property purchased. A one-stop place is available to obtain the information instead of applying to the multiplicity of places which the laws of Victoria require, as I mentioned earlier. One has a one-stop shop for all the information required. It is an important difference and it is an ideal towards which Victoria should be moving.

Some of the suggestions to help the situation, given that we do not possess that degree of sophistication, are to impose obligations on vendors as they do in other States to provide more information. Therefore, a vendor in South Australia has to provide basic information about the zoning, rates and so on with the contract itself so that the purchaser, on signing, has more information and less work needs to be done by his solicitor in relation to that transaction.

These are important issues and I am surprised that they have not been dealt with elsewhere in the House. The physical deficiencies in the Titles Office have
been pointed out. That is a matter that I have been echoing in every Budget debate since I have been a member of Parliament. There is no doubt—and I shall use the same words—that the Law Department is the "Cinderella" department of Victoria. It is the "Cinderella" department because we collectively, as members of Parliament, do not apply enough pressure on the Treasurer to get the message across that the role of the Titles Office is important. We all have responsibilities and all honourable members know the Government reacts to a squeaky wheel.

An Honourable Member—It is the Parliament that makes laws.

The Hon B. A. CHAMBERLAIN—The trouble is the Attorney-General does not get to use the profits of the Titles Office because they go straight to the Treasurer. Nevertheless, the Law Department is a "Cinderella" department. I have heard stories that part of the equipment at the Titles Office cannot be used because it is only partly there or there is insufficient staff. At least this year the funds are available for the first stage of computerization and it is an important stage. Thousands of dealings are lodged each day; it is easy to attempt to search and miss a dealing which may have been lodged within half an hour of one's application. Although the Titles Office is diligent with the manual system it has, obviously shortcomings exist.

The system where one uses a computer terminal and can receive updated information on unregistered dealings is important. The Attorney-General as well as everyone else, will applaud that system when it is operational. Last year legislation was passed which amended the Transfer of Land Act and provided for the use of photocopied titles. It is all very well to pass legislation but, up until recently, no money has been made available to buy the sophisticated photocopying equipment to put the legislation into operation. Honourable members can now see that happen.

It is true that the physical deficiencies which have been outlined by other honourable members exist. Steps have been taken to rectify the matter. The problem lies with honourable members collectively who have to get the message through to the powers that be in order to have the necessary funds allocated. There is a need for a much greater priority in that area.

I shall deal with some other matters which have been dealt with and which I believe are important. Honourable members have dealt briefly with the problem where the title exists already for a particular property. Of course, honourable members realize that in many cases much work has to be undertaken before that. I refer in particular to plans of subdivisions, particularly cluster and strata plans. Such plans require sophisticated work beforehand and that is an area within the Titles Office where great strides have been made. If Mr Mackenzie had visited the Lonsdale Street premises he would have found the difference equivalent to that between chalk and cheese. The Lonsdale Street premises have much better working conditions with modern offices and plenty of room. Requests are dealt with efficiently. It is in that section that the detailed strata and cluster plans are dealt with. I suggest that if that section were still located in Queen Street there would be great difficulty in handling that aspect of the work. There are deficiencies and they can be dealt with. However, we have a long way to go, for reasons which I have stated. There are many examples in other countries of the ideal situation.

Mr Landeryou made reference to the advice which appeared in the Law Institute Journal for solicitors acting for vendors where the purchaser was acting for himself with the aid of a conveyancing kit. It is important to bring into context the contents of the article, bearing in mind that the solicitor's client is the vendor. It is the solicitor's obligation to look after his client's interests. I shall cite an example. Let us assume there has been an exchange of contracts and settlement is due at the end of the month. Let us assume that both settlements are
due at the end of October and the vendor, Mr Walker, requires his money by that day. The purchaser is using a conveyancing kit and sends the transfer to the solicitor for Mr Walker's signature. The solicitor notices that the transfer has been wrongly prepared. He has two courses of action open to him. Firstly, he can have Mr Walker sign the document knowing that there will be problems later on. Secondly, he can send the document back to the purchaser and say it is not correct and advise the purchaser what he should do. If the document comes back and it is still incorrect the solicitor has to think about Mr Walker's interests. We know that the vendor requires the money to buy another property. What does one do? In most cases, the solicitor would fix the matter up and would not be paid for doing so. It is a dilemma and the solicitor endeavours to protect his own client, the vendor, by undertaking some of the work which should be undertaken by the purchaser.

The other part of the article in the Law Institute Journal suggested that if the purchaser defaults and does not settle by the due date, penalty interest be applied. Again, the solicitor has to consider whether it is in Mr Walker's interests as vendor. The vendor may need to purchase another property and there may be a risk that he may have to default. He may require the money from the first transaction to finance a further purchase. Obviously, his rights under that contract have to be enforced. I believe that the particular direction in the Law Institute Journal could have been expressed a little differently although there is absolutely nothing wrong with the sentiment of it.

Mr Landeryou referred to a couple of matters with which I would like to deal. He stated that there had been a growth in legal fees for conveyancing work. In fact, there has been no growth in the area since 1976. The fee scale was last set in 1976. Mr Landeryou stated that the Law Institute imposes its own fee structure. That is not correct. The fees for conveyancing are prescribed under section 83 of the Supreme Court Act which provides for a committee to set those fees. The committee comprises a Supreme Court judge. There was an interjection earlier about whether this should go to the Arbitration Commission! The committee further comprises two persons nominated by the Governor in Council, in practice the Government Statist and Actuary, the Taxing Master of the Supreme Court, and two members of the Law Institute of Victoria. It is a committee of five people with only two solicitors involved. Therefore, the solicitors do not have a majority and they do not set their own fees. The fee scale was last set in 1976.

I raise the matter of conveyancing kits. If people wish to use conveyancing kits, well and good. If a person wants to repair his or her own car, that is fine. However, that person cannot expect the same sort of results if they do the job themselves as when a professional does it. Let us examine the difference between operations like the Land Transfer Company and a solicitor qualified in Victoria.

One of the important matters is the protection that the client is given in relation to his investment. Mr Baxter referred to the fact that solicitors make errors. People have to realize that if they are dealing with a solicitor and he makes an error, the solicitor must make recompense if a client loses money. If he does not have the wherewithal to recompense one, he is obliged to be covered by indemnity insurance. He must have a cover of at least $100 000. I believe the annual premium is something like $600 for a single practitioner, which is a substantial premium. If there is something wrong with a title and a person suffers substantial loss when dealing with a solicitor, there is a fund to which he or she can have recourse. Therefore, that is one advantage the conveyancing-type companies do not give. It is a significant type of protection.

If the solicitor is dishonest and takes off with one's money, there is protection through the application of the Solicitors Guarantee Fund. So people get what they pay for. If they deal with a conveyancing company or use a conveyancing kit, they get
cut-price conveyancing but they do not get the same protection. Normally the purchase of a house is the biggest single investment any family will make. If people pay for a black and white television set they get a black and white television set, but if they want a colour television, they must pay for it.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—The monopoly does not give the two television set analogy.

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—People still have the choice of doing it themselves. I refer to the question of monopoly. Although the honourable member casually referred to the interim report of the conveyancing inquiry, he studiously avoided much of the information in it. The honourable member made a comparison on costs of the different States. I suggest he should refer to Attachment 2 on page 22. Given the recent history of the National Times and the number of errors on the technical matters which have been highlighted in letters to the editor and other matters of which I am sure the honourable member is aware, I suggest that the tables in this report are more likely to be accurate. They deal with all the issues that the honourable member dealt with before, bearing in mind that that information in this report was adopted unanimously. There was a dissenting report but only on the question of the suggested scale of costs. The Chairman of the Consumer Affairs Council, plus an accountant, plus other non-solicitors, prepared the report and the scales are there.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—That is not right—non-practising.

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—Non-practising.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—but how many were members of the Law Institute?

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—Two out of five.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—How many had legal training.

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—Two out of seven. If we deal with the question of the monopoly the committee fairly and squarely dealt with that. The committee said it really only comes down to this, the only argument against monopoly that has been put is really a question of costs. In other words, people are saying there should be no monopoly because they can do it cheaper. However, I refer to the third last paragraph on page 7, which states:

As we have said, the introduction of land brokers in Victoria was suggested to the Committee solely upon the basis of cheaper cost. Such a basis does not, in the view of the Committee, exist and that could probably be the end of the matter, but we think it is appropriate to add some further observations.

The other matter which I think was mentioned by Mr Baxter was that we should have some other group to do this work. Again I refer to the committee which looked at the situation throughout Australia. That is important because most honourable members are unable to do that because we do not have those resources. At the top of page 8 it states:

We think that it is to be expected that any organized group, such as land brokers in South Australia, carrying out para-professional (if that is the term) duties will wish to raise the standard of their training as nearly as possible within their limited field to the standard of their professional counterparts and will seek to be rewarded accordingly. Unless there were clear, long-term advantages to be gained by way of cheaper costs or otherwise, the introduction of a system of land brokers would not, in the opinion of the Committee be justified. We do not think that these advantages exist.

All I am suggesting to Mr Walker is that most of the answers to the issues that he raised, and they are important issues, are to be found in that report. It was suggested that we should not talk about scales and costs until we have changes in the law. I suggest that given the history of the Sale of Land (Deposits) Act 1980 and because of the extraordinary difficulties and technology in those areas, that there is an immediate problem. So it is better to implement those procedures, and we are awaiting a final report on that, rather than to wait to change the substantive law on conveyancing. Some of the changes revolve around the sort of factors that I referred to before. The fact is that in a fairly simple suburban transaction there are about nine different bodies to which the purchaser's solicitor must refer to obtain all the information he needs to
advise his client on whether he should proceed with that matter. At this stage it is appropriate for me to make a plug for the professional architects because I believe there is scope for more operation for architects in this field. A system is in operation in England whereby as part of the transaction at the time of signing of the contract, a certificate must be obtained on the soundness of the property or otherwise. Apparently it is not an expensive operation.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—Our fees are always very reasonable.

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—In the interests of professional harmony, I will not comment on that statement but the charges quoted to me for that service in England were reasonable. I know many people who engage architects or builders to look at properties before they buy them, particularly the older properties that are now so fashionable. We should perhaps consider a compulsory system because many people have no information on these matters. It does not apply so much to new houses but to older houses which may be dollied up to look good but which in fact may have serious defects.

I conclude by saying what I said before, in the conveyancing business people get what they pay for. If they want protection for their investment and for their money they can pay for it. If they want something less than that, they pay a lesser amount and that is the choice of the individual.

The House divided on the motion (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade in the chair).

Ayes... 16
Noes... 24

Majority against the motion... 8

AYES
Mr Baxter
Mr Butler
Mrs Coxedge
Mr Dunn
Mr Eddy
Mr Evans
Mr Kennedy
Mr Kent
Mr Landeryou

NOES
Mrs Baylor
Mr Block
Mr Campbell
Mr Crozier
Dr Foley
Mr Granter
Mr Guest
Mr Hauser
Mr Hayward
Mr Houghton
Mr Hunt
Mr Jenkins
Mr Knowles

Mildura College Lands (Easements) Bill

The Hon. A. J. Hunt (Minister of Education), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Mildura College Lands Act 1916 with respect to the granting of easements in relation to lands vested in the Minister under the Act and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Coroners (Amendment) Bill

The Hon. Haddon Storey (Attorney-General), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Coroners Act 1958 and the Magistrates (Summary Proceedings) Act 1975 with respect to depositions.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Crimes (Classification of Offences) Bill

The Hon. Haddon Storey (Attorney-General), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to abolish the division of crimes into felonies and misdemeanours, to amend and simplify the law in respect of matters arising from that abolition, to amend the Crimes Act 1958 and certain other enactments, and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.
PATRIOTIC FUNDS (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Patriotic Funds Act 1958, and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

COMMAND PAPER

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General) presented, by command of His Excellency the Governor, the report to the Victorian Government on matters of particular relevance to the State of Victoria arising out of the Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs.

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

On the motion of the Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province), it was ordered that the report be taken into consideration on the next day of meeting.

DRUG PROBLEM IN VICTORIA

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General)—By leave, I move:

That there be laid before this House a copy of the report of the Inter-departmental Working Party on the Drug Problem in Victoria, Volume 1.

The motion was agreed to.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General) presented the report in compliance with the foregoing order.

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

On the motion of the Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province), it was ordered that the report be taken into consideration on the next day of meeting.

PAPERS

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


La Trobe University—Report of the Council, together with Statutes approved by the Governor in Council for the year 1979 (19 papers).


Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act 1959—General abstract of births, stillbirths, deaths and marriages in Victoria during the year 1979.

Statutory Rules under the following Acts of Parliament:

Abattoir and Meat Inspection Act 1973—Nos. 393 and 394.


County Court Act 1958—No. 401.

Explosives Act 1960—No. 370.


Health Act 1958—No. 382.

Industrial Training Act 1975—Nos. 385 and 386.

Inflammable Liquids Act 1966—No. 371.


Liquefied Gases Act 1968—No. 372.

Marine Act 1958—Nos. 325, 399 and 400.

Mines Act 1958—Nos. 368, 381 and 384.


Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act 1959—No. 405.


Stock Diseases Act 1968—No. 387.

Strata Titles Act 1967—No. 398.


Workers Compensation Act 1958—No. 373.


Surveyor-General—Report upon the progress and co-ordination of surveys under the National Mapping Scheme, and the activities of the Place Names Committee, for the year 1979–80.

Teaching Service Act 1958—Teaching Service (Classification, Salaries and Allowances) Regulations—Amendments Nos. 516 to 519, and 520.

Teaching Service (Teachers Tribunal) Regulations—Amendments Nos. 519 and 521.
POLICE REGULATION (CHARGES AND APPEALS) BILL

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill effects a number of changes to the procedures for the hearing of disciplinary charges against members of the Police Force arising from complaints made by members of the public. It provides also for the creation of a Second Division of the Police Service Board with the function of hearing and determining appeals from members of the force in respect of transfers and promotions.

Honourable members will recall that the Report of the Board of Inquiry into Allegations against Members of the Victoria Police Force, which was conducted by the then Mr B. W. Beach, Q.C., contained recommendations for changes in the procedures adopted by the police in the investigation of criminal offences. The report also recommended changes in the system applying to the investigation of complaints made by members of the public against members of the force and to the review of the results of such investigations.

Early in 1977, the then Chief Secretary established a committee under the chairmanship of Mr J. G. Norris, Q.C., a former judge of the Supreme Court, to advise as to the implementation of the recommendations of the board of inquiry. The other members of the committee were the then Chief Commissioner of Police, Mr R. Jackson, the then Secretary to the Law Department, Mr R. Glenister, and Mr R. L. King, the then Under Secretary of the Chief Secretary's Department.

The terms of reference of the Norris committee enabled the committee to make recommendations alternative to those included in the report of the board of inquiry. The committee was required to consult with interested parties such as the Victorian Bar Council, the Law Institute of Victoria, the Victorian Council for Civil Liberties and the Police Association. It consulted, also, with the present Chief Commissioner of Police. It received written submissions on the matters under investigation and surveyed the many reports of Australian and overseas bodies which had examined similar subjects.

The report of the Norris committee was presented in two parts. Part I dealt with police procedures relating to the investigation of crime and Part II dealt with the investigation of complaints...
against police. The Government has accepted, generally, the findings of the Norris committee's report with some variations which arose from a further consideration of the Beach inquiry recommendations and the submissions of interested parties.

In relation to Part I of the report, the Chief Commissioner of Police has implemented a number of alterations to procedures by way of administrative action and amendment of Police Standing Orders. Other matters involve legislative action and these are being attended to as part of a general review of police powers and functions.

Several of the matters arising from the consideration of Part II of the report, relating to the investigation of complaints against members of the Police Force by members of the public, are being implemented by way of administrative action. These include provision for the investigation of all complaints to be supervised by the Police Internal Investigations Bureau, colloquially known as BII, and for each complainant to be notified in writing of the results of the investigation and of the availability of recourse to the Ombudsman if the complainant is dissatisfied with such results. The Government has also initiated action to ensure that, where a complaint is not substantiated or where no further action is taken, the BII report is referred to the Ombudsman for independent investigation and report.

The Bill before the House proposes to implement a number of further measures based upon the findings contained in Part II of the report in respect of the hearing of disciplinary charges laid against members of the Police Force as a result of an investigation of a complaint made by a member of the public.

The Police Regulation Act currently provides that, where any member of the Police Force is charged with an offence against the Act, the Chief Commissioner of Police may either refer the charge to an officer not below the rank of chief superintendent, hear the charge himself or refer the charge to the Police Discipline Board. The board currently consists of a stipendiary magistrate and a nominee of the Chief Commissioner of Police being an officer not below the rank of superintendent.

The provisions of the Bill introduce the principle of community involvement in the conduct of formal disciplinary proceedings in respect of charges arising from the investigation of complaints made by members of the public.

Clause 4 of the Bill changes the structure of the Police Discipline Board by providing that the nominee of the Chief Commissioner shall be an assistant commissioner and that, when the board is hearing a charge arising from a complaint made by a member of the public, a representative of the public, appointed by the Governor in Council, shall also sit on the board. In order that such person shall be, and shall appear to be, independent, the clause also provides that the representative of the public shall not be a person who is or has been a member of a police force, an employee of a public service or a statutory authority, or a barrister and/or solicitor.

Clause 6 provides that all charges arising from complaints made by members of the public shall be heard by the Police Discipline Board which, in fact, is in accord with the policy of the present Chief Commissioner of Police and his predecessor.

The Police Regulation Act provides that any member aggrieved by a decision of the Police Discipline Board may appeal to the Police Service Board. The latter board is comprised of a County Court judge as chairman, a representative of the Government of Victoria and a member elected by the members of the Police Force.

Clause 3 provides that, where the Police Service Board is hearing an appeal against a decision of the Police Discipline Board with respect to a charge which arose from a complaint made by a member of the public, a representative of the public, appointed by the Governor in Council, shall sit on the board in lieu of the Government representative. As with the Police Discipline Board, this representative
shall not be, or have been, engaged in any of the occupations or professions referred to earlier. In line with the principle of community involvement, the Bill also provides that, where the Police Discipline Board is hearing a charge arising from a complaint made by a member of the public and where the Police Service Board is hearing an appeal against a decision of the Police Discipline Board in such cases, the hearing shall be open to the public, unless the relevant board directs otherwise.

Clause 8 provides the Chief Commissioner of Police with a right of appeal against any penalty imposed by the Police Discipline Board in respect of a charge which arose from a complaint made by a member of the public if he considers that some other penalty should have been imposed in the interests of the discipline of the Police Force.

In this respect, where the truth of a charge has been proved, the Police Discipline Board is empowered to adjourn the hearing, reprimand the member, impose a penalty of not more than $500, reduce the member in rank or dismiss him from the Police Force.

It is envisaged that the decisions of the Police Service Board on appeals instituted by the Chief Commissioner of Police would provide appropriate guidance to the Police Discipline Board, either confirming or varying the principles upon which the latter had proceeded, and thereby strengthening public confidence in the system.

Clause 2 effects an amendment of the Police Regulation Act which is unrelated to the recommendations of the Norris committee. One of the functions of the Police Service Board is to hear and determine appeals from members of the Police Force who are aggrieved by the failure of the Chief Commissioner of Police to select them for promotion or transfer, or by a decision of the Chief Commissioner of Police to transfer them to positions for which they have not applied.

During the lengthy hearing of the recent general salary claim lodged by the Victoria Police Association, the board did not deal with promotion or transfer appeals thus leading to arrears of appeals awaiting determination.

The Chief Commissioner of Police is concerned at the situation which has arisen because of the effect it has had on the efficient administration of the Police Force. In this regard, where an appeal is lodged against the selection of a member of the Police Force for promotion or transfer to a country police station, that member remains at his present station until the appeal is determined. Any delay in hearing the appeal can result in a police station remaining under-staffed or, where the station is a one-man police station, the station and residence remaining vacant. This situation may deprive the particular town of the services of a policeman and leave the residence open to deterioration and vandalism. Of course, ad hoc arrangements are normally made to deal with such situations.

Further, members selected for promotion to positions in the Criminal Investigation Branch and the Traffic Operations Group who are located in the country also remain at their stations pending finalization of appeals. A backlog of appeals may create staff shortages in both of these specialist groups.

The Victoria Police Association is also concerned that the hearing of appeals lodged by its members has been delayed and that such a situation could again arise if the Police Service Board is required to devote a lengthy period of time to the determination of a particular claim or a related series of claims. Of immediate concern to the association is the clearing of the current backlog.

To overcome the arrears of appeals and to provide a future facility for the hearing of appeals when the Police Service Board is engaged in the hearing of a lengthy claim, the Bill provides for the establishment of a second division of the Police Service Board to hear and determine appeals in respect of promotions and transfers. The first division of the board would retain primary jurisdiction in this area as well as sole jurisdiction to determine conditions of service and to hear and determine appeals in respect of disciplinary matters.
It is proposed that the second division be convened at the request of the chairman of the board and that it be comprised of the deputy members of the board. At present, the Act provides for the appointment of a deputy chairman, who is a County Court Judge, and a deputy member representing the Government and for the election of a deputy member representing the Police Force.

The ability to form a second division of the Police Service Board will ensure the speedy determination of all promotion and transfer appeals lodged by members of the Police Force.

The major provisions of the Bill are designed to promote public confidence in the procedures adopted for the hearing of disciplinary charges against members of the Police Force arising from complaints made by members of the public. The involvement of representatives of the public in those procedures will bring a further degree of independence to the hearing of disciplinary charges and help to ensure that the requisite degree of public confidence is maintained.

On the motion of the Hon. R. J. EDDY (Thomastown Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 28.

MILDURA COLLEGE LAND (EASEMENTS) BILL

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The origin of the Mildura college lands dates from 1887 when an agreement was entered into between the Victorian Government and the Chaffey Brothers under which a one-fifteenth part of all the land granted to them was to be set aside for the support of an agricultural school or college in the Mildura area. The Chaffey Brothers undertook to build the school and had in fact progressed as far as pouring the foundations when with the bursting of the land boom in 1895 their company went into liquidation.

In September 1912, the Mildura High School was established. The school was built on the foundations laid by the Chaffey Brothers and the income from the leases of the land which they had provided was directed to it.

The Mildura College Lands Act of 1916 vested the lands in the then Minister of Public Instruction, the forerunner of the current Minister of Education, and put the administration of these lands on a firm footing. This Act was amended in 1970 to allow the three local post-primary schools, the Mildura High School, the Mildura Technical School and the Irymple Technical School, to share the income from the leases of the Chaffey land for the benefit of their pupils.

The blocks of land which make up the Mildura college lands are scattered throughout the business, residential and rural parts of the Mildura area and these lands are leased by the Minister as he is advised from time to time.

Development of properties adjoining these blocks has created a demand for the granting of easements of one kind or another, both for drainage purposes over agricultural or residential lots and for party walls between lots in the business area. Strangely enough, no power exists under the principal Act for the granting of easements and the purpose of this short Bill is to give the Minister this power, a power which is enjoyed by every owner in the State.

The purpose of the Bill is to give the Minister power to exercise that right in favour of people. Therefore, it is a power designed for the benefit of Mildura and not for the trust itself, for the benefits of neighbours and landowners in the vicinity. This provision will allow the development of the lands to proceed more efficiently for the benefit of all people in the area. It is a simple Bill and I commend it to the House.

On the motion of the Hon. C. J. KENNEDY (Waverley Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 28.
PARLIAMENTARY SALARIES AND SUPERANNUATION BILL

The debate (adjourned from October 1) on the motion of the Hon. A. J. Hunt (Minister of Education) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province)—With all due respect to my colleagues in the corner, this is probably the most disgraceful Bill to come before the House. It is a Bill which, at the very highest one can put it in terms of morality, comes about because one man, elected by National Party supporters in his electorate, has decided to prostitute himself for his own political advantage in the future. The reality is that one member of the National Party, having attended the Administrative Staff College at Mount Eliza, came back convinced that he had spent his lifetime supporting the wrong party and decided to change.

The Hon. H. R. Ward—It was not wasted, was it?

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU—I expect that kind of comment from Mr Ward, having regard to his political morality. The once great National Party which had twelve members, has now lost its twelfth man. I am not sure whether it is because he took the view that, having achieved a status at the Administrative Staff College, he should no longer be treated as a drink waiter. Perhaps as a result of leadership disputes, from time to time he has been placed at silly mid-on, so to speak. Perhaps also as a result of disputes over the leadership of the National Party, in this House there is now the situation of four members of the National Party, hard working as they may be, each holding some office of that party.

I do not believe there is any particular virtue in ascribing a set of numbers to a party because it becomes the third party. Even the late Sir Robert Menzies decided that two people in the Senate comprised a party, and, I suppose, that with such an erstwhile statesman as he, who am I to argue?

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—They commanded a fair number of votes.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU—I understand that, and although my view may not be unanimously held by members of the Labor Party, I believe in a gerrymandered House like this the numbers of a political party are probably irrelevant. However, in the over-all political scene, in this Chamber, with 44 members, the only party grossly under-represented is the Labor Party. Presumably the National Party would subscribe to the view that the Democratic Labor Party, the Communist Party—perhaps it would not go that far—the Right to Lifers and whoever might have a minority point of view in the community ought to be recognized with some form of status. Recognition of status in this and another place is related to the salaries of the captain and the deputy captain. It appears that each of the four members of the National Party in this House has an office, not necessarily a salary.

The Hon. W. R. Baxter—that is not right.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU—One of those members must be unlucky. However, 75 per cent of those members hold an office, and that is extraordinary. I do not subscribe to the view that there is some magic in the figure of twelve any more that there is some magic in the words proposed in the Bill; the morality of the whole question is what matters.

When the Minister introduced this measure, he did not have the decency to blush. At least Ned Kelly had the decency to wear a mask. The Minister said that this is a small Bill to correct some anomalies in the existing Act and to honour an undertaking given by the Government to retain the status of the National Party as a third party. In other words, the Government was honouring its commitment to the rat who deserted his own party and joined the Government party. So desperate was the Government that it gave this member a standing ovation in the party room and even James Guest was moved to clap. Mr Taylor might giggle. It was not long ago that he was talking about rattlesnakes and not being able to trust them. Yet, he was standing in that room
cheering and clapping when one of those rattlesnakes whom he could not trust was welcomed to the Government's breast. That shows how astute a Parliamentarian and statesman Mr Taylor is.

This Bill demonstrates that the Government is prepared to do anything to hang onto power. It could not care less about the fact that it cheats in regard to the electoral boundaries or about the fact that it bribes, intimidates or encourages anyone to cross the floor as long as he joins the ranks of the Government party.

Perhaps the once-great National Party may face electoral demise and perhaps I may have a different point of view on some matters from the views of other members of the Labor Party, but I point out that on the matter of status and staff available to Leaders of political parties, although the Labor Party has 50 per cent of the electorate's support, the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party must go cap in hand to some public servant bureaucrat and ask for the loan of a Government car and from time to time he, and I are denied resources of this Parliament to prepare for debate and for our public appearances and have had to pay for additional staff out of our salaries.

I am not questioning the matter of Parliamentary salaries because, on a work-value basis, many members of the Government in this House owe the Parliament money. I know something about work value, even if Mr Taylor can only ride a bike.

In the second sentence of the second-reading speech of the Minister the Government gives away what the Bill does. It honours an undertaking, in the same way I suppose that Hitler honoured the undertakings that he gave in the 1930s.

I suppose Mr McInnes, who is a man of considerable talent, as I have noticed in the brief working experience I have had with him on a number of committees within the Parliament, believes his responsibilities lie with the Liberal Party. He is entitled to that view but if any member of this Parliament, having been elected on a particular platform and a particular programme, decides that he has changed his mind about that programme, he should have the honesty and dignity to resign and contest the same seat on his new-found philosophy. That has not been done. The Government, because it was constantly threatened and because it did not do as well as perhaps it thought it ought at the last election, decided it needed to buy someone out and it did so. Because he did not have the sense to realize what was occurring or perhaps because he did and did not have the morality to question it, Mr McInnes was insisting that although he was going to rat on his colleagues, he did not want to go down as the worst rat in history but just wanted to ensure that his colleagues retained their cars, their salaries or both.

The Hon. J. V. C. Guest—The cars have nothing to do with the Bill.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—I understand that Mr Guest, with his twisted mentality, would have difficulty putting forward an argument to sustain the assertion that the Leader of a political party who had suddenly become just an ordinary member, should still retain a Government car. The reality is that what the Government was faced with—as Mr Guest well knows—was a decision it had to take in its own interests. It could not care less about the wishes of the people of this State and certainly had no regard for the wishes of the electors of Mr McInnes's electorate. When it comes to facing up to what ought to be a fairly fundamental question of morality, Mr Guest, by inter-
jection, says that cars have nothing to do with the Bill. As members of Parliament, we seem to run away from our responsibilities to ourselves and the electorate.

Often we are not courageous enough to demand the sorts of resources that those who represent the large numbers of people that we represent should have. I understand the difficulty of the National Party and those who represent large electorates. I represent probably the most populous electorate.

Allocations of resources should be decisions of principle based on practical experience of what is fair and equitable. They should have nothing to do with the political convenience of the ruling junta at the time. What Mr Hamer has done, and what the Parliament has been asked to accept, arose from a back room deal between the Government and someone who was prepared to sell out his colleagues and the people who elected him. It cannot be put differently because that is what occurred, and if Mr McInnes did have the change of heart that he claims to have had he still could have followed his duty of honour, resigned and contested the electorate.

I understand that Sir Winston Churchill once claimed, after he fought with the Conservative Party and joined the Liberal Party—there is not much difference in the Australian political standard—that some people change their principles for the sake of their party, and others change their party for the sake of their principles. Mr McInnes cannot be in that position. He was elected by the people and ascribed himself publicly to a certain philosophy, which he has now deserted.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—He was elected three times.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—That is the simple truth of the matter. This Bill is amending the law of the State so that one man, having sold out his colleagues, will be able to ensure that his old party is not injured by his actions.

In regard to clause 2, our erstwhile colleagues in the press have not been their usual observant selves. That clause corrects the fact that many hundreds of thousands of dollars have been incorrectly paid out of a fund under the control of the Parliament. That is not stated in the best way in the words of the second-reading notes of the Minister. If one is to accept the advice of the Solicitor-General, having regard to Mr Dawson's recent faux pas, I am not certain that the original interpretation of this clause and what arises from it is correct.

Clause 3 is crucial because it gives some solace to members of the National Party in hanging on to what vestiges of prestige they have. I use the opportunity of discussing this clause to point out to the House, by way of reiteration, that the allocation of the resources to the Labor Party in this House causes us to labour under great difficulty. It is one thing to pretend that this Chamber has some relevance in the latter part of the twentieth century, but it is another thing to lock up four of my colleagues in the roof hall for eighteen months and then, as a result of your own personal commitment to the programme, Mr President, we are about to relocate them in the dungeon below.

When it comes to my deputy deputizing for me, he uses public transport to meet the Minister who arrives in a State provided car with the back-up staff that have arranged this commitment for him and, presumably, with his press officers and the entourage that join Ministers on such occasions. In the case of shadow Ministers, in this House or elsewhere, we go about under our own resources. It may well be argued that with the fairly handsome salaries that we are paid as members of Parliament—they are handsome in comparison with other members of the community—we should be able to afford our own transport.

I believe that what is fair for one should be fair for all. It does not apply to the Government, and although we have the sanctimonious and almost hypocritical nonsense of honourable members opposite with respect to public funding of political parties and the point scoring and electoral stance taken by the Liberal Party, what we are faced with is that honourable members are being asked to accept a decision which
is not democratic in any sense. It is patently not democratic because of the unequal electorates in this State. The Government then uses the domination of members that the system produces to achieve its personal ends. It then denies the natural justice of the claim of my own deputy who, in my view, is not only entitled to the full use of a vehicle, as I am, but also access to additional resources by way of staff.

The Hon. W. V. Houghton—Would you change that in time?

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—If the Labor Party had sufficient members in this House, I would propose that we abolish the Legislative Council, so the dilemma would not arise. If the Minister were on the Opposition benches, and his party was silly enough to retain him as a spokesman, I would ensure that he had the assistance he needed.

I shall summarize the attitude of my party. The Bill should never have been introduced in any Parliament. It is a document of disgrace. It carries with it the shame of a once-proud man who will live to regret the fact that he turned his back on a lifetime of friendship and tradition in a philosophy I sometimes have difficulty in understanding and a party that I often have difficulty in appreciating, let alone agreeing with, but, nevertheless, it is a respected party with great traditions in this State. Liberal Party members are desperate men who are prepared to use desperate measures to hang on to power, regardless of morality and regardless of the consequences.

In recent years unfortunately there have been a number of dramatic examples in which the Liberal Party has been prepared, both in the National Parliament and here, to demonstrate its dedication to hanging onto power, regardless of the cost, the public inconvenience or the morality. This is yet another blatant example of that sort of morality. Honourable members have heard the flippant remarks of Mr Guest and Mr Ward, but I would have thought there were men of some substance on the Government benches who must feel at least somewhat uneasy about the way in which the Premier, his advisers and Mr McInnes cooked up this deal and, because it backdates and validates administrative action with respect to the Parliamentary superannuation fund, we lock in with it matters associated with preserving the status of the National Party.

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—It sounds a bit like the Gair affair, does it not?

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—I suppose that is so, but in the honourable member's case, at least the people who were prepared to do the negotiations made sure that the resignation was in writing. That does not make it honest.

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—You are saying there are precedents?

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—I should have thought that the precedent has been fairly well established in this Parliament by the honourable member's Government, but so far as he is concerned, he is prepared to do almost anything. There are Ministers who in this sessional period have had the gall and hypocrisy to stand up in this House and talk about the Westminster tradition, but when the former Leader of the Government was under fire on the same principle, that was all denied. The honourable member did not have the courage to vote against him at that time, nor did any of his colleagues, and tonight he is hypocritically committed to support a Bill which does nothing more than give public recognition to his determination to do whatever is necessary to hang on to power. The honourable member may go to the grave comforted by that thought, but in my opinion men of integrity and honesty would not. Once this legislation is passed, the honourable member will have to wear for the rest of his public life that he was prepared to conspire secretly and then publicly proclaim that conspiracy as if that was an act in itself worthy of proclamation. It should, like any other act of immorality, be covered up and forgotten, not exposed and promoted and written into the law by way of the honourable member's actions, a statement which will publicly
confirm for ever in Hansard and in the statute-book of the State the determination of the Liberal Party to govern no matter what the costs might be.

I suppose if there is not a spark of decency in the response from the other side, that will at least determine the battle standards for the fight yet to come, because when people stand up and tear-jerk about Parliamentary democracy and talk about the importance of this place as an institution, and yet use it as a plaything, as a rubber stamp, as a toy of the establishment and of the Liberal Party hierarchy, in the way this Bill suggests, then do not be surprised if people like myself decide we should play the same game. If this happens, Parliament can be treated as a mockery.

If we can have hypocritical stances on issues, perhaps it is time that my movement took as an issue to the people of the State whether this Parliament has any relevance if all it does is rubber stamp, without questioning, an agreement which has a basis of deceit and a document which arises out of sheer political opportunism, using a man who is prepared to prostitute himself in the interests of personal advancement at the cost of the people who elected him to the position he holds.

My party opposes the Bill for the reasons I have outlined. If members of the Labor Party were to discuss the question of political party resources and the facilities available to political parties, no matter how big or small, within this Parliament, there could be an interesting exchange of views. However, the cynical and hypocritical way in which this Bill is presented does no credit to the individual who introduces it and, in my opinion, will publicly record as long as each member of this Government lives, that honourable members were prepared to vote with their feet, not in the interests of Parliamentary democracy and not in the interests of this House, even though I question the value of this institution, but rather in the shabby, personal interests of some power-hungry men.

Parliament has been insulted by this proposed legislation and the people of Victoria have been hoodwinked once again, but eventually those who are too immoral to recognize the immorality of this act will be found out. I only hope for the sake of the Minister for Conservation that he will still be here to appreciate the evil of what he is about to do.

The Hon. W. R. BAXTER (North Eastern Province)—At the outset I declare a pecuniary interest in the proposed legislation. My colleagues Mr Dunn and Mr Wright and I will not be voting on the measure. For Mr Landeryou's information, I point out that Mr Evans is the member who does not hold office in the party and I am the one who has two offices. Under the existing legislation and under this amending legislation, the office of Deputy Leader is without remuneration.

Tonight I do not intend to canvass the shift in allegiance by Mr McInnes. Honourable members all know deep in their hearts that his action reflected no credit on him, on the Liberal Party or on the Government. He could have taken the honourable course of resigning and recontesting the seat under his new party colours. He failed to take that course and that is unfortunate. However, be that as it may, apart from the latter part of Mr Landeryou's speech, he said much with which I would agree. It is quite relevant that legislation should set out a specific number that a group must have to have party status in Parliament. If similar legislation applied in New South Wales, the Liberal Party in that Legislative Assembly would be very close to losing party status. No one suggests that would be a fair thing. The National Party probably has more financial members than any other party in the State, and certainly in terms of its membership subscription.

The amount of income derived from membership of the National Party is probably greater than any other party, at $30 a head. It is supported by many thousands of people at election time and throughout the year.

Even if the so-called agreement between Mr McInnes and the Premier—the inducements offered to him—had not included the undertaking to adjust
the legislation to allow for fewer than twelve members, I still would have expected, as a matter of equity, that the Government would have done so, because it is patent clear that the National Party, small as it is in the numbers of representatives in Parliament, represents a large number of voters in the country. It is all very well for Mr Butler to say 5 per cent. How does he explain that Mr Dunn gets 52 per cent of the vote, Mr Wright and Mr Evans get the same, and Mr Jasper and Mr Hann get absolute majorities in their electorates? The honourable member knows it is dishonest to spread the vote over the State when the party does not contest all seats.

I do not believe, as Mr Landeryou does not believe, that there should be a number to constitute a party as such. He referred to two DLP senators who were at one time given party status. I agree it was for political expediency at the time but they were entitled to some recognition because Australia-wide that party was commanding widespread support and went on to increase its Senate representation rather substantially, albeit for a relatively short time.

The other matter Mr Landeryou canvassed, with which I agree strongly, relates to the facilities and staff provided to members of the Opposition. No matter what party is in opposition, it is part of the integral operation of Parliament and democracy. An Opposition is entitled to adequate staff to enable it to carry out its work. The community expect it. Governments should not be so parsimonious in offering it. I find it distressing that Federal and State Governments—my own party included—in some parts of Australia have been remiss in the facilities they have made available to members of Opposition parties. One should remember that the wheel always turns and the boot will be on the other foot at some time.

Democracy is a fairly fragile thing but one of the fundamentals of democracy is that there are two sides to an argument. There must be a viable Opposition as well as a Government. The Opposition must be able to function properly. Years ago Government was much more simple and the demands upon members were not as heavy as they are today. In these days, shadow Ministers and party Leaders particularly are required by the community to act in much the same way as Ministers. They do not have the Executive power but in terms of representation, policy and assistance, they are expected to perform in much the same manner as Ministers. They cannot do so unless better facilities are offered to the Opposition, particularly in this House. I agree with Mr Landeryou on that point. I do not agree with his remarks regarding the relevance of this Parliament and this Chamber. That matter is not under debate and it is irrelevant to this debate.

The National Party views this measure which resulted from a disappointing feature of politics in this State, as being fully justified to give the National Party status and recognition within this Parliament.

The Hon. J. V. C. GUEST (Monash Province)—I rise principally because Mr Landeryou has charged honourable members on this side of the House who support this measure with a lack of integrity. He should have addressed himself to the Bill before us. I have no difficulty in supporting this measure on its merits. The Bill has nothing to do with the origins of any agreement made between Mr McInnes and the Premier. Whether or not an agreement was made is totally irrelevant. To object to a Bill which is good because the Opposition interprets some of the events leading up to its introduction as undesirable would involve the Opposition in considerable difficulties. For example, if Mr White had confidential documents from a completely illegitimate source he should be unwilling to use them even for what he conceives to be good public purposes.

Let us face the real task and do our duty as legislators in considering a Bill for an Act of Parliament on the terms presented to us. This does no more than commit us to decide one way or another whether eleven men, for whom I have considerable respect as a body, who have a considerable contribution to
make, and who represent a legitimate and substantial body of opinion in our community, should be able to function as a political party.

Mr Landeryou was at pains, rightly so, to emphasize the importance of a political party in the Parliamentary system as it works today. I wish to draw attention to one or two consequences of Mr Landeryou's argument. He argued for more resources for the Opposition and I think he conceded even for the third party. Under those circumstances he can hardly say he is not arguing for what this Bill precisely does. What he should have been saying logically is that he supports this Bill because it rightly recognizes the status which entitles the National Party to resources.

He should recognize that if he wants the Parliament to function properly and wants to follow the trend of his own argument, he should be arguing for an information service for the support of honourable members—I do not mean a research officer for each member as that is a relatively inefficient way of dealing with the problem—superior resources for the Library and an extension of Library services so that all members can have access to them, as at Westminster, so that committees too can be properly supported and do the job which is not being done by this Parliament at present. This Parliament is charged by the people to watch over the activities of Executive Government and it is ill-equipped.

What is emphasized by the failure of the Opposition to develop his argument to where it should logically lead is that if the Opposition takes its approach to Parliamentary Government seriously it will present a policy on the activities of Executive Government and it is ill-equipped.

Even on Mr Landeryou's own argument, clearly honourable members must support the Bill because it ensures the provision of resources to the National Party. I support it quite independently of any agreement which might have been made beforehand. I support it because I support it on its merits.

The Hon. G. A. S. BUTLER (Thomastown Province)—I indicate at this stage that I do not support the Country Party being recognized as a political force in this State, any more than the Liberal Party recognizes it as a force in Queensland. Honourable members should bear in mind that when they speak of politics and refer to the corner party, they are only pretending that it is a political force in Victoria. It has only 4-8 per cent or 5 per cent support and that is what it is all about.

For years members of that party have bamboozled politics in this country by allegedly representing country people, but its members have never represented country people. After all, the Minister for Local Government, who represents
the Western Province, well knows the struggle which took place between the Liberal Party and the Country Party in that area. The honourable gentleman knows that for years the Liberal Party fought and struggled with the Country Party which held that area.

The Hon. D. M. EVANS (North Eastern Province)—On a point of order, Mr Deputy President, so far as I am aware there is no Country Party and if the honourable member wishes to refer to a particular political party at least he should give it its right name.

The Hon. D. E. Kent—What is the right name?

The Hon. D. M. EVANS—The name is the National Party, and if Mr Butler wants to refer to it, it is only fair that he refer to it as the National Party.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (the Hon. W. M. Campbell)—Mr Evans has made his point.

The Hon. G. A. S. BUTLER (Thomas-town Province)—I stand by what I said, for I could never recognize it as the National Party; it is in fact a Country Party. That is its function and its history and there are Liberal members of Parliament who remember the struggles they have had with members of the National Party. The Liberal Party eventually won in Gippsland and it is still continuing to clean up the National Party because after all that is what this debate is about. Mr McInnes has joined the Liberal Party.

The Hon. K. I. Wright—What about Mr Nixon?

The Hon. G. A. S. BUTLER—He will be the next one.

At the moment the Government should not be reducing the number to eleven; it should reduce it to five because that is what it will be the next time around. That is the political future of the National Party, as it likes to describe itself. The change in name was made in an attempt to upgrade its political purpose and to increase its pull with the public. It changed its name to the National Party and had candidates stand in metropolitan areas, but they were wiped out.

I am sorry that the Liberal Party has wiped out members of the National Party but I suggest that several members will change their party. If the Liberal Party is prepared to accept a rat, then it is entitled to do so, but the Labor Party would not accept that. I imagine that there are many members on the other side of the House who would not accept it. I believe that, but it is political—

The Hon. K. I. Wright—What would Mr Butler do?

The Hon. G. A. S. BUTLER—I will not say, but in actual fact I would have told Mr McInnes where to go. I acknowledge that the Labor Party has its problems, but it does not accept rats from the other side, and I would never accept anybody who ratted on us.

The Hon. D. N. Saltmarsh—It used to in the past.

The Hon. G. A. S. BUTLER—Do not blame us for the past. Government supporters raised the position of Mr Gair, but we did not agree with that, we opposed it.

I sincerely believe the Government is making a very grave error in simply reducing the number required for a recognized party from twelve to eleven. The Government ought to have another think and further reduce the number to five.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—Mr Butler has said that already.

The Hon. G. A. S. BUTLER—I am going to repeat it because members of the National Party have to understand something. I can go back to the old days when Mr Moss and Mr Bradbury used to run the party, but at least they were gentlemen and their word was their bond. I know a little bit more about these things than Mr Dunn and some other members of the National Party. Presently the members of the National Party cannot even agree amongst themselves whom the Leader ought to be.

The Hon. Glyn Jenkins—You also have your problems in that area.
The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—There is no question about our leadership, on the basis of the results—nothing has been said in the House today about the Federal election results—why?

The Deputy President (the Hon. W. M. Campbell)—Because it would be out of order.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—It would be out of order to acknowledge that the Liberal Party got thrashed in Victoria, but there is no question that the next Premier of Victoria will be Mr Wilkes.

With respect to the Bill, I suggest that the Government do its homework and reduce the number for a party to five because if the Government did that now it would save the Labor Party the problem of amending the legislation later on.

The Hon. R. J. Long (Gippsland Province)—This evening honourable members heard the usual diatribe from the Leader of the Opposition, but that is what honourable members have become accustomed to in this place. It seems that when Mr Landeryou has no facts or arguments to put forward in a debate, he reverts to the usual innuendo and personal abuse. This evening Mr Landeryou used expressions such as “back door deal”, “buying someone out” and “conspiring secretly” without putting any argument to back up any such statement. In addition, he kept saying that we wanted to hang on to power. Whatever happened as far as Mr McInnes is concerned, I remind Mr Landeryou that it was completely unnecessary for the Liberal Party to have Mr McInnes to hang on to power because it already had that power without any assistance.

It hurts me to hear members of the National Party and Mr Baxter in particular decrying Mr McInnes in the terms in which they have done tonight. It is apparent that so long as Mr McInnes was a member of the National Party, he was an acceptable person and highly thought of, but in my view Mr McInnes has always been a man of the highest integrity. I say that despite the fact that he was a member of the National Party and had been for many years.

He came to me and told me of the decision that he had made, and said that he did not want to leave the National Party without party status. I was present when that so-called deal took place. The deal simply was that the Premier agreed to put to the Liberal Party whether it would reduce the number required for party status to eleven. That was done in an open fashion; the party agreed and Mr McInnes then took the next step.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—I should have thought it was a matter for the Parliament rather than the party.

The Hon. R. J. Long—The decision was made, and that is why the Bill is before the Parliament.

Anyone would think this was the first time in the history of Australia or the world that any person had ever changed parties. I remind the House of a couple of names that come to mind. Let us go back to 1910, when James Edward Fenton left the Australian Labor Party and joined the United Australia Party. In 1931 Joseph Lyons left the Australian Labor Party and joined the United Australia Party. In 1915 Billy Hughes left the Australian Labor Party and joined the Nationalist Party. Mr Archie Cameron left the Country Party in 1944 and joined the Liberal Party. In 1949 Messrs Mibus, Hipworth, Hedditch and Lienhop left the Country Party and joined the Liberal-Country Party. The interesting thing about that is that I have been unable to find any reference to when any member has ever joined the Australian Labor Party, and that is significant.

The Hon. D. E. Kent—I can tell you one who did so, B. J. Hogan.

The Hon. R. J. Long—It is fair to say that the philosophies of the National Party and the Liberal Party are fairly much in line; perhaps it is only the matter of emphasis that is different, and therefore it should not be unusual that somebody in the National Party finds himself in a position where he can no longer continue his allegiance and after a great deal of thought has decided to join the Liberal Party, which at least embraces the same sort of philosophy.
There is nothing strange in that. What has amazed me is the tremendous support that Mr McInnes has received from the electorate he represents since he took that step. It is absolutely amazing, and contrary to all the nonsense that has been spoken about the next election, Mr McInnes will win it with an absolute majority.

I take strong exception to Mr Lander-you's remarks that Mr McInnes was "a man who seeks to prostitute himself for personal advancement." He did not advance one word of support for what personal advancement Mr McInnes got. I assure honourable members that Mr McInnes did not receive any advancement, and I think they are despicable words.

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Chelsea Province)—It should be well understood that I have a deep personal interest in the events that have taken place, having worked and struggled most of my life in the sorts of areas which are being discussed tonight, and also having had a fairly long association with the honourable member under question, who has proved to be one of the most capable men that it has ever been possible to buy. That has been evident for a long time.

I had discussions with Mr McInnes, and I know that Mr Taylor, who has remained silent to date, will appreciate the events which preceded the situation that developed. Some time in 1972 Mr McInnes spoke to me about his desire to serve the State and said how important it was that the Liberal Party, which showed no interest in decentralization and State development, should be trimmed back to size and possibly brought into a situation where it had to depend on the Country Party, as it then was, to form a coalition. The sorts of assurances that Mr McInnes sought at that time were that in the electorate of Gippsland South the Labor Party would direct its preferences to him, remembering quite well that Mr Taylor had been elected previously by a small majority because he had received Labor Party preferences.

We all know that the situation for Mr McInnes as a representative of the party which changed its name to the National Party deteriorated considerably between 1976 and 1979. The one factor which concerned Mr McInnes was not the desire to serve his nation, but the desire for survival in this Parliament. It was obvious that he was looking for a way out. I commend him for the casting of crumbs behind to those people he was leaving and at least ensuring that they would be able to retain an identity and something which is called status. How one can bestow status simply by the allocation of a few status symbols such as motor cars and titles such as Leader and Deputy Leader is difficult to know. However, I commend Mr McInnes for that sort of consideration.

At the same time, I emphasize the deplorable, contemptible treatment which the Liberal Party has given to the concept of democracy and the traditions which it claims to uphold in the selection of candidates for election to the Party. I am not talking about sums of money; I am talking about the real conditions upon which Mr McInnes insisted, and the prime condition he made was that he be given a guarantee of endorsement for the next election. That was the vital thing. It is obvious to everyone that survival was the vital consideration which determined Mr McInnes's actions. It was more important than sums of cash money.

So the rank and file members of the Liberal Party in the electorate of Gippsland South were once again denied the right to have any choice about the member who they elected to go to Parliament. It is not the first time it has happened, as Mr Taylor and Mr Long well know. There was no Liberal Party candidate for the Federal seat of Gippsland this time. A candidate was endorsed in 1974 but was withdrawn some time prior to the election so as not to embarrass Mr Nixon. Now we have a further denial of the rights of people who pay for a membership ticket in the Liberal Party on the assumption that they have some rights—even if not in the formation of policy, at least in the selection of a candidate to carry their name.
There is no question that this was the factor and this was the price that was paid—a denial of any right. There can be no denial.

Members of the Opposition are asked, by virtue of the proposed legislation, to agree to the perpetuation of the sort of betrayal that took place with the membership of the National Party in Gippsland South. It is a distortion of democracy which has plagued the country for 50 years or so, since the formation of the party which was once known as the Country Party. The National Party cannot claim to be an opposition party. It is an opportunist party which has taken every opportunity to spread its power and influence.

In case Mr Dunn is not aware of it, I lived in the area about which he speaks but I saw the evilness and inconsistency of his party. Long before I left that area, as a matter of free choice, I was convinced that Socialism was much more preferable than opportunism. The step to be taken by the proposed legislation will be repeated if it is considered expedient. The situation could exist where the National Party consists of only one of two members. Possibly Mr Dunn could be the survivor when one or two other honourable members follow the course taken by Mr McInnes.

An Honourable Member—Who will they be?

The Hon. D. E. Kent—I am not prepared to nominate who the two honourable members will be. I have my own idea about who the next honourable member will be. In any case, the proposed legislation is inevitably a temporary measure because the numbers prescribed for the National Party will have changed after the next sessional period.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn (North Western Province) — I shall make a few brief comments on the Bill. However, I wish to declare a pecuniary interest in the Bill, as did the Deputy Leader, and for this reason members of the National Party will not be voting on the measure. I wish to assure the House and Mr Butler, who appears to be departing, that the National Party in Victoria is alive and well and will be here for a long time. The House should be well aware that over the years, rural people in particular have had to fight for what they have and have had to fight to keep what they have. It is nothing new to members of the National Party to have to fight their way through issues and to fight against odds. The members who represent the National Party must be able to outvote the Liberal and Labor parties; the major political forces in the country. They are able to do so. It is nothing new to members of the National Party to have to engage in a fight and to stand their ground; members of the National Party enjoy it. So far as they are concerned, they are not worried about what members of the Opposition call the challenge ahead of them. Members of the National Party accept that and look forward to it.

Mr Butler can be assured, if he has a future of any length in the House, that the National Party will be here arguing for the rights of rural people as it has been since its inception. It will be doing so a long time after the honourable member has left the House. The members of the National Party represent a large part of Victoria and a large part of the wealth of Victoria is located in the rural areas. Sixty per cent of the land area in Victoria is represented by members of the National Party. The National Party has an important role to bring the needs of the rural people to the attention of the Parliament and the Government. Time and time again members of the National Party have had to remind the Parliament and the Government of their responsibility to rural Victoria. Even tonight, as I speak, there are moves under way in Victoria to withdraw from country people the services that it has taken generations to actually have provided to them. I refer to rail facilities. However, one could go on.

The Government tends to forget about rural people because of the large number of members who represent metropolitan areas. Members of the
National Party recognize the problems of people representing rural areas for the Liberal Party because of the battles they must have in their party room. The National Party is soundly based and, I understand, has the highest individual membership of any political organization in Victoria. The National Party intends to be around the political scene for a long time.

I have a few comments so far as Mr McInnes is concerned. All honourable members know that when one changes colours in the political world, one loses the respect of the people whom one leaves, and one never has the trust of those whom one joins. In this case, Mr McInnes should have taken the stance that was open to him. He should have resigned and contested the seat. However, he was not prepared to do so because he would have been rolled and Mr Jenkins is aware of that.

So far as Mr McInnes is concerned, I say, "Well and good." The National Party stands together as a united group and it is better off without people who are prepared to support another political philosophy to the detriment of their own party. I am pleased with the view that has emerged during remarks made in the debate, which was recognized by Mr Landeryou and by most other speakers, that there should not be a set number of members in order to have political party recognition in the Parliament. One could well consider why we have the figure eleven or twelve written into the statute-book. Why is that the figure on which the recognition of our political party is based? As the Deputy Leader of the National Party, Mr Baxter, pointed out, a political party could be a significant force with far fewer members than that. That fact should be recognized regardless of the number that a particular party has in the House.

I support the view that expanded facilities need to be provided to political parties in the Parliament. Mr Landeryou made the point that the facilities extended to his party are inadequate and I believe the assistance given to members generally whether they are in the Government, Opposition or the

The House divided on the motion (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade in the chair).

Ayes: 23
Noes: 12

Majority for the motion: 11

AYES
Mrs Baylor
Mr Block
Mr Bubb
Mr Campbell
Mr Chamberlain
Mr Crozier
Mr Granger
Mr Hauser
Mr Hayward
Mr Houghton
Mr Hunt
Mr Jenkins

Tellers:
Mr Knowles
Mr Lawson
Mr Long
Mr Radford
Mr Reid
Mr Saltmarsh
Mr Stacey
Mr Storey
Mr Ward

NOES
Mr Butler
Mrs Coxedge
Mr Eddy
Mr Kennedy
Mr Kent
Mr Landeryou
Mr Mackenzie

Tellers:
Mr Sgro
Mr Walker
Mr White
Mr Thomas
Mr Trayling

PAIR

Mr Taylor
Mr Walton

The Bill was read a second time.
The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I move:

That the Bill be now committed.

The House divided on the motion (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade in the chair).

Ayes... 23
Noes... 12

Majority for the motion 11

AYES
Mrs Baylor Mr Knowles
Mr Block Mr Lawson
Mr Bubb Mr Long
Mr Campbell Mr Radford
Mr Chamberlain Mr Reid
Mr Crozier Mr Saltmarsh
Dr Foley Mr Stacey
Mr Granter Mr Storey
Mr Guest Mr Ward
Mr Houghton Tellers:
Mr Hunt Mr Hauser
Mr Jenkins Mr Hayward

NOES
Mrs Coxedge Mr Thomas
Mr Eddy Mr Trayling
Mr Kennedy Mr Walker
Mr Kent
Mr Landeryou Tellers:
Mr Mackenzie Mr Butler
Mr Sgro Mr White

PAIR
Mr Taylor Mr Walton

The Bill was committed.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2 (Repeal of spent interpretations).

The Hon. D. E. Kent—That would have provided for the other two that need to go.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT—This was considered, but the Government was afraid that it would be swamped in the rush. There is no magic, as suggested earlier, in the number eleven; it could equally have been 10, 9, 8 or 7 and I am sorry that the debate was diverted into a discussion about the actions of one honourable member because that is not really the issue. The issue is that a party with reasonable numbers ought to be recognized.

Mr Landeryou and Mr Walker referred to the desirability of ensuring that the Leaders of parties have proper access to resources. Both honourable members know that I have made certain representations to ensure that they can carry out their duties properly. I will give an undertaking that I shall continue to make those representations, I understand the points made and I shall
convey them again to the Premier and to the Treasurer. I have no comment to make about the move by one honourable member from one party to another except that it required a great deal of courage on his part.

The Hon. D. E. Kent—if he had stood for election, it would have been different.

The Hon. A. J. Hunt—Mr Kent has raised again the question of guarantee. I give him my word that the guarantees Mr Kent alleges were never given. For acceptance of membership to the Liberal Party for an endorsed Liberal candidate a number of conditions are required. Firstly, if he is a member of Parliament, acceptance by the Liberal Party is necessary; secondly, acceptance by the State Executive is necessary. The State Executive cannot make that acceptance unless it has considered the views of all electorate committees operating in the area. That includes the Gippsland South Electorate Committee of the Liberal Party, the Gippsland Federal Electorate Committee and the two province committees that abut that area. I want to inform Mr Kent that all of those committees freely and openly discussed the issue.

The Hon. R. A. Mackenzie—Were you there?

The Hon. A. J. Hunt—I was entitled to be present at two of the four committees and I was present at them. At those electorate committees, assurances were given by Mr Long, who has indicated that he knows something of the events, that Mr McInnes at no stage sought guarantees of endorsement prior to the move and that he recognized that endorsement was dependent upon his performance from that date onwards. It was quite clear to me at the meetings I attended that members of the Liberal Party appreciated that fact and appreciated that they would have the right in due course to determine whether Mr McInnes would be endorsed for that seat at the next election. I believe Mr McInnes, in seeking to ensure that the move he was making would not prejudice his former colleagues, acted with commendable honour.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—What happens when you collect the next two? What do you do then?

The Hon. A. J. Hunt—I have already stated that the Government could have proposed a lower number and I have adverted to the fact that the matter was considered and discussed. I personally believe there are strong arguments for it. Whether the number is 11, 10 or 9 and whether it is the Liberal Party, the National Party or the Labor Party which is involved, if that party commands a substantial vote in this State and has numbers of that magnitude, it requires recognition as a party and the proper support services. That is the basis of the Bill and it goes no further than that.

The Hon. I. B. Trayling (Melbourne Province)—The Minister has made a number of comments about the propriety—

The Chairman (the Hon. W. M. Campbell)—Is the honourable member quite sure he wishes to speak on clause 2?

The Hon. I. B. Trayling—Yes, Mr Chairman. The Minister made his comments on clause 2.

The Chairman—The honourable member has been a member of this House for long enough to understand the procedures of the House. During the Committee stage of a Bill, the Minister has the right, on clause 2, to reply to all matters raised by honourable members during the second-reading debate. The Minister has done that. Clause 2 deals with the repeal of two interpretations. I think perhaps it is clause 3 to which the honourable member should direct his remarks.

The Hon. I. B. Trayling—Clause 3 will suit me just as well, Mr Chairman.

The clause was agreed to.

Clause 3 (As to third party)

The Hon. I. B. Trayling (Melbourne Province)—I wish to make a couple of comments on this clause. In dealing with clause 2, the Minister stated that there is no magic number.
The Hon. A. J. Hunt—That is right. I accept what was said by both the Opposition parties.

The Hon. I. B. TRAYLING—I acknowledge the Minister's acceptance of that. However, at no previous period of our political history has any governing party specified the number of representatives necessary in order to qualify for the status of a party. It is not as if this matter had never been considered in the past. From time to time, particularly over the past decade or so, because of the National Party's declining vote and its declining representation in the Parliament, the Government has had to legislate to enable the former Country Party, now the National Party, to retain party status. This should not be done as a result of a crisis or crises erupting from time to time. It should not be necessary, because there is either the actuality or the probability of a decline in the National Party's numbers in this House, for the Government to take repetitive legislative action to preserve the National Party in Victoria.

It is well known that the National Party attracts fewer and fewer votes from election to election. This Parliament and the community have a right to expect the Government to say at what level it will retain the National Party as a party in its own right. If the Government of the day—and it is currently a Liberal Party Government—decides that the National Party is worth preserving as a party in its own right for whatever reasons, let it determine now, on the basis of some morality, what that level should be. The Government knows that in this House there are so many members and in the Assembly there are so many members. If it is to be worked out on a percentage basis, it should not be difficult for the Government to set a number. If it is worked out on some other criterion, the Government can do that and state what the number is.

The hypocrisy reflected by this clause of the Bill is that the Government has failed to specify any criteria at all upon which it bases its decision, other than an arbitrary, emotional decision in response to a crisis which may repeat itself in a month's time, and then we will be talking about crises.

It is unfair and unreasonable, not only to those who are bemused and bewildered by what the Government is doing, but even to the National Party, that the Government totters and staggers and acts only in relation to its concept of understanding what a third party is about, when there is a defection from its ranks or for some other crisis. Surely there is a capacity within the Government's ranks and a rationale existing somewhere that can find reasons and the logic to interpret that the third party shall be represented on a party basis by at least so many members. It does not matter whether it is in 1980, 1987 or 1990. What we are looking for is integrity in terms of defining, in a political sense, what is party representation, so it means we have leaders elected and facilities provided and all the other things required by a party.

It is grossly unfair for the Government to consider the position one election after another, one crisis after another, rather than saying that the National Party has this percentage of the vote in Victoria or the National Party has so many representatives in the Parliament on the way it is elected, which is an entirely different thing, and therefore on that basis the members are entitled to party status by reason of its percentage of the vote or its representatives in Parliament.

The Government will not do that. It prefers to have a sword hanging over the National Party so its members are afraid to take action in a political sense which might endanger or jeopardize its party status in the future. Mr Dunn shakes his head, but there is no doubt that after the next State election the National Party will have even fewer
members and then its members will wonder whether party status will be preserved.

Surely it is incumbent on the Government to establish the criteria upon which the National Party might expect to remain a party.

In the absence of that honesty, the National Party and other parties—well, at least the Labor Party—will be kept in a position of wondering, at least after the next election, whether it will remain a party dependent upon how many National Party members are returned.

If the Government has any integrity or honesty in its political concern for the community, surely it will lay down the criteria so we all know what it is thinking and will understand what is going to happen to the National Party now and in the future. Thus far the Government has not been honest enough to so indicate.

The Hon. J. V. C. GUEST (Monash Province)—There is one small point which has not been made, but before I address myself to that point, I suggest that Mr Trayling's long speech has illustrated the basic unseriousness of Opposition speakers on this Bill. When one comes to think about it, one realizes that only a brief time has been spent on what is an important issue.

One of the simple consequences of considering a change in the number from eleven to some lower number would be to consider the appropriateness of having whips provided for despite the lower numbers. If the number is brought down to five, for example, would we want to provide salaries for whips and for the deputy leader of the third party in the Legislative Assembly? These matters clearly require to be considered if honourable members are to take the matter seriously. For that reason we are very properly dealing with a situation where we can see the third party, the National Party, with eleven members and at present it appears to be a body which is properly regarded, on the general understanding of the community, as a political party and as such should be given party status. It would be appropriate, if the situation changed, to consider at that time whether a genuine party should be recognized.

A challenge was made earlier about the integrity of members of the Government. I indicate unequivocally that if my conscience told me that there was something wrong with supporting this clause—and this clause is the essence of the Bill—because of the way in which the legislation was given birth, then I would have no hesitation in voting against it, but I shall vote to support it because I believe it to be right, that in the actual circumstances it is the right thing to support the Bill.

I am glad mention has been made of Mr McInnes. However, I am sorry his former colleagues have made ungrateful remarks because I believe Mr McInnes to be a man of ability, a man who has exhibited excellent judgment and courage in joining the Liberal Party, a man who has behaved with the utmost integrity...

The Hon. J. V. C. GUEST—I have previously paid a tribute to Mr Graham Nicol. Mr McInnes has told me his reasons for wishing his former colleagues to remain a party. They are sensible reasons and he undoubtedly believes they represent the body of opinion in the community and that the organization should be regarded as a party.

Finally, I suggest to the Opposition that it should support the clause which does not reduce the figure below the number of eleven and thus only allows for their party breaking into two parts instead of three of which the Opposition is naturally composed.

The Committee divided on the clause (the Hon. W. M. Campbell in the chair).

Ayes : : : 22
Noes : : : 12

Majority for the clause : : 10
Clause 4 (Amendment of No. 7723)

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE (Geelong Province)—I bring to the attention of the Minister the wording of the new sub-section (5) which is:

For the purpose of calculating his entitlement under sub-section (2) a person who is a responsible Minister of the Crown . . .

and later:

... so long as he is or is deemed to be . . .

I remind the Minister that there are female members of Parliament and female shadow Ministers who may shortly become Ministers. For instance, Mrs Coxsedge could well become the President. The Parliamentary Counsel should be careful in drafting legislation to cover this aspect.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—The Acts interpretation Act provides that where the context so admits, the masculine shall be deemed to be the feminine, and the singular shall be deemed to be the plural.

The clause was agreed to.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Police probation period—School apprenticeship training—Swanston Street Primary School—Proposed city hostel for country students—Unemployment in Sunshine—Lone parent benefits.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I move:

That the Council, at its rising, adjourn until tomorrow, at a quarter to four o'clock.

The motion was agreed to.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

The Hon. B. A. CHAMBERLAIN (Western Province)—I wish to develop an aspect of a matter I raised earlier with the Minister of Education, which deals with the departmental decision or instruction that certain schools will lose their apprentice training facilities next year and that the facilities of certain others will be reduced. The effect of that will be that Maryborough, Stawell and Ararat will lose about 50 apprentices, Hamilton will lose about 50 and Portland will lose something less.

The Minister has outlined some of the rationale behind the instruction. However, as he pointed out to the House, the decision was taken in isolation. I must also point out that only five or six
weeks ago Mr McKellar in another place and I saw the Technical Schools Division of the Education Department on these issues. We were assured that this sort of thing would not happen and that there was a whole process to go through, which involved the TAFE Board, the Industrial Training Commission and the Minister, before some hard decision had to be taken. At that stage, we mentioned another series of alternative approaches which could be considered and we were told that they would be considered. We have now learned of the incredible decision announced to schools yesterday.

I take up the Minister’s comments that some students, because of numbers, may be required to use the resources of adjacent schools. I point out the practical problems, for instance, in the case of Portland. The adjacent technical schools which could be used there would be Hamilton or Warrnambool, one of which is 80 kilometres away and the other about 100 kilometres away. In neither case is suitable public transport available to the schools. Quite often the apprentices are under the age of eighteen years and therefore cannot drive themselves. I ask the Minister in considering all the various issues, and there are many factors and issues on which the Minister for Local Government, Mr McKellar and I would want to put views to the Minister of Education, to take this into account and also take into account the fact that there is no demand from employers in the areas to change the system.

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE (Geelong Province)—I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister of Education. A grave fire danger exists at the Swanston Street Primary School in my province. Despite assurances from the Treasurer that work would be carried out during this financial year and that money would be made available in Budget allocations for the upgrading to be carried out this year, the school is not to be subject to upgrading and fire protection work will not be carried out. Although we realize that this upgrading must be carried out in a priority order and we do not dispute that the priorities must be carried out, in this case an extremely dangerous situation exists.

The school is 109 years old, the ceilings are old wooden lining boards and the stairways empty into a cul-de-sac at the bottom. There are no hose reels or fire protection equipment of any sort. This matter is causing concern to the principal of the school, yet despite the assurance given by the Treasurer, who visited the school and said that money would be available, this has not been so. I ask the Minister to examine this matter and treat it as an emergency situation, and to ensure that funds are made available immediately for alterations to this school to reduce this fire hazard.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North Western Province)—I wish to draw to the attention of the Minister of Education the development of a hostel in the city for country students visiting Melbourne for work experience or other necessary educational experience. It is an urgent matter because I understand that some buildings which may be suitable for this purpose are available in the Melbourne area.

In February 1979, the Minister of Education told me that over the previous four years he had investigated a considerable number of sites and hopefully a hostel facility would be provided in the city for country students. It is now October 1980 and no purchase has been made of a suitable building and no real provision has been made for hostel facilities for country students in the Melbourne metropolitan area.

The North Western Regional Council for Secondary Education consists of people generally involved in rural education. It is concerned with this matter. I would like the Minister to inform the House what action is being taken to provide this urgently needed facility which will alleviate many of the substantial costs facing parents of country students who find that they must have work experience or educational training in Melbourne.
The Hon. JOAN COXSEDGE (Melbourne West Province)—I raise a matter for the attention of the Attorney-General representing the Minister of Labour and Industry in his capacity as Chairman of the Victorian Employment Committee. I ask the honourable gentleman to draw the Minister's attention to a recent article in the Age newspaper and the Western Suburbs Advocate of 15 October which links the increase in the suicide rate among men, especially young men, in Sunshine with the high rate of unemployment. Will the Minister give the House some assurances that these claims will be investigated by the Government and that the Minister will finally act to do something about the tragic plight of unemployed people in this State?

The Hon. R. J. EDDY (Thomastown Province)—I direct my remarks to the Minister for Conservation, representing the Minister for Community Welfare Services. I raised this matter some four or five weeks ago. It concerns thousands of young parents who are receiving lone parent pensions and who have been receiving fringe benefits over the past years, but have not been the recipients of transport concession cards. I pointed out at that time that single parents were unable to take their children to visit relatives, wherever they may be, because of the low level of pension payments. They are unable to meet the costs of transport fares. I asked the Minister to see whether something could be done about providing lone parents with transport concession cards. They would then have the opportunity of taking their children to visit relatives, and also of attending social functions which the Government operates, such as Moomba. The Minister told me that he would raise this matter with the Minister of Labour and Industry, but I have not received an answer yet. I ask the Minister whether he will speed up the provision of an answer in the interests of the people concerned.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—Mr Chamberlain again raised an issue which he mentioned earlier today regarding apprentices attending country technical schools. The suggestion that country technical schools were losing their apprentices could well be misinterpreted to mean that apprenticeship in particular schools had been phased out entirely and that is certainly far from the case.

The Hon. B. A. CHAMBERLAIN—That is as they understand it.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT—That is far from the case. The issues relate to particular courses which cannot be properly, and in the advantage of equity and reasonable use of resources, carried out at different schools. I gave the explanation provided to me by the department for the action which the Technical Schools Division had proposed. I also made it clear that I was personally concerned with the way in which those decisions had been taken and that there would be consultations as soon as possible with all the areas involved. I made it clear also that the material contained in the circulars would be reviewed in the light of those consultations and available resources.

I accept the objective of using resources sensibly. I do not accept any objective of making technical education impossible to obtain or unduly difficult to obtain for country children. If, after the consultations take place in the country areas affected by these circulars, satisfactory results are not achieved, I shall be certainly happy to review them personally. I point out once more that there may be other alternatives such as the combination of differing years which will make economic courses that are not economic with only two or three young people in a given year undertaking them.

Mr Mackenzie referred to what he believes to be a fire hazard at the Swanston Street Primary School, Geelong. In the absence of personal knowledge, I must accept that he has raised an issue which is of concern. I shall certainly refer it to my colleague, the Assistant Minister of Education, Mr Lacy, who is in charge of the building programme and who I believe visited that school in the not-too-distant past. I am sure he will be
aware of the situation and whether any urgent steps are required. I shall invite him to give Mr Mackenzie a reply at an early date.

Mr Dunn has raised a question of hostels for work experience. There is a hostel in North Melbourne which is conducted by the Education Department in conjunction with the Young Men's Christian Association for a very nominal rate, roughly the same or under work experience payments, which as honourable members mostly know, are $3 a day.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—How many can it accommodate?

The Hon. A. J. Hunt—I am not sure of the total accommodation available at that hostel, but if Mr Dunn desires that information I will obtain it for him tomorrow. The hostel is there. It has been in operation for some months now and it is providing accommodation for students from country Victoria who previously often found it impossible to undertake work experience in Melbourne because of the absence of accommodation.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General) — Mr Kennedy raised a question concerning the powers of the Chief Commissioner of Police and has asked me to refer the matter to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. I will ask the Minister to look at the matter raised by Mr Kennedy and advise the honourable member.

Mrs Coxsedge referred to an article that appeared in the Western Suburbs Advocate on 15 October drawing attention to figures of the number of suicides in those areas among people who were unemployed. She has asked me to refer that article to the Minister of Labour and Industry and have him examine the points raised in it. I will certainly do so. I will also ask the Minister to provide Mrs Coxsedge with the relevant information.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation) — I am surprised and disappointed that Mr Eddy has not yet received an answer. I will refer the matter to the Minister and ensure that the honourable member gets an answer this week.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.4 a.m. (Wednesday).
Questions Without Notice

Value Added Tax

Mr Wilkes (Leader of the Opposition)—In view of the apparent interest shown by the Commonwealth Government in introducing value added tax to this country, will the Treasurer indicate, firstly, what discussions have been held between his Treasury officials and the Commonwealth on this matter and, secondly, the attitude of the Victorian Government on the impact of such a tax on the economy of the State?

Mr Thompson (Treasurer)—I am not aware of any discussions that have taken place between Treasury and Commonwealth officials on this subject. The view of the Government is that it would be quite wrong to penalize people when selling their homes for any added value their homes may bring in the selling price compared with the original purchase price.

I stress that a person engaging in the selling of properties as a business enterprise is already taxed. The proposal of the Australian Labor Party would take that practice considerably further—just how far, no one knows.

Probate and Gift Duties

Mr Ross-Edwards (Leader of the National Party)—Will the Treasurer give urgent consideration to naming a date at which the reduction in probate and gift duties will occur in Victoria? There is no need for me to emphasize the urgent need to know when the reduction will occur because of the serious repercussions it has on the community generally.

Mr Thompson (Treasurer)—The date will be 1 January. The same applies to pay-roll tax, land tax and gift duty. From memory, stamp duty will be from the date of proclamation and corporation tax will apply for the whole year regardless of the time of introduction.

Home Mortgages

Mr Collins (Noble Park)—In view of the widespread concern of all Victorians who are endeavouring to pay off their home mortgages and particularly the concern of those involved with permanent building societies and forecasted increase in interest rates in Australia which will have an adverse effect on those persons weekly income status, will the Minister of Housing inform the House what steps are open to the Government in its own right and in conjunction with the Federal Government to review this situation to give some sense of security to thousands of Victorian homeowners who are barely making out as it is?

Mr Dixon (Minister of Housing)—The matter is the subject of inquiry by both the Campbell Committee of Inquiry into Australian Financial System and the Green Paper on Housing. It is not a simple matter to determine, even though the honourable member for Carrum may believe so. When those reports have been produced, the Treasurer and the Government will give the matter further consideration.

Health Policy

Mr Roper (Brunswick)—Because of the failure of the Fraser Government to publicly announce its health policy during the recent election campaign, will the Minister of Health assure the House that a means test will not be introduced into Victorian public hospitals and that Victoria will retain the 50-50 cost sharing agreement for this and the next financial year?

Mr Borthwick (Minister of Health)—I am not personally aware of what the newly elected Commonwealth Government might bring forth. What I do know is that the Commonwealth Government is continuing the cost sharing agreement for the current fin-
VICTORIA PROMOTION COMMITTEE

Mr WHITING (Mildura)—Given that there is considerable agreement that Victoria is going backwards industrially, can the Premier indicate whether the Victoria Promotion Committee will be given further encouragement, and have there been changes to the directorship, and, if so, what changes?

Mr HAMER (Premier)—There is no agreement on the first part of the question. That is simply not the fact. As far as the Victoria Promotion Committee is concerned, the directorship has been changed. The old director has retired and a new one, Mr Julian Doyle, has been appointed.

The Victoria Promotion Committee has every confidence and I am sure that the new director will bring to the operations of that committee a welcome drive and initiative. He has behind him a wide experience both here and in Europe as Trade Commissioner and as an associate with the European Economic Community.

MORNINGTON HOUSING COMMISSION UNIT

Mr DUNSTAN (Dromana)—Can the Minister of Housing advise what action has been instigated to rectify structural faults and the subsequent health hazard to the Housing Commission unit at 34 Hardy Street, Mornington? I raised this matter in the House six weeks ago.

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—That matter has not been drawn to my attention. I will have investigations made and inform the honourable member.

TUNNEL UNDER THE DOMAIN

Mr CRABB (Knox)—Can the Minister of Transport inform the House whether he is aware that the West Gate Bridge Authority has employed a firm of consulting engineers to prepare and design a tunnel underneath the Domain as a link to the West Gate Freeway? In view of the fact that the planning scheme reservation for such a tunnel was deleted some six months ago, can the Minister inform the House why and how much taxpayers' money was spent on this project?

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—I was aware that some inquiries were being made regarding the possibility of a tunnel in that area. The planning scheme reservation has been cancelled and, therefore, before such a scheme could be advanced, it would be necessary for a planning amendment to be made, if that were decided to be a useful thing.

I am not aware of the cost of any consultations that have been held on that matter. As far as I know, from the original work that I saw on it, it should not cost very much of the taxpayers' or any one else's money. I will certainly have an investigation made into the matter.

METRIC AND IMPERIAL MEASUREMENTS

Mr McARTHUR (Ringwood)—I refer to recent publicity on the desirability of publishing measurements in both metric and imperial. Would the Minister of Consumer Affairs inform the House of the successful action he has taken recently to have dual measurements adopted in a national publication?

Mr RAMSAY (Minister of Consumer Affairs)—I assume the honourable member for Ringwood is referring to a recent publication produced by the Commonwealth giving the fuel economy ratings for a wide variety of motor vehicles. At the suggestion of Victoria, there has been included in the back of that publication a table showing the conversion from miles per gallon to litres per 100 kilometres, which is the up-to-date manner of measuring fuel economy. It was perfectly clear to me, as I am sure it is to other members of the House, that there is not a ready appreciation of the economy represented by litres per 100 kilometres and that many people still have a better understanding of
the miles per gallon ratio. I am sure it is in the interests of the community that both of these ratios should be available to the general public.

NEWPORT POWER STATION

Mr AMOS (Morwell)—During the period since the Newport gas-fired power station broke down, has the Minister for Minerals and Energy familiarized himself with the reason for the breakdown? Was the water leak fault, which prior to the breakdown was known by State Electricity Commission staff and ignored, the reason why the contractor who installed the equipment that was damaged denied liability, thus clearly contradicting the assistant general manager of the State Electricity Commission? What was the total cost of that breakdown and when will the station again be ready for commissioning?

Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—I am not sure where the honourable member obtained his information, but the station was in its commissioning stages and the turbine had been run up to about 450 megawatts when apparently a welding on the end of a tube came off. This was noticed on the instruments, which were also undergoing their commissioning, and it was some period before the set was turned down. However, no damage has been done and, in compliance with what was to have happened in any event, the set was pulled down. It is now being reassembled and it is hoped to have it on line in the first or second week of November of this year.

Mr Amos—At what cost?

Mr BALFOUR—I have been told, and I would confirm this, that the actual cost of the breakdown was about $600.

FIRES IN EAST GIPPSLAND

Mr B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East)—Can the Treasurer inform the House of the cost of controlling the recent fires in east Gippsland and whether the cost is attributable to Victoria's share of natural disaster contributions, under which Victoria is required to provide $7 million before the Commonwealth contributes?

Mr THOMPSON (Treasurer)—The process of calculating those costs is not an easy matter. It should be quite permissible to include in the over-all cost the tremendous amount of voluntary work that was done. The whole question of assessing the costs of minor and major disasters is being reassessed with a view to making a fresh approach to the Commonwealth because the figure of $7 million seems to be too high a level to fix before the Commonwealth comes into the picture.

OPEN HOUSE CHRISTIAN INVOLVEMENT CENTRES

Mr SKEGGS (Ivanhoe)—Will the Minister for Community Welfare Services advise the House whether his department is able to assist the Open House Christian Involvement Centres in Ivanhoe in respect of the financial assistance needed to replace the house which has been sold but which was previously used as Open Door to provide long-term emergency accommodation for people needing special care and counselling?

Mr JONA (Minister for Community Welfare Services)—I am aware that an application has been received from this organization for financial assistance. I am also aware of the excellent work done by the organization and I mention particularly Mr George Farrington, who has been closely associated with it for a long time in the Ivanhoe and Heidelberg areas.

As the honourable member is aware, a number of emergency accommodation projects with which he is closely involved in the Ivanhoe and Heidelberg areas have received grants under the Youth Accommodation Services Programme and the Family Support Services Programme. The particular application to which the honourable member has referred is being considered in the light of the other services now being provided and I hope it will be possible to find ways and means of assisting, not only because of the accommodation that is provided but also because of the important counselling services that have been rendered by the organization, which, in many in-
stances, have resulted in young people being able to return to their homes.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Mr EDMUNDS (Ascot Vale)—In view of the 492 unanswered questions on the Notice Paper and as the Government has shown great reluctance to answer questions, despite the previously accepted principle that questions should be answered promptly, will the Premier direct Ministers, particularly certain Ministers, to answer the questions on the Notice Paper so as to maintain the principle inherent in any democracy, that questions asked by members of Parliament, whether they be members of the Opposition or of the Government party, should not be ignored by the Government?

Mr HAMER (Premier)—The general principle that questions ought to be answered as promptly as possible is followed to the maximum extent but, when hundreds of questions are put on the Notice Paper, many of which could easily be answered by the member concerned himself, with a little research, and when others appear that require many hours of work on the part of public servants and other people to obtain the answers, it is not always possible to give the answer promptly and in some cases it is not possible to give the answer at all. I appeal to members of the Opposition to use questions on notice to elicit relevant information and not to clutter up the Notice Paper with irrelevant questions.

INTERSTATE RAIL TRAVEL

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—Can the Minister of Transport provide any information about the plight of pensioners and low income families who desire to travel interstate by rail?

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—I am not sure what plight the honourable member refers to in connection with pensioners who wish to travel interstate. Concessions are available. However, such people would today face some difficulty in travelling interstate because an industrial dispute that arose last week but was snuffed out in anticipation of the Federal election has again burst forth. The dispute relates to the battery electrical system. When a member of the team goes off to other duties, it has been demanded that he be replaced by a full-time employee member to make up the team. That dispute has again burst out today, so interstate train services are not operating and passengers are making their journeys in Victoria by bus. It seems that the unions are determined to implement the recommendations of the Victorian Transport Study.

HOSPITALS DEFICIT

Mr MATHEWS (Oakleigh)—Is the Minister of Health aware that the current accumulated deficit of major and base hospitals is approximately $8 million and is drastically and adversely affecting patient services, particularly at the Austin and Ballarat hospitals; if so, why was the surplus in the Hospitals and Charities Fund allowed to increase by some $20 million last year, when that money could have been used to relieve the pressures on hospitals adversely affected by rising costs?

Mr BORTHWICK (Minister of Health)—I am not aware that the deficits total $8 million. Last year a number of hospitals had deficits which totalled slightly more than $6 million, but against that there were a number of hospitals which had surpluses making the total deficit something of the order of $3 million to $4 million.

The cost sharing agreement does not allow deficits from one year to be funded out of allocations for the following year, but deficits are reviewed, for instance, to determine what caused the deficits, by the State standing committee on cost sharing in November each year. I have no doubt that a certain proportion of those total deficits at least will be funded.

I turn now to the question as it related to the Austin Hospital. From memory that hospital had a deficit of $268,000 out of a budget last year of $33,66 million. It has an approved budget for this year of $35,997 million.
It was suggested to that hospital that with a budget of that size, $36 million plus a further 4 per cent escalation in the last six months of the financial year that the Government will add, that deficit of $268 000 could reasonably be caught up.

The Austin Hospital had one item relating to drugs where in one year there was an increase in excess of 28 per cent. The nearest other teaching or major hospital had a 23 per cent increase, but other hospitals were as low as 15 per cent. The deficit at the Austin Hospital occurred despite that hospital receiving a special additional allocation during the year towards the general funding of that hospital.

We are living in a stage of Australia's economic and financial history where hospitals have to live within their budgets and the only way in which the Government can find additional moneys for a particular hospital is literally to take it from another hospital. I recognize that all hospital managements, in the current financial climate, do face some difficulties, but some hospitals tend to be facing up to them a darned sight better than others.

I turn now to the question as it related to the Ballarat Base Hospital. That hospital overspent its budget by $168 000. The budget for last year totalled $11·22 million and its budget for this year is in excess of $12 million with a further 4 per cent rise to be granted in the last six months of the financial year.

The department has spoken to all hospitals which have a deficit and officers have explained the position to them in great detail. They have not been directed as to the areas which should be cut, but they have been directed that they should endeavour to pick up that amount over a full financial year which, in the case of the Austin Hospital, represents $268 000 within a total budget of $36 million which will be increased by a further 4 per cent in the last half of the financial year. If one hospital gets away from budgetary control they all will or will want to.

PETROL PRICING

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—The Premier will be aware of the disparity in petrol prices, particularly between metropolitan and country areas, where in some cases country motorists are paying up to 10 cents a litre more for their petrol. The honourable gentleman will also be aware that the Federal Government provides a transport subsidy so that the maximum price differential should not exceed 0·44 cents a litre. Because of this discrepancy and the problem within the industry, is the State Government prepared to legislate to set a maximum wholesale price for petrol which will assist to stabilize the industry and stabilize the price of petrol for motorists in Victoria?

Mr HAMER (Premier)—It is quite true that there are discrepancies, but the Government does not believe the suggestion of the honourable member is the right way to tackle it. After all, the Prices Justification Tribunal is supposed set wholesale prices and we do not want another price setting mechanism—the Government does not believe that is the best way of tackling it anyway. If there is to be an equalization mechanism, then it should be supported fully, as the Victorian Government has stated, from petrol tax. The Government has stated that over and again and will take up that matter with the Federal Government.

PROPOSED ABORIGINAL HOUSING BOARD

Mr MACKINNON (Box Hill)—I direct to the Minister of Housing a question which refers to the proposed Aboriginal housing board. Will the Minister inform the House of the functions of the board, and, in particular, how it is expected to benefit the Aboriginal people?

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! That question is very broad and really seeks a Ministerial statement. I shall accept the question if the Minister can be brief in answering it.
Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—Thank you, Mr Speaker; I intend to be brief. An Aboriginal housing board will be established with eight elected members and one member from the Ministry of Housing. The functions of the board will be that, through the Housing Commission of Victoria, it will determine the types of houses to be purchased, the prices, the location, the tenancy priority, the sort of maintenance to be carried out and what action might be possible regarding recovery of rental arrears and tenants who may find it difficult to live in those houses.

It is a big step forward for Aborigines in Victoria, and it is a step along the path of self management.

PATERSON'S CURSE

Mr FOGARTY (Sunshine)—I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether legal action undertaken by a group of apiarists, graziers and others has interfered with a national campaign being conducted by the Australian Agricultural Council to eradicate Paterson's curse?

Further, it is a fact that the legal proceedings involving the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization and other organizations will be lengthy, costly and complicated due to legislation between States, and did Victoria release the insects prior to the court action being initiated? If so, what has been the result in the areas in Victoria where insects were released, and what action can the Victorian Government take to ensure that the insects do not go interstate, because section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution has no bounds?

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! The honourable member asked a number of questions—admittedly on a related subject. The Minister may answer whichever one of them he chooses.

Mr I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture)—The honourable member almost invites me to quote section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, which allows trade, commerce and intercourse between the States to be free and unrestricted. I am not sure whether that becomes a problem with the biological control of Paterson's curse.

The State Department of Agriculture had no direct involvement in the CSIRO programme for biological control of Paterson's curse. I am aware that a group of individuals has taken legal action against the CSIRO. These people are opposed to the release of the biological control agent for Paterson's curse. I presume that the legal proceedings will be lengthy, because I understand that the case is going to the High Court.

However—and this is the crux of the matter—the State of Victoria has no recourse, either administratively or in any other way, to overcome this problem, unfortunately.

ROAD TOLL

Mr COX (Mitcham)—I direct a question to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. What measure is the Government planning for the future in the fight against the road toll? Will the Minister give consideration to inviting specialists from overseas to investigate our campaign and to ascertain whether they may be able to improve the results of our fight against the road toll?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The next move is an advertising campaign initiated by the Road Safety and Traffic Authority involving such people as Mike Willesee, Olivia Newton-John and Geoff Cox. We might even include George Cox, the honourable member for Mitcham—another well-known personality!

The next question that might be asked is whether this type of advertising is effective. The survey that has been carried out by the authority indicates that it is, that whereas more than 50 per cent of the drivers killed in road accidents in 1977 and 1978 had a blood alcohol level of .05 per cent or above, last year only 40 per cent of drivers
killed had that level, and it is hoped that the figure will drop to 30 per cent, and perhaps even 20 per cent.

The next question, which was hinted at by the honourable member for Mitcham, was whether the Government intends to invite experts from overseas. The answer is, "Yes". An international convention has been organized for November to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the introduction of the compulsory wearing of seat belts. Over the past decade the wearing of seat belts has saved the lives of some 2000 Victorians and has stopped possibly 40,000 to 50,000 serious injury accidents. To that conference two acknowledged overseas experts have been invited—Dr Campbell from the United States of America and Professor Koshi from Japan—with the aim of developing further measures to counter road accidents in Victoria. Honourable members will know that the road toll figure is now approximately 110 lower than that of last year. The Government is extremely pleased about that, but it is still not satisfied.

CHAIRMAN, WESTERN PORT REGIONAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

Mr Rowe (Essendon)—Can the Minister for Planning explain to the House why proceedings taken by his Ministry against the former Chairman of the Western Port Regional Planning Authority alleging that the chairman of that authority voted on matters in the authority in which he had a pecuniary interest were not taken up until June of this year, despite the fact that notice of such matters was brought to the attention of Parliament in October of last year?

Mr Lieberman (Minister for Planning)—The question relates to legal proceedings which have not yet been completed so far as I am aware, and it would not be appropriate for me to say anything further. If the honourable member would like to discuss the matter with me, I shall be happy to give him details of the progress of the proceedings, and at the outcome of the proceedings I shall provide any further information that he may reasonably request.

CORELLAS

Mr McGrath (Lowan)—The Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, who represents the Minister for Conservation in this House, would be aware of the concern of farmers about large numbers of corellas and cockatoos in the Western District and the desire of the farmers to have an open season. The Minister would also be aware that the Wildlife Act has to be amended to provide for an open season on these birds on a shire basis. Can the Minister indicate when and if this legislation will be introduced into the House?

Mr Wood (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs)—The question of minimizing damage caused by corellas and cockatoos is uppermost in the minds of most farmers and of the Government. As I mentioned in answer to a recent question, the Minister has had various discussions about ways and means of overcoming this problem. Poisoning has been suggested, but I point out that when poisoning, one does not always kill only the target bird. The question of an open season is still being discussed and, as the honourable member said, it requires a change in the legislation. When a decision is made by the Minister, the House will be notified.

ALCOA SMELTER

Mr Tanner (Caulfield)—Will the Minister for Minerals and Energy advise whether the development of an aluminium smelter at Portland by Alcoa of Australia Ltd will adversely affect the amount of electricity available to other users in Victoria?

Mr Balfour (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is, "No". In assessing the future power requirements of Victoria, the domestic requirements have been taken into account, as have the requirements of Alcoa of Australia Ltd, and an anticipated 4 per cent per annum increase in industrial
power. If that can be achieved there should be no problems for any company wishing to come to Victoria. Victoria could not accommodate another aluminium company such as Alcoa of Australia Ltd for some time, but there should be abundant power available for industrial and domestic consumption.

TWENTIETH CENTURY BUILDING AND INVESTMENT SOCIETY

Mr CATHIE (Carrum)—Has the Minister of Housing received an opinion from the Crown Solicitor and a Queen's Counsel on the powers to repay shareholders of the collapsed Twentieth Century Building and Investment Society and, if so, what are those opinions and will the Minister lay a copy of those opinions on the table in the Library?

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—I have received opinions together with matters concerning those opinions from the Crown Solicitor and officers of my department. I am prepared to make them available to the House and the thrust of the opinions is that, although funds could be paid from the General Reserve Fund, in order to clarify the matter legislation would be required. I believe such legislation is justified and it will be introduced to the House as soon as possible.

LATROBE VALLEY DEMARCATION DISPUTE

Mr McINNES (Gippsland South)—Is the Minister of Labour and Industry aware of a statement attributed to the member elect for Wills, formerly the President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, that on his election to Federal Parliament he will quickly resolve the demarcation dispute in the Latrobe Valley and, if so, can the Minister advise whether he has offered his services in that capacity?

Mr RAMSAY (Minister of Labour and Industry)—The answer is, "No", I have received no approach from the member elect for Wills. However, the major demarcation dispute that is causing such a major hold-up in the construction of the vital power station in the Latrobe Valley has been referred to the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! Will the Minister resume his seat? I ask honourable members to cease interjecting. The House has heard enough from the Opposition on who is in danger of losing his seat and honourable members should return to State issues.

Mr RAMSAY—The major demarcation dispute that is causing such a dislocation in the Latrobe Valley at present is before the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The appeal has been listed for hearing before a full bench early next month. However, if any person with influence within the trade union movement can get the peak councils of the trade union movement in Australia to take proper responsibility for demarcation issues between its constituent members, that would be in the best interests of Victoria and Australia. The Leader of the Opposition cannot fix it!

POLICE CADETS

Mr HOCKLEY (Bentleigh)—In view of the widespread uncertainty reiterated by the Government's announcement that the police cadet system will close down, will the Minister for Police and Emergency Services inform the House when recruiting of police cadets will cease; when will the last course for police cadets be conducted and what does the Government intend to do with the Spencer Street building presently used for police cadet training?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—Taking those questions in reverse order, the Police Department will be making use of the major portion of that building. Additional cadets will not be recruited this year. Of course, those in training will complete their courses and all the additional money saved will be devoted towards training police trainees at the Police Academy at Glen Waverley.
NURSING HOME GRANTS

Mr HANN (Rodney)—Can the Minister of Health advise the House whether the constitutional difficulties between the Commonwealth and State Governments concerning grants to nursing home projects in conjunction with hospitals has been resolved? If so, what action does he intend to take to resolve this matter?

Mr BORTHWICK (Minister of Health)—The matter is being resolved in two ways. In the first instance it will be resolved by using the power that the Minister has to remove hospitals from the Fifth Schedule of the Hospitals and Charities Act. An Order in Council was presented today removing a number—I cannot recall offhand, but I think Yarram and Woorayl were two. The ones removed today would be those that were due to receive capital grants in this financial year, and others that might after December have maintenance moneys jeopardized, such as the Royal Talbot General Rehabilitation Hospital. In the longer term, Victoria has the agreement of Senator Guilfoyle that the Government can negotiate agreements with the hospitals to establish separate constitutional bodies for the nursing homes and for the homes to enter into service agreements with the hospitals. She has agreed that the Commonwealth and State should look at each individual case. In the meantime, so that there is no possibility of jeopardizing assistance from the Commonwealth, I have removed those immediately affected from the schedule.

MOTH PLAGUE

Mr KENNETT (Burwood)—Could the Minister of Agriculture advise the House the extent of the moth plague that is currently in Melbourne, and also whether there are any side effects of this plague about which Victorians should know, or is it solely one of nuisance value?

Mr I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture)—The plague is mainly of nuisance value, and those people in suburbia who are troubled by the moths can exercise some recourse if they contact the department because advice is available on how to minimize the effects of the plague. It seems the most satisfactory and traditional biological control of Bogong moths is not with us any longer. The Aborigines used them as a delicacy, and of course there are not sufficient Aborigines around these days to keep them under control.

EDUCATION STAFFING FOR 1981

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray)—I ask the Assistant Minister of Education: In view of the wide-spread concern by staff, principals and councils of Victorian technical schools and colleges at the staffing proposals for 1981 that have just been received at these individual schools and colleges, and brought about by the rigid staff ceiling adopted by the Victorian Government, particularly in the TAFE area, and in view of the widespread concern voiced by employer organizations at the great shortage of school people able to work for the development of Victorian industry, will the Minister agree to review the staffing level within TAFE colleges for 1981 and, in particular, set up proper consultation with those bodies directly affected so that the needs of Victoria and Victorians can be met next year?

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—The major concern of the organizations referred to by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition relates to the proposal for the staffing of particular courses in the apprenticeship area. It has been brought to the attention of the Technical Division that a number of these classes have such low class-room sizes—down to two or three students to a class and a teacher—that it would be advisable, and it has been suggested in the rationalization directive, for those classes to be amalgamated with neighbouring technical colleges, or that woodwork, sheet metal and other courses be conducted across a number of levels, and therefore be concertinaed within the school. That matter has brought some response and concern from the organization referred to by the honorable member. The Minister has undertaken to
review the matter, so that directly answers the question raised by the honourable member, and also to take into account the responses from those organizations in the consultations that will proceed as a part of that review.

PETITIONS

Victorian Transport Study

Mr WALSH (Albert Park)—I present a petition from certain citizens of Victoria praying that the recommendations contained in the report of the Victorian Transport Study concerning the closure of train and tram services in Port Melbourne, South Melbourne and St Kilda be rejected and that a programme to improve train and tram services throughout Melbourne be commenced. The petition is respectfully worded, in order, and bears 2605 signatures. I desire the petition to be read.

The Standing Orders were suspended to enable the petition to be read, and the petition was read by the Clerk. It was in the following terms:

To the Honourables the Speaker and the President and Members of the Victorian Parliament as in Parliament assembled.

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Victoria respectfully showeth:—

That, as residents and users of public transport we object in the strongest possible terms to the proposed closure of all train and tram services in the Port Melbourne, South Melbourne and St Kilda areas—as recommended in the Victorian Transport Study report entitled 'Metropolitan Public Transport'.

We believe that these closures, if carried out will:

(a) severely inconvenience the regular users of public transport in this part of Melbourne, particularly the many people who do not own cars;
(b) cause increased congestion on the roads, which means more accidents and additional expenditure on roads;
(c) threaten the health of residents because of increased pollution from car exhausts;
(d) cause further unnecessary depletion of our limited petrol supplies.

We therefore call on the State Government to reject this report and instead begin a programme of improving train and tram services throughout Melbourne.

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

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

Health and human relations courses

Mrs CHAMBERS (Ballarat South) presented a petition from certain members of the Buninyong Catholic Women's Association praying that action be taken to suspend all health and human relations courses conducted in Victorian schools and to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the subject matter. She stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 12 signatures.

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

Retail trading hours

Mr MACKINNON (Box Hill) presented a petition from certain citizens praying that shop trading hours be not extended and that legislation be enacted to protect small businesses from the operation of large retail chain stores. He stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 88 signatures.

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

Upfield railway line

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) presented a petition from certain citizens praying that the Upfield railway line be retained and upgraded. He stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 3372 signatures.

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

Health and human relations courses—Lilydale-Healesville railway line

Mr REYNOLDS (Gisborne) presented two petitions from certain citizens of Victoria: 1. Praying that action be taken to suspend all health and human relations courses conducted in Victorian schools and to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the subject matter; 2. Praying that the Lilydale to Healesville railway line be retained and
that the service continue in operation. He stated that the petitions were respectfully worded, in order, and bore 30 and 2061 signatures respectively.

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

**Extended licensing hours**

Mr COX (Mitcham) presented a petition from certain owners, operators and patrons of BYO restaurants, praying that the proposed legislation to amend Victorian licensing laws provide for the extension of hours during which liquor may be consumed at BYO restaurants and enable wines and beers to be purchased at such venues to supplement the initial supply of liquor brought to the restaurant by the patron. He stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 3075 signatures.

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

**Retail trading hours**

Mr BURGIN (Polwarth) presented a petition from certain members of the Ararat Chamber of Commerce and residents of the Ararat district praying that trading hours for retail shops be not increased and that an investigation be carried out into the effect of trading in holiday resort areas, week-end markets and by street vendors on small businesses. He stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 134 signatures.

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

**Newport–Williamstown and Altona railway lines**

Mr STIRLING (Williamstown)—I present a petition from certain citizens praying that the recommendations contained in the report of the Victorian Transport Study concerning the closure of Newport to Williamstown and Altona railway lines be rejected. The petition is respectfully worded, in order, and bears 3084 signatures. I desire the petition to be read.

The Standing Orders were suspended to enable the petition to be read, and the petition was read by the Clerk. It was in the following terms:

The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament Assembled.

The humble petition of the under-signed citizens of the State of Victoria respectively sheweth—

That the recommendations for the closing of the railway lines from Newport to Williamstown and Altona contained in the Report of the Victorian Transport Study, entitled 'Metropolitan Public Transport' would:

Disenfranchise the many people who depend on public transport, and may have no other means of transportation.

Increase the demand for liquid fuels which the nation is being asked to conserve by the Governments.

Increase congestion and demand for upgrade of roads.

Raise doubts on the usefulness of the near completed, costly underground loop.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the State Government reject the recommendations contained in the Report.

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

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

**DRUG PROBLEM IN VICTORIA**

Mr HAMER (Premier)—By leave I move:

That there be presented to the House a copy of the report of the Inter-departmental Working Party on the Drug Problem in Victoria, Volume 1.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr HAMER (Premier) presented the report in compliance with the foregoing order.

It was ordered that the report be laid on the table and be printed.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT**

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman) presented the Treasurer's statement of the receipts and payments of the Consolidated Fund and the Trust Fund for the year ended 30 June 1980, accompanied by the report of the Auditor-General and by the documents specified in section 47 of the Audit Act.

It was ordered that the report be laid on the table, and be printed.
COMMAND PAPER

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport) presented, by command of His Excellency the Governor, the report of the Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs to the Victorian Government on Matters of Particular Relevance to the State of Victoria.

It was ordered that the report be laid on the table and be printed.

PAPERS

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


Environment Protection Authority—Report for the year 1979-80—Ordered to be printed.


Statutory Rules under the following Acts—

- Building Societies Act 1976, No. 409.
- County Court Act 1958, No. 401.
- Explosives Act 1960, No. 370.
- Industrial Training Act 1975, Nos. 385, 386.
- Marine Act 1958, Nos. 399, 400.
- Public Service Act 1974, PSD Nos. 107 to 112, 114.
- Racing Act 1958, Nos. 395, 397.
- Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act 1959, No. 405.
- Stock Diseases Act 1968, No. 387.
- Strata Titles Act 1967, No. 388.


Teaching Service Act 1958—

- Teaching Service—Primary Schools Division (Classification, Salaries, and Allowances) Regulation—Regulations amended No. 516.
- Teaching Service—Secondary Schools Division (Classification, Salaries, and Allowances) Regulation—Regulations amended No. 517.
- Teaching Service—(Teachers Tribunal) Regulations—Regulations amended Nos. 518 and 520.


Town and Country Planning Act 1961—

- Bacchus Marsh—Shire of Bacchus Marsh Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 17.
- Bairnsdale—Town of Bairnsdale Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 32.
- Ballarat—City of Ballarat Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 55.
- Bendigo—City of Bendigo Planning Scheme 1962, Amendment Nos. 30, 32 (two papers).
- Buninyong—Shire of Buninyong Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 10.
- Gisborne Shire Planning Scheme.
- Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme—Amendment Nos. 3 (Part 1c), 110 (Part 4), 115 (Part 2a), 116 (Part 2) (four papers).
- Mildura—City of Mildura Planning Scheme, Amendment No. 36, 1980.
- Traralgon—City of Traralgon Planning Scheme 1957—Amendment Nos. 16, 23 (1979) (two papers).
- Werribee—Shire of Werribee Planning Scheme 1963, Amendment No. 73.
- Yackandandah—Shire of Yackandandah Planning Scheme 1965 (Township of Yackandandah), Amendment No. 8.

Transport Regulation Board—Report for the year 1979-80—Ordered to be printed.
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
Drug Problem in Victoria

Mr HAMER (Premier)—I desire to make a Ministerial Statement in connection with the tabling in Parliament today of the Australian Royal Commissioner's report to the Victorian Government on matters of particular relevance to the State of Victoria, and the report of the Inter-departmental Working Party on the Drug Problem in Victoria.

Honourable members will recall that books “A” to “E” of the report of the Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs were tabled in both Houses on 18 March 1980. At that time, the final volume of the commission's report had not been completed. Book “F”, the final volume, was subsequently tabled in both Houses on 2 October 1980. It contains the outlines of uniform legislation which the Honourable Mr Justice Williams recommended should be enacted as part of his proposed national strategy to control the distribution and use of illegal drugs. Mr Justice Williams proposed that the uniform legislation should comprise Drug Trafficking and Drugs of Dependence Acts.

The legislation recommended by the commission is directed to promoting national legislation enforceable in each State as Federal and as State legislation, notwithstanding section 109 of the Australian Constitution (the inconsistency of laws provision). The commission points out that some matters necessarily involve exclusive State or Commonwealth powers, while others involve amendment of existing legislation. The commission is not committed to any particular method of achieving uniformity and considers that the method to be adopted is properly the subject of consultations between the Commonwealth and the States.

All States and the Commonwealth are proceeding with the examination of the many recommendations made by Mr Justice Williams, and I now table the Australian Royal Commissioner's report to the Victorian Government on matters of particular relevance to the State of Victoria, which addresses itself to specific matters of concern to this State.

Recently, Victoria initiated a meeting of police Ministers of the States, the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth who resolved to form a standing Australian Police Ministers Council with one of its initial tasks being the consideration of the Williams's recommendations for further law enforcement initiatives in tackling the drug problem.

At its inaugural meeting in Melbourne on 29 August, the council endorsed Mr Justice Williams's call for increased Commonwealth-State co-operation in action against drug trafficking. In this context, it agreed to support the establishment of the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, a major role of which will be the collection and dissemination to all Australian law enforcement agencies of intelligence in respect of drug trafficking and other drug related crimes. The bureau, which will have its headquarters in the Australian Capital Territory and field staff in the States, will also be concerned to impart speedy and accurate information to police forces with a view to expedient and effective apprehension and prosecution of targets identified through the bureau's activities.

The establishment of the bureau will meet a major recommendation of Mr Justice Williams's Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs, in that it will carry out the intelligence gathering role envisaged by Mr Justice Williams for the national and State drug intelligence bureaux which he recommended be established under the provisions of uniform drug trafficking Acts (as described in book “F”).

The bureau represents a major achievement of national importance for policing in Australia and has the support of the Australian Commissioners of Police.

The Government at present is also paying particular attention to matters relating to the Steering Committee of Commonwealth-State Ministers to oversee and co-ordinate action on recommendations of the Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry Into Drugs. The steering committee, which was agreed to at the most recent Premiers Confer-
ence, will have an important role in continuing Governmental action to tackle the problem of drug trafficking and related crimes.

My colleague, the Honourable L. H. S. Thompson, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, has been nominated as Victoria's representative on the committee, and proposals for the agenda of the inaugural meeting are currently being formulated. Arrangements for the first meeting of the committee will be taken up by the incoming Commonwealth Government. In the meantime, and parallel with meetings of that committee, consideration of specific issues raised in the Royal Commission's report and any other relevant reports will continue in other specialized forums, such as the Australian Police Ministers' Council, the Ministers for Health Conference, and the standing committees of Attorneys-General and of Social Welfare Ministers.

The threat to the maintenance of law and order and to the community presented by the activities of some major drug trafficking groups requires new approaches and new methods. The Commonwealth and Victorian Governments are therefore co-operating in the establishment of a special judicial inquiry armed with the powers of a Royal Commission under the Royal Commissions Act 1902 of the Commonwealth and equivalent State legislation, operating in conjunction with a Federal-State multi-discipline task group.

The Victorian Government fully supports the proposals for this inquiry and discussions are under way between the Federal and State Attorneys-General, concerning its establishment, and between the Federal Minister for Administrative Services and the Victorian Minister for Police and Emergency Services, regarding the establishment of the task group to support the inquiry.

The second report being tabled today is the Report of the Inter-departmental Working Party on the Drug Problem in Victoria. The working party was headed by an officer of the Department of the Premier, and included representatives of all State Government departments and agencies who may, in any way, be involved in dealing with problems relating to drug use or abuse.

The terms of reference of the working party were: To examine and report on the incidence and trends of the use of illicit drugs and misuse of licit drugs, excluding nicotine and alcohol, in Victoria:

To inquire into and report on the existing educational, preventive, treatment and rehabilitation programmes in Victoria for persons using or misusing such drugs or substances;

To suggest any changes which may be desirable in the ways and means by which government could contain the use of illicit drugs and the misuse of licit drugs; and

To suggest ways and means by which the community can participate in reducing the introduction and use of illicit drugs and misuse of licit drugs in Victoria, especially among young people.

In its report tabled today, the working party has emphasized its concern that appropriate legislation should be clear, concise and workable, and many of its recommendations are designed to remove existing anomalies, either by amending or consolidating the current legislation. In particular, the working party has suggested several initiatives which can be implemented in the short term, pending any over-all review of drug legislation on a national basis which may be undertaken.

The Government intends to make changes to both the Poisons Act 1962 and the Health Act 1958 to increase substantially the penalties available to deal with those who misuse drugs, or illegally use, or deal in, drugs. These changes include:

The transfer of Part XVIII of the Health Act 1958 to the Poisons Act 1962, as part of a necessary consolidation of drug control measures.
The deletion of the requirement in section 32 of the Poisons Act for differentiation of product based on the percentage of tetrahydrocannabinol—This will reduce the amount of time-consuming chemical analyses required, and resultant lengthy delays at the Forensic Science Laboratory and in the court system.

Significant increases in the penalties applicable to various offences under the Poisons Act 1962, including the following:

Forging a prescription or uttering a forged prescription for a restricted substance—two years' imprisonment.

False representation in relation to a restricted substance—two years and/or a $5000 fine.

Trafficking in a restricted substance—ten years and/or a $50 000 fine with the forfeiture provisions of section 34 (3) and/or section 62 (3) being applicable.

Possession of a restricted substance—two years and/or a $5000 fine.

Breach of section 48, which deals with the sale of poison or deleterious substances—2 years' imprisonment and/or a $5000 fine.

Many of the working party's recommendations are designed to reduce delays in analyses at the Forensic Science Laboratory, with the resultant delays at the courts. These include:

(a) Upgrading the maximum penalties under section 35 of the Poisons Act as a means of reducing the need to go to a higher court.

(b) Amendments to section 149 (A) of the Evidence Act.

(c) Recasting section 32 (5) of the Poisons Act 1962 along the lines of section 32 (4).

The Government intends to introduce amendments as soon as possible, with the object of greatly reducing the demands for analyses by the laboratory.

The Government recognizes that much needs to be done to rationalize the use of, and where necessary, to improve, the assessment, treatment and rehabilitation facilities available for alcoholic and drug-dependent persons in this State. The corporate plan initially put forward by the Health Commission and developed further by the working party has been accepted by the Government as a sound basis for a strategy for treatment services.

The working party has suggested various changes to the Alcoholic and Drug-Dependent Persons Act 1968, to ensure that it is used more efficiently and more constructively as a means of providing treatment for persons suffering from alcohol or drug dependency, and for protecting the interests of such people while they are undergoing treatment. In particular, these changes will ensure that the inspector of treatment centres acts as an independent "auditor", that explicit standards for treatment are determined and that the efficacy of programmes is regularly evaluated. In this way, Victoria can determine which programmes should be encouraged and, if necessary, funded, and which programmes should be revised or cancelled.

One of the major areas of concern which became apparent to the working party was the effectiveness of existing drug education programmes and, in particular, the need for better and consistent guidelines for the operation of such programmes, whether they be conducted by schools, particular groups within the community or the media. The Government concurs with the working party's view, and the view of the National Standing Control Committee on Drugs, that drug education should be part of a total "Education for Living" approach and that it should only be conducted in the context of a total health and human relations education approach.

Agencies of the Victorian Government are already co-operating with the Commonwealth in its coastal surveillance effort, particularly the Ports and Harbors Division of the Public Works Department, the Ministry of Police and Emergency Services, the Ministry for Conservation, the Department of Agriculture and the Health Commission.
The Government believes that the serialization of prescription pads, recommended by both the working party and the Royal Commissioner, is an invaluable aid in achieving greater security in the prescribing and dispensing of drugs of addiction. Appropriate action will therefore be taken as soon as possible to introduce a system of serially numbered and distinctively coloured prescription pads, which will be administered by the Health Commission. As suggested by the Royal Commissioner, these will be in triplicate and will be required to be returned to the Health Commission by the dispensing pharmacist, as recommended by the drug working party, rather than by the prescriber, as recommended by the Royal Commissioner.

The Government accepts that in the long term there is a need for computerization of all prescriptions for drugs of addiction, as recommended by Mr Justice Williams, and as a first step in the implementation of such a system, a feasibility study will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.

Co-operation between health and law enforcement agencies of the Commonwealth and the States will be essential in any programme to curtail the illicit drug market, both in Victoria and Australia-wide. A co-ordinated approach within the Victorian community involving the State Government, its agencies, local government and non-government groups will also be essential if the problems associated with the misuse of drugs are to be tackled effectively. The community as a whole must share in the task. Drug abuse affects all levels of the community, from the abuser himself to his family and to our medical, social welfare and criminal justice systems, and the community must be prepared to acknowledge the problem, to become aware of its ramifications and to take action to help.

The Government dedicates itself to the task of dealing with one of the most destructive of human activities, the most evil in its potential to corrupt and destroy people, particularly young people, and ruin lives and families. We call on all citizens to join in this commitment and to apply all their knowledge, skill and determination to eliminate this canker from our midst.

I move:
That the Ministerial statement be taken into consideration tomorrow.

Mr ROPER (Brunswick)—The Opposition would like an undertaking from the Premier that time will be made available for this matter to be considered. It would not be sensible to proceed with the debate of this 219 page report immediately because members of all parties have not yet had the opportunity of examining it. At this stage of the sessional period there can be a tendency for a major public policy such as this to come up with the Premier or the Minister dealing with it presenting a view on the report and no further debate taking place. The Opposition would like an assurance from the Premier that time will be made available for these documents to be debated.

Mr HAMER (Premier) (By leave)—I give that assurance willingly.

The motion was agreed to.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES BILL

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman) announced the presentation of a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the Residential Tenancies Bill.

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport), pursuant to Standing Order No. 169, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to simplify and modernize the law relating to residential tenancies, to define the rights and duties of landlords and tenants of residential premises, to promote the quick and inexpensive resolution of disputes between landlords and tenants of residential premises, to provide for a Residential Tenancies Tribunal, to amend the Landlord and Tenant Act 1958, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs Act 1973 and the Administrative Law Act 1978 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.
LIQUOR CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr RAMSAY (Minister of Labour and Industry) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Liquor Control Act 1968 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—I move:

That, in respect of General Business motions listed as Numbers 1 to 3 inclusive on the Notice Paper, this House requires that these motions be debated concurrently and that Standing Orders be suspended so far as to allow such motions to be so considered.

In moving this motion I am aware of the difficulties which could arise in trying to deal with three separate matters arising from the Victorian Transport Study.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! Before the Minister proceeds, is the motion seconded?

Mr THOMPSON (Treasurer)—I second the motion.

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—The reason for moving the motion is to avoid the possible effect of points of order that may arise during debate of these matters. There could be difficulty where, for instance, a railway line is used both for freight and for passenger services in distinguishing the two separate debates. Without wishing to restrict in any way the way in which the honourable member for Knox presents his motion or the timing of a debate, I move this motion to enable an opportunity for debate of transport covering each matter contained in the motions, with each to be voted on separately when a vote is taken. The attitudes of honourable members will be separately recorded but, in their contributions to the debate, honourable members will not be restricted by the terms of the Standing Orders in relation to anticipation, from speaking on matters not yet moved but on the Notice Paper. To enable a broad debate with the canvass as wide as possible, giving the honourable member for Knox full scope in relation to the three motions, I have moved this motion.

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray)—The Opposition opposes the motion by the Leader of the Government. The concern of the Minister for a free flow of debate is touching, but entirely unconvincing to the Opposition. Members of the Opposition find the motion to be discourteous, and the Minister to be impudent. It is quite improper in the handling of matters of this nature. The Standing Order sets out in detail the rights of individual members in being able to introduce matters for discussion, and it is quite clear that despite this attempt by the Minister, and one now gets the impression by the Deputy Premier, to over-ride the rights of the honourable member for Knox, the shadow Minister of Transport, fortunately the Standing Order will not allow it. It is not possible for the Government to use the sheer weight of its numbers to force the honourable member to have a single debate on these matters. Fortunately the principles on which this Parliament was established are such that it will be possible for the honourable member to resist this motion. As you will no doubt rule from the chair at the appropriate time, Mr Speaker, the shadow Minister of Transport will be able to move these motions separately.

The Minister is discouraging honourable members from giving advance notice of motions before the House. In deference to the House and to the public interest, the shadow Minister of Transport gave three notices of motion the debate of which was to be spread over a period of time. If that honourable member had chosen to move only one of those motions and have it disposed of and then to move another motion a few days later, the Minister would not have moved the motion that he has moved. Instead of encouraging the honourable member to give notice to all honourable members to play a part in this important transport debate, the Government has made a heavy handed but fortunately unsuccessful attempt to force the honourable member to make one speech only on what
are obviously three separate matters. I hope all honourable members have taken a close interest in the various reports which have been tabled and the information forwarded to them. It will be obvious that these are extremely important matters, and time for their discussion should be made available. As the initiator of these motions, the Opposition has willingly conceded that there should be a limit to the time for debate.

The first matter relates to metropolitan public transport; the second relates to country passenger services; and the third relates to transport and miscellaneous freight. The Minister has attempted to have all these matters debated together. Members of the Opposition do not accept the need for forcing—the word used in the motion by the Minister was "requires"—the shadow Minister to make only one contribution to the debate on these matters. The motion should not pass. Three separate debates should take place within an agreed time length. On each of the previous substantive motions the agreed time length has been two hours. It is wrong for the Government to try to force a single debate on the matter, and the Opposition wholeheartedly opposes the motion by the Minister.

Mr WHITING (Mildura)—In my knowledge of the operations of this Parliament, this is an extremely unusual situation and it is hoped that it will not be a forerunner for future occasions when reports similar to the report of the Lonie committee are presented to Parliament.

Because the report is so diversified and has so many sections and particularly because of the way in which it has been presented to the Parliament, anything up to twenty similar motions could emanate from it. As yet the Government has not indicated whether it intends to debate the report as a whole or in parts, as has been suggested by the honourable member for Knox by way of Notice of Motion. I hope the Government will reconsider the situation because if this Parliament is to operate as it was intended, the opportunity of debating individual sections of the report which are so individual that they lend themselves to motions such as this, should be provided. I hope the Premier or the Treasurer will reconsider the situation and not go ahead with the motion moved by the Leader of the House. The National Party opposes that motion and will not support a combined motion to cover country passenger services and the transport of miscellaneous freight and all the connotations of that.

I hope sanity will prevail. Obviously separate votes will need to be taken on the three items listed for General Business. If that does not occur, it would be a travesty of the function of Parliament. It is to be hoped that the Government will reconsider the situation and not proceed with the motion moved by the Minister of Transport.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! As I have now heard argument from all three parties, I should like to make the position of the Chair clear so that further argument may not be necessary. It has been the ruling and practice that the Chair has always followed that Notices of Motion, General Business, are the property of the honourable member introducing the Notice of Motion, General Business. Although Parliament may pass Notice of Motion No. 2 if it sees fit, that cannot dictate to the honourable member unless he is willing or he has introduced all three motions to the House. They then become the property of the House and the will of the House then prevails. However, I advise the House that until the honourable member introduces all three of his motions, they are his property and not the property of the House.

Mr CRABB (Knox)—It is remarkable that the House is in this situation. When the Victorian Transport Study reports were tabled, the Minister of Transport should have made a Ministerial statement which could have been debated at the desired length. However, the Minister did not do that and he has made no statement of Government attitude towards the recommendations of the study. As a consequence, as Opposition transport spokesman, I was not
prepared to leave the situation lie with many thousands of persons not knowing the attitude of the Opposition. Therefore, it was my intention to clarify what the Opposition's attitude was by moving the three motions.

It was my intention to give notice of the aspects of the Victorian Transport Study at once. I doubt whether the I realized the three separate notices of motion would cover most of the issues raised in the 28 transport studies. It is remarkable that the Minister should suggest that the notices of motion should be amalgamated into one brief debate which he could sweep under the carpet. I would not want to make a speech of the duration necessary on all of the aspects of the Victorian Transport Study at once. I doubt whether the Minister would want to encapsulate the Government's attitude in one speech. The same position would apply to the National Party.

It is my intention to move each of these motions separately. It is my intention that the notices of motion be voted upon separately. It is important that the House reject the motion moved by the Minister and thereby demonstrate to the Minister that it is the desire of the House that each of the notices of motion be debated separately so that honourable members have the opportunity of making their appropriate contributions separately and identifiably around those three major issues.

Mr WILTON (Broadmeadows)—I take the point that you, Mr Speaker, have already made to the House a little further because it is an area that has been causing me concern. I put to the Minister of Transport that the motion before the House would become ineffective in as much as you, Mr Speaker, have already pointed out to the House under the rule of anticipation that it is not the province of the Minister or even the House to assume that the honourable member for Knox will move any one of the notices of motion listed under general business.

Even if the House were to carry the motion at the appropriate time, when the honourable member for Knox is given the call by the Chair and he does move Notice of Motion No. 1, the only question that will be before the House is item No. 1 as listed on the Notice Paper and not item No. 2 or No. 3. Neither the House nor any other honourable member will have the right to assume that the honourable member for Knox will at some later date eventually move to notice of motion No. 2 and notice of motion No. 3. The motion moved by the Minister is such that even if the House passed that motion, it would be ineffective under the rule of anticipation.

The House divided on the motion (the Hon. S. J. Plowman in the chair).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AYES</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Austin</td>
<td>Mr Balfour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Birrell</td>
<td>Mr Borthwick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Brown</td>
<td>Mr Burgin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Chambers</td>
<td>Mr Coleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Collins</td>
<td>Mr Crellin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Dixon</td>
<td>Mr Dunstan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Ebery</td>
<td>Mr Evans (Ballarat North)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Hamer</td>
<td>Mr Hayes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Jona</td>
<td>Mr Kennett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Lacy</td>
<td>Mr Lieberman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr McCance</td>
<td>Mr McClure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr McInnes</td>
<td>Mr McKellar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Mackinnon</td>
<td>Mr Maclean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Patrick</td>
<td>Mr Ramsay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Reynolds</td>
<td>Mr Richardson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Skeggs</td>
<td>Mr Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Smith (South Barwon)</td>
<td>Mr Smith (Warrnambool)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Tanner</td>
<td>Mr Templeton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Thompson</td>
<td>Mr Weideman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Williams</td>
<td>Mr Wood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tellers:
Mr Cox
Mr McArthur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOES</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Amos</td>
<td>Mr Cain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Cathie</td>
<td>Dr Coghill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Crab</td>
<td>Mr Culpin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Edmunds</td>
<td>Mr Ernst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Evans (Gipspsland East)</td>
<td>Mr Fogarty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Fordham</td>
<td>Mr Ginnifer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Hockley</td>
<td>Mr Jasper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Jolly</td>
<td>Mr King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Kirkwood</td>
<td>Mr McGrath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Mathews</td>
<td>Mr Mathews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Miller</td>
<td>Mr Remington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Roper</td>
<td>Mr Ross-Edwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Rowe</td>
<td>Mr Sidiropoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Simmonds</td>
<td>Mr Simpson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Spyker</td>
<td>Mr Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Toner</td>
<td>Mr Treble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Trezise</td>
<td>Dr Vaughan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Whiting</td>
<td>Mr Wilkes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Wilson</td>
<td>Mr Wheelan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tellers:
Mr Gavin
Mr Walsh
Mr CRABB (Knox)—I move:

That this House rejects the recommendations contained in the report of the Victorian Transport Study entitled “Metropolitan Public Transport” and directs the Minister of Transport to expand, improve and co-ordinate all existing rail, tram and bus services.

Less than eighteen months ago this State Government was elected on a platform which included the promise of expansion and improvement of public transport. That was the mandate on which this Government was elected and which this Government undertook to achieve. The recommendations of the Victorian Transport Study are the antithesis of the Government's mandate. Mr Lonie’s recommendation on metropolitan public transport, apart from recommending the closure of eight railway lines and seven tramlines, essentially come down to a public transport system which would comprise only peak hour services to the central business district of Melbourne. Under Mr Lonie’s scenario the balance of the transport needs of the community, that is the off-peak services, the evening services and weekend services would be provided by private cars, taxis, school buses and similar services.

If the Government wants to adopt the recommendations of Mr Lonie, which are the direct opposite and in contrast to the promises it made before the last State election, it should in honesty go to the people of Victoria on that issue. No Government with any sense of morality should obtain a majority in an election on a certain policy and then midway through its term, adopt the reverse policy. If the Government wants to adopt the Lonie recommendations, it should not in conscience do so without an endorsement from the people of the State.

Although in the past the Government has promised great things, it has seldom achieved those promises. Indeed, there has been enough vacillation, procrastination and deceit from the Government in respect of public transport. I endorse an editorial in the Melbourne Herald of 25 September which, in relation to the Victorian Transport Study, stated:

The Government must lay down positive guide lines—and stick to them.

There has been too much neglect, too many delays.

This motion provides an opportunity for the Government to come clean and decide which of the three options it will take. Will it fulfil the promises it has made in relation to public transport, will it turn full circle and adopt the Lonie recommendation, or will it take the easy road and pretend to fulfil its promises while in reality adopting the recommendations of the transport study? Many people suspect that the third line has been occurring for years. The Government has been promising the world but in reality giving only cosmetic improvements in the services while the basic infrastructure of the public transport system falls apart. In fact, many people in the community believe the cutback at all costs philosophy of the Victorian Transport Study has been implemented by stealth or by neglect for many years. However, more recently there seems to have been a acceleration in the process. Within recent weeks the trading and catering branch of the Victorian Railways has been under inspection by a private catering organization which, it is understood, has been asked to submit propositions to the Victorian Railways Board for taking over those operations.

Simultaneously, a number of consultant firms are working on projects within the Victorian Railways and the other authorities in the transport system. The firm of Pak Poy and Associates has been working for some months on a project which, I am informed relates to the management and administration of our public transport systems. The Transmark organization, which this House last heard of in relation to grain transport and the charges being made to wheatgrowers, has been contracted by the Government to do more work. Recently it came to my notice that Transmark has reported on the cost-pricing options of the passenger services of the Victorian Rail-
ways. On 15 October it reported to none other than the Acting Secretary of the Transport Regulation Board recommending the options the Victorian Railways had in respect of cutting back its passenger operations under four main headings—country services, interstate services, country commuter services and suburban services.

These matters are going on without the knowledge of Parliament. The honourable member for Polwarth may be aware of them but they are certainly not with my knowledge or consent, nor with the consent of the Opposition or of the National Party. The Victorian Transport Study, which is the subject of this debate, was instituted as a result of a motion of this House and nothing ought to be done about implementing it without the approval of the House. If more evidence is wanted on what is happening with the recommendations of the Lonie inquiry, one need look no further than this morning's Melbourne Age which reports on page 5:

The Transport Minister, Mr Maclellan, said yesterday that the Government had decided to begin implementing sections of the Lonie report soon.

As I speak, this is the first mention the House has heard about the Lonie recommendations. However, the Minister is telling Melbourne newspapers that he has already decided to implement sections of that report. That is in dramatic contrast to what his backbenchers are saying in country newspapers, which will be the subject of the next motion before the House.

If one wants more examples of what the Government has been doing they can be obtained from the works and services programme for the Victorian Railways which shows dramatic cutbacks in several areas of basic infrastructure.

If one looks at the Government's commitments over recent elections, in the metropolitan area the Government would have to spend approximately $250 million if it were to meet its commitments. In actual fact, no money has been committed for those projects yet, including in the current financial year. Examples are the Furlong station which was promised in 1976; the electrification of the Melton line; the Greensborough-Eltham duplication; the third line from Box Hill to Ringwood—a start has been made on that as far as Blackburn; the Caulfield-Cheltenham line—half the work has been done; the Caulfield-Oakleigh line which has not been started; the Ringwood to Bayswater and Croydon duplication which is half completed; the Frankston centre which has not even been started. All of these projects have been repeatedly promised, but no money has been allocated for them in this financial year.

When preparing my speech I thought I might have to look for expert material from academics and independent researchers but when one considers the matter, the Government is condemned out of its own mouth and that of its statutory authorities.

The annual report of the Victorian Railways for the year ended 30 June 1980 is headed, "Capital is the Key". In the body of the report the railways demonstrate the effect that the starvation of capital resources has had on the suburban system and indeed the whole infrastructure of the railways. On page 4 it states:

Nowhere is the inseparable relationship between service standards and the availability of capital funds better illustrated than in the case of the suburban passenger system, which is currently the subject of severe public and Press criticism arising mainly from its poor record of operating reliability.

The report goes on to state:

Again because of lack of funds, insufficient line capacity will then be available—

This is after the underground loop is opened—

the busiest routes to enable the Board to run the number of trains that the terminal system will be able to handle efficiently.

What an appalling situation. The final comment is:

These are only two of the many examples of the way in which the inadequacy of capital allocations not only reflects on the Board's standing and its ability to improve the financial results of railway operations, but places in jeopardy the very future of the Railways as an effective transport operation.

The scenario to which Mr Lonie applied his mind is one where the Victorian Railways is informing the Gov-
ernment that the basis of the system is in jeopardy because of a lack of capital funds and yet the Government is still cutting back services and the capital that is being invested in the railways.

I have been informed that the latest cutback is that the railways are no longer hiring out special trains. This information came from a scout group in Mordialloc which wanted to hire a rail motor to take people from Mentone to Bacchus Marsh and return. They were originally quoted $700 for the excursion. When one considers that rail motors are available on Sunday one would think that the cost of running a rail motor from Mentone to Bacchus Marsh and return would be much less than $700, so a sizeable profit would be involved, but the Victorian Railways have apparently taken the view that they will not accept further bookings for rail excursions. They will honour bookings that have already been made. The Victorian Railways are now refusing to accept business when it is presented to them.

These limitations on funds have occurred despite the mandate on which the Government was elected. Let us for a moment look at that mandate. Immediately after the 1979 election the Premier was quoted in an article which appeared in the Herald newspaper of 8 May 1979:

"The Premier, Mr Hamer, said today the people of Victoria had given the Liberal Party a mandate to govern. "We accept that mandate with enthusiasm and will do our utmost to provide a further three years of sound, competent and creative Government," Mr Hamer said.

The article later states:

Mr Hamer said a Liberal Government would immediately start to fulfil its election promises. "All of the promises which we have made to the people of Victoria will be carried out as quickly as possible," he said.

"The keynote of the Government will be economy and efficiency." Let us look to the promises the Premier made. In the Victorian Government Transport policy, a 16-page document which was released during the 1979 State election campaign headed, "The Transport campaign headed, "The Transport Follow through", the first words are:

The Government is determined to back public transport and to establish a transport system to rank among the world's best.

There is then a promise about new trams and trains. The document states:

The Victorian Government is acutely conscious of the world-wide energy shortage.

The suburban trains and the tramway system are pollution-free, electric systems. Victoria is well placed to continue the up-grading of public transport to meet the challenge of the energy shortage, and at the same time protect the environment.

The presence of an extensive network of electric trains and trams provides an alternative to the private car, particularly for travel to and from work. This network is currently being extended.

That was eighteen months ago. The Government has passively adopted the study recommendations which imply exactly the reverse of what was promised eighteen months ago. Given the mandate on which the Government was elected, the Victorian Transport Study should have been rejected. That was not the end of the grand statement. At page 3 of the Government's transport policy statement the Minister said:

The need for a second family car is being further reduced by the provision of public transport in the suburbs.

Then on page 4:

The Government's policy is to 'follow through' and complete the many projects which will give Victoria one of the best public transport systems in the world.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! I am sure the honourable member for Knox can present his case quite well without his cheer squad behind him, particularly those who are interjecting out of their place.

Mr CRABB—Finally, on page 5:

The Tramways Board is now in the process of planning the extension of the East Preston tramway. The service will run from the existing terminus in Tyler Street to Settlement Road.

Mr Lonie now says that that should not occur.

The SPEAKER—Order! I suggest that the honourable member address the Chair rather than his fellow members behind him.
Mr CRABB—Mr Lonie suggested that trams should be taken off and replaced by buses. The Government did not reject that recommendation but remained silent. The final comment in relation to the metropolitan system is:

Melbourne is the only capital city in Australia having a pollution free public transport system with a guaranteed brown coal energy source. All the grand promises, but what has happened since? It is not as though the Government had second thoughts immediately. In July 1979 the Premier—not the Minister of Transport, the boss—said, on radio station 3XY, as reported in the daily press:

Melbourne's reshaped and expanded public transport system would cushion the impact of higher petrol prices on household budgets, the Premier, Mr Hamer, said last night.

"One result of steeply rising petrol and oil prices will be a swing to public transport," Mr Hamer said.

"For some years now the Victorian Government had had a programme underway to improve our public transport services and make them more attractive."

He then went on to repeat all the promises about new trains, trams and so on. In January of this year there was a headline in the Melbourne Age, "Super Trains and Buses". We were told that we would be getting double-decker trains and trolley buses. I do not know whether the trolley buses were to be double-deckers. It was part of a major plan to woo more people back to public transport as oil prices rose.

Mr Gavin—What has happened?

Mr CRABB—We have certainly seen no double-decker trains. In July this year there was a remarkable flurry of activity by the Premier and the Minister of Transport. If they were changing their minds about the mandate on public transport, one would have thought that they might have mentioned it, but an article in the Herald of 8 July states:

The Premier, Mr Hamer, today admitted the State's rail system was a mess.

And Mr Hamer served notice that he intends to take a more direct role in the administration of VicRail.

Talks today with the Transport Minister, Mr Maclellan and the new VicRail chairman, Mr Alan Reiher, will be followed by talks with other rail experts and rail unions, Mr Hamer said.

Today's meeting would be the start of a renewed campaign to lift staff morale and make trains cleaner and more punctual.

The next report was in the Sun and it said that 50 per cent of the staff whose morale was to be improved would lose their jobs. During the burst of activity on 8, 9 and 10 July, the Premier promised to make the trains run on time. He said that train services would get an immediate shake-up and that staff morale and industrial relations would be improved. None of those promises was kept. Just a couple of months ago, on 11 August, the Minister and the Premier—once again together—announced a special grant of $3 million to help VicRail modernize its fleet of blue Harris trains. That was another promise, but what happened? The works and services Bill showed that an allocation of $2.3 million was made for the Harris trains, but the programme is to cost $63 million, so it will take 30 years at that rate. Where did the money come from? It was taken from the wagon building programme, so the railways did not receive any additional funds.

It is not only through the daily newspapers and 3XY that one learns what the Government is doing. Last week a remarkable item of information was brought to my attention. It appeared on the front page of the Real Estate News of 14 October, with a photograph of a smiling Minister of Transport. Under the headline, "Trains Planned for East Keilor", the article states:

The State Government is considering opening a passenger rail link through East Keilor and Airport West, the Transport Minister, Robert Maclellan announced on Saturday.

That might seem a little strange, but the article continues:

The State Government is considering opening a passenger rail link through East Keilor and Airport West, the Transport Minister, Robert Maclellan announced on Saturday.

That might seem a little strange, but the article continues:

Mr Maclellan inspected the line and a possible station site with the Liberal Party candidate for Maribyrnong in Saturday's Federal elections.

I do not know if the Minister went to Healesville but he certainly did a good job in Maribyrnong.

Mr Maclellan said the line could be carrying passengers in less than two years if the money was available.

What absolute nonsense! The Minister is spouting that rubbish in the electorate but at the same time in Parliament
he is saying that the Government will adopt sections of the Lonie report. It is not as though the promises made in 1979 and the mandate on which the Government was elected are something new. They are not bright new policies thought up by the present Minister of Transport. In fact, they fit in well with what the Government has been saying ever since 1970.

The Victorian Transport Plan was produced in December 1978. There are three volumes to the report and the Government worked on it for about two years before it was eventually produced, ready for the State elections in 1979. The first volume is entitled "The Strategy" and on page 30 it contains a summary of transport policies. I shall not read them all in detail, I shall just give honourable members an idea of what the summary contains:

- Encourage the use of public transport wherever possible.
- Keep public transport fares at lowest practicable levels.
- Improve the availability of transport to those without access to private cars.
- Encourage transport development and uses that contribute to conservation of energy.
- Minimize the adverse effects of transport on the environment.

In other words, all the good things that everyone concerned about transport would want. The specifics are contained in volume 2, which deals with the five-year plan. Once again the Government made all the promises that have been reiterated over and over since the 1970 plan—express lines, new rolling-stock and so on. Interestingly, it also included the separation of trams from motor vehicles in Sturt Street, Queensbridge Street, Clarendon Street, Lygon Street, Queens Parade and Batman Avenue and the extension of electrified services, although it did say that they must be examined for viability, from Sunshine to Melton, St Albans to Sunbury, Broadmeadows to Craigieburn and beyond Epping. How does that fit in with the recommendations of the Lonie inquiry, which seeks to cut back our transport system to the basic core, the central business district?

That was the 1978 plan, but one can go back a long way to learn the extent to which the Government has committed itself to the people who elected it on a policy of expanding public transport. I refer to the 1973 election promises made by the Government, which are worth a brief examination. The Premier said then:

We have begun a new deal for public transport in Victoria.

He was specific about a programme over the following five years. There were to be new trains and trams. We were to get new railway lines. There was to be the eastern railway to Bulleen, a line from Huntingdale to Fern Tree Gully, one from Frankston to Lyndhurst and one from Altona to Weston. It is interesting that in 1973 we were to have the Altona line extended to Weston, when in 1980 the Lonie report recommends that trains should no longer run from Flinders Street to Altona. There was to be the construction of express tracks from Caulfield to Mordialloc, from Box Hill to Ringwood, from Caulfield to Oakleigh and from Victoria Park to Jolimont. The lines to Greensborough, Croydon, Geelong, Bayswater and Deer Park were to be duplicated and the line to Deer Park and Werribee was to be electrified. Seven years ago the Government promised that all those things would be done within five years, but it has achieved none of them.

In 1976, when the next elections were held, there was another flurry of activity, and the Premier said on 3XY
on a Sunday night in February—this is really worth listening to:

 Everywhere you look now in Melbourne you can see clear signs of a public transport revolution.

 In that speech on 3XY the Premier committed himself, and it is encapsulated in this paragraph with the Premier's words:

 It is the trains that carry the most passengers, which means that more is needed than just new rolling stock. The whole system is being upgraded in a three-stage process. First, there is the underground loop which will untie the knot in the centre of the system. Next a third track is being built on many lines to allow trains to travel express to the city from outer stations. Third, in outer areas, single lines are being duplicated. All this, along with power signalling, means that we can have more trains travelling at faster speeds without diminishing safety.

 That simply has not happened. The Government does not seem to be aware that it was not happening, because the Premier went on to say:

 All this is already paying off in popularity. Latest figures show that half a million more people are now using buses, and more than 11 million more are using trains.

 So we must continue to try to offer the motorist a better alternative to the frustration and delays of peak hour traffic and the cost of parking.

 I do not know who wrote the speech for the Premier, but his final words were:

 Public transport in Victoria is certainly on the move. It will become still better, as the new trains, trams and buses take over more and more, and the many improvements now in hand are completed. As has been said the important thing is not so much where we are, but where we are heading.

 During that election campaign promises were made again that related to the provision of a single ticket system for public transport, which has not happened. The Premier spoke about a new five-year forward look programme in 1976, as opposed to the new forward look plan in 1973. Presumably it was given the same name because it was looking forward to the same things. However, nothing was done between the elections.

 The matter I should most like to draw to the attention of the House is that of the comments made by the then Minister of Transport, Mr Ray Meagher. I quote from an article in the Knox News of 16 March 1976, when the Minister had been out there campaigning for the Liberal candidate. He said:

 We want to make public transport so attractive that anyone who would use a car to travel to work would be a fool.

 He went on and spoke of all the good things that the Government was going to do. It did not do any of them.

 In April 1976, after the election, the then Minister of Transport, Mr Rafferty, was following up the promises that had been made. This is an important statement by the Government because it relates closely to the Government's policies and contrasts with the recommendations of the Victorian Transport Study. In the column entitled "Liberal Voice" in the Herald the former Minister of Transport, Mr Rafferty, is quoted as having said:

 Victoria is well to the forefront in the dramatic world-wide swing back to rail and other forms of transport.

 Action the Government has taken to improve our public transport system has been vindicated by at least 56 overseas cities which are planning massive urban rail systems.

 A programme costing $500 million to modernize our train, tram and bus services is now well under way.

 Again, we are well up with overseas trends. That was the Minister of Transport in Victoria speaking only four years ago. He went on to suggest that we were well up with Sao Paulo in Latin America, Glasgow, Calcutta, Washington, London, Atlanta, Osaka and Milan. These were all cities which the Minister said Victoria was doing as well as in its public transport system. I am not sure whether the Minister was fishing for a trip, but clearly what the Government was telling the people was that Victoria was pursuing the same trends that had been identified overseas of returning to public transport and moving away from the car.

 A phrase that seems to stick in the Premier's mind was repeated again in September 1976, as the Government continued its litany of promises on public transport. Again on 3XY on Sunday night, 5 September 1976, the Premier said:

 In public transport this week, things have certainly been moving.
He was announcing the new trams, and went on to say:

Of course, the new trams mean that Melbourne, like many other cities around the world, now has found that metropolitan electric tramway systems have a real future. They are environmentally clean, they carry large numbers of commuters, and they save the waste of fuel and the congestion involved in the movement of thousands of private cars—with one and a half passengers each.

Indeed, we are to extend two tram lines.

He mentioned the East Burwood line and the East Preston line. The Premier said later:

The whole system is being upgraded . . . so that still more people will want to travel by rail.

The Premier continued:

What we are out to do is, to speed up our aim of making public transport more attractive—faster, more frequent, more comfortable services, and as cheap as possible.

A good public transport system is essential to the well-being of any community.

How does that statement contrast with the recommendations of the Victorian Transport Study?

The sitting was suspended at 6.16 p.m. until 8.5 p.m.

Mr CRABB—Before the suspension of the sitting for dinner I was demonstrating what the Government’s mandate and commitment to Victoria was. Perhaps I have done that adequately. It is appropriate to examine the contrasting situation of Mr Lonie’s recommendations on metropolitan public transport.

It is worth recording how the transport study originated. On 13 June last year the House passed a motion which read:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should—

(a) institute a study into all freight and passenger transport within Victoria and to and from Victoria, in order to produce a co-ordinated transport system capable of meeting the needs of all residents of Victoria, having particular regard to the effect of transport on the balanced development of the State; and

(b) maintain all country rail lines, including the Balmoral line, pending the results of the above study.

That motion was carried unanimously without demur by any honourable member. I should especially like that put on the record because a member of the other House, the honourable Mr Bubb, one of the members for the Ballarat Province, has taken it upon himself to go to press in the Ballarat Courier informing the good people of Ballarat that the Government voted against the establishment of the Lonie inquiry, which is clearly untrue. The honourable member went as far as saying that anyone who could read Hansard of 13 June would note that that was true.

It is apparent that the honourable member is not only naive but merely a fool. I do not think he was deliberately telling lies—I think he cannot read very well. The honourable member has mistaken a division during the course of a debate on whether country rail lines should be maintained or retained. The Government won that division because the honourable member for Gippsland South went for a haircut, and no doubt honourable members recall that occasion. Surprisingly now, the honourable member does not need to go for a haircut—he can turn up for divisions because he is now on the Government benches.

However, for the sake of the honourable members who represent the Ballarat area, it is worth noting that neither the honourable member for Ballarat North nor the honourable member for Ballarat South took it upon themselves to inform their rather ignorant colleague in the other House that he had told lies in the local newspaper. Those lies have not been corrected to this day.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—I would remind the honourable member for Knox that he must not reflect upon honourable members of either Houses of Parliament to the effect that he is now saying that the honourable member representing the Ballarat Province told lies in his local newspaper and that is a direct reflection and I would ask the honourable member to withdraw the remark.

Mr CRABB—Could I ask for your guidance, Mr Speaker? What the honourable member said in the local newspaper is not true.
The SPEAKER—That is a different matter to saying that the honourable member told lies.

Mr CRABB—I withdraw the remark. I do not for a moment believe that the honourable member did that deliberately. It was merely a matter of ignorance. The matter should be corrected by his lower House colleagues, who should be able to interpret Hansard more accurately.

However, if one turns to the Victorian Transport Study report on metropolitan public transport, one notes that it essentially follows the philosophy that Mr Lonie and his team followed in all the other reports. It favours a line-haul operation for passengers, as it does for freight. The essence of the report is that the metropolitan public transport system ought to provide peak period services to the central business district and nothing else. It suggests that the bus system should act as a feeder to the rail system and that there should be virtually no off-peak, evening or week-end services and even those buses which operate should operate without subsidy.

Mr Lonie's ideas on persons whom he describes as "disadvantaged" are that there should be some sort of charitable system of taxi cabs, buses owned by schools or councils or whatever. Indeed, one could almost think it was a report brought down by Adam Smith 200 years ago or perhaps by Ayn Rand today. It is hard to believe the integrity of the report because it was not followed through in respect of other types of transport. Mr Lonie recommended that increasing amounts of money should be spent on roads, whereas I would have thought his ultra conservative economic philosophy, which is reflected in his recommendations on passenger transport, would require that every new road that is built by the Government should have a toll gate on either end, and if it does not pay its way it should not be built. I would like to have seen what Mr Lonie thought about the West Gate Bridge Authority, which is clearly bankrupt. In a humorous article I read recently, it was suggested that because the West Gate Bridge Authority was bankrupt, it should rip up the girders and sell them—just as the recommendations in regard to the public transport system suggest that the rails ought to be ripped up and sold.

However, Mr Lonie, in his recommendations on metropolitan public transport, has produced what can only be called a trivial document. Not anywhere in the voluminous report, almost 100 pages, can one find an original objective analysis. It is a fairly tawdry collection of plagiarised excerpts from other reports—not even reports that have been vaguely gleaned from around the world, but reports which almost any member of Parliament in an hour or two in the Parliamentary Library could have collected. In his assessment of the public transport situation, there is no consideration of social effects or social costs, nor of the environment or of the effects on the community.

I recall seeing some years ago the analysis on what the British Government, in conjunction with the Greater London Council, decided to build the new Victoria tube line. In that analysis new methods were created for cost-benefit analysis. It was demonstrated that the Victoria tube line would never collect enough fare revenue to justify the capital expenditure incurred, but the ancillary benefits that would accrue to the community from that line far exceeded the estimated capital cost. When one took into account the reduction and congestion on the roads, the reduction in pollution in the atmosphere, the reduction in stress and strain and accidents, and all the other concomitant effects of congested roads, the Victorian line became a very profitable proposition, was accordingly constructed, and is now an efficient and beneficial section of the London public transport system.

None of that methodology is used anywhere in the Lonie report, and is specifically not used in this examination of metropolitan public transport. Equally, the transport study team did not examine, in any way that is dis-
I now turn to the metropolitan public transport report. I will refer to these page by page, and I will assume that whoever may read the report in Hansard might have a copy of this report with them. On page 2 is a graph of the trends in public transport patronage. That demonstrates a very high peak of Tramways Board patronage during the war years, certainly between 1940 and 1950, and a steady decline in tramway patronage afterwards. It shows a steady patronage on the VicRail system until 1970, and a very dramatic reduction afterwards. The graph indicates that the railways patronage was about 130 million or 140 million in 1970, and has fallen to about 90 million in 1980. What is not said in the report is that that drop in patronage matches the performance of the Victorian Railways.

Up until 1970 the Victorian Railways had a relatively efficient operation. I refer to the McKinsey report that the Minister provided last year. It showed that in 1970, 91 per cent of VicRail's trains were on time; the definition "on time" being less than three minutes late, which is a reasonable definition. Mr McKinsey showed that 5 years later in 1975 the figure had dropped from 91 per cent to 78 per cent.

I took it upon myself to make some inquiries as to the level of lateness of trains currently, and obtained figures for two or three weeks recently. On analyzing those I found that 68 per cent of trains were on time, the balance being either cancelled or more than 3 minutes late. One can see that continued decrease in the performance of VicRail, and that decrease in performance is matched equally by the decrease in patronage.

Mr Lonie's conclusion is not the same as mine. He does not conclude that the decrease in patronage results from decreasing performance; rather he concludes that it is in the nature of the system.

The trams, on the other hand, show a dramatic fall from as far back as 1950. The reason again for that, in my view, is that the Tramways Board is still operating the same routes that it
was operating in 1950, and the desires of the people of Melbourne have changed. Clearly, people are not now living in the same places as they were in 1950, or indeed working in the same places as they were in 1950, yet the Tramways Board is still running the same service.

The Minister asks would that also be true of the railway system. The railway system is currently serving the central business district more than the trams and buses, and the number of people in the central business district, although this growth has been limited, indeed there may be a marginal negative growth, is still much the same and therefore the railways are still serving the same dimension of demand, I would think, as they did ten years ago.

At page 13, sections 3.3 and 3.4 the Lonie report refers to the matter I am discussing. It attributes the high level of public transport patronage during the war years to petrol rationing. That is a give-away line. It is an important factor. If petrol rationing during the war caused the high level of public transport patronage one would expect petrol rationing at any time in the future to have a similar result. Petrol can be rationed in more ways than by issuing coupons. It can be effectively rationed by increasing the price. That is happening today, yet, despite the precedent, Mr Lonie’s assessment is that future fuel prices and availability of petrol will have no effect on increasing the levels of public transport patronage.

In section 3.10 at page 16 of the report, Mr Lonie reflects on the reasons behind the decline in patronage over the period under review and states that the obvious answer is the convenience and flexibility of the motor car. He lists many other factors, such as the nature of post-war urban development, the shift of work opportunities to new suburbs, the decline in population in the inner city and the decline of work opportunities in the central business district.

Mr Lonie does not mention the decline in service and reliability of the public transport system. Clearly, even the Government must accept that a public transport system that is not efficient and reliable will attract less patronage than one that is efficient and reliable—dramatically. The rate of cancellation of trains during the peak hour of Melbourne is 41 per cent; one train in 25 is cancelled. If a person’s car broke down every twenty-fifth day, the owner would either purchase another car or would use another method of getting to work. That level of reliability is not good enough. Yet that is what is happening in public transport. Mr Lonie and his team have not considered that fact in the report.

To graphically illustrate how bad the service is, I shall use an example of a gentleman who wrote to me recently of his experiences as a train traveller on the Belgrave line over a period of two to three months. He travels to Melbourne on the 7.9 a.m. train and returns on the 5.32 p.m. train. His catalogue of problems include: In April, for 4 days the trains were late, half an hour every night and late most mornings by 10 or 15 minutes; on 23 April all trains were delayed; on the following day the morning train and all others were 40 minutes late because of signal failure; during May his train was cancelled because of a signal defect at Upwey and there was a consequent over-loading in the following trains; on 3 June there was general chaos because cables had collapsed; 2 days later the train was 20 minutes late; on 18 June the train was dangerously overcrowded because the previous train was cancelled and on that afternoon the train was half an hour late; the same occurred next week; on 18 July the trains were 15 minutes late; on 23 July they were dangerously overcrowded again; and, on 24 July, the occasion on which he wrote, there was general chaos, as he informs me, resulting from a cause unknown. That is the regular experience of a train traveller in Melbourne yet in the recommendations of the report no consideration is given to that level of service and the effect it has on patronage and on what might occur.
At page 19 of the report a table demonstrates the dimensions of the public transport market. It shows that 3400 people drive a car in the city during the day out of a total of 5800 city trips; approximately 58 per cent. That table is used as a direction towards cutting out the public transport system almost completely rather than as a positive indicator of the market available for public transport should public transport be provided. Section 1.53 at page 33 is remarkable. It states that the authorities have endeavoured to market the product on the basis of attractive fare schedules, improved vehicles, maintaining high levels of service and using various methods recommended by marketing and public relations personnel to present an appropriate image to attract passengers to use public transport.

One can hardly believe Mr Lonie is describing Melbourne when one reflects on the experience of public transport users in Melbourne over the past decade. For an inquiry into public transport to state categorically that the public transport authorities have attractive fare schedules, improved vehicles, high levels of service and other various methods recommended by public relations personnel is astounding. Whatever city Mr Lonie is describing, it is not Melbourne. He states that these efforts have had little effect. That is absolute rot. There has been little effort, resulting in little effect.

At page 43 and subsequently, Mr Lonie addresses himself to the capital requirements of the Victorian Railways. I have already spoken of some of the problems of lack of investment. The study group believes insufficient capital investment is currently being directed to the public transport system and with that statement one can agree. Approximately 329 rail carriages are of an average age of 60 years and are likely to be phased out by late 1985. Mr Lonie points out that the deterioration in those trains is such that they lead to jammed doors and windows, excessive draughts and the entry of water into passenger and driver compartments. The report does not state that the entry of water into those compartments causes faults with electrical circuits and sets trains on fire with amazing regularity and that the Government intends on occasions to allow those trains to be driven on the underground loop.

Referring to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board, Mr Lonie points to the current fleet of buses which include 48 at an average of 25 years of age and 105 at 15 years of age. Presumably, the honourable member for Sandringham who is interjecting, and whose railway line in the electorate he represents has been recommended for closure will contribute later in the debate and honourable members will then be able to listen to the pearls of wisdom dropping from his lips.

Mr Lonie mentions obsolete mechanical, signalling, double line electrical signalling and so on. He draws attention to the inadequacies of the communication system which includes the central telephone exchange and the ancient fault-prone cables, antiquated audio and visual train information systems, and so on. He mentions that suburban trains are unprotected against vandalism and that in the past decade more than 50 carriages have been subjected to serious fire damage.

Mr Crellin—I wonder who is burning them?

Mr CRABB—Indeed, if railway trains and carriages worth $2 million are left in a paddock without protection, without a fence around it, without security lighting and even without anyone looking after it, the fact of life is that someone is liable to damage them.

Mr CRABB—The honourable member is correct in saying that it is a disgrace, but there is no point in sitting in this House and saying that.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! Let us not have debate by interjection.

Mr CRABB—Every other public transport system has train stabling yards. The Victorian Railways have put to the Government propositions for the establishment of train stabling yards, the first one at Langwarrin and others...
around the suburbs, which would be security controlled in such a way as to protect the investment of the community. The fact is that, according to the report, 50 carriages worth $20 million have been set on fire in the past ten years. That is a direct result of the lack of investment in secure stabilizing yards.

The Lonie report goes on to emphasize the delays in duplication projects at Ringwood, Croydon and Cheltenham. It points out that bridges in the suburban area are falling apart and have reached the end of their life. Despite that and the Government's remarks about safety, the works and services allocation for bridge works has been cut from $5 million in each of the last two years to $2.3 million this year—less than half in real terms.

On page 68 under the heading "Comments", there is a remarkable item where the report states, in section 8.5:

The Study Group has not sought to investigate the management, staffing and operations methods of the public transport authorities. I thought that was one of the things the study group was meant to be doing because one of the severe criticisms put, especially by the users of public transport, is that the management, staffing and operations of the authorities are inadequate; yet Mr Lonie says that the study group has not sought to investigate those matters.

The report continues:

However, in the course of the Study, the Group has travelled on trams and trains, has visited railway workshops and maintenance facilities.

On the basis of that in-depth analysis, he comes to the conclusion, in section 8.6:

It is impossible not to reach the conclusion that work practices in both Authorities are much more labour intensive than is the case in many comparable organizations.

What a trivial, off-hand, throw-away statement! Not a number, not an indication that he investigated a comparable organization, not a mention of which organization he is referring to! A trivial and shallow effort at a report!

At section 8.13 the study group endorses the idea of a common ticket system for travel on trains, trams and route buses, a proposition advanced by the Labor Party over the past ten years. The difficulty is that Mr Lonie does not mention how that is to be done, especially in consideration of the fact that he does not believe in setting up a single metropolitan transit authority.

He then continues with the view that fares should be doubled. He does not actually say that. He says that fares should be increased to a level where they would cover the cost of travel, and that means doubled, so he is in favour of doubling fares.

Mr Dunstan—How do you calculate that that means doubled?

Mr CRABB—From the Victorian Railways and the Tramways Board annual reports. I will lend the honourable member copies, if he wishes. Those reports state that the suburban service gains in revenue about half of its costs of operation. One could argue that it is 55 per cent, but in rough terms it is half; so that to increase the fares to a level to cover costs would mean at least doubling them because some people would be driven away from the service by increasing fares to that level.

In section 8.15 dealing with that matter, the report states:

Such a policy would inevitably result in some diversion from public transport. Exactly how much is not clear.

That is what we get! That is it! That is the total assessment of the effect of that policy by the Transport Study. What a worthless effort! The man spent six months coming up with a report and that is what he tells us: "Exactly how much is not clear". It is crucial to know how much and what effect that is likely to have. It is clear that if a transport service drives half of its passengers away it must increase its fares not twice but four times; and presumably that drives more passengers away. If the service continues with that exercise, it will end up with no passengers at all.

In section 8.33 on page 73 of the report, Mr Lonie says:

Elsewhere in this report a number of revaluations of services in inner and middle suburbs are recommended. It is hoped that this will make available some resources, both
1328 Metropolitan Public Transport

physical and financial, which may be re-deployed to areas where relatively poor public transport is experienced.

The Opposition has often talked of the transport-rich suburbs and the transport-poor suburbs. One could say that Mr Lonie is referring here to a reduction of services in the transport-rich suburbs. The trouble is that he does not talk of any increase in transport for the transport-poor suburbs. The best we get is:

It is hoped that this will make available some resources, both physical and financial, which may be re-deployed to areas where relatively poor public transport is experienced.

In the paragraph 8.34 the report states:

However it would be unfortunate if residents of outer areas formed unrealistic expectations of service improvement.

Unrealistic expectations! The level of expectation at the moment is about zero. It could hardly be increased to anything unrealistic.

At page 76 in section 8.44 Mr Lonie rejects the idea of a single metropolitan transit authority. The problem is that he makes the wrong comparison. He rejects the idea of an amalgamation of Victorian Railways with the Tramways Board. At no stage in his study does he consider the idea of establishing a single metropolitan transit authority, leaving the Victorian Railways to run the country rail and freight system, and that is a remarkable omission from a report of this nature.

Mr Maclellan—Did he study amalgamation elsewhere?

Mr CRABB—Mr Lonie says that New South Wales tried an amalgamation and it did not work, but what New South Wales attempted was to amalgamate the whole system and that did not work. In Victoria it has been suggested, not only by the Opposition but it was part of the Government's policy until very recently, that there should be a metropolitan transit authority as there is, for example, in Brisbane where it works successfully.

In section 8.5A on page 79 the study group recommends the improvement of certain practices in the authorities:

The Study Group is of the opinion that considerable scope exists for improved effectiveness in many of these areas and it is recommended that specific attention be directed to:

- the improvement of staff training and development programmes;
- more formal application of methods and systems evaluation and of industrial engineering skills;
- use of management consultants, where appropriate.

At least there is one with which I can agree!

In section 8.55 there is another remarkable comment which gives an insight into the operations of the Study Group. It says:

This is not to suggest that the Study Group believes that management efficiency in the public transport authorities is lower than in other Government and semi-Government bodies.

On what basis he draws that conclusion is beyond me, because the level of operation of each of the transport authorities leaves much to be desired. I am not sure whether Mr Lonie is saying that all Government and semi-Government bodies are equally inefficient or whether he disagrees with me in regard to the Victorian Railways and the Tramways Board.

On page 81 it is suggested that eight train lines should be cut and that seven tramways lines should be cut and on page 82 he comments about the bus lines and says:

Modification of bus services into a system complementing the remaining rail and tram services.

The remaining rail and tram services! Mr Lonie envisages a public transport system which serves only the central business district during peak hours and that bus services ought merely to act as feeders to that and that cross suburban travellers should have no public transport at all.

In section 8.78 the report suggests:

It is recommended that a study be undertaken to identify the costs and benefits of replacing obsolete green trams with buses rather than new trams.

In other words, he wants to stop the construction of the new orange trams and the new gold trams and replace them with buses.

Mr Gavin—That will increase pollution.
Mr CRABB—It will add to pollution and to all the things the Government has said it will not do. In paragraph 8.60 Mr Lonie suggests there should be a more open view of taxi regulation. The Opposition would not disagree with that. There are no doubt many ways in which the taxi industry could be of benefit to the community than it is at present. The first conclusion of the report contains the words:

Reliability is the most keenly sought factor in public transport.

The Opposition agrees, the only trouble being that Mr Lonie did not give consideration to that in his analysis and recommendations, because if reliability were as it ought to be and as it was 10 years ago, Melbourne would not now be facing the present problems connected with metropolitan transport.

The second conclusion, quite remarkably, is:

The Study Group Investigations have shown there is insufficient data available on requirements of the various sections of the metropolitan area for public transport.

What is the study for? The study was meant to produce that sort of information, not to produce the conclusions that the information does not exist. I could have told him that before he started!

Mr Maclellan—Did you?

Mr CRABB—The Minister has trouble getting information out of VicRail, what sort of trouble does he think I have? The best information I can get is what falls off trucks, which is probably better than the information the Minister obtains. Paragraph 9.4 of the conclusions, states:

The motor vehicle is likely to continue to be the best provider of mobility and accessibility for the individual and industry for an increasing range of goods and services, and the most important mode of passenger transport for many years to come.

At no stage is there an analysis of the factors leading up to that conclusion. It is not a conclusion of the report, it is a premise upon which the report is based and upon which the conclusions are based. I defy anyone to find anywhere in the report an objective analysis leading to that conclusion. There is simply no such thing. Mr Lonie continues by stating that fixed rail systems have only a limited potential to encourage the development of urban growth. What nonsense! Most of the urban growth in Melbourne occurred because of the fixed rail system and if anyone wants to see an example of what happens to places that do not have a public transport system, they would need only to look at the plummeting property values in places like Melton that have little or no public transport.

In paragraph 9.10 Mr Lonie states that the Transport Regulation Board’s practice of discouraging the provision of independent school buses for the transport of students where public transport is available should cease. He seems to think this will cause a decrease in peak hour traffic and give some sort of benefit. He is suggesting moving one bus load of children from a tramways bus to a school bus. How that would change the community cost of transporting the children to school is beyond me, but it is indicative of the approach Mr Lonie has used. He then suggests that there should be no extension or even continued operation of much of the fixed rail services, and states:

Widespread replacement of tram services should be contemplated as soon as possible.

He then continues with what is perhaps one of the more significant aspects of his conclusions:

The Government subsidy provided for public transport should be withdrawn as soon as possible.

He wants no subsidy at all for public transport but in his recommendations on roads he recommends there should be increased expenditure, without mentioning from where the increased expenditures should be funded. Paragraph 9.16 states, inter alia:

There is little that can be done to increase patronage unless multiple services are developed and maintained.

The Opposition agrees entirely, but it is a shame that that was not considered earlier in the report and considered by Mr Lonie when reaching his conclusions.
I shall not deal with the recommendations that follow in detail, other than to say that they are pretty wishy-washy. The word "consideration" is used time and again. He says various things "should be considered", "consideration should be given", "a study should be undertaken", "there should be a reassessment", "a plan should be developed after investigation" and uses many similar expressions. This is a trivial document based on a trivial analysis! I have contrasted the Government's mandate with the recommendations of the Lonie report. The Government's mandate clearly calls for the Government to expand and improve the metropolitan transport system, but the Lonie report clearly calls for the opposite.

The policy of the Labor Party is quite clear. It is in favour of the extension and improvement of the system. Indeed, for some years its policy has been along those lines and the Government policy has also been along similar lines, although perhaps it has not gone as far. The Lonie report is the antithesis of both the Opposition's policy and the Government's policy.

The Opposition believes there ought to be one, single metropolitan transit authority to run Melbourne's transport system as a single, co-ordinated unit, including a single ticket structure. It ought to have the power to run its own finances and do everything that is required for or conducive to the running of an efficient transport system. The board that controls it ought to comprise elected representatives of employees and nominated representatives of travellers, taxpayers and management. There also ought to be worker and traveller involvement at all levels and there ought to be consultative committees in each metropolitan region. Its capital works programme ought to be financed from the Works and Services Account and it ought to be able to borrow money, lease its rolling stock and do all of the things that such an authority should do.

The Government ought to provide a fixed subsidy for fares, based on the number of passengers or passenger kilometres. The subsidy ought to be paid to the authority, which should then be required to operate at a surplus, with the surplus being invested in its capital works programme. The objects of the Metropolitan Transit Authority ought to be similar to those set out by the Government as long ago as 1970. They should include the provision of an integrated service to provide all the people of Melbourne with reasonable access to efficient transport to and from their places of work, for their shopping, schools and leisure activities. It would involve a substantial increase in the number of buses presently used and the construction of the new railway lines that the Government once promised. There would have to be an immediate programme to replace the antiquated red rattlers and the other lines and express lines promised in 1970, the containment of fare rises, the expansion of the tram network and the isolation of tram tracks as promised by the Government in successive election campaigns.

I believe I have demonstrated that the Government has a mandate to improve and expand the public transport system, as I called for in the motion. The Government has been neglectful in not reaffirming that mandate in the face of the recommendations of the Lonie report. The Minister of Transport should have reaffirmed the commitment he made eighteen months ago when asking for votes from the people of Victoria. He ought to have reaffirmed that commitment on the day that he tabled the Lonie report and it is regrettable that he did not do so and it is also regrettable that he has not chosen to do so now. I believe he ought to do so now, and I believe members of the Government party who represent suburban electorates should tell the House what they are going to do, whether it be in connection with the Sandringham line or the Alamein line.

Mrs Patrick—The Sandringham line is the Brighton line, too.
Mr CRABB—No doubt we will also hear from the honourable member for Brighton as well as the honourable member for Burwood, in whose electorate the Alamein line is recommended for closure. It has already been replaced by a bus service on a few evenings recently.

I hope this debate can continue so that these members can reaffirm the commitment they made to the people who elected them only eighteen months ago. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray)—For the reasons indicated by the shadow Minister of Transport and mentioned by me early this afternoon when dealing with how these transport motions should be handled by the House, the Labor Party believes they should be treated as separate issues. I understand that the Government wishes to have a cognate debate on this matter later in the week and if that is the wish of the House, and it is voted upon, obviously the Labor Party will meet that need on Thursday. I reiterate that the debate should proceed now. The Minister has a responsibility to respond now to the address given by the shadow Minister of Transport who has outlined extremely well and in detail the weakness of the Lonie report and the implications on transport in this State. The Opposition does not support the adjournment of this matter.

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition)—This is the first opportunity that Parliament has had of debating these three extremely important motions that have been placed on the Notice Paper by the shadow Minister of Transport. This issue must be the most important matter confronting the people of Victoria today—whether they will have public transport. The honourable member for Knox pointed out carefully the direction in which the Government was going in relation to public transport and he also mentioned promises made by the Premier about public transport. Are these accusations and allegations not to be answered by the Minister now? Does not the Minister intend allowing debate to continue on the first motion moved by the honourable member for Knox? If not, one can only conclude that the Government is afraid of the recommendations that have been made. What other construction could be put on the matter?

Either the Government intends to accept the recommendations of Lonie or it has not the courage to say in this Parliament tonight where it stands. It is prepared to allow the debates to rest in limbo until the honourable member for Knox will be obliged to move his second motion tomorrow. Presumably the Government will adopt the same cowardly attitude tomorrow in refusing to accept to debate this issue, and on Thursday, if it so suits the Government, when the honourable member for Knox is obliged to move the third motion in his name in respect of freight, perhaps the Government might consider debating the matter.

The Government is displaying cowardice on an issue which is important in the eyes of most people in Victoria today. It has decided not to inform people about where they stand in relation to the metropolitan public transport system. Consequently, the people are entitled to believe the Government accepts the recommendations of the Lonie report. Notwithstanding the ramifications of that report, the electorate is entitled tonight and in the future to believe the Government proposes to accept the recommendations. I should have thought that the Minister would have welcomed the opportunity of stating the Government’s position on the Lonie report.

Tonight it would have been easy for the Minister of Transport to answer the allegations made by the honourable member for Knox, and to put to rest the troubles that concern the electorate and the people who believe in public transport in Victoria. However, the Minister has decided not to accept that challenge. One can only conclude that the honourable gentleman, as the spokesman for the Government on this mat-
ter, has not made up his mind whether to accept the recommendations of the Lonie report.

I suggest that the Minister and the Government are prepared to accept the recommendations of that report. That is the only conclusion to which one can come, because of the Minister's reluctance to debate this issue where it should be debated, in this Parliament. If the Minister walks away from that challenge to debate this issue, he and the Government will have to answer to the people who respect the propositions put by the honourable member for Knox in relation to preserving public transport in this State.

Mr CRABB (Knox)—Surely all the Minister of Transport has to do is say to the House that he reaffirms the platform on which he was elected eighteen months ago, and then there would be no debate. All he has to say in relation to the mandate given by the people is that the promises that he made eighteen months ago still hold good. What else would there be to talk about? It would take half a minute for the honourable gentleman to say that. However, the Minister wishes to have the debate adjourned. What is the reason for that? Does he have to go back to a party meeting? Has the honourable gentleman decided to renege on the promises that were made?

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! I ask the honourable member to return to the motion. He should not canvass what might or might not happen. The House is simply concerned with whether the debate should be adjourned.

Mr CRABB—If the Government has decided to stand by the commitments that it made eighteen months ago, it should say so. If it has decided to renege on them, it should go to an election.

The House divided on Mr Maclellan's motion (the Hon. S. J. Plowman in the chair).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AYES</th>
<th>NOES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr Austin</td>
<td>Mr remington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Balfour</td>
<td>Mr Roper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Birrell</td>
<td>Mr Rowe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Borthwick</td>
<td>Mr Sidirooulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Brown</td>
<td>Mr Simmonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Burgin</td>
<td>Mr Simpson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Chambers</td>
<td>Mr Spyker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Coleman</td>
<td>Mr Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Collins</td>
<td>Mr Toner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Crellin</td>
<td>Mr Trezise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Dixon</td>
<td>Dr Vaughan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Dunstan</td>
<td>Mr Wilkes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ebery</td>
<td>Mr Wilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Evans (Ballarat North)</td>
<td>Mr Cox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Evans (Gippsland East)</td>
<td>Mr McArthur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Hamer</td>
<td>Mr Hinchey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Hann</td>
<td>Mr Hinchey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Jasper</td>
<td>Mr Hinchey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Jona</td>
<td>Mr Hinchey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Kenneth</td>
<td>Mr Hinchey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Lacy</td>
<td>Mr Hinchey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Lieberman</td>
<td>Mr Hinchey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr McCance</td>
<td>Mr Hinchey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr McClure</td>
<td>Mr Hinchey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tellers: Mr Cox Mr McArthur

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

SUMMARY OFFENCES (CORPORATION MEETINGS) BILL

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to amend the Summary Offences Act 1966 to enable persons responsible for the conduct of meetings of corporations to hold and conduct those meetings without disruption.

Section 17(2) of the Summary Offences Act provides that:

Where in the opinion of the chairman presiding at a public meeting any person in or near the
hall room or building in which the meeting is being held—

(a) behaves in a riotous indecent offensive threatening or insulting manner; or

(b) uses threatening abusive obscene indecent or insulting words—

the chairman may verbally direct any member of the police force who is present to remove such person from the hall room or building or the neighbourhood thereof and the member of the police force shall remove such person accordingly.

That sub-section is confined in its operation to public meetings and therefore does not apply to meetings which are not or may not be described as public meetings.

For example, the annual general meeting of a company, open only to its members, would not normally be a public meeting. Even if a public company were to admit at its annual general meeting a limited number of persons other than its shareholders, who are entitled to attend, it might well be that the meeting was still not a public meeting, in the sense that not every member of the public would be free to attend. Thus, if any one or more of the persons present made it their objective to disrupt or to frustrate the holding of that meeting, section 17(2) of the Act would have no application, and the chairman would be powerless to order the removal of the persons involved.

This situation has in fact occurred on at least one occasion. In the particular case, the police were of the view that the meeting was not a public meeting, so they proceeded pursuant to section 9(1)(d) of the Act, which prescribes an offence of trespass. The Court held that such an offence was not made out, on the basis that the meeting was not held at the office of the company and therefore the chairman was not in the position of an occupier or owner of the premises, as is prescribed by section 9(1)(d).

In many instances, meetings convened by corporations are required to be held by law, and must be held within a specified date. It is not then simply a matter of adjourning a disrupted meeting to a subsequent date.

It is recognized by the Government that there exists the need to ensure the orderly conduct of meetings, other than purely public meetings. As it appears that such a need is not being adequately met by the existing legislation, the Government proposes this Bill to rectify this situation.

The Bill provides that where a person who is present at a general meeting of a corporation wilfully fails to obey a ruling or direction of the chairman which has been given in good faith and is necessary for the preservation of order at the meeting, the meeting may resolve that the person be removed. In circumstances where the meeting has been so disrupted that it is not practicable to put such a resolution to the meeting, the chairman may direct that the person be removed from the meeting.

Where the meeting has resolved that a person be removed or where, because of disruption, it is not practicable to put such a resolution to the meeting, the chairman may verbally direct that a member of the police force remove that person. No offence is committed by such a person and no penalty is provided. He or she is simply removed from the meeting or its vicinity. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr MILLER (Prahran), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 28.

APPROPRIATION (1980–81, No. 1) BILL (Budget debate)

The debate (adjourned from October 2) on the motion of Mr Thompson (Treasurer) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr HAMER (Premier)—I congratulate the Treasurer on this his second Budget. Any fair assessment of it shows that he has tackled the problems confronting Victoria in a forthright way and gone about using the financial resources in his hands to the best possible advantage.

I wish to deal a little with the future of Victoria, because this is what ought to be concerning all of us, and we
ought to be directing our attention to it. Firstly, I should like to deal with a few statements made in the contribution by the Leader of the Opposition. In many respects, what he had to say was based on a mish-mash of wild, inaccurate, and misleading statements, and I want to deal with them one by one. The first one, and I quote:

Unemployment is 11 per cent higher than it was twelve months ago.

The latest figures available, and these are the Australian Bureau of Statistics figures, which is full and part-time work, showed a decline in unemployment in Victoria from 6.2 per cent in September 1979 to 6 per cent in September 1980. The latest Commonwealth Employment Service figures of those registered for unemployment at the end of August, and I think the honourable member for Dandenong will accept those figures, showed no change, 6.2 per cent in both years. The fact is that during the course of that year, from August 1979 to August 1980, 61,500 new jobs were created in Victoria; 61,500 more people were in employment this August than in the previous August, and it is absolutely inaccurate and misleading to say that unemployment is 11 per cent higher.

From the point of view of Australia as a whole, 200,000 new jobs were created from August to August, and Victoria's share of 61,500 is a good proportion of the total. That was the first statement.

The second statement made by the Leader of the Opposition was:

Bankruptcies in Victoria are running at a higher rate than anywhere else in Australia.

In fact, the bankruptcies in Victoria for 1979–80 totalled 1235, that is 24.8 per cent of the total bankruptcies in Australia, and seeing that Victoria has 27 to 28 per cent of the population, that is actually below the level of what might be expected on a pro rata basis. It is utterly misleading to say that bankruptcies in Victoria are running at a higher rate than anywhere else in Australia.

Thirdly, the Leader of the Opposition said that people are being forced to leave Victoria and they are going to States like New South Wales and Queensland, where work potential is so much greater. That sort of statement ignores one plain fact. Why would people go from a State that has the lowest unemployment to a State that has among the highest rate of unemployment?

Mr Remington—Because bankruptcies are up 61 per cent in the year.

Mr HAMER—The trouble is that the honourable member for Melbourne was not listening when I dealt with the statement made by his Leader.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! It appears also that the honourable member for Melbourne was not listening to the Chair.

Mr HAMER—The honourable member for Melbourne can contribute his share later, if he wants to. There is a tendency, as there is all over the world, for people to go to warmer climates. They are making for the so-called "sun belt" in America, and the Mediterranean in Europe, and a few people from the southern States make for Queensland when they are no longer tied by a job, and they seek warmer weather. It is a characteristic of growing old that one feels the cold a lot more. There is no doubt that that is part of the reason for the movement.

There has also been a movement of public servants from Melbourne to Canberra as Commonwealth Government departments have been moved and have taken their employees with them. There is also some movement of skilled people from Victoria to jobs in the developing States of Queensland and Western Australia. It is the history of Victoria that we have trained a large number of skilled people, particularly in engineering. It was calculated years ago that Victoria was turning out more than 40 per cent of the trained engineers in Australia, and there is no doubt that some of them find roles and tasks in other States. We should welcome that. It is part of the whole movement of this State, which is in many ways the power base of Australia.

Mr Hamer
Another statement made by the Leader of the Opposition was:

Activities in key sectors of the economy, such as building and construction, and the automobile industry is at a recession level.

The fact is that employment in the manufacturing sector in Victoria actually increased from 392,100 in August 1979 to 420,200 in August 1980, an actual increase of many thousands in the total employed in the manufacturing sector. They are also Australian Bureau of Statistics figures. In the light of those facts, this type of comment is highly misleading.

One further statement of the Leader of the Opposition was:

The Budget envisages an increase in land tax of 4.8 per cent, despite the deferral of new valuations.

The plain fact again is that land tax rates have not increased but will be reduced by the effect of the higher exemptions for a principal place of residence. The adoption of new valuations, which would have been available in 1981, has been deferred until 1982. The increase in budgeted revenue is due, first of all, to a catch-up in assessments and a reduction in outstandings, in other words, more will be collected in this financial year, but the rates of tax have not been increased, they have been reduced.

Further the Leader of the Opposition said:

The Government is prepared to say to the consumers of gas in Victoria that they will pay 8 per cent, 10 per cent, or more, on their gas bills in the foreseeable future. The honourable member was not able to make up his mind what it was going to be, but he was way out. The total increase is 4 per cent, and that is the increase due, as he was making out, to the increase in the turnover tax. Once again, he has been proved wrong by events.

I want to deal with the surplus, because the Leader of the Opposition had something to say about the surplus of $61.4 million at the end of last year. That has been dealt with by the Treasurer as follows: $32.4 million has been left in the current account to supplement the expected revenue, and, of course, thereby to avoid the necessity of taxation increases. Perhaps one could say, to help fund the taxation decrease, which I will mention in a minute. The second portion, $29 million, has been transferred to the Works and Services Account. That is available to supplement the works programme. The over-all increase from the Loan Council was 5 per cent but, as honourable members will recall, with this transfer of $29 million, the increase is 12 per cent of the works effort above the rate of inflation.

Having disposed of a number of inaccurate statements, that brings me now to the real features of the Budget which are, firstly, lower taxation. Pay-roll tax is decreased by raising the exemption level well above the inflation rate to $96,000, which releases approximately 1300 taxpayers from paying tax and is a relief to all other pay-roll taxpayers. The land tax exemption is raised to $45,000 on the principal place of residence.

In this Budget, the Treasurer has been able to carry out the undertaking given by the Government that it would seek to diminish taxation. He has also diminished stamp duty on motor cars. There have been reductions in almost every field of State taxation. That is the first feature of the Budget.

The second feature has been the transfer of funds from the revenue account to works in order to maintain works effort and to keep up employment.

The third feature is the considerable increase in the works effort in housing by the transfer of funds from the Budget—$10 million—directly into housing for welfare housing and a further $10 million from the Treasury balances to co-operative housing societies to boost their budgets. If honourable members wish to compare figures they will see that in real and absolute terms there is an increase in funds this year.

This Budget should not be looked at in terms of denigrating the efforts of people. There are many people who make a considerable effort to keep the State moving, to maintain employment and keep up economic activity. They are certainly not the doom sayers and
predictors of woe. We need recognition of the outstanding assets of this State, and a determination to use them to the best advantage of the whole community.

Among those assets is the productivity of land in agriculture. Because of a temperate climate and a wide range of soils, Victoria can produce practically any of the foods or fibres that are an advantage to man. All but the tropical and antarctic plants can be grown somewhere in Victoria. It behoves us to develop agriculture even further. It has been calculated that even applying the techniques we now have and know of generally in the farming community, we could increase the output by $1000 million.

Mr B. J. Evans—Providing it rains.

Mr HAMER—The honourable member for Gippsland East has reason to make that interjection. It has rained in many parts of Victoria and it appears as though Victoria will have the third good harvest in a row, but that cannot go on for ever. What I am saying is that with the type of soil and climate Victoria has and the development of irrigation systems—I hope there will be more in Gippsland East—we have the opportunity of growing a wide range of food and fibres in this country. We should regard that as an asset in Victoria of which we should take full advantage.

It means that in the field of dairying where we produce 90 per cent of the export income for the whole of Australia, 85 per cent in dried fruits, 60 per cent in fresh fruits, and vast quantities of wool, wheat and meat. Approximately 60 per cent of the export income in Victoria comes from the land. We ought to regard that, as we do, as an immense and powerful asset.

The second asset Victoria has is the manufacturing industry. Victoria is the centre of the motor car manufacturing industry and also chemicals, rubber, textiles, clothing, footwear and many other industries. In all those cases Victoria provides almost half the overall manufacturing output of Australia. Although Victoria is only a small State, it produces 35 per cent of the total manufacturing output. That is of tremendous advantage to us because of the wide range of skills that have been developed. Another big asset to Victoria is the highly skilled and adaptable and innovative work force.

The third advantage is in energy where Victoria produces approximately 70 per cent of the crude oil requirements of Australia from its Bass Strait fields. More than 90 per cent of the known oil reserves in Australia are in Victoria. The natural gas reserves are considerable. Much more is being discovered in Bass Strait. It will last into the next century. Gas is supplied by pipeline to 80 per cent of Victorians at reasonable prices. Oil and gas together constitute a considerable asset. Perhaps more important in the long run than either of those is the brown coal deposits which are the largest known in the world. With proper development and use of those energy resources, in which Victoria is particularly well off, we have a third magnificent asset.

Fourthly, in the capital cities and other parts of Victoria, we have a degree and level of financial and management skills which are important, when one considers the future of this State.

Finally, the ports around Melbourne—Westernport, Portland, Geelong and eventually a port in Gippsland—provide a potential for maritime commerce and a great deal of trade. Added together, Victoria has immense potential.

It is up to all of us to use those assets for our benefit and development of our children and grandchildren. I wish to deal with the future as we know it now. It is much brighter than some of the doomsayers would have us think.

I mentioned that Victoria has the main motor car manufacturing industry in Australia. There are four large plants—GMH, Ford, Toyota and Nissan. New engine plants and extensions are being developed at each one which exhibits the faith of that industry in our future.
Many other industries are expanding but the motor car industry is one of the largest industries in the world. In addition to turning out and assembling cars, by reason of the number of suppliers—the people who make the components for the industry—it has wide ramifications. When that industry is down, as it has been in Victoria for the past 18 months, it affects many other industries. When it comes bouncing back, as I and the industry fully expect will happen, it will be very good for Victoria and we ought to welcome it and understand the reasons for it.

The next feature is the new-found stability of the textile, clothing and footwear industries as a result of a decision by the Federal Government to reject the recommendations of the Industries Assistance Commission. The security of those industries has been assured for years ahead. I have received letters, not only from manufacturers but also from unions involved in those industries, and they have welcomed the new stability and said that they are glad the decision was made as it was. I must inform the House that a great deal of effort was put in by the Victorian Government to make sure that the decision went that way. I am extremely glad it did, because it means that those industries, which are so important to Victoria, have been given a new future and a new self-assurance.

Part of the effect has been shown in letters I have received, which indicate that many of the firms involved in those industries are now expanding and buying new plant and equipment. That, in turn, will create new employment. There is a new certainty and a new confidence in the future and many of the deferred projects, which had simply been set aside pending the decision on the Industries Assistance Commission report, will now come to fruition.

The House will be debating the proposed Alcoa smelter tomorrow and I shall not go into the details now, except to say that the project promises some 1500 jobs during the peak of the construction phase, up to 1200 jobs permanently on site and an estimated 4500 additional jobs in associated industries.

The next large project with which I shall deal is the ICI Australia Ltd plan for a major petro-chemical complex at Point Wilson, which is to be centred on chlor-alkali and caustic chlorine production.

Mr Wilkes—Your brother is involved in it.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! The Leader of the Opposition was given the courtesy of being heard almost in silence. I ask him to extend the same courtesy to the Premier.

Mr HAMER—It is simply another misleading statement. My brother is not involved in it; he is not even a member of the company. A major ethylene plant may also be built and the total investment will be between $500 million and $700 million, with construction due in 1981–82.

General Motors-Holden’s Ltd is completing a new engine plant for the world car at Fishermen’s Bend, at a cost of $300 million. The Shell Company of Australia Ltd has recently completed a refinery expansion at a total cost of about $40 million at Corio. Broken Hill Pty Co. Ltd has two projects in hand, one being the Lysaght’s factory at Westernport, where BHP is continuing to invest in steel finishing and coating at the Hastings plant. The total investment will be more than $300 million. In addition, in the past few weeks, BHP has indicated it will build a mini steel works at Geelong to feed its rod mill. That will cost another $50 million and will use recycled car bodies and other scrap steel.

The Altona Petrochemical Co. Ltd is planning to expand ethylene production at Altona at a cost of approximately $300 million. Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd has announced that it is planning a major expansion at Maryvale, to cost about $150 million. The Esso-BHP consortium has announced that it will be spending $1000 million in Bass Strait in the next three years on oil and gas exploration.

Mr Wilkes—So it should!
Mr HAMER—Perhaps it should, but $1000 million is a large investment. If all that is added up, it comes to a formidable total. There are also many more small and medium sized projects, quite a few of which result from the large-scale developments.

I have said enough to indicate that there is a lot of activity in this State and a lot of promise in the future. A lot of jobs will be created, both directly and indirectly, and we ought to welcome that. It is our task to encourage that sort of development for the sake of the unemployed in this State, particularly the young unemployed.

I shall now report briefly to the House on coal liquefaction. The first plant is likely to be built in the near future at a total cost of more than $100 million. The full-scale commercial plant, if it is built—and I am confident it will be—will cost about $3000 million. It is an enormous plant, roughly equivalent in size to Loy Yang.

Mr Wilkes—Which one, Kominic or Mitsubishi?

Mr HAMER—Kominic.

Mr Wilkes—Mitsubishi thinks it has your approval.

Mr HAMER—Mitsubishi is part of Kominic. I believe I have said enough to indicate that what the Treasurer has done is to lay a solid foundation for the kind of growth and development we can confidently expect in this State, and he has done that in a way that will promote and encourage that development. I commend him on his Budget. It ought to be well received and it has been well received by the people of Victoria as a balanced document that tackles the problems of taxation and tries to keep taxation down. It presupposes a tight reign on Government expenditure and tight ceilings on manpower. It provides a real encouragement, by way of infrastructure and otherwise, to the kind of growth and development that the future holds for Victoria.

For all those reasons, I commend the Budget. I welcome it and I congratulate the Treasurer on presenting it in this way.

Mr JOLLY (Dandenong)—We have just listened to the words of the Premier, which are really the words of the Premier’s propaganda machine. What the honourable gentleman has said tonight has little relevance to what was said in the Budget speech or what is really happening in the Victorian economy. The Premier claimed that the statistics presented by the Leader of the Opposition were a mishmash, but the Premier himself distorted the statistics on unemployment, bankruptcy and population growth.

I shall concentrate on those three major statistics, because, in order to understand the seriousness of Victoria’s economic condition, it is necessary to analyze them closely. The Leader of the Opposition was referring to the movement of unemployment over the financial year for which the Budget is relevant. That is the only way in which to examine the performance of last year’s Budget, and the fact is that over the period June 1979 to June 1980 unemployment increased in Victoria by about 11 per cent. It is true that from August 1979 to August 1980 and from September 1979 to September 1980 unemployment did not increase, but that was because the labour market has been so depressed in this State that it can no longer be said that the Victorian rate of unemployment is the lowest of any State in Australia.

That used to be the line, as honourable members will recall, of the Premier. He used to say that Victoria had the lowest unemployment rate of any State in Australia. He has changed his tune because that is no longer the situation. If one examines the latest unemployment figures, to which the Premier referred, one discovers that the rate in New South Wales is lower than the rate in Victoria. It is 5.7 per cent in New South Wales and it is 6 per cent in Victoria. The rate in Western Australia is lower than the rate in Victoria and the same is true of Tasmania. No longer can the Premier claim that Victoria’s employment record is better than that of any other State.
Let me go to the second issue that was raised by the Premier, in relation to bankruptcy. He used the term “bankruptcy rate”. There is no comparable definition between States of what constitutes bankruptcy, because different States have different criteria, so to pick up the position of bankruptcies it is important to look at the percentage increase in bankruptcies.

What happened in the last year for which statistics are available? The number of bankruptcies in Victoria increased by 61 per cent, compared with 29 per cent for the whole of Australia. In other words, the rate of increase in bankruptcies in the latest period shows that Victoria has a much larger increase than Australia as a whole.

The third point raised by the Premier was population drift. No one can deny—the Premier certainly would not deny and neither would the Treasurer—that there has been a net migration from Victoria to other States. The Premier posed the question, “Why has this happened?” He said that there were no greater job prospects in other States, but the fact is that the job vacancy position in Victoria has been declining substantially over recent years, so there are fewer job vacancies in Victoria than there are in New South Wales. The position in New South Wales generally has been improving, whereas in Victoria it has been declining.

It is interesting to examine the statistics provided by the Australian Government statistician on why people who want jobs are not actively seeking work in Victoria, because this reveals the reflection of individuals who are unable to find work, do not register for unemployment benefits and are not registered with the Commonwealth Employment Services as actively seeking work. There are more people in Victoria who want jobs but are not actively seeking work because there are no jobs available in their line of work or in their nearby locations. More people in Victoria fall into that category than in any other State. That is the reason why there has been a net migration from this State to other States.

The other point I make is that in all indicators of economic activity Victoria is performing worse than Australia as a whole. I first take the position of retail sales, which constitutes the main element of consumption expenditure. On the latest figures, retail sales barely kept pace with the rate of inflation. In other words, the quantity of goods sold in Victoria was stagnant in the last financial year—there was no real increase. The position on retail sales is that for Australia as a whole the increase was more than 2 per cent in real terms.

Then we come to examine the motor vehicle industry. In his speech the Premier indicated that the motor vehicle industry was the most important manufacturing industry in the State. Of course that is so, but the figures for motor vehicle registrations have fallen more sharply in Victoria than they have in Australia as a whole, so again this other important component of consumption expenditure—new car sales—has fallen.

One explanation for this is that the Government in the last State Budget irrationally announced that there would be a huge increase in stamp duty on new cars. As a result of the representations of the Opposition and the National Party, the Government eventually backed down on this proposition, and modified the increase on stamp duty. This Budget puts back the rate of stamp duty to where it should have been last year. The increase in prices caused by the increase in stamp duty created an element of uncertainty. The ineffectual economic policy of the Government has been generating additional problems for the motor vehicle industry in Victoria.

I turn next to the building industry, which again has suffered an extremely severe recession. The Minister of Housing will agree with that proposition. Although there has been some recovery in the number of new homes approved for building, the number of approvals for other dwellings has continued to decline, so overall the building industry is in a parlous condition. We have to face up to reality that
economic activity in Victoria has been declining compared with the rest of Australia. New policies must be developed to meet this new economic challenge. This proposition should also apply to the Federal Government, because the economic challenge to be faced in the decade of the 1980s is to generate sufficient growth to bring about a sustained reduction in unemployment without increasing inflation. The only comment the Government has made on that proposition is that it supports the policy of reducing inflation first.

When asked to elaborate on this proposition, the advocate for the Victorian Government before the Full Bench of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission said that the economy should not be stimulated until the inflation rate is reduced to 2 per cent or 3 per cent per annum. The rate of inflation is now about 11 per cent per annum. The inflation rate stated by the Victorian Government is totally unrealistic and implies a severe restraint on the economy, an increase in interest rates and higher unemployment. Those are the sorts of policies that the Government stood for, but no one has retracted that stance.

I should like to make some general comments on how the economic challenges should be faced up to in Victoria. In the public sector it is important to ensure that all the resources of the State sector are used to maximize employment in Victoria. Too often one sees the situation such as that where the State Insurance Office is investing more than $100 million in interstate semi-Government authority securities. Too often obsolete legislation forces public bodies to hold higher cash reserves and liquid assets than they would normally hold to undertake sensible economic activity, and yet the Government has done nothing to improve the situation. It has pushed a policy of over-all restraint in the public sector, and this has generated an increase in unemployment.

I shall comment briefly on taxation because taxation policies are also important in respect of what happens in the private sector in Victoria. The philosophy of the Government seems to be that the poor should pay more. That is not only inequitable; it is economically irrational, because more than anything else the Government should be reducing taxes to boost consumption expenditure in Victoria. Unfortunately the situation has been the opposite; increasingly the Government is relying on indirect taxes, which bear more heavily on low-income earners, and rapidly phasing out taxes like probate and gift duty, which fall on the wealthy. As I said, that is inequitable and economically irrational in the present economic circumstances, and I will be dealing with that matter in more detail later in my speech.

The third point I should like to make on the economic challenges facing the State is the position of economic development. One had to read the Herald to discover that the Premier is considering issuing a Green Paper. No wonder he needs a Green Paper, because he churns out the same story in every Budget speech of what is going to happen to the economy. This is becoming a sick joke. The Premier says we now need a Green Paper, after the Government has made arrangements to go ahead with the Alcoa development at Portland on the basis of an agreement that has come before the House in a Bill. There has been no economic evaluation of the Alcoa project; it is another ad hoc decision of the Government. There is no guarantee in the agreement that Alcoa of Australia Ltd will meet the full costs of the electricity it consumes, and it means that once again Victoria is on the road to selling the State down the drain.

It is important to make rational and sound economic decisions in isolation of an economic evaluation, and that was the time when the Green Paper should have been undertaken, not after large sums of public money have been committed to the Alcoa development in Portland.

The fourth point relates to industrial relations. Victoria has had the worst industrial relations record of any State over a consistent period of time.

Mr Jolly
If one examines the number of working days lost per employee, one will discover that, on the latest figures available, Victoria is once again at the top of the tree. Victoria has more industrial disputes per worker than any other State and it is no coincidence that the level of industrial unrest is mainly caused by the atrocious industrial relations within the public sector—the Victorian Railways, the State Electricity Commission and the Education Department are all within the sphere of Government influence. Instead of developing a policy of industrial relations co-operation, the Government concentrates upon confrontation and that means greater dislocation and uncertainty and this adversely affects Victoria’s economic performance.

An overview of the Budget reveals that in many ways it is disappointing, although I recognize that the new Treasurer has made more attempts to improve the Budget presentation than the Premier did when he was Treasurer, and that is to the credit of the Treasurer. Nevertheless the Budget has no clear statement of objectives. It has no coherent economic strategy, and, as a result, it is based upon misconceptions and misunderstandings.

Let me highlight the economic confusion that has been generated by the Budget. One of the problems Victoria faces is lagging consumer demand. There is a need to boost consumer demand, but that proposition is not understood by the Treasurer or his economic advisers. At page 20 of the Budget, the Treasurer said, inter alia:

The general strength of the Victorian economy is also shown in the fact that we have the highest level of savings bank deposits per head of population.

Listen to those words: “We have the highest savings bank deposits per head of population”, and the Treasurer said that is Victoria’s strength. However, the Fraser Government has indicated clearly that the problem facing Australia is one of having too high a savings ratio. In other words, the savings levels are too high and action must be taken to reduce those levels so that the savings reduction is transformed into consumption expenditure. That is a reasonable proposition that should be followed by this Government. Yet another propaganda statement which has no relevance to economic reality appears in the Budget, that savings bank deposits are the strength of the economy, when they are the very weakness.

That statement more than any other single statement in the Budget indicates the economic incompetence of the Government because savings bank deposits are an important element. The Minister of Housing interjects. I shall not comment on who is an economic idiot, but I am willing to have an economic debate with the Minister of Housing.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr B. J. Evans)—Order! The Minister of Housing will have his opportunity to contribute to the debate and I suggest he waits until that time.

Mr JOLLY—Savings bank deposits are an important element of savings generally. There are no figures available on savings generally on a State basis and the only indication is the one presented by the Treasurer in the Budget. The Treasurer indicated that savings deposits are the strength of the economy. It would be interesting to hear the Minister of Housing explain why that is the strength of the Victorian economy. The Minister could not base his argument upon any economic theory.

Increases in the savings ratio are the result of increasing uncertainty and the redistribution of wealth as a result of the State Government's taxation policies. Everything possible should be done to reduce the savings ratio in Victoria and increase consumption expenditure.

I turn to what I consider to be the main thrust of the Budget speech. The Premier and the Treasurer commented considerably upon the actual outcome of revenue estimates being greater than anticipated at the time of the Budget speech. That was highlighted as a proposition of sound financial management. I do not regard that position as being an indication of sound financial management when one has rubbery estimates. That is an enormous confidence trick that has been betrayed in the Budget because, if one examines the
statistics available with the Budget documents, one will discover that the Treasurer is planning for a higher level of trust fund balances relevant to the Consolidated Fund than the target he aimed for last year. To illustrate that position, I seek leave to have two tables incorporated in Hansard.

Leave was granted, and the tables were as follows:

### Table 1

**NATIONAL ACCOUNTING STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND OUTLAYS OF THE CONSOLIDATED FUND 1979-80**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Net Figures)</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$m</td>
<td>$m</td>
<td>$m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Outlays—</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on Goods and Services—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Consumption Expenditure</td>
<td>2236.2</td>
<td>2168.5</td>
<td>-67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Expenditure</td>
<td>394.8</td>
<td>405.3</td>
<td>+10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Payments</td>
<td>682.6</td>
<td>667.2</td>
<td>-15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advances</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3318.7</td>
<td>3243.0</td>
<td>-75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Receipts—</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxation</td>
<td>1324.0</td>
<td>1359.4</td>
<td>+35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advances from Commonwealth</td>
<td>155.2</td>
<td>155.7</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repayments of Advances (other than Commonwealth)</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>+2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants from Commonwealth</td>
<td>1533.4</td>
<td>1529.6</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>property and other income transfer (other than Cw.)</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>+2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent and Royalties</td>
<td>115.3</td>
<td>109.8</td>
<td>-5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Funds Available</td>
<td>112.5</td>
<td>115.6</td>
<td>+3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3282.7</td>
<td>3316.7</td>
<td>+34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECEIPTS MINUS OUTLAYS (2)</strong></td>
<td>-36.0</td>
<td>+73.7</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes:

(1) Includes balance carried forward of $32.4m.
(2) Difference recorded as Transfer to and from Trust Funds in National Accounting Statement.

### Table 2

**VICTORIAN STATE REVENUE: 1979-80 ESTIMATES AND OUTCOME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Estimate</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Discrepancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$ 000</td>
<td>$ 000</td>
<td>$ 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay-roll Tax</td>
<td>555 900</td>
<td>562 518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probate duty</td>
<td>48 000</td>
<td>51 389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Tax</td>
<td>104 000</td>
<td>90 226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Car Third Party Insurance</td>
<td>12 800</td>
<td>12 531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totalizer</td>
<td>47 500</td>
<td>48 727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tattersal duty</td>
<td>102 000</td>
<td>106 986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift Duty</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1 232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamp Duties—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betting Instruments</td>
<td>11 200</td>
<td>10 741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty of Insurance</td>
<td>53 000</td>
<td>56 713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Registration Branch</td>
<td>71 000</td>
<td>53 550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>200 930</td>
<td>234 966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mr Jolly
Mr JOLLY—The figures are based upon the national accounting statement of receipts and outlays of the Consolidated Fund for 1979-80. The estimate for 1979-80 is that there will be $36 million less outlay for receipts. The actual outcome for 1979-80 was that receipts exceeded outlays by $73·7 million. In other words, an improvement of $109·7 million. That is a considerable turn around from the plans that were put into effect at the beginning of the last financial year.

If one examines the national accounts estimate for this financial year, one will find that only about $70 million of those trust fund balances will be reduced and made available for economic purposes. Therefore, it appears that an additional $34 million is available for expenditure this financial year on capital works because it has gone back into trust fund balances related to the Consolidated Fund. That is the picture that is borne out by the national accounting statement. I have relied upon the national accounting statement because there is no double accounting.

If the Treasurer has the opportunity of examining the footnote in the tables, he will notice that the balance includes $32·4 million carried forward. That relates to the proposition incorporated in the Consolidated Fund. The figures that I go on have to be the position expounded in the national accounting statement. That highlights another proposition which should be examined closely when the Budget is debated.

The Budget estimates do not have any explanation. One does not know what rate of inflation the Government is assuming when it calculates revenue estimates. One does not know what level of economic activity the Government is assuming, or what wage rates it is assuming, nor does one know precisely what the tax changes in real terms are that the Government is assuming. That is a major weakness in the Budget documents as presented.

I shall elaborate on that proposition because, if honourable members are to have a better understanding of what is happening in economic decision making, at the very least the House should have an explanation of the estimates of revenue and expenditure.

Mr Simpson—Is this what Dr Foley wants?
Mr JOLLY—Dr Foley would support this proposition because the Federal Budget contains a detailed explanation of the Estimates, and that is sadly lacking in Victoria. We are deliberately left in the dark by this Government because it does not want anyone to examine closely what is going on in this State, and that, in my view, is a shameful situation. There is no doubt that the whole budgetary process in this State must be reformed, and I have already indicated that the Treasurer, by presenting documents in a more meaningful form, and including statements on the economy in the Budget for the first time, is at least recognizing the need to change the presentation. That is a recognition problem, but substantial changes must be made if the Budget document is to be meaningful from an economic point of view.

There should not be any doubt in anybody's mind that the Budget should be an economic and social document. It should not be simply a bookkeeping exercise that is the basis for State financial management in Victoria. The Budget should include a clear statement of objectives. It should spell out the priorities of the Budget. Targets should be set, and a detailed outline of the economy of the Government over the year. There must be a coherent strategy for development. No such strategy appears in the Budget speech, and no one knows the Government's intention in relation to economic activity and reducing unemployment. While there was incorporation in the Budget documents of a statement on the Victorian economy, there is no integration of the Budget speech and the economic statement contained in the Budget document. There must be an economic outlook statement in the Budget speech so that the private sector is not left with the uncertainty of trying to interpret a meaningless set of documents, which is the basis of the Budget speech. I say that it is meaningless because the Budget document is not comprehensive. It covers less than 50 per cent of the economic activity of the public sector in Victoria.

The public works and capital expenditure covers less than 26 per cent of total capital works undertaken by the public sector in Victoria. That is not a satisfactory situation in terms of handling the State economy on capital works expenditure by the State Government. There needs to be a complete restructuring of economic reporting in the Budget speech. There is a need to analyze the impact of the various economic and tax measures in the Budget on the various sectors of the Victorian economy.

In terms of improving the comprehensiveness of the Budget documents, at the very least the Auditor-General's report and the supplementary report should be made available at the time of the Budget speech. The Auditor-General's report has become available today, but the supplementary report and the Auditor-General's report should be available at the same time as the Budget speech.

Let me turn to another issue that involves the need to plan ahead on a project basis in respect to capital works expenditure. The annual system of funding causes great uncertainty. I find statements at page 3 of the Budget speech quite remarkable. The Treasurer said, inter alia:

Two choices present themselves to a Treasurer who is confronted with the prospect of an improved budgetary situation. One is to indulge in a short-term spending exercise. The other course, and to a responsible Treasurer the only course, is to allow the approved expenditure plan for the year to continue, to let the surplus eventuate and to determine the best possible use of the funds in the forthcoming Budget.

This action of using surplus funds of a previous year to assist the budget of the next year is a clear illustration of the real facts of government financing. Government is a continuing exercise, where activity does not cease because of the artificialities of annual accounting periods. While it is necessary to recognize such periods for the formal processes of the Parliament, the continuing nature of government requires that a responsible Government is not blinkered into operating within the confines of one accounting period.

I agree with that latter statement, but it contradicts the first statement because the failure of this Government to monitor what was happening in the economy indicates how rigid it was in
adjusting its policy during the course of the financial year. Instead of spending the money, it just allowed the money to build up so that it could be spent in this financial year because of the arbitrary demarcation of periods.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr B. J. Evans)—The honourable member has two minutes.

Mr JOLLY—It is precisely the proposition that the Treasurer said should not be followed by a Government following sensible economic policies.

In terms of economic planning, it is important to plan ahead on a project basis, and I agree with the proposition that arbitrary accounting periods should not determine when a Government turns an economic policy off and on.

Capital works expenditure is a major problem for many statutory authorities because many authorities plan ahead on a project basis, but, because of the Government's approach of allocating funds on an arbitrary period of one financial year, a considerable amount of uncertainty exists and the statutory authorities do not know whether to make decisions to go ahead or not. That is faced by many statutory authorities in this State, and there is no attempt in the Budget to overcome this particular problem.

In summary, the Budget, in my view, is a disappointing document despite the fact that there is an improvement in its presentation. There is no coherent economic strategy. The Budget contains economic contradiction that lacks comprehensiveness, and, in my view, is an incomprehensible document. It fails to commit itself to reducing the problem of unemployment, and it fails to recognize that this is our most serious economic problem.

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—There is no doubt, in my view, that the Opposition has, over the past two years particularly, made some contribution to the Budget debates in this House, and I believe the changes that have occurred, in terms of the national accounting statements of receipts and outlays and the improved presentation of the Budget, is to some extent due to the contributions that have been made by the Opposition. I think that that is an important point to note.

One area in which the Government and the Opposition has consistently differed is in the over-all approach to the way in which the economy of Australia and the economy of Victoria should be managed, and mention has been made of that by all speakers in the House.

I should like to remind honourable members of the fundamental strengths of the Australian economy. These strengths are vastly different from the situation that faced the Fraser Government in 1975, when there was roaring inflation and a tremendously expanding rate of increase in the level of unemployment.

The most recent statistics provided to me by the Commonwealth Treasury indicate that in the twelve months to August 1980 the growth in money supply has been 12.9 per cent, indicating, in terms of availability of funds, that funds have been there to enable the growth and expansion of the necessary consumption and investment expenditures to further improve employment to be maintained. The Consumer Price Index in the twelve months to the June quarter has been running at 10.7 per cent. That is two percentage points lower than the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development—OECD—average. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has interjected that that is terrific, and I agree completely. The fundamental strength of the Australian economy in its capacity to trade relies on its ability to keep its prices below the price increases of its trading partners. Without doubt, Australia's performance internationally has been the subject of praise from the World Bank and from commentators on the economic capacities of OECD countries.

In the three months to August 1980, the average employment level in Australia was 5 244 300 in full-time work, whereas in the three months to August 1979 the average employment level was 5 103 700. Those are Australian
Bureau of Statistics figures. They show a significant growth of employment. For full-time and part-time employment the 1980 average employment level was 6253100; in 1979 it was 6055600. As the Premier announced, that is an increase in average employment of 200000, a considerable portion of which was in Victoria. The Premier's figure of the employment increase for Victoria was 61500, which represents an increase in employment over the year of approximately 3 per cent. Those facts have been glossed over in debate on unemployment.

In the Australian economy, unemployment has remained stable at the 6.1 per cent level. There are two contrasts: Unemployment, which has stabilized at 6.1 per cent and a quite remarkable growth in employment. Indeed, that is the highest growth in employment Australia has enjoyed over the past few years. It is a remarkable achievement by the Fraser Government and its economic policies.

Building approvals are used to indicate the way in which the construction industry is going. Private dwelling approvals for new dwellings in the three months to August 1980 were running to 36000 whereas in the three months to August 1979 the approvals were at 32100. From an Australia-wide point of view, that is a significant improvement.

I was interested to note the comments of the honourable member for Dandenong when he was honest enough to say that the levels of building commencements and approvals in Victoria are at long last going up. I hope the improvement that has been noted in statistics will continue. Certainly, in additions to houses—an important part of the construction industry—a substantial improvement has occurred over the past two or three years and has been strongly maintained in the latest figures available.

Housing finance approved by the major lenders, savings banks, trading banks, permanent building societies and other sources of finance available, in the three months to August 1980 for all dwellings was at $6467.6 million approved contrasting with the three months to August 1979 figure of $5748.2 million approved. On average investment projects in Australia, $29 billion in major mining and manufacturing projects has been either committed or is in the final study stages.

One of the major problems faced by both the Federal and Victorian Governments is to ensure that the investment in those projects benefits the whole community and not merely those directly involved. The taxing structures in Australia are in need of further investigation to ensure that those major investment decisions, of enormous benefit to Australia's gross domestic product, are fairly distributed to all persons in Australia.

The strength of the economy is best shown in the volume of exports, which have reached a record level. Exports were 33 per cent higher in 1979-80 than the previous year. Manufacturing industry is sharing in the boost of exports brought about by the fundamental, sound, economic policies of the Fraser and Hamer Governments.

The economic spokesman of the Labor Party reiterated that a Labor Government in Victoria would reintroduce and increase death and gift duties. The Opposition has made it abundantly clear that it believes taxation methods of the Government in increasingly reducing death and gift duties should be reversed; that the Government should increase those duties. I support the view of the Government. I have not had full opportunity of studying the figures put forward by the Opposition spokesman because they have only just been made available to me but, on a preliminary analysis, I presume that the $32.4 million, which is the surplus in the Consolidated Fund, has been included in the amount he claims is a trust fund balance of $109.7 million. From the reticence of the honourable member in commenting, I assume that the surplus in the Consolidated Fund is in fact the amount the honourable member has included in the trust balances, as described in his press statement. The honourable member now confesses that is so and he has calculated that...
as being above the planned level. I make it clear that the $32.4 million is included in the revenue of the Consolidated Fund. It appears that the $32.4 million which has been recorded in the 1979-80 preliminary receipts and expenditure net estimates is in fact a surplus in the Consolidated Fund. It does not seem appropriate to include it in the Trust Fund balances as the honourable member has done. If he does so, he must recognize that that figure is in the revenue of the Consolidated Fund for this year and that this so-called confidence trick of which he speaks is no confidence trick but a mistake in his arithmetic.

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray)—I am disappointed in the superficial comments made by the Minister of Housing. Over a number of years he has demonstrated not only an interest in economics but, perhaps more importantly, a sense of compassion on social issues. Today the sense of compassion he has sometimes demonstrated is well hidden in what seems to be a somewhat crass determination to defend the indefensible, and that is the economic and social policies of the Fraser Government, and once or twice he made reference to the Hamer Government.

One would not have expected that type of approach from this Minister in dealing with what were portrayed by both the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Minister for Economic Planning as the major social problems facing our society and the need for economic and social response by the Hamer Government. Honourable members did not hear from the Minister of Housing, within his portfolio or any of the other welfare portfolios in operation in Victoria, what can and should be done, and that is a matter for disappointment.

I should like to deal with some of the statistics, although I do not normally play the game of statistics. I believe the Minister was not fair and he certainly was not straightforward in handling some of these figures. He mentioned M3, the index of the money supply. He did not say that the Fraser Government has been agitating and has publicly stated its concern about the money supply overheating the economy and that it is now determined to reduce that figure. The Minister said that it ought to be a vehicle for growth and future development but the Fraser Government is moving in the opposite direction because of its concern for the impact on inflation.

The Minister found some solace in the fact that Australia is in the top half of the OECD countries in terms of the current inflation index. I do not understand how he can find any solace in an inflation rate of 10.7 per cent. Given Australia's history, resources and capacity it ought to be in the top one-quarter of the OECD countries. At present it is not within cooee of being in that situation, and in fact, there has been a deterioration in the situations.

The third aspect to which the Minister referred was the measurement of the employment rate in the community by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Traditionally, the index has been wage and salary earners employed in the community. That index is no longer available and there is a new definition of "employment" now followed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and being used by Governments. That definition of "an employed person" includes someone aged fifteen and over who, during the survey week, worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job, business or on a farm. The second aspect of that the definition includes a person who worked for fifteen hours or more without pay in a family business or on a farm. That definition of "employment" is much broader, and I agree that it can be. It is a reasonable definition but it should not be compared with the traditional definition that is no longer available, that is, wage and salary earners in employment.

The Minister indicated that, over the past twelve months, there has been some improvement in terms of building approvals. However, he did not indicate that in respect of building approvals Victoria is still some years behind compared with the thrust of the early
1970s. The significance of that is that the building industry is a major catalyst in restoring the economy to something like a healthy position.

Finally, the Minister dealt with the statistics in relation to exports. It must be recognized that the bulk of our export income now comes from the minerals boom based particularly in Queensland and Western Australia. I am pleased that Australia has these resources but I am not pleased that the benefit of that wealth is not being shared by all Australians, all of those who are in need in our community.

I reiterate that I do not like playing statistical games. What is necessary is a proper social analysis of community problems and of the capacity of Governments, both National and State, to respond. The Minister of Housing, who is normally prepared to give that sort of social analysis, both as an individual and on behalf of the Government, did not do so today, and that is a pity.

What does the community expect from a Victorian State Government Budget? It is obviously an annual opportunity for an over-view, not in the sense of an ad hoc response to a particular problem but, rather, a chance to restate the Government's thrust in response to the economic and social problems of the age. The Opposition has consistently maintained this criterion over recent years. Both the Leader and its spokesman on economic planning have maintained that concept. On that criterion, this Budget is a lamentable failure. It contains no detailed analysis of our society in this State, its resources, both human and physical, the problems that are so obviously there to be seen by honourable members on both sides of the House and the options facing the Victorian Government in responding to those problems. It contains no programme and no commitment. No programme is advanced by the Victorian Government for responding to those challenges and those problems.

The Budget speech contains a passing reference to the problems of inflation and unemployment, but it contains no analysis and no determination to overcome those problems. It is increasingly evident that the wider community, the great mass of men and women in the State, expect Governments to come up with a programme and to be able to meet the problems that unquestionably exist.

The Hamer Government displays its impotence. On some occasions it suits the Government to deal with social and economic issues and to talk about itself as being the sovereign Parliament and being able to operate in ways that can best meet the needs of the people of Victoria. But when it comes to facing up to these fundamental issues, it passes the buck quite openly and totally to the National Government. Instead of being a pressure point and developing, not just in the sense of a political point but on behalf of the people of Victoria, a programme to overcome the economic inertia that is now prevalent, honourable members see a willingness to abrogate that responsibility to the Federal Government.

The facts are obvious. They are not a matter of argument. There is mass unemployment in our society. There is an inflation rate of 10.7 per cent which is likely to increase over the next twelve months; and interest rates will almost certainly rise by a further 2 per cent over the next six months. They are the facts of life. At no stage was the Minister prepared—and he had his opportunity—to be critical of those facts and to put forward policies to overcome the social problems that those facts of life portray. He failed to recognize that there are some 500,000 people in this State living below the poverty line. Those are not my figures; they are the figures of the Brotherhood of St Laurence based on the Henderson report and its extrapolation to 1980.

In terms of projected investment in this State, in terms of population movements and a dozen other indices, it needs to be recognized that those problems are not being overcome and that they will not be overcome without proper leadership by Government. As we enter the 1980s, this is the great challenge of the decade.

Mr Fordham
Given the obvious wealth of this State, given the technology that exists and given the capacity for human enterprise that the people of Victoria and, for that matter, of other parts of Australia have demonstrated consistently over the decades past, we are not marshalling the resources of the community in the interests of all. Why is it that, despite our history and our capacity in terms of energy, despite the record of industry in this State, despite the capacity for agriculture and other aspects of primary industry and despite the people of Victoria, there is not a spirit of optimism, a spirit of confidence with our society moving forward in the interests of all its members? The problem is obvious, as is the reason for it: There is a lack of leadership on the part of Government. There is a refusal to marshal those resources of which I have spoken, a refusal to overcome the mal-apportionment of the resources of our society. There is no vision and society is crying out for vision. There has been significant and growing criticism across the whole spectrum of the Victorian community. The Minister for Housing would be well aware, from his time as Minister for Social Welfare and the contacts he developed then, which I hope he has maintained since—

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr B. J. Evans)—Order! The time appointed by Sessional Orders for me to interrupt business has now arrived.

On the motion of Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing), the sitting was continued.

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray)—I would hope, as I said, that the Minister has maintained those contacts. If so he would be aware of the growing criticism by welfare agencies throughout the community about the problems facing ordinary men and women, ordinary families, because of that economic and social malaise. I believe the Government, and the community at large, for that matter, ignores at its peril the concern expressed in recent months by church leaders, including leaders of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Uniting churches, at the failure of society's leaders to respond to the needs of society. I refer particularly to the challenging statements and research of the Brotherhood of St. Laurence.

There is an absence of justice and compassion on the part of governments and many members of society at present and that is, unfortunately, reflected in many Government agencies. The facts of life are that our education system is not overcoming the needs of the disadvantaged. Our health system militates against the poor and those in need. Our welfare system is not sufficiently well financed and supported by government to overcome the problems cast upon it every day. We are a complacent society and this is a complacent Government, and it does not meet those challenges. I am concerned that we are fracturing our society. The impact of unemployment and poverty will create a significant backlash, not merely in a political sense but in a way that will have far wider ramifications for the future of Victoria.

I am the shadow Minister of Education and within the limited time available to me I will be unable to deal in detail with the provision made for education in the Budget. I hope to handle the matter in more detail when the clauses are being discussed and in the debate on the Public Works and Services Bill, but I shall make some general comments on education now.

In the 1980s education is obviously a matter of grave concern to most people. Given the changing patterns of employment and leisure that will be with society throughout this decade and over the rest of this century, education will and must play a central role in assisting society to gear up for change. At the same time, although there is a willingness on the part of most people to concede the important role of education, there is widespread concern among ordinary parents and employers about what our schools are achieving. This is occurring after a decade of much querying, particularly in the media, of our performance in education. It has traditionally in the past ten or fifteen years been a battleground between the Government and
teacher unions, but there has also been significant criticism in the media—most of it, I believe, completely ill-informed—about the performance of our schools and the provision of basic skills for young people leaving school and entering the work force.

The reality is that our literacy and numeracy rates have marginally improved over that period. Our rate of retention of young people staying on at school for senior secondary education and going on to tertiary education has improved significantly during those fifteen years. However, there are no grounds for complacency on our part. Recent figures from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development indicate that Australia is fourteenth of the 24 OECD countries in its retention rate of 15-19 year-olds in full-time education. The retention rate in Australia was 46.1 per cent, whereas in North America it was 72 per cent. Australia was sandwiched between Ireland and Greece.

Another matter of concern is that there are still significant numbers of young men and women leaving our schools who are underequipped to enable them to cope with the society they are entering. The Keaves-Bourke study sponsored by the Australian Council for Educational Research shows that about 20 per cent of young people leaving school are underequipped and have not developed their skills in either numeracy or literacy—these weaknesses are undeniable and they indicate the need to provide additional resources. The resources must be provided and must be properly marshalled to answer the challenge.

There are a number of manifestations of the needs of and disadvantages suffered by many young people in our schools. I do not believe the Assistant Minister of Education would contest the view that we still have a long way to go in ensuring that young people who come to this country and this State from overseas need a great deal of additional help and there are many shortcomings within Victorian schools in the field of migrant education. The latest survey conducted by the Australian Teachers Federation indicates that 33.8 per cent of students perceived by teachers as needing extra help are not receiving it in Victorian primary schools. That is roughly one-third of students who require special help but who are not receiving it. That is obviously an unsatisfactory situation that has to be met.

Remedial programmes, together with smaller classes, will be essential ingredients in overcoming the poor performance reflected in the Keaves-Bourke study. That study shows that 53 per cent of children perceived by teachers as requiring extra help are not receiving that extra help in remedial numeracy and for remedial literacy the figure was 46 per cent. About half of the boys and girls in primary schools who need special help are not receiving it. That legacy will be borne throughout the system and will move on to the secondary schools. Unless extra resources are brought to bear the problem will continue.

I now turn to class sizes. The Australian Schools Commission has established what it believes are desirable class sizes. The recent survey by the Australian Teachers’ Federation found that in infant grades more than 30 per cent of classes exceed the recommendation of the Schools Commission that there should be sufficient staff for the classes not to include more than 25 students. In the remainder of the schools it was found that more than 42 per cent of classes consist of more than 30 students, which was deemed by the Australian Schools Commission to be the desirable maximum for primary school grades. The Assistant Minister of Education, at a recent function that I attended, conceded the desirability of reviewing class sizes in special areas of need where that can be demonstrated. I believe such a policy should be attempted. Some steps have been taken in this direction over recent years, but obviously much more needs to be done.

I shall now deal with the technical and further education area and its importance in the future development of Victoria. Over the past decade the Par-
liament and society have been warned repeatedly by employer groups and by trade unions of the looming shortage of skilled personnel. If there is to be a significant boost to industry in Victoria to provide the needed additional employment, it is obvious that there will be a marked shortage of skilled and semi-skilled tradesmen to meet the needs of industry. Even the Victorian Employers Federation, the Chamber of Manufactures and as recently as today, Mr Polites of the National Employers Federation, commented on the seeming incapacity of our education systems, and the concern today is with the Victorian education system, to provide sufficient opportunities for the development of skilled tradesmen. The Industrial Training Commission and, for that matter, the Technical Schools Division itself, has commented on that shortcoming.

Once again I shall quote a report of the Technical Schools Division of the Education Department as submitted to the Partridge committee. It was dated 1977 and the position still has not improved. It provides an indication of the considerable frustration and concern felt by these people:

The margin between expectation and reality is so great in the case of TAFE accommodation that expectations appear to be almost fanciful and, like Dr Johnson's definition of the second marriage, "the triumph of hope over experience".

That is the legacy of technical and further education in our society, and it is a matter of concern that the Government has given no indication of being prepared to gear up and provide funds, not Commonwealth funds, to overcome those decades of inactivity. Instead of an increase, there is a reduction in Government funds within the school and college building programme. That is the most consistent hallmark of the Government's performance over recent years.

Despite the capacity of the building industry to help restore the economy, there has been a consistent cutback of funds and I will make much more of this later in the sessional period.

Over the past five years the amount budgeted by the Victorian Government for the school and college building programme has been: 1976–77, $104.2 million; 1977–78, $107 million; 1978–79, $107.2 million; and 1979–80, $97.7 million. This year the figure is $92.3 million, a drop of more than one-third in real terms, despite the weaknesses in technical and further education and despite obvious weaknesses in primary and secondary schools of which honourable members in all electorates would be well aware.

Despite continued reports of regional directors following their discussions with local committees and the submitting of lists of needs to the Assistant Minister and his predecessors, consistently over this five-year period there has been a significant reduction in real terms. The Minister admitted that some extra pupil positions are required and that hundreds of extra class-rooms are required this year, but reduced funds are being made available. It is a matter of much concern to all involved in education in this State.

Above all has been the performance of the Government in its relations with teachers. A sad and continuing history of confrontation has occurred and instead of marshalling its great reserves and capacity to assist the young people in the society, the Government has become involved in the suspicion and the attack which has been waged constantly by both sides since the mid-1960s. Despite promises to reform the structures under which industrial relations are managed between the Education Department, the Government and teacher unions, little has yet been achieved. Earlier this year the Assistant Minister of Education said:

There is a general feeling in the community that schools have been trying to do just about everything else except teach.

The Assistant Minister went on to say:

There is a need to return to the basic core curriculum 'with the same enthusiasm with which it was abandoned in the 70's'.

Surely it is not a matter of turning back the clock. This society should be looking forward and not backward. My greatest disappointment about the Budget is that it is not an instrument for looking forward and ensuring that all of our society's resources are being marshalled in the interests of the wider community. This Government is not
motivated to present such a Budget. It is obvious to most people of Victoria, as is increasingly being demonstrated politically, that it is not just a matter of changing this Budget but of changing the Government.

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—I enter this debate on the Budget in respect of remarks made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition relating to education, to the education portfolio and, in particular, the education allocation. At $1,548,000 million, the allocation for education in this Budget is a recognition that the Government believes an investment in children and in their education is its first priority. Indeed, it is an investment in the future of this State and of this country, an investment in children in such a way that they will be able to benefit from the tremendous resources of this State in the education area. It is a credit to the Treasurer that he has been able to continue to maintain this high level of expenditure, and the responsibility of Ministers, as well as ensuring that the needs of schools and of children are well and truly recognized in the framing of the Budget, is to ensure that that allocation is spent in such a way that maximum benefit is achieved for those for whom it has been allocated. In terms of two major points made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, this Budget in particular demonstrates that that is the case.

The honourable member referred quite rightly to the change in patterns of employment and leisure, and the role that education had to play in meeting the needs of students and the demands of society for a lead through schools and through educational institutions in providing for those changing patterns. The honourable member also referred to the leisure and recreation areas, to the continuing need for a response to the problems being experienced and now recognized widely in research terms in the areas of remediation in literacy and numeracy.

However, no reference was made by the honourable member to the fact that this Budget provides for a doubling of the number of special assistance teachers involved in precisely the area to which he referred. An additional $4.5 million is to be spent on doubling from 232 to 464 the number of teachers involved in the area of special education consultancy in schools. I refer to the special assistance programme which will commence in 1981 with that additional resource put into it—doubling the number of personnel.

The main tenets of that programme are, firstly, to provide, in accordance with the best advice available to the department, school-based appointments for these teacher consultants with qualifications in special education who will be devoted specifically to ensuring that some minimum requirements are met in supervising the education of those children who have been demonstrated to be leaving primary schools without sufficient skills to succeed at secondary level or in society as a whole. The provision there will ensure that each school with an enrolment of more than 300 pupils will have precisely that resource. Some 547 teachers have been nominated by principals of primary schools with enrolments of more than 300. For the first time people will be set aside precisely for this task, with a job prescription that ensures that they will be on the spot, able and qualified to ensure that any child detected in the early years of schooling as not having sufficient skills or readiness for proceeding to learning, becomes part of a programme that ensures that those skills are attained before the child leaves that school. The person concerned will be a senior teacher and 50 per cent of those nominated have qualifications in special education. Approximately 250 of those persons hold senior teacher positions or above and many of them are vice-principals. It is surprising that the honourable member for Footscray failed to refer to the $4.5 million worth of expenditure and the 300 additional teachers devoted to meeting precisely the area of need to which the honourable member referred. I do not believe the honourable member does not know about that. I am convinced he does...
know about it, but to refer to the problem and make no mention of the allocation and the doubling of the resource to the area is an attempt to conceal what has been provided for by the Treasurer in the Budget.

The purpose of the special assistance programme is much more involved than simply doubling the resource available and making those appointments school-based so that teachers are on the spot to provide a ready consultancy service for those children in need of that special assistance. The purpose is also to integrate into a one-stop service those services now provided by counselling guidance and clinical services in the form of social workers, speech therapists and educational psychologists, together with those services presently provided through special education units to ensure that those two areas form separate branches of the special services division do provide those services at a decentralized but regional location so that both small primary schools, non-Government schools and secondary and technical schools continue to have access to a consultancy service for students who need special assistance.

That programme is one of the remarkable steps forward in the Budget that results from the Government’s desire to respond to precisely the set of facts that have been demonstrated in successive reports over the past few years, commencing with the 1975 ACER report that the honourable member for Footscray specifically referred to.

Another area of the Budget which deserves considerable mention is that related to the changing patterns of employment and leisure to which education systems must respond. I refer specially to the building programme, which is fulfilling the first of a two-part election undertaking to spend $10 million on leisure and recreational facilities in schools. For many years the Government has recognized the need to ensure that schools have facilities that allow for a complete programme of physical education, sport and recreation that will assist students to develop fit and healthy bodies, as well as develop life-long habits of physical fitness and physical exercise through an interest in sport and recreation.

The Budget provides more than $4 million for initiative that commences with the 1980–81 building programme in the form of the ecacentre programme. As a result of that programme, approximately nineteen post-primary schools will receive ecacentres this financial year. Over the two-year period within which the total allocation referred to in the election undertaking has been provided, $10 million will be spent, a total of 44 schools will receive ecacentres and another 10 will receive similar facilities through the community education programme. A total of 54 schools will benefit from these facilities.

That is a considerable achievement when one compares that with what has been achieved with the assembly hall programme during the three prior years. What happened in the financial year 1975–76 and the subsequent financial years was that the Government built 6 facilities and in the following year 3, and in the year after that, 3 more. In that three-year period a total of 12 assembly halls were built. In the current two-year period a total of 54 will have been built. That is a considerable advance in precisely the area in which the honourable member for Footscray referred to in terms of the provision of leisure time and recreational facilities.

Having referred to that, it was incumbent upon the honourable member to indicate that that was, in fact, provided for in the Budget. Those are initiatives that indicate that the Government is taking seriously the role of leisure in the future in society. As a result of that, 54 school communities in the two financial years will receive those facilities. Furthermore, the building programme provides for a total of 174 schools to have projects undertaken. There are 2100 schools in the school system and a significant proportion of them will have projects undertaken this financial year.
Approximately nineteen new school libraries will be built and nineteen art and craft rooms will be built. Staff and administration upgrading will take place at 28 schools and 27 schools will have internal/external cyclical maintenance projects undertaken. Altogether 174 schools will have major projects. Twelve new schools and five replacement schools—a total of seventeen new schools—will be built. Unfortunately three of them result from fires that have destroyed schools which have had to be replaced.

Those seventeen new schools will be built because although enrolments are predicted to decline in primary and post-primary schools in 1981 by a total of 10,000, there will be a requirement for the Government to provide a total of 9515 additional pupil places because there are 244 primary schools and 90 post-primary schools at which enrolments will increase in that year. Therefore, the Government realizes that it will need to provide an additional 491 class-rooms in 1981 for those 9500 new pupil places. The Government is building the schools and delivering the goods where they count. The Government is providing the facilities at the school place—174 projects including 17 new schools.

Mr Simpson—Why did the Government waste $750,000 on Cubitt Street?

Mr Lacy—I invite the honourable member for Niddrie to the opening of the Cubitt Street centre on 10 December. I need a pair to attend the opening by His Excellency the Governor. Therefore, I invite the honourable member to join me and we will both have the opportunity of inspecting that magnificent facility which will provide apprentices from the western and eastern suburbs with the best circumstances to ensure that they receive a sound apprenticeship training. Nothing has been wasted there. It is an investment for the apprentices in the best location that can be provided. If the honourable member would like to extricate himself from some files on that morning and join me, we will inspect the building in the company of His Excellency the Governor.

The Government has made the most of the amount of money it has received from the Commonwealth to assist in the capital works programme, and is delivering services to schools in such a way that the school system will be able to continue with the best accommodation. We will also be upgrading numerous schools with art and craft rooms that in the Labor-controlled Government of New South Wales are not even provided in schools. Do honourable members realize that this Government provides art and craft rooms in schools but our neighbouring State of New South Wales does not provide art and craft rooms in schools?

This State has a greater record of delivery of services and school buildings to our Government schools in that sense than the Government of the complexion of members of the Opposition. More than that, we will be ensuring that students commencing school in 1981 in those new schools that have been part of the 1979-80 building programme will be in the very best accommodation. I invite any honourable member to join me and look at some of those core-plus schools and the portable class-rooms that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spits out every time he refers to those schools. These relocatable class-rooms are regarded by the teachers who use them as the greatest innovation in education buildings ever seen in the State because not only are we able to deliver them at a 15 per cent better rate of expenditure of the education dollar, but in the ability to remove those class-rooms from one population growth area to another population growth area, we have ensured that it was possible to build other facilities with the funds saved as a result of the mobility of these units.

I congratulate the Treasurer on his Budget. He has ensured in a most difficult period over the past couple of years with declining support from the Commonwealth in the capital works area, particularly in the loan programme, that the school building programme and the
provision and investment in education remains appropriate to the importance which this Government attaches to this area of its responsibilities and in respect of children suffering from illiteracy or innumeracy or in danger of being in that position, that this Government has taken the most major step forward in meeting that need without a word of encouragement or even a word of criticism—and that is welcome from time to time—from the Opposition. We have embarked on the most comprehensive and expensive programme of assistance to those children who need literacy and we have provided it at a cost of $4.5 million. We have ensured that every teacher added to the staffing of primary schools in the State is devoted to those children who need them most and I would have hoped we had the support of the Opposition on that.

Members of the Opposition regularly refer to the need to provide assistance to those who need it most and that is precisely what we have done in the special assistance programme but without a word of encouragement and the almost complete ignorance of the Opposition on the programme being developed and provided in this area.

The Treasurer has again done a magnificent job on his second Budget. I refer particularly to education which he has ensured remains at the forefront of the Government’s expenditure. It demonstrates that the children of this State and their educational opportunities remain at the forefront of our concern as a Government.

Mr SIMMONDS (Reservoir)—Tonight honourable members have heard the Premier support the Treasurer. The Premier seemed to be saying to the House that Victoria is a magnificent place with magnificent resources and that this Budget is making some contribution towards developing those resources. We have now heard from the Minister who has responsibility for probably the greatest amount of expenditure in the Budget, the Assistant Minister of Education. One could perhaps be forgiven for commenting that self-praise is little recommendation, because this Minister indulged in a great exercise of self-praise for his so-called performance.

I draw his attention to the fact that the children in primary schools in the Upper Yarra shire simply do not have a choice of technical education. The people in charge of the education system in the State are supposedly aware of the concept that there is a need for additional emphasis on technical education, but the children of that area have been deprived of that opportunity.

In the context of the remarks by the Government speakers on employment opportunities for youth in the State, I raise a number of questions. The Premier attempted to indicate that employment prospects have improved in Victoria. I draw his attention to the Monthly Review of the Employment Situation of August 1980 which was a relevant document at the time the Budget was produced. It showed that in respect of juniors in Victoria at the end of August 1977, 17,741 young people who registered for employment were unable to find work. The figure at August 1980 was 24,384, an increase of nearly 7000 young people looking for employment who were unable to find it. If honourable members believe the Premier, it could be said that this does not represent a worsening of the situation. I refer to the jobs available to these young people. In 1977 there were 777 registered vacancies and in August 1980 there were 771, a decline in the number of job opportunities and a massive rise in the number of young people seeking employment.

The future of this State in its potential for providing employment for young people, and in fact for all people in the State, is largely dependent on the capacity of the manufacturing industry to develop or keep level with its previous capacity. The Victorian economy represents about 28 per cent of the Australian economy but commands 34 per cent of all manufacturing, compared with only 19 per cent of agriculture, 15 per cent...
of mining, 25 per cent of construction, and 27 per cent of services. The top ten Victorian manufacturing industries (in terms of employment) are in the following order:

Motor Vehicles and Parts
Clothing
Printing and Publishing
Other Industrial Machinery and Equipment
Other Fabricated Metal Products
Meat Products
Other Transport Equipment
Textiles, Yarns and Woven Fabrics
Plastics and Related Products
Household Appliances and Electronics.

The situation in the ten years between 1968 and 1978 showed that in the inner metropolitan area there was a decline of 34,469 in the work force engaged in those industries, a decline which represented an 8 per cent change. The important statistic of 431,191 being employed in 1968 was reduced to 396,722 in 1978. The indications are that manufacturing in the State has continued to decline from that point. According to the Chamber of Manufactures, in the six months from August 1980 the outlook for many parts of Victorian manufacturing deteriorated significantly and continues to deteriorate.

The chamber went on to list the areas in which a deterioration had taken place. They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry group</th>
<th>August quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fabricated Metal Products</td>
<td>Production fairly stable, forward orders up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport Equipment</td>
<td>Significant declines in production, employment and forward orders. Labour problems significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Machinery and Equipment</td>
<td>Production showing little change, liquidity still tight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Manufacturing</td>
<td>Production stable, forward orders have now stabilised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, Beverages and Tobacco</td>
<td>Production stable, forward orders have now stabilised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>Production declining in the steel and non-ferrous sectors. Forward orders increased in the steel sector but were stable in the non-ferrous metals sector. Little export in steel sector and stable exports in non-ferrous sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing and Footwear</td>
<td>Production stable, forward orders fluctuating with some declines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood, Wood Products and Furniture</td>
<td>Production declining in the steel and non-ferrous sectors. Forward orders increased in the steel sector but were stable in the non-ferrous metals sector. Little export in steel sector and stable exports in non-ferrous sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper, Paper Products, Printing and Publishing</td>
<td>Production declining in the steel and non-ferrous sectors. Forward orders increased in the steel sector but were stable in the non-ferrous metals sector. Little export in steel sector and stable exports in non-ferrous sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemicals, Petroleum and Coal Products</td>
<td>Production stable, forward orders unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Metallic Mineral Products</td>
<td>Production declining in the steel and non-ferrous sectors. Forward orders increased in the steel sector but were stable in the non-ferrous metals sector. Little export in steel sector and stable exports in non-ferrous sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Metal Products</td>
<td>Production stable, forward orders unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel Cutting</td>
<td>Production and employment declining. Significant labour problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwear</td>
<td>Decline in production. Employment and forward orders continuing to fall for motor vehicles, but situation firmer for other transport equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedding and Mattress</td>
<td>Production, employment and forward orders stable or increasing slightly —similar to last survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture Trades</td>
<td>Production and forward orders unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel Cutting</td>
<td>Production fairly stable, forward orders up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwear</td>
<td>Significant declines in production, employment and forward orders. Labour problems significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production showing little change, liquidity still tight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production stable, forward orders have now stabilised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production stable, forward orders have now stabilised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production declining in the steel and non-ferrous sectors. Forward orders increased in the steel sector but were stable in the non-ferrous metals sector. Little export in steel sector and stable exports in non-ferrous sector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production stable, forward orders fluctuating with some declines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production declining in the steel and non-ferrous sectors. Forward orders increased in the steel sector but were stable in the non-ferrous metals sector. Little export in steel sector and stable exports in non-ferrous sector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production stable, forward orders unchanged</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production and employment declining. Significant labour problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline in production. Employment and forward orders continuing to fall for motor vehicles, but situation firmer for other transport equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production, employment and forward orders stable or increasing slightly —similar to last survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production and forward orders unchanged</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a situation of serious decline and no indication of any improvement.

With respect to the oft-repeated statement that there is a shortage of skilled workers in Victoria, we have to view the current position of the Industrial Training Commission's list of apprentices who were unable to attend school because the policies of this Government deprived them of educational facilities to finish their training.

As at 30 September 1980, 1003 apprentices in the metropolitan area and 336 in the country area were in that position. The breakdown is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>Metropolitan</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boilermaking and Structural Steel</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broommaking</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butchering and Small Goods</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpentry and Joinery</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel Cutting</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Cleaning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electroplating</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floristry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fibrous Plastery</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor Finishing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming/Fruitgrowing</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Glass</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwear</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedding and Mattress</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture Trades</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mr Simmonds
It covers the whole range of trades which employ apprentices who are unable to complete their training because of deficiencies in the education system. Those deficiencies relate not only to a lack of class-room facilities but also to a shortage of instructors. There is a shortage of 320 instructors. They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>Metropolitan</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turf</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladies Hair</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>8 x 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Mechanic</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moulding</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optical</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting, Decorating and Signwriting</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastrycook</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patternmaking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastering</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plumbing and Gasfitting</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigeration</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof Slating</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing Machine</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheetmetal</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipwrighting</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silversmithing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textile Mechanics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilingaying</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodymaking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel Beating</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trimming</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiting</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watchmaking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Machining</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Machining</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1003</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If one believes what the Minister of Education said that situation could not exist, but it does in the apprenticeship trades in Victoria. If there is to be any regeneration of the manufacturing industry and a development of demands for skilled workers, surely there should be some requirement in the Budget for recognition of this situation. There is no indication of an awareness of the problem. There is no introduction of the "Work for Tomorrow" project that the Premier introduced prior to the State election. That was no more than an exercise in semantics. A two-day seminar was held and people talked about the needs of young people and their prospects for employment but it did very little to provide the wherewithall for employment to be created.

The reality for young people is that there is a diminishing opportunity for
employment. The result is a breakdown in the social order. Young people are disillusioned because they are unable to find employment and are developing anti-social traits in a range of areas. I will not go through the Ministerial statement or talk about drugs and drug abuse.

Obviously there is a relationship between the decline and degradation of society created by the removal of opportunity and the failure of the Government to provide realistic training opportunities for those people who are in employment. How much more difficult will it be for these young people without employment or those now in the education system who will move into a job market in which they cannot obtain employment. I draw the attention of the House to their prospects for the future.

The Premier made much of the importance of the motor car industry. Without the motor car industry and the employment associated with it a further decline will take place, not only in the economics of the State but also in employment opportunities.

An article appeared in the Herald of 17 October 1980 which should be read and absorbed by every member of this Chamber. It is headed “Robots: we'll take $4.80 an hour”. It states:

The first good thing about employing robots in factories is that you don't have to pay the devils too much.

Reports from the U.S. say that the ordinary pay scale of a moderately intelligent robot is just over $4.80 an hour.

This is less than half the wage of a worker doing the same job, and the worker does not do a 16 hour shift as a robot normally does.

Pay scale for robots?

Simply, it's just the cost of running the things, along with depreciation, etc.

Robots vary in price according to latest figures, from $35,000 for pretty dumb ones to around $75,000 to better educated models that can "see" the objects they handle.

The Wall St. Journal says the industry could be hiring as many as 200,000 robots by the end of the 1980s if the major computer makers gear up strongly into the business.

The U.S. magazine Business Week says it has been told by a Fiat executive that if the company had enough robots equipped with sensory devices, Fiat could cut its work-force by 90 per cent in some plants. Already Fiat has computerised welding robots in two Italian plants. Each is operated by 25 people who can turn out 1200 car bodies a day.

I invite any honourable member who does not believe that is possible to go out to the Nissan works to see what is happening there and to contemplate the ultimate effect of these robots on Victorian employment opportunities.

British Leyland has a robot in its Longbridge, U.K., plant that can weld up a complete car body in 42 seconds.

There will be no paid labour other than $4.80 robots.

This allows the factory to produce an extra 342,000 cars a year with 70 per cent fewer workers.

Just apply those statistics to the Victorian car industry and imagine the problems that will be faced in a short time when these devices become commonplace.

Aside from cars, General Electric is spending $51 million in the U.S. this year on 47 robots to carry out, among other things, the automatic spray painting of refrigerators. Over the next 10 years GE plans to install 1000 robots.

Even on this year's outlay, GE expects to save $26 million on labour costs.

Eventually, GE executives have told Business Week, the company plans to replace half of its 37,000 assembly line workers with robots.

Mr Lacy—What are they like at building power stations?

Mr SIMMONDS—The interjection comes from a former sky pilot. The Premier would no doubt be interested in the interjection. I have had some conversations with the Premier on this subject. The problem is that the Government has such a poor capacity for industrial relations that in 1978 it released a document that effectively prevented the contractors from being able to deal on a realistic basis with employees in the industry. As a result they have been locked into a situation that no private employer will tolerate.

Mr Mackinnon—Do you support blackmail?

Mr SIMMONDS—I support the application of logic and the Premier agrees with that. If it is applied tonight we might be able to do something about the situation tomorrow. If the honourable member wishes to talk about blackmail, he can talk about having the police pulling trade union
officials out of their beds at 6.40 a.m. because of public opinion polls which predicted defeat for his Federal colleagues. If the honourable member wishes to indulge in that subject as an alternative debate, the Opposition will deal with it.

The reality is that people are going to have to live in the sort of society I am talking about, but the Budget does not acknowledge that the problem exists. It seems to operate on the premise that somehow the Government has some say in the management of the resources of the State. If it did have that say, Alcoa of Australia Ltd could not have come to Victoria and obtained the agreement it obtained. The agreement would have been negotiated between equals and the Government would have ensured that the benefits of marrying Victoria's energy resources to the resources brought from other States would be used to provide funds for training opportunities for young people. I am not talking about the training opportunities supported by the Federal colleagues of members of the Government party; I am not talking about support given by paying employers $50 a week for seventeen weeks and then turfing the young people involved out on to the labour market. That is not training. It is just subsidizing profit making by employers. Real training programmes are based on the proposition that at the end of the programme there will be a real responsibility on the trainer to employ the person who has been trained.

There is evidence that the training schemes introduced in this State and subsidized by the Federal Government are being exploited by employers on the basis that they are able to tap a reservoir of semi-skilled and untrained workers. Employers prefer in-plant training to pre-vocational training schemes. That has always been so. Employers prefer to train young employees in their own plants and on their own terms and conditions. There is no argument about that. The argument I have is that they are being subsidized in the process. Firms like General Motors-Holden's Ltd and others could well afford to introduce training schemes and pay for them out of their profits and dividends, rather than having the taxpayer pay for them.

I am reinforced in that view by the document produced for the Victorian Employment Committee on the implications of semi-skilled training. It is a 100-page document and a number of industries were surveyed. Time and again the survey shows that training in itself does not produce employment opportunities. What is required is a definition of the areas where skills are required, with training programmes through the conventional apprenticeship scheme being developed to meet those requirements. The Industrial Training Commission should be given the resources and the opportunity to predict employment opportunities and to then adopt training schemes appropriate to meet those needs.

What is happening in this State is that across-the-board subsidies are being paid to employers in different ways. There are four different basic schemes subsidized by the Federal Government, but only one is of real significance. I am referring to the craft scheme, under which employers must be prepared to take on apprentices and to face the responsibilities of the apprenticeship scheme. They are then subsidized, and I have no argument with that. We must ensure that a sufficient number of apprentices are trained in the areas in which they are required. There is a whole range of areas in which apprenticeships exist but training facilities do not.

The Government must also understand that it cannot get services on the cheap. It cannot expect food school instructors at the William Angliss establishment to accept $15 000 a year when the going rate in the industry for the people who have suitable qualifications is $20 000 a year. The Government will not be able to attract the additional 30 instructors needed for the 500 students in food training schools unless it is prepared to face up to that reality. The Government cannot seek to develop tourism in isolation. It cannot develop tourism if it does not have the catering industry to go with it. It must
provide the training programmes to develop the skills necessary to service the industry. There must be a proper analysis of the needs of the State and its capacity to meet those needs. That would make some contribution towards lifting the living standards of the people the Government is seeking to govern.

The Premier and the Assistant Minister of Education, who also contributed to the debate, should illustrate their awareness of the problems and develop answers and solutions, rather than merely playing around with figures that they claim demonstrate that things are really not too bad and that there is a capacity to provide a sound basis for developing the economy. They suggested that somehow or other we only have to wait and everything will come good. It will not come good on that basis. It will only come good if there is a concerted programme to apply the resources of the State to the needs of the people. In introducing this Budget the Government has failed to do that.

Mr Dunstan (Dromana) — I refer to water supply and sewerage services for country towns. The Treasurer said that the proposed works programme for this financial year is estimated at $50.7 million. That is a record provision and is an increase of $5.1 million or 11 per cent over last year. Perhaps less provision would be required in this area if greater use were made of waste water. Everybody knows that the potential is there to use waste water, but perhaps they do not have the incentive because of what could be seen as a short-sighted, unrealistic pricing policy by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.

To develop my argument I refer to a recently released report by a special task group, the Westernport Catchment Coordinating Group of the State Co-ordination Council, consisting, as we know, of the top public servants in the State. It is a lengthy report, and to summarize it in relation to the argument I am trying to present I shall quote from page 13, where it states:

The existing water supply developments are considered to be adequate to meet present demands.

I emphasize "present demands".

For population scenarios developed, estimated water demand will exceed available supply, particularly for the Mornington Peninsula region supplied by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission.

Mr Ginifer — They have taken all the waste out to Cape Schanck.

Mr Dunstan — Yes, at the rate of 40,000 gallons an hour, and I shall come to that point. The quotation in the report continues:

The potential for reuse of waste water can be considered as significant throughout the region. I am referring to the Westernport area and the Mornington Peninsula. At page 20 of the report it states:

To accommodate population growth in the region, and the population growth is rapidly increasing year by year — and to minimize the impact of growth on the quality of the waters of the region, waste water treatment and disposal strategies need to be developed and implemented.

At page 25 the report states:

The materials that appear as waste water are by-products of industrial, commercial and domestic activities. Their values as resources are generally not recognized and they are discarded because replacements are available more readily and mostly more cheaply.

The resource value of the water in waste water is increasingly being recognized, prompted no doubt by the rising marginal costs of harnessing and supplying water, the limited availability and the increasing demand for water.

Elsewhere in the Budget the Treasurer points out the cost of harnessing and supplying water. The report continues:

An increase in the cost of water would provide an economic incentive to reuse water.

But this is not so or will not be so under the present Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works pricing policy. The report goes on to state:

The re-use of water and in particular the re-use of treated wastewater is already practised, but there is potential to extend the practice.

I might say an aside that I was instrumental in the first waste water being used on the Mornington Peninsula on a golf course. Now three golf courses are using waste water in tapping the southeastern sewer trunk main to Cape...
Schanck. I am glad to hear, by interjection, that it is being used in Williamstown, too.

At page 100 the report states:

The material resources of waste water (water, nutrient, organic matter) can be used for the benefit of the community. Agricultural re-use, the irrigation of sporting grounds and the watering of public parks are notable re-use applications. It should be recognized that pricing policies and legislative arrangements can be valuable mechanisms for encouraging greater re-use of effluent.

At page 127 appears a definite and positive recommendation numbered 7, and I suggest that it would not be too soon for the Government to examine that recommendation, which reads:

A thorough examination of the administrative practices, legislative controls and financial aspects of wastewater management should be undertaken.

I say strongly that it should be undertaken by the Government right now. The report was circulated recently, and action should be undertaken in the near future.

I shall make two more brief quotations from the same report:

Various management and technical options are available to keep the input of nitrogen to Western Port at acceptable levels, including:

(a) Limit the discharge of wastewater to Western Port by diverting wastewater (e.g. to Bass Strait) and/or discharging treated wastewater to land.

Financial subsidies for wastewater schemes should be granted according to explicit need criteria...

Finally it is conceded again that:

Variation of the MMBW’s pricing policy could significantly affect local decisions.

I shall give an instance of one local decision where a variation of the Board of Works pricing policy could affect a decision to launch an imaginative, productive venture which would provide more employment in an area where the unemployment rate is much higher than the State or national average and would grow more food and make use of water. I refer to an applicant who recently applied to the Board of Works for the use of waste water, which, as my friend from the Opposition said, is poured out into the sea at the rate of 40 000 gallons an hour. He wants this water for a 210-acre property which would employ eight permanent and three casual employees in horticultural and agricultural pursuits.

The applicant has been advised by the Board of Works that the cost would be 11.25 cents a kilolitre. This compares with the cost of irrigation water at Deniliquin of 0.89 cents a kilolitre and in the periphery of Adelaide where the cost of waste water is 0.22 cents a kilolitre. I should like to know how the South Australian Government can provide waste water at 0.22 cents a kilolitre while the Board of Works in Melbourne wants to charge 11.25 cents a kilolitre.

Mr Ginifer—They priced themselves out of the market for political reasons.

Mr DUNSTAN—That is the point I am making. They would rather see the water discharged and wasted. The applicant requires an amount of water. On the figures quoted by the Board of Works it would cost the applicant $34 000 a year for only five months summer use. The applicant requires 1 million gallons a week, which would cost $514 a week, making a total of $34 000 a year. That is in addition to the cost the producer would have to meet for a licence, pumping expenses and the capital outlay for relevant equipment. The applicant adds that by putting the waste water into practical use, the Mornington Peninsula could become the market garden of the State, and there is no reason to doubt that. The applicant wants to start a project on the peninsula which could have wide growth.

In a letter dated 29 August, the Board of Works replied to the applicant, Mr J. W. King, C/o Delamere Gardens, Corner of Moorooduc Road and Nepean Highway, and stated:

At a recent meeting the Board revised the Pricing Policy and, as a consequence, the new charge for the supply of effluent for agricultural and recreational purposes was fixed at 25 per cent less than the ruling alternative source cost.

It is time the Board of Works considered the difference between waste water used for a golf course and waste water used for vegetable growing. A
differential rate should be considered. The letter continues:

Currently, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission charge for supplying properties on the Mornington Peninsula is 15 cents per kilolitre, therefore the Board's charge for supplying effluent to your property will be 11.25 cents per kilolitre. This charge will be subject to future variations in the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission charges.

That does not make sense. If the Water Commission increases its price, so too will the Board of Works for waste water.

The applicant applied to the Health Commission and a permit certificate was issued on 12 September for the use of waste water for vegetable growing. In a letter to the Board of Works, the applicant states:

Surely prospective users of this water should be encouraged rather than being deterred through relative high fees.

I believe it is very important for the Board to see that a commercial venture such as ours be successful and I urge you to reconsider the fees proposed.

Finally, I can assure you that the growing of vegetable crops is no easy task. It is an extremely costly operation fraught with pest diseases, high pumping and high labour costs, and transportation costs etc.

The proposed fee of 11.25 cents per kilolitre would be the absolute death knell to the venture. I do not believe the Chairman of the Board of Works should be the sole arbiter of pricing policy for waste water when it is considered in the context of the amount of money the Treasurer has had to find for water harnessing and supply. I urge the Government to note what I have stated because the matter concerns the Treasurer, the Minister of Water Supply, the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister for State Development, Decentralization and Tourism. I urge the Ministers and the Government to consider the matter at Cabinet level and let Cabinet decide pricing policies for waste water for the benefit of Victoria.

Mrs TONER (Greensborough)—In speaking to the debate earlier, the Premier said that the Budget had been well received by the people of Victoria. Those persons who are dependent upon the Government for welfare services have not received the Budget very favourably. The volunteer agencies and the group which distributes welfare consider that they have been cheated of millions of dollars by the Budget. The Federal Government has assumed responsibility for family assistance payments and yet the State Government has chosen to put this payment into general revenue rather than to upgrade welfare services.

Last year family assistance cost the State $9,772,199, whereas this year only $2,3 million has been allocated. Nowhere in the community welfare services budget is that saving shown to have been distributed to provide new programmes in regional services. I remind the Treasurer that he made a commitment in last year's Budget speech when he said:

In line with the White Paper, and the need for the State to concentrate available resources in such vital areas as regional welfare programmes, family and child care services, family support services, foster care and child maltreatment preventative programmes, the State has informed the Commonwealth that it proposes to withdraw from the present sharing arrangements for sole parents as from 1 January 1980.

One would be justified in concluding that the State was handing over these payments to the Federal Government in order to concentrate available resources in vital areas such as those named. Certainly that was the assumption made by many voluntary agencies.

I refer especially to a letter from the Victorian Council of Social Service to the Treasurer in which it indicated that the Federal Government in its Budget last year announced that it would pay the supporting parents benefit during the first six months. It indicated that the transfer of responsibility will save the Victorian Government approximately $5.5 million in the coming year and indicated it is imperative that this money be used for urgently needed services provided by the Department of Community Welfare Services and non-Government agencies. The letter goes on to state that the White Paper not only requires State resources, but the continuing goodwill and support of a number of community and self-help groups and 3000 non-Government organizations. It states
that these provide services such as long-term care for children, credit counselling and emergency accommodation. It goes on to state:

We look forward to the tangible acknowledgement of the co-operative relationships which have been built up in Victoria and the Government's practical support for the continuation of this co-operation by retaining the $5'5 million saved on supporting parents benefits within the Budget of the Department of Community Welfare Services.

The letter was dated 25 August. To my knowledge, the Victorian Council of Social Service has still not received an acknowledgment from the Treasurer, nor has it found any evidence within the community welfare services section of the Budget that these monies have been allocated to welfare services to alleviate the distress that many families are feeling at present. Instead, this multi-million dollar saving has disappeared into general revenue. The latest Budget contains no major funding for foster care programmes beyond two units previously committed. There is no additional funding for probation officers beyond out-of-pocket expenses.

The State Government is clearly winding down welfare services and, in doing so, is operating in collusion with the Federal Government. Local Government and voluntary agencies are desperate. They are being pushed into accepting greater responsibility without any accompanying provision of resources. There is no mention in the Budget of the mini-block grant proposal which was recommended in the White Paper, and to which the Government supposedly has a philosophical commitment. Family support services, which consist of financial counselling, family aides, housing officers, and counselling services, may be forced to cease operation. They draw heavily on the FACS programme, and presently there are 25 per cent cuts in some areas, including the north-western and north-eastern regions, because of new funding arrangements and new distribution arrangements for the FACS programme. Consequently, the voluntary sector feels very let down with this present Budget.

Some agencies have enormous deficits, and without additional funds and resources, may be forced to withdraw some of their services. The 7.5 per cent over-all increase in the Budget does not even keep pace with inflation. More than one-third of the Budget allocated to community welfare services is given to pensioner concessions, such as rate and fare concessions, which are properly the responsibility of the Federal Government, because they represent one aspect of income security. The Federal Government will be reluctant to pick up further responsibility for income security when it sees that the State Government is not retaining monies within the welfare services department.

This Government gave unqualified support to the Federal Government in the recent election, and I think it will regret that. There is no whisper of complaint about the Federal emergency relief allocation this year of $500'000, which is clearly inadequate to support families in distress in the State.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition complained earlier about a lack of vision on the part of the Government. I have grown to expect a lack of vision, but I would expect good management. However, that has not occurred.

I should like to refer particularly to the Budget figures, and to indicate that last year there was an under-spending of the total Budget by $1'770'357, and this was at a time when there was an enormous cut-back in staffing and when there was no officer within each region to organize probation in that particular area, when there were at least 1000 unsupervised probationers with no one to match a probationer with a probation officer, when there was a very real need for family aid and family services, and yet the Minister continually cried poor, and at the end of the year the Government finishes with this significant amount of money unexpended. That seems very mysterious to me.

I now wish to refer to the payments in respect of rate concessions for pensioners, to which I referred earlier. I
indicated that they represent more than one-third of the whole welfare Budget, and in fact the 7·4 per cent increase in the Budget this year is wholly taken up with those concessions. I believe that is inappropriate for the Department of Community Welfare Services to have to bear. If the Federal Government cannot be persuaded to take up responsibility for rate and fare concessions, it should remain within Treasury, or within local Government, where the department that has the responsibility of administering this programme, has to take it out of its Budget. These pensioner concessions have certainly precluded the department from supplying the services on the ground which it made a commitment to two years ago in the White Paper. Because these increases are eaten up in this way, the services are seriously eroded in this area.

The FACS programme had an enormous shortage of funds last year to provide preventative services and a back-up for the community programmes that it had initiated. Again there was an underspending of $232 059 in last year's allocation. This year when there is an increase of 11·1 per cent, it is based on under expenditure in the previous year, and it is still not keeping abreast of inflation. This is despite the fact that FACS is being pushed to pick up more and more responsibility because the Department of Community Welfare Services seems determined to wind down services within the region.

I move on to the situation of honorary probation officers, where it appears that there has been a big increase in reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses. Last year the payment was $13 714, and this year $31 000 has been allocated, a 126 per cent increase. Last year money was unexpended by $10 000. Again, this was because most of the probationary officers in Victoria were not utilized because no arrangements were made within the regional offices to match them up with those people who had been put on probation by the courts, so they were put on to voluntary reporting.

Mrs Toner

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Patrick)—I advise the honourable member that the sitting will be suspended at 12 midnight, and I will resume the chair at half past 12 o'clock. She has one minute.

Mrs TONER—There is a big increase in respect of youth accommodation services, and that is rightly so. The Federal Government has recognized a very real need in this area, but I still believe the factors that contribute to the problems of youth leaving home must be looked at, and unemployment is one problem that is causing family distress and breakdown.

In respect of correctional services, there is an increase in the Budget beyond the inflation rate. This is a necessary increase because of the number of adult offenders who are presently in gaol, and because the gaols are enormously run-down. The increase that is provided is still quite inadequate to cope with the current needs.

The sitting was suspended at 12 midnight until 12.32 a.m. (Wednesday).

Mrs TONER—With the present State Budget before me, and with the intention of the State and Federal Governments of continuing to keep welfare spending to a minimum, I am fearful of the three years ahead. The north-western region is facing enormous problems now. Recently, the North Western Suburbs Regional Consultative Committee submitted a paper to the Minister for Community Welfare Services in which it highlighted the number of unemployed and the welfare problems in the region. In the five north-western suburbs the number of registered unemployed has increased by 28 per cent in two years. It now totals nearly 8000 persons. The committee defines the real problem facing families as the amount of money received by those on pensions and benefits. The welfare budget has to be seen in that context, that the amount of money provided for social security payments is quite inadequate. One in ten persons in the north-western region is dependent on a social security pension or benefit.
In 1974 the poverty inquiry established minimum income levels for families of different sizes and for single persons yet the current benefits fall short of the mark substantially. A married couple with two children receives $126 a week in unemployment benefits yet the figures supplied by the Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research indicate that the family needs $146 a week for it to function on the poverty line. This highlights the inadequacies of money provided for the Family and Community Services programme and for emergency relief organizations which are weekly topping up funds for families in distress. Organizations in the north-western region are under pressure to provide this relief while major resources are drying up. The family support programme from the Department of Community Welfare Services was suspended in its first twelve months. Last week the care agency in Broadmeadows gave $12,000 in emergency relief—this same amount was given in June, July and August of this year.

The Federal and State Budgets reflect the diminishing commitment to welfare programmes and the inadequacies of relief funds supplied federally—they will not last out the year. The Treasurer should make submissions now for supplementation of funding as it appears that the Federal Government is determined to pursue its economic policies with the result of a large pool of unemployed. A similar story exists with the State Budget because there has been no growth in real terms in the amount allocated to community services grants through the FACs programme.

In the north-western region, with the new funding formula, a 25 per cent cut in funds is anticipated. This will certainly prohibit any preventative programmes being established. No programme funds have been made available by Treasury for counselling and family support services agencies. That will place impossible demands on members of the North-Western Suburbs Regional Consultative Committee who advise the Minister for Community Welfare Services on community service grant decisions for the region.

Once again, local government will be under pressure to pick up what is a Federal and State Government responsibility. Despite the fact that only 2 per cent of personal income tax has been allocated to local government it is expected to take up an ever-increasing share of welfare responsibilities. Many outer urban areas are faced with a no-growth situation because of diminished building. I have grave fears for the future and urge the Government to consider an additional allocation in the vital areas to which I have referred.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I have read the Budget speech with interest, as have all honourable members. I have noted many of the items, including community welfare services referred to by the honourable member for Greensborough, mental health and mental retardation services, the Police Department and the amount of money to be spent for that department over the next twelve months, education, and so on.

I pay tribute to the Treasurer. The honourable gentleman displayed great ability in his previous portfolio of education and has carried that ability into his present portfolio.

The surplus from the previous year was $61.4 million. Of that $32.4 million has been left in the current account as a surplus. The Treasurer is well aware of the need to get the best value for money and to get the best from Government departments. If the Budget is read carefully and facts and figures examined, I am sure the aim is clear to try to get the best from the money being spent in Victoria.

There are some question marks in my mind. Has Victoria got a clearly defined objective? Do we know where Victoria is going today? Those questions should be considered. We should try to find the answers to them in the Budget Papers before us. We seem to be looking for positive leadership in Victoria and positive statements from the Government on future objectives. It is all very well to speak in terms
that are not very clear and which do not tell us where the State should be heading.

I refer to some statements made in the Budget speech. In the conclusion, at page 50, the Treasurer stated:

Secondary industry in Victoria has its own strength.

What does he mean? Does he mean that Victoria is in the situation of being self-generating? Does he mean that because of the decisions of the Commonwealth Government relating to the Industries Assistance Commission report on the textiles, clothing and footwear industries not to alter the tariff structures that this is a plus to Victoria? It certainly is a plus.

We in Wangaratta are pleased with the decision taken by the Federal Government not to change the tariff levels for eight years. The leaders of the Bruck Mills and the Wangaratta Woollen Mills are pleased about the Federal Government's decision because it gives a lead on what they should be doing in those industries in the next eight years.

The Victorian Government, like many people, made representations to the Federal Government on the report of the Industries Assistance Commission. We are pleased that the situation has been arrived at where there is no change in the level of tariff structure. By the same token, I refer to what the report is and what is stated in the Budget Papers. The Treasurer does not say what the Victorian Government is doing. He states that our industries are not stagnant. We need more specific evidence of why industry is not doing in those industries in the next eight years.

The Victorian Government, like many people, made representations to the Federal Government on the report of the Industries Assistance Commission. We are pleased that the situation has been arrived at where there is no change in the level of tariff structure. By the same token, I refer to what the report is and what is stated in the Budget Papers. The Treasurer does not say what the Victorian Government is doing. He states that our industries are not stagnant. We need more specific evidence of why industry is not doing in those industries in the next eight years.

The Government must obviously be aware of that fact. Anyone who has operated in business and knows about business arrangements will understand the competitive nature of gaining business, whether it be a business enterprise or for the State of Victoria.

Without going into a subject which will be debated tomorrow, that is the sort of progressive attitude we want from the Victorian Government. We want to see industry being attracted to this State. That has not happened in recent times.

Positive leadership from the Government is needed to attract industry and people to Victoria. The conditions must be right for industry to develop. I think I can highlight some points made in the Budget as to why the Government is not doing that at this stage.

Again on page 50 the Treasurer stated:

Victoria is particularly fortunate in its energy reserves of crude oil, natural gas and brown coal, which provide a secure basis on which sound overall development can proceed and new technologies can be attracted to meet the challenge of the 1980's.

I compare Victoria's resources with the natural mineral resources of Queensland and Western Australia which are attracting industry to those areas. I do not believe we are utilizing the resources within Victoria to attract and gain the most we can from industry that might and should be interested in taking up the challenge of coming into Victoria.

Victoria's main attribute of brown coal and electricity generation should be utilized to attract industry. Victoria's coal and power is supposedly cheap compared with world standards. According to reliable information, I do not think it is as cheap as it is made out to be. Nonetheless, power generation is available from the brown coal reserves within Victoria. I refer to the development of brown coal in the generation of power and to a question I put to the Premier on 2 October 1980 in relation to the Loy Yang project. In that question I told the Premier that disputes at the Loy Yang project have increased the cost of that project...
by $340 million. I asked what action was being taken by the Government to minimize the strikes which were occurring on this project because of militant unionism and what action was being taken to minimize the cost escalation of the Loy Yang project as this escalation will eventually be to the detriment of Victoria, the people who use power in Victoria and any industry which may be interested in developing in Victoria.

The Government has a responsibility to govern. As I understand it, the Government has a need to take positive action to come to grips with this problem. It is all very well to say that the matter is in the hands of the court. That is how the Premier answered the question. He indicated it was a demarcation dispute between unions, it was a problem for the court and was now before the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission under Mr Justice Marks. It should not be left there.

Most people are looking for positive leadership from the Government in coming to grips with an apparent problem. Perhaps it is a demarcation dispute, but surely because of the escalation in cost to $340 million and the fact that this will be a deterrent to industry developing in Victoria, the Government should take up this matter and positively try to resolve it for the future of the Loy Yang project and the future of Victoria.

The Government talks a lot about introducing secret ballots. That was one of the prime objectives of the Government in its policy speech before the election in May last year. We have not seen any action in that regard. The Premier was adamant that secret ballots were needed at union elections. He has not come to grips with that problem. If he had, it may have minimized the problems which exist at Loy Yang. The Government should not allow the dispute to continue. This is the sort of case where we are looking for positive leadership from the Government. The Premier is the most important person in that respect.

I am interested in page 1 of the Budget speech and the highlights of the 1980–81 Budget. The first highlight mentioned is the reduction in pay-roll tax for small businesses. That is a positive step to raise the actual exemption level for small businesses. Members of the National Party have constantly pressed the Government to raise this level. The argument has always been that the Government can only raise it by a certain amount because pay-roll tax is an important revenue earner for the Government.

It is my belief and the belief of my party that the pay-roll tax exemption should be raised to such a level that all small businesses would be exempted from the tax. That would result in small businesses employing more people and that situation would generate more employment within the State and more wealth for Victoria.

In answer to an interjection, I would regard a small business as one employing fewer than 100 people. The Government should raise the exemption level further. The raising of the exemption level as from 1 January next year from an $84 000 pay-roll to a $96 000 pay-roll is a step in the right direction but, that is an increase of approximately 15 per cent which is not much higher than the inflation level. It is one positive step the Government could take to assist small businesses and one which would ultimately assist in the development of Victoria with the natural increase in employment and the profits that would be generated.

An Honourable Member—What would that cost?

Mr JASPER—I will be pleased to discuss that further when honourable members have the opportunity of debating the Pay-roll Tax Bill. I hope those honourable members who are interjecting will be in the House to hear my contribution.

The second matter with which I wish to deal is the increased support for library services. In the past I have been critical of the Government in regard to the level of assistance in many areas of local government and I am pleased to
see an increase of $3.25 per head in this allocation. It will assist municipalities in providing what I see as an essential service.

The third matter I wish to deal with is further relief from probate duty and gift duty. The complete removal of probate duty should be the ultimate aim of the Government and I believe it is the ultimate aim. The raising of the level for gift duty from $15,000 to $20,000 will also be of assistance. However, the National Party believes that, if probate duty is to be completely removed, gift duty should likewise be removed.

Another area mentioned is the record allocations for country water supply and sewerage authority projects. This is another area in which, over the years, I have been critical of the small amount of money allocated by the Government. It is mentioned in the Budget Papers that $22 million has been allocated to water supply projects and $29 million to sewerage projects. The towns receiving funds from the Government through the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission are appreciative of receiving that money, but it does not go far enough. As I understand it, 35 towns within country Victoria are ready to proceed with sewerage projects but the Government funding to enable them to proceed is not available. The Government is committed to decentralization. It should, therefore, be seeing that more is spent on country water supply and sewerage projects. Many towns are desirous of having better water and filtered water. That would be to the advantage of all these country areas and an increase in funding for country water supply and sewerage projects is essential.

Another area mentioned in the highlights of the 1980-81 Budget speech is the increased capital works programmes. It is nice to mention that but one needs to analyse the amount being spent. It is suggested that $441.7 million will be spent on the capital works and services programme, an increase of $47.3 million. That reads well. Anyone reading it as it is stated in the Budget Papers would see that as being a good increase which would assist development throughout Victoria. However, it needs to be looked at in the context of the amount allocated in previous years.

As I said, the total allocation is $441.7 million. In 1977-78 the allocation was $443.4 million, so that three years ago the allocation was higher in the area of works and services. In 1978-79 the amount was reduced to $432.196 million, and then last year it dropped almost $40 million down to $394.447 million. That is the background against which honourable members see the generous allocation by the Government this year, an increase of $47.3 million. As I have indicated, it needs to be considered in the context of the amount spent in previous years. If the Government were honest it would clearly state the amount spent in the past.

For the expansion of Victoria and to achieve progress within the State, an expanded programme of capital works and services is necessary. As a matter of comparison, there is mentioned in the Budget Papers an allocation of $11.2 million for capital works projects in the police and emergency services area. I invite honourable members to compare that with the allocation for the Ministry for the Arts where more that $20 million is allocated for expenditure on the Arts Centre. That is a typical example of Government use of money and of putting money into the wrong areas.

Essential services should come first and police and emergency services is surely one area where there needs to be an increase in Government spending.

Mr Roper—Hospitals is another.

Mr Jasper—I am interested to hear some of the interjections and I will be interested to hear the contributions of other honourable members. Apparently there are many other areas where members believe there should be increased spending. I have highlighted this particular area because I believe the police and emergency services area is one where an increase in spending is necessary. An allocation of $11.2 million for the whole of the State is just not sufficient, knowing the money required for capital works in my own area. Comparing it with the amount being spent on the Arts Centre highlights the small allocation.

Mr Jasper
I was also interested to hear the Premier make play earlier this evening on the stamp duty relief in respect of new motor vehicles. It is quite ridiculous when one considers what has happened in this area. Last year the Government pressed on with an increase in stamp duty on the registration of new motor vehicles and the transfer of second-hand vehicles. Although it was higher in Victoria than in any of the other States, there were further increases and Victoria ended up with stamp duty of 3 per cent on new cars and 4 per cent on used cars as from 1 January this year. The Treasurer estimated that that increase would result in $10 million of additional revenue, but I am reliably informed that the amount was of the order of $450 000 in the six months to the end of June. I repeat and emphasize that the Treasurer estimated that the revenue from the increases in stamp duty would be $10 million for the first six months and in actual fact on my investigation the actual increase was about $45 000.

This fact highlights what I said last year, and I refer to my comments in the House when the Bill was debated. I said that, apart from many other factors, those increases in stamp duty would act to the detriment of Victoria, that the motor industry was already in trouble and was looking for a lead from the Government. It did not need to find itself being attacked by the Government. In the speech I made on this subject in the spring sessional period last year, I predicted that many motor businesses would close their doors and go out of business, and that has proved to be the case because they have not been able to maintain a viable operation. I am not suggesting that the increased stamp duty was the only factor, although some people may believe that is the implication. Many factors have led to the decline in the motor industry, but the increase in stamp duty was a contributing factor and it was peculiar to Victoria.

The Victorian motor vehicle stamp duty was the highest in Australia before the increase, but the Government pressed on and increased the impost. Many firms which were contemplating the purchase of motor vehicles, particularly fleet purchases, and which found they could operate from a base outside Victoria, have purchased their motor vehicles in other States. That is why there has been such a small increase in revenue. The Government now says that, to assist the industry, it will drop the stamp duty on new vehicles from 3 per cent back to 2.5 per cent, which is what it was six months ago. Even at that it remains the highest rate in Australia. In New South Wales the duty on new and used vehicles is 2 per cent; there is no duty in Canberra; in Queensland the rate is 1 per cent; and in Western Australia it is 1.75 per cent. That illustrates the problems I mentioned last year when I said that the increase in stamp duty would operate to the detriment of the motor industry in this State and it illustrates the fact that we are not getting leadership from the Government of Victoria.

Positive leadership is needed, with the Government attacking the problems facing the State. The Government should be attracting industry and people to Victoria, but it will not do that through the methods it is using. I spoke to a person involved in the undertaking field last week. I should have thought that that would be a fairly steady sort of occupation. I asked how business was going and I was told that it was not so good. I said, "People have to die. There should not be much difference," and he said, "People are leaving the State. There are not the same numbers." The Premier mentioned that earlier when he said that many older people are going to Queensland and other States, but particularly Queensland. If people found it attractive to stay in Victoria and if the Government were providing positive leadership those people would be retiring in Victoria.

There are many areas in which the Government should be applauded for positive progress, but we need positive leadership so that business can expand and become profitable and so that people are satisfied with their jobs. We need working people who are able to spend in Victoria and to assist the State to develop. We need a show of confidence from everyone and aggressive
action from the Government. We must capitalize on the natural strengths of Victoria, which I mentioned earlier, as did the Premier, with its resources of oil, natural gas and its huge deposits of brown coal.

I hope the Government takes notice of some of the comments I have made, because if my suggestions were adopted the State would be better off and there would be positive progress for Victoria in the future.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—Australian Governments are in a real bind. Sixty per cent of the Australian community believe Governments should be spending more money to provide more services to make a better Australian way of life and particularly to provide more jobs, and 85 per cent believe their living standards are stagnant or falling, and they obviously blame Governments for this. That imposes an increasing responsibility on the Victorian Government to live within the parameters that have been set by the Federal Government, which is trying to follow the dictates of its Treasury advisers, who, in turn, have probably been listening to overseas economists who believe in stringent control of the money supply and repressive financial management.

This has created difficulties for the Victorian Government, which is not nearly so conservative, in my view, as the Federal Government. The Victorian Budget clearly shows that the Victorian Government is prepared to spend its reserves and, to the extent of any other funds it can raise, even from its own taxpayers, to maintain the highest possible level of Government works programmes in real terms.

Mr Ginjaer—You were expanding the money supply a moment ago!

Mr WILLIAMS—I agree with it expanding the money supply if it makes the Australian people happy. I do not believe there is any future in repressive policies that will eventually destabilize the entire political situation.

The Victorian Government is committed to high employment as a basic policy objective. Contrary to claims from members of the Opposition, the Victorian Government has a proud record in the creation of new jobs. Job opportunities in Victoria are growing at a faster rate than those in New South Wales and at a faster rate than the national average. In the year to August, jobs in Victoria increased by 61,500 or 3.8 per cent, which is more than the 3.4 per cent average for Australia or the 3.2 per cent for New South Wales. Jobs for Victorian women have risen by a striking 7 per cent and jobs for males by 2 per cent. Jobs for Victorian males in recreation and personal service have increased by 26 per cent. We hear all this knocking by people who should be concerned about getting jobs for the workers, while recreational and personal service jobs have increased by a massive 26 per cent.

Financial jobs are up by 11 per cent. Victoria is still the financial heart of Australia and that is where the jobs will be found, in service industries such as insurance, banking and so on.

Manufacturing jobs, outside foodstuffs and the depressed metal and engineering sector, are up as a whole by 5.5 per cent. For Victorian females, foodmaking jobs are up by a massive 30 per cent. Community service jobs, including health and welfare, have increased by 16 per cent, and manufacturing jobs, outside the metal sector, are up by 13 per cent.

Hand in hand with this recovery in the private sector has gone a sustained State Government effort to enhance and expand the community services so essential to the welfare of the Victorian people. A record $1548 million has been provided for education. Health continues to receive a high priority, receiving $740 million or 14 per cent more than it received last year. The allocation for public transport is $667 million, or 18.6 per cent more than was allocated last year. I am pleased that the electorate of Doncaster is sharing in this increased transport expenditure, in that 130 new tramway buses will be in service at the end of this financial year.

I particularly commend the 13.6 per cent increase in the expenditure on police and emergency services to $220 million. After unemployment and inflation, crime is the issue that most worries the Australian people. I have categorized
the assault of organized crime on the Australian way of life as being just as dangerous as the assault by an external foe. I have been horrified by the infiltration of organized crime into drug trafficking, which is now a $4000 million industry in this country.

I was pleased with the headline in today's Age—that is Wednesday—of "Tough new drug laws. Heroin pushers face up to 25 years' jail". Those are headlines which give me heart and which give the lie to the remarks of the honourable member for Murray Valley, that my Government is not prepared to stand up and be counted. If we receive more of this type of tough Government action then members of the Opposition will receive a real shock come the election in 1982.

A very interesting document was tabled in the House today. I refer to the report to the Victorian Government on matters of particular relevance to the State of Victoria following the Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs conducted by Mr Justice Williams. The document quoted confidential evidence by the officer in charge of the Victoria Police Drug Bureau. He spoke of a number of identified individuals known to be engaged in bringing drugs from Sydney to Melbourne and of other individuals who were suspected of having been so engaged.

Another confidential exhibit was provided by Mr D. J. Mitchell, the officer of the then Federal Bureau of Narcotics responsible for Victoria and South Australia. That exhibit contained information relating to associations between leading Sydney and Melbourne criminals which in turn has implications of drug trafficking.

This dreadful drug problem has become our major problem. According to a recent Age poll, more than 1 million people in Victoria and New South Wales have smoked marijuana and of these, nearly one-third or about 300,000 are regular smokers.

According to a recent study conducted by the United States National Institute of Drug Abuse, marijuana is far more deadly than the cigarette in causing infertility, defective births and lung cancer. I condemn those individuals who are trying to persuade the community that marijuana is not as harmful as the smoking of cigarettes.

However, the real deadly drug is heroin and 50,000 Victorians have tried heroin, 30,000 of those being under the age of 24 years. I am very pleased that my own Government is increasing the numbers in the Drug Squad and will be introducing these new, tough drug laws.

The Victorian Government has an obligation to protect young persons in this State from the ravages of the evil drug trade. It is clear from evidence given to various Royal Commissions that Sydney is the centre of that trade, but we have inadequately policed entry points at Tullamarine airport and obviously at Westernport and Mallacoota where drugs are entering this State unhindered.

The recent coroner's inquiry exposed the massive drug traffic conducted by the New Zealand syndicate, the Asian syndicate or whatever syndicate one wants to name it, but it was more horrifying than any movie that has been seen on television. Successive inquiries have clearly indicated the failure of law enforcement agencies to prevent drugs entering this country. The failure of the Nugan Hand bank has exposed only the tip of the iceberg in its connection with the drug traffic, money laundering, criminal activities and the stacking and criminal activities existing in Labor Party branches in New South Wales.

Dr Alfred McCoy of the University of New South Wales, in his recent book on drug trafficking, estimated that $1.5 million a year is available from illegal casinos conducted in Sydney. Dr McCoy alleges that a lot of this money is used to bribe senior police officers and Parliamentarians. I hope every member of the Labor Party reads Dr McCoy's book. He also mentions that with an annual turnover of something like $2000 million from crime in all its forms in Sydney, this money is drawing international gangsters from the United
States of America, the south of France and everywhere else, wherever the Mafia seems to concentrate.

A document which apparently caused the resignation of the former police commissioner in New South Wales alleges that New South Wales police were heavily involved in organized crime including armed robberies, drugs, prostitution and corruption of our court processes. The document also alleged that vital evidence has been withheld in court and that this has led to the introduction of interstate criminals who appeared to operate with immunity upon the payment of large sums of money or part of the proceeds of crimes committed to certain members of the Police Force.

Mr Bernard Delaney, the former southern commander of the Australian Bureau of Narcotics, has stated that New South Wales policemen accept bribes, protect criminals and prostitutes and sell briefs to shady lawyers and then in turn are protected by corrupt politicians. Mr Delaney also stated that the New South Wales police can do any given job more quickly and ruthlessly than members of any other State Police Force.

These are horrifying extracts which I have read. They have been made by people whom I believe to be highly reputable in their field. However, that does not mean that I am attacking the majority of policemen, for I have spoken to senior policemen in this State and I hold them in high esteem.

I am proud of the police in my electorate of Doncaster. In recent times I have been the only member in this House to have had a hotel closed within his electorate. That arose because of the action of the police who were gravely dissatisfied with the conduct at the Doncaster Inn Hotel and had it closed for a fortnight.

Earlier, an underworld figure in Melbourne—I do not know whether to provoke him or not—decided to establish a massage parlour down the road from my office, in Doncaster Road. For the benefit of those who are cynical of getting rid of massage parlours, I am proud to indicate that in conjunction with the municipal officers and the police in Doncaster, this massage parlour was closed. The promoter of the massage parlour was a well-known Melbourne gangster, and I could name him, but the massage parlour was closed and the women running the parlour were driven out of Doncaster.

That is what happens when we have a strong, incorruptable Police Force and that is certainly the position in the electorate I represent—I wish I could say the same about some other electorates. There must be thousands of policemen who must be disgusted, disillusioned and disheartened by their seeming inability to make any headway in fighting organized crime.

I applaud the efforts of the Government, in consultation with the Governments of other States, to establish a national bureau of criminal intelligence and presumably that organization will track down the men at the top of organized crime in this country.

I applaud the Budget because at long last honourable members will see that the Government is active in tackling the problems which are most worrying to the Australian community. That includes jobs for our young people, and the provision of better community services, particularly in the outer suburbs, and that requires much more expenditure on roads. There is also the provision of hospitals and the electorate I represent lacks a hospital.

I spoke earlier of the transport system in the electorate. I am probably more fortunate than most honourable members in having a very modern bus service operating within my electorate. I speak quite proudly of my constituents, and the fact that the voters in my electorate held up very well on Saturday for the Liberal Party. I cannot say that the same happened on the other side of the river, in the electorate of Greensborough, but my constituents were still prepared to support the policies which will emanate from Canberra.

I listened intently to what the honourable member of Greensborough said about social welfare.
The Hamer Government has a proud record of caring for people. I have already had discussions with the Treasurer about the funding of special family welfare agencies, a remarkable agency called Doncare operates in the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. It would be a tragedy if that agency were to run down its services because it was no longer able to obtain funding under the FACS programme. I hope it is possible for the Government to reconsider funding of the family welfare agencies because, regrettably, the strains of modern life are putting heavy pressures on all stratas of society. In the Housing Commission areas there are not only deserted wives but also a high incidence of marriage breakdowns in electorates such as the one I represent in Doncaster, and these deserted wives and their families need counselling as much as they do in any other industrial suburb. The Liberal Party stands for family life, and the Government must spend much more money in fields aimed at maintaining Victorian families and bolstering them, if necessary, with all the welfare counselling services that come from these voluntary agencies and that should be supported by Governments.

They are the priorities. All Governments must establish priorities, I see them as, firstly, providing jobs for young people; secondly, increasing Government spending in areas where the funding is obviously deficient, and thirdly, providing much greater assistance for the family, particularly the single income family. If the Government does not learn the lesson of the surveys that have been taken recently, perhaps some other party will have the opportunity of putting its theories into practice. The Victorian people will be jumping from the frying pan into the fire if they think they will receive much real assistance from the sorts of programmes that will emerge from the alternative Government of Victoria.

Nevertheless, I applaud the basic humanity of the Victorian Budget, and I hope that in the period to come we can even enlarge on the provisions that have already been made in this year's Budget.

Mr CAIN (Bundoora)—Firstly, I express my regret that this debate should be proceeding at this hour. The Budget is a matter that would have justified greater priority than the Government apparently intends that it be afforded. Consequently, honourable members are debating the Budget in the early hours of the morning to dispose of it. It is a matter for regret that we were not able to debate it at a more reasonable hour. In the circumstances I propose to offer some commentary on what I see as the role a Budget should play in Victoria, and perhaps to make some brief reference to remarks made by earlier speakers this evening in that regard.

I was one of about six or eight members of this House who sat and listened to the reading of the Budget speech by the Treasurer some two or three weeks ago. I did so as an exercise in discipline rather than anything else; I thought that was the best way to hear what was contained in it. I must say that I have sat in this place in other years and listened to the debate that followed the Budget speech and the contributions of the economic “heavies”, as I call them, which have taken place, and I feel pretty inadequate in discussing the various permutations and ramifications of the Budget compared with others who understand economics. I feel ill-informed but one honourable member in this place has lifted the standard of debate on the Budget and has raised the blinds and made it much clearer to me. I refer to the honourable member for Dandenong.

This House owes a debt of gratitude to the honourable member, not just for the way in which he has made it clear that a better presentation of the Budget Paper is required, but also for making clear with his own contributions what Budget Papers ought to contain and how they should be expressed to the Parliament. He has played an educative role in Parliament. Having listened to the debate tonight, I believe it is an educative role that has paid some dividends for a number of honourable members on both sides of the House.
However, the Government supporters who have spoken and have demonstrated that the honourable member for Dandenong has had some influence on them do not carry the same weight that comes to the Government acting as a Government, because I do not believe the Budget contains the sort of approach and information that would justify that. Government supporters have mouthed platitudes.

The Budget ought to be a document of economic management. We ought to take economic issues seriously in Victoria. It is not enough to come in here, as a number of members have done and as the Premier has done in the past, mouth platitudes and generalities and expect that to be sufficient. The approaches to the Budget made tonight are similar to those made in the past; the honourable member for Dandenong took them apart methodically and effectively. It was shown by later speakers that the Budget Papers ought to be a source of information to us all.

The point that the honourable member for Dandenong made—and made very well—is that it can be turned any way one likes, but the Government's economic statement, contained in 10 or 11 pages from page 97 onwards shows through the graphs and figures that the Victorian economy is in a state of decline. The honourable member said that Victoria was becoming known as the stagnant State.

All the indicators such as the figures on population and employment, consumer demands, new houses or constructions built and motor vehicle registrations show that Victoria is faring relatively worse than Australia as a whole and other States in particular. In all these areas the honourable member has demonstrated that Victoria is down. Although honourable members express concern in particular regards, the Budget document approved by the Government and presented in Parliament does not grapple with and address itself to those issues of the Victorian economy. It just does not come to grips with those matters. The ten or eleven pages to which I referred are really no better than one would expect in the current issue of the Victorian Year Book. It is an ex post facto review and is so characterized in the economic context of the Budget.

Nowhere has any attempt been made, as has been said by members of the Opposition, to paint the picture and plot the course. It has become all the more important to do that because of the changing structure of our Federation. The components of the Federation are, in our estimation, growing farther apart. In many regards, unfortunately, they are competing with one another and are seeking to draw to their shores industry and capital growth at the expense of other States. We are rapidly losing a national economic approach, and that is a matter for regret.

The second reason why the Victorian Budget has to be a document that faces up in a more sophisticated way to the economic issues is that the central Government that has traditionally been accepted and is accepted in other Federations as being the Government that ought to be responsible for economic management is withdrawing more and more from its economic management role.

A philosophical gulf exists between the views of the Opposition and those of the Government on that matter. I accept the difference, but I do not agree with members of the Government party. The economic management of this nation should be the responsibility of the central Government. Members of the Opposition would be prepared to give that Government the constitutional powers it needed to fulfil that role. It would need additional powers. Members of the Government party, on the other hand, do not want the Federal Government to have that role, for reasons that I shall not go into now.

Because there will be a further three years of Federal Liberal-National Party coalition Government, the economic role will fall more and more into the camps of the States. That must be recognized. It is another reason why
a more sophisticated approach to the economics of the Budget is required. That economic planning approach is to be contrasted with what I regard as the Government's collective response and collective initiative towards the Budget. The Minister's speech has confirmed that the Government still regards the Budget as a housekeeping exercise. One shuffles and juggles, starting with last year's figures, adding a bit here and taking off a bit there, compromising, wheeling and dealing, and meeting the competing demands. That is about the extent of the depth of approach.

One always has regard, as Catherine West said recently, to the electoral consequences of certain actions. That is the overriding factor to observe continually. One must not regard the Budget as a serious economic document which ought to embrace all aspects of the State's economy and be seen as a method of shaping that economy. That is the difference in the philosophies of the Opposition and the Government. Members of the Opposition regard the Budget as an economic statement, a plan and a serious goal to be implemented in the coming year. More so than the Government, the Opposition regards the Budget as a method of providing and caring for the people in the community who need to be cared for, and of servicing the society in which we live.

Another aspect of the difference between the parties is the role of the tax system. Members of the Opposition regard it as a method by which the Budget ought to express and seek to achieve a more equitable society and a more egalitarian approach to society. The Budget should be directed, so far as its tax initiatives are concerned, towards ensuring that the burden of paying taxes is borne by those who can best pay.

The probate issue, which has been discussed in this place before and will be discussed again, is perhaps the best example of this. Members of the Labor Party believe there is nothing wrong with taxing large estates once in a generation as a matter of principle if that ensures that other persons are thereby required to bear less of the tax burden. It is purely a matter of making a value judgment of what area one wishes to attack. For some years members of the Labor Party have said that provided one makes provision for those people who are dependent on small farming business, there is no value in this community attempting to take care of the large estates that go on accumulating, generation after generation. The alternative is taxation of another form, attracting tax from people who can less afford to pay it.

The role of the State Budget should be upgraded. The Budget should be seen as the document, and it is becoming more so slowly, that gives the lead, plots the path and offers the future economic plan for Victoria. The present State Budget is not a full and accurate statement of the State's economy and, of course, it cannot be because it does not include the financial involvement of the large number of public authorities that dominate this State and the functions it carries out. It is a matter for regret that the Government, moving as it is slowly towards a Budget that meets those guidelines adequately, has not moved as quickly as one would have hoped.

Another aspect on which the Budget is silent is the subject of the future of Federal and State financial relations. The whole question of stage 2 of the new federalism with State taxation has been avoided. It is time that debate was faced up to and those issues resolved.

The other matter that must be tackled is to what extent the tax reimbursement formula should pay regard to the potential contribution that the resource rich States can make. For some years the Federation has taken the line that smaller and more populous States ought to contribute mightily to the financial needs of the larger, more sparsely populated States. The philosophy was that this nation should develop as a nation and that those rich, smaller and more populous States should receive less than their per capita share because of the need to develop the larger and more sparsely
populated States. That argument must now be tempered with some consideration of the extent to which the large resource rich States ought to be contributing perhaps in reverse to the smaller States from whom the economic power is gradually slipping. That debate has so far been avoided and ought to be encouraged by a more sophisticated approach again in the Budget documents.

The case for and against those sorts of matters should be set out in the Budget Papers. Such matters should not just be looked at in retrospect but should also be considered in prospect. That would be useful in the Budget in future years. An attempt at crystal ball gazing from the people responsible for preparing these documents would be of value.

I shall now become parochial and make a few brief comments about the Budget's failure to grapple with the question of the administration of justice in this State. As I have said before in this place, as a member of the legal profession I am ashamed at the present legal system in Victoria that does not provide a speedy and economical system of criminal justice. It is a disgrace that year after year the State allows persons to be locked in the remand prison at Pentridge for nine or ten months although found guilty of nothing.

Mr Jona—A few of them.

Mr CAIN—If only one is there longer than he or she should be, that is too many. The Minister may say that it or 2 or 3 is all right, but I do not accept that. As long as this system of justice leaves people rotting away, without bail, in the remand yard month after month, because they are unable to be brought before the court, I am not satisfied, no member of the Opposition is satisfied, I hope no member of the Government party is satisfied and the public of Victoria is not satisfied. It is time the Government faced up to the rotten system it has. That is all that can be said. There are persons on bail who have been waiting up to two years for their trials to come on, with all the attendant anxiety and concern. There is a range of reasons why that occurs but the main reason is that the system is unable to cope with the number of cases. So long as the Government adopts the philosophy that there are no votes in the administration of justice and gaols, it will have a lousy system. For 25 years the Government has simply looked at the electoral roll and said "There are no votes in that. We will do nothing about it". As a consequence, an appalling situation exists in which the Government can display no pride.

I am not saying anything that I have not said on previous occasions. I will continue to say it again and again: The situation is not good enough. The fundamental obligation of this and any Government is to provide a system of justice in the community. The Government has failed in that obligation to meet the needs of the community. The Government does and will continue to stand condemned for its attitude towards the administration of justice.

Mr MACKINNON (Box Hill)—The Budget does not adopt any startling changes of direction. No dramatic new sources of revenue have been sought and there are no dramatic changes in the area of expenditure. Nevertheless, it is a Budget which is worthy of scrutiny and comment.

Previous speakers have touched upon the question of Federal-State relationships. It is always salutory to remember that the proportion of revenue derived from the Commonwealth Government is equal to the amount of revenue the State Government raises in taxation. That amount is approximately $382 million. The Government does not have as much leeway in the amount of revenue that it raises and is, therefore, dependent upon the Commonwealth Government. That situation must be continually examined.

Any new formula will have to take into account the changing nature of taxation. It is likely that there will be less emphasis upon direct income tax and more emphasis upon sales tax and other less direct forms of taxation.
There are changing taxation behaviour patterns in the community. There is a large underground economy which avoids taxation. If important sections of the community at the wealthy and less wealthy ends of the tax scale are avoiding taxation, the high level of taxation levied will have to be examined. Pressures, for example, in the area of pay-roll tax, will become operative. States will not move away from pay-roll tax. New South Wales has an anticipated pay-roll tax revenue of $800 million compared with $626 million for Victoria. However, all honourable members would recognize the effect that an impost like pay-roll tax has upon the smaller employer who is faced with this and other imposts or wages. There will be pressure to reduce the level of pay-roll tax and to increase the level of exemptions. Taxation is used intelligently in Victoria to enable special dispensations from pay-roll tax to apply in certain instances, for example, for decentralized industry, Victoria does have some means of providing an incentive or reducing a disincentive.

Although there is a range of taxes, those taxes fall in different ways upon different parts of the economy. Although it may be said that any one tax is not always completely fair in its application, if there is a sufficiently wide range of taxes which are thoughtfully developed, in total a reasonably fair system will prevail.

There should be a diversity of taxes but not only for the sake of levying taxes. There is merit in a diversity of taxes.

Mr Roper—And a variety of ways of avoiding them.

Mr MACKINNON—Naturally with the diversity of taxes it becomes much harder to develop schemes for avoiding them. That is a factor that does have to be taken into account. Honourable members opposite sneeringly talk about persons avoiding taxes. That avoidance applies to most parts of the community one way or another. That avoidance ranges from whether somebody declares all the tips he receives in his tax return to those who undertake complicated schemes such as the case in England which was given wide publicity in the media recently. That case concerned a family who operate a private company and ensure that they have sufficient assets to allow for the growth of that company.

Mr Roper—Like Vestey?

Mr MACKINNON—That is right. The Vestey family were one of the pioneers in tax avoidance. It is interesting to note that a major source of revenue is the various betting and gambling revenues which contributed $160 million last financial year. The Victorian Government is outstripped by the New South Wales Government which accumulated $311 million because of its taxes on poker machines. I do not suggest for a moment that because the New South Wales Government derives revenue from that source, that would be a reason to introduce poker machines in Victoria.

I refer to some of the changes that have been made in the format of the Budget. The Treasurer has decided that there should be a block-funding approach generally to cover at least the following items of departmental expenditure. The items listed are travel subsistence, office requisites, equipment, stationery, books and publications, postal and telephone expenses, motor vehicles, purchase and running costs, fuel, light, power and water and incidental expenses. It is suggested that the departments exercise more accountability and responsibility by being able to vary the amounts they spend on these items between the notional amounts put forward in the Budget as they see them. I applaud this, as the departments spend a great deal of time in preparing requests for a Treasurer's Advance. However, I believe a number of departments will find this difficult to operate unless they have adequate commitment control.

If one looks closely at the way some departments operate, at the level of administrative expertise and the degree to which computer assistance has been introduced, one sees that the departments are short of the facilities that they need to exercise that sort of control.
While I applaud that move, I believe that needs to be pointed out, and I hope it prompts departments to take advantage of the flexibility of this new approach.

It was good to see the Auditor-General's report being tabled in Parliament today. This will enable honourable members to refer to matters arising from the report in this debate. One of the items referred to frequently by the Auditor-General is the need for expanding internal audit. He states that a number of larger departments and organizations fail to realize the potential benefit to be derived from the operation of an internal audit. The introduction of an internal audit in departments may be seen as an inquisitorial exercise, but the facts are that an internal auditor will assist a department to operate efficiently and effectively, and will ensure a proper accounting of all the moneys that pass through it.

There is also reference in the Auditor-General's report to electronic data processing. Again it would be useful for urgent moves to be made in this direction. Mini computers are available, and there is an opportunity to extend their use throughout the departments. I am aware that the EDP Policy Committee and others are examining the matter. I hope their investigations will be conducted with some urgency, because there is no question that the complexity of financial management in this State is increasing with every day.

Before I conclude, I wish to refer to one of the matters alluded to by the honorable member for Greensborough, the question of institutions operated under the community welfare services. I have taken some interest in Winlaton Youth Training Centre, which is within my electorate. It is typical of a number of establishments of this nature. It is not all that one would desire, but I congratulate the staff on their constructive approach and on their work. I have no doubt that many of the girls who have passed through that institution have moved on into the world that much better for it, and have learned a great deal from it. I should not like the good work done there to go unnoticed. I am very impressed with the work that is carried out at Winlaton, and it is good to see that something is being done and that the girls are not being treated as if nothing can be done for them. Winlaton is a very caring institution, and the girls who go there are not treated as complete dropouts in this world but, as one would expect, they are treated as human beings. More than that, the confidence that they need is worked on. I am pleased to see in the Budget speech that work will commence to further update Winlaton.

Community welfare services is one area that, for many years, has been swept under the carpet, but this has not been the attitude of the present Government. A great deal has been done to update the services, and the Government is to be congratulated for that. On that note, I am happy to conclude my remarks.

Mr GINIFER (Keilor)—The Budget debate gives members an opportunity to put their varying attitudes and interpretations of economic indicators before the House. The Opposition believes the Government has misread many of the economic indicators in this State. If it had read them correctly, through home building, bankruptcies, car registrations, employment and movement of population, it would have seen that this State, businesswise, is in a rather stagnant position. One would have hoped that the Budget brought down by the Treasurer would have given encouragement and optimism to entrepreneurs and small businessmen.

One of the factors involved in investment is confidence in the particular State or system in which one is operating, confidence in the future, and some predictability of Government and Government policies. Unfortunately, the policies of the Federal Liberal Government have been re-echoed and reinforced by Government members in this debate. One of the factors inhibiting new investment is the soaring interest rates in this State and nation. This has been brought about to a large degree by the matters referred to by the Minister of Housing.
The Minister indicated that there was a strong restriction on the elasticity and enlargement of money supplied. It is apparent that the holding back of the expansion of the money supply will result in steep increases in interest rates. This will be an inhibiting factor in additional investment by small businessmen. The higher the interest rate the fewer opportunities are available for economic, viable propositions for investment by small businesses. The Opposition disagrees with the fiscal policies of both the Federal and State Governments. As a result of those policies, interest rates will rise and will have a profound effect not only on business investment but also on persons who wish to purchase their own homes. It will particularly affect first home buyers.

If the Victorian Government continues to support such a programme, it should closely examine discriminatory interest rate support for these persons. It may be all right for the Federal Government to offer some taxation relief but, unfortunately, that is only small. Should the Government pursue that policy, interest rates will increase because of the pressure on money supply. The Government should take positive action to assist those persons desiring to purchase their own homes because high interest rates are crippling.

Social welfare is similarly affected. Many community groups, particularly ethnic groups wishing to build their own community centres, are concerned. They hope for some assistance from Government agencies in counselling, and other aspects of welfare. They are discovering that the large portion of the burden they face is in interest rates they are forced to pay because of the policies of the Federal Government, supported by the Victorian Government. Assistance should be given to these groups, especially if the Government continues with its high interest rate policy. These are the fundamental issues with which the Opposition disagrees.

I remind honourable members that one of the responsibilities of the Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs —perhaps a misnomer—is to promote and facilitate the settling of migrants in Victoria, the establishment of ethnic groups and the promotion of post-immigration after care and well being of these citizens. Up to now, because of the financial stringencies of the Treasury, insufficient funds have been made available to the Ministry to enable it to carry out its responsibilities fully. Tribute should be paid to the fact that some funds were made available during the last financial year for a translation unit and I hope the unit will be bolstered to provide a high standard of service to fully carry out the needs and requirements of ethnic communities in Victoria.

Had the unit the resources and physical capacity it needs, it could have been used when the Green Paper on Education was introduced. The Green Paper was circulated to the community, schools and other organizations to seek advice, assistance and comment. Many schools have a high ethnic population and the translation unit could have been used to provide copies of the Green Paper in various languages of the ethnic communities. In fact, much of the jargon contained in that Green Paper was a difficult exercise in reading for many Anglo-Saxons. When various communities are asked to contribute to and consider documents like the Green Paper on Education, the translation unit should be used to full advantage for these purposes. If the Green Paper foreshadowed by the Minister of Housing is to come within the ambit of ordinary citizens, I hope provision will be made for its translation so that ethnic communities will be able to understand it and contribute to it.

Funding for the Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs for this year totals $1 050 000, an increase of approximately 30 per cent over the allocation for last year. A large percentage—$400 000—goes towards salaries, allowances, and so on with very little left over for other expenditure and for the contributions that can be made to various communities for the welfare services they are attempting to provide. Salaries have increased by 25 per cent; provision of expenses for publicity has increased 50 per cent; provision of funding for office requisites has increased
Appropriation (1980-81, No. 1) Bill (Budget debate) [ASSEMBLY

40 per cent; post and telephone expenses have increased 100 per cent; yet the allocation to ethnic groups has remained at $100,000 for the current financial year and the two previous financial years.

The Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs has not succeeded in obtaining from Treasury the additional funding required to assist the various ethnic community groups that have been attempting to establish their own buildings for the development of services within their own communities. There is no provision for capital works and buildings. The amounts normally made available are approximately $2000 to $3000. Additional pressure must be made by the Ministry and the Minister in further representations to ensure further funding is available for these community groups.

In education, under the provisions for other services there is a contribution to the teacher exchange programme between Victoria and France. In this instance, very few people of the French ethnic origin are resident in Australia. It is enlightening to note that for the first time in this financial year a contribution of some $5000 is being made to the teacher exchange programme between Italy and Victoria.

I commend this initiative and hope it will be a precedent to future larger contributions so that not only will we have exchange teachers from Italy within our midst but perhaps others from Malta and Greece. I suggest to the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs that he should go further in this field. Melbourne has about the third largest Greek speaking community in the world. The Maltese speaking community is also very large. Consideration should be given to those two communities. I hope that the $5000 included in this estimate is only a token of something which is to come.

We need an extension of the opportunity to assist and encourage Greek, Maltese and Italian speaking teachers to come to Victoria on a tour of duty of Victorian schools.

One point that was brought to my attention when looking at the advance account and the money made available there was that the Minister and the Government might well consider, so far as the ethnic community is concerned and its attempt to develop a multicultural society, that when we have problems such as those into which the Minister went to inquire and see at first-hand in South East Asia twelve months ago in relation to the refugee problem, and what might be done by Victoria, that it might be a highly desirable approach on such an occasion for not only the Minister of the day to attend and bring back an assessment on such problems but also for the Opposition spokesman to attend and at least bring back, if possible, a bipartisan approach to some humanitarian questions. I am sure that the National Party can speak for itself on this matter.

On such questions, it is highly desirable that not only is an attitude brought to bear that might be regarded as a Government attitude but that a member of Parliament who represents an electorate where an overwhelming majority of people who come from non-English speaking countries reside might also be able to make an objective assessment and contribution to the needs and welfare of such people.

It is on that basis that I wish to conclude my remarks and return to the point where I began, that the Budget is a vehicle by which all sides of the House might make a contribution regarding the economic and fiscal management of not only the State but also the nation.

In this instance the Opposition believes the Government has mis-read the economic indicators so far as the welfare of Victoria is concerned. It is highly desirable that the Government should tackle problems, such as welfare problems and difficulties, which have been brought about by what in many instances are half measures and have had an undue influence on many people from the low economic gaps in this State. They should not have to bear the full weight of the economic measures this Government supports, and the National Government, in attempting to hold back inflation at a cost to the community.

Mr Ginifer
Mr HANN (Rodney)—In rising to comment on the Budget, I first commend the Treasurer for the additional information which was supplied with the Budget Papers—namely, four or five documents containing substantial detailed information on the various estimates and loan repayments to the Commonwealth. These documents have given members of this House a much clearer understanding of the information contained in the Budget. The Minister did highlight some problems Victoria is experiencing.

Members of the National Party have already drawn attention in this debate to the decline in the population and general economic welfare of Victoria. This is spelt out clearly on page 100 of the Budget Papers which states:

Throughout the 1970s, the growth in Victoria's population has been less than for Australia as a whole. The compound growth rate between 1971 and 1979 for Victoria was 1.1 per cent per annum compared with 1.4 per cent for Australia.

This was brought to my attention recently in an address at an annual meeting of the Royal Women's Hospital when the guest speaker who was in charge of the test tube baby section drew attention to the fact that Victoria is experiencing a situation of less than zero population growth. If one follows that through to its logical conclusion that is an alarming situation for this State. It means that in 20 or 25 years time there will be fewer taxpayers in Victoria to support an increased ageing population. Once again in the information supplied to the House by the Treasurer, he draws attention to the fact that the population of Victoria is ageing. He states that forecasts indicate that the proportion of population aged 15 to 64 was 62.7 per cent in 1971 and is projected to rise to 65.3 per cent by 1981 with a continuing rise up to the year 2000.

Mr Dixon—Are you sure you are quoting the right figures?

Mr HANN—I am quoting from the Budget Papers. We are talking about the age category. When I first came into Parliament the majority of people in Victoria were under the age of 25 years. The Minister should be aware of this. It is a direct quotation from the Budget Papers.

Mr Dixon—I was querying your interpretation of the figures.

Mr HANN—The Minister may or may not have read the figures. The age groupings will project into an older age grouping.

Mr Dixon—That is not substantiated by what you quoted.

Mr HANN—If the Minister studies it, I think he will find that it is. This will have a long term effect upon the work force in Victoria and on the general growth of the State because there will be a smaller work force. I suspect, after listening to the address by the Premier to this House earlier tonight when he quoted the unemployment figures for Victoria, that one of the reasons this State has been able to maintain a lower percentage of unemployment is that many young people have moved to other States to find employment and so are not included in the unemployment figures for this State. The Minister has no reason to be proud of his record in promoting employment in this State.

As late as this afternoon it was pointed out to the National Party that there has been a serious decline in the growth of manufacturing industry in this State to such an extent that, if we had not been able to encourage Alcoa to set up the smelter at Portland, this State and especially the State Electricity Commission would have been severely embarrassed when the Loy Yang project came to completion because there would have been a surplus of electricity power supply. That is amazing when one considers that it is only three or four years since that project was first announced in this Parliament and legislation was first passed to approve of the construction of the Loy Yang power station; yet some four years later we find that, had Alcoa not made the decision to come to Victoria, the State Electricity Commission would have been severely embarrassed because of a serious downturn in the growth of manufacturing industry in this State.
Looking again at the Minister's own documents supplied with the Budget, one finds reference to the decline in the growth of manufacturing industries, and I refer to page 105 of the Budget Papers. In formulating its Budget policy, the Government should have been more aggressive in encouraging the growth of manufacturing industry in this State by providing more incentives to companies to come here. Reference has been made to the payroll tax concessions but this is an area where Victoria lags far behind the other States, especially Queensland. The exemption limit in Victoria is still far below that which applies in Queensland. The Government seems reluctant to recognize the benefits that can accrue to small business and industry through the provision of these concessions or rebates, assistance which would encourage over-all development of the State. Victoria would reap the benefit many times over if it provided this sort of assistance.

One of the strongest criticisms that members of the Parliamentary National Party experience from time to time is in respect to the ever-growing number of regulations, controls and taxation measures applied to small business in this State by the various Government departments, the restrictions which affect their over-all economic viability, and I believe the Government should examine this area.

Reference is also made in the Budget Papers to the rural situation and the fact that rural industry is experiencing something of a boom period; but it should be a matter of grave concern to Parliament that the Australian Bureau of Statistics has predicted that, although the income of farmers will rise by about 8 per cent, the price paid for the inputs or the costs of production will rise by 11 per cent, so there will be an over-all net decline in rural income. Carrying that through to the longer term, one foresees a serious situation in which the Government should take more interest.

The question of economic management should be an increased responsibility of the Department of Agriculture in Victoria. Emphasis appears to be placed more on matters of research and the extension of agricultural production without adequate consideration being given to the long-term marketing strategies, both within Victoria and in the export situation, so as to ensure the long term economic viability of the rural communities. The rural communities in Victoria are of vital importance to the whole economy. Victoria is not a resource-rich State such as Queensland or Western Australia, and it relies heavily on its rural industries. To a limited extent it relies on oil and brown coal, as an honourable member interjects; but each of the commodities to which the honourable member refers is being sold fairly cheaply by this State and Victoria is not reaping major benefits. The difference between agriculture and those other resources is that agriculture is reproducing.

Mr Dixon—A moment ago you were asking for subsidies to promote manufacturing industry.

Mr HANN—No, I was asking for fewer Government controls and regulations. The Minister should be aware that the various planning controls and environment protection controls imposed by his Government are costing private enterprise and manufacturing industry in Victoria millions of dollars each year.

Mr Burgin—What do you think about the Alcoa project?

Mr HANN—I support the Alcoa proposal because it will give a boost to the economic climate in western Victoria, which has been rather sick, as the honourable member for Polwarth knows.

Particularly within the Department of Agriculture more emphasis should be placed on the whole question of the marketing of the end product rather than the almost total concentration on production areas. There is enormous potential in this State, especially in the areas I represent in northern Victoria, the irrigation areas, where, on the department's own estimates, there could be something like a fivefold increase in production; yet it is of little value to increase production fivefold unless...
there are adequate markets for that productivity and returns which will overcome the high costs. Extensive reviews are currently being carried out in the Department of Agriculture and the Minister should give higher priority to the marketing of the agricultural production of this State.

The question of Budget priorities causes deep concern to the Parliamentary National Party, especially when one considers the way priorities have drifted in recent years. One facet about which the National Party is most alarmed is the lowering of the priority this Government assigns to water supply and sewerage works and services in this State and it is interesting to note that the works and services allocation in this year’s Budget is $34.9 million. In 1975–76, the actual payments from the Works and Services Account for the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission amounted to $33.037 million; so over a five-year period there has been a marginal increase only, just over $1 million, in the Works and Services Account. Effectively, that means that there has been a reduction of 50 per cent in the funds available to the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission. This places strong pressure on many centres throughout Victoria, not only country centres but also metropolitan centres, seeking improvement to water supply and sewerage works in this State.

In my own area there are projects in excess of $3 million awaiting funding by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission. They are urgent, major projects and yet at this stage none of them has been able to be funded by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission. That is only the tip of the iceberg. Many communities are seeking improvements to their water supply, filtered water or much-needed sewerage services. The National Party believes the Government should review its priorities and give a higher priority to these essential works and services in the interests of the balanced development of the State.

Road funding is also a matter of concern. The percentage of State Government funding for roads has declined in recent years, which is having a serious impact on country municipalities.

Another reason for disquiet is that it seems that the State does not get value for money in many of the capital works carried out under the auspices of Government departments, particularly the Public Works Department. There seems to be a general rule that anyone tendering for a public works contract should automatically add a percentage to cover delays in payments, delays in getting decisions and other matters. Perhaps the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee should inquire into that situation to ensure that we get value for the money spent on public works contracts so that the funds might be spread further. Excellent examples occur in many school projects, which seem to be enormously costly compared with what private enterprise would construct for the same funds.

I shall conclude on rather parochial issues relating to the electorate of Rodney. Last Sunday a deputation met with the Assistant Minister of Education to discuss stage 2 and the further stages of the Echuca Technical School, which is being relocated. It is a matter of concern to the school council that on present estimates the Bendigo region believes it may be some four years before stage 2 can proceed. That could lead to a ridiculous situation with the Echuca Technical School eventually having five separate campuses. The local community could not tolerate that. Large projects of this type should receive on-going funding so that the various stages can follow, one after the other, without intermediate delay. The Minister was sympathetic to the proposition put to him and I hope he will be able to assist in ensuring that the various stages proceed.

It is worrying that the bridge to link Echuca and Moama still seems to be a long way off. The Government committed itself to the project something like ten years ago and the site was
decided on three years ago. I understand that the two State Governments, through the Country Roads Board and the New South Wales Department of Main Roads, have given second priority to that bridge, after the Swan Hill bridge. The bridge is important to the communities of Echuca and Moama. There is a serious bottleneck. The railways want to upgrade the present rail facilities, but cannot do so until the new road bridge is constructed. I should like the Government to give a higher priority to the urgent replacement of structures such as this. There is also a bridge in the electorate represented by the honourable member for Murray Valley that needs urgent replacement. Presumably that has priority No. 3, although it would be No. 1 with the honourable member.

The delay in projects such as this can lead to a vast increase in costs. A project that may have cost $200,000 ten years ago could now cost $2 million, which causes a further delay while the Government attempts to find the funds.

Generally, I commend the Treasurer on the Budget he has presented and on the detailed information provided to Parliament. I hope that the next Budget will, however, be a little more progressive.

Mr FOGARTY (Sunshine)—I shall limit my contribution to the debate on the Budget to matters relating to the Department of Agriculture, where I believe there are certain inefficiencies. I shall refer to meat inspection, carcass classification and other areas of agricultural administration.

In the answer to question on notice No. 447, which I received from the Minister of Agriculture today, I was informed that immediately prior to the 1979–80 Budget, Countryside Meats Pty Ltd at Donald owed $189,638 to the State Government for inspection fees. In reply to a further question the Minister said that he had not foreclosed on the company earlier because of the financial difficulties the company was then experiencing and the possibility that the company may be forced to go into liquidation. It did go into liquidation and the Minister now has no hope of getting the rest of the money. I accept the fact that the Minister believed that the company might trade out of its difficulties and I understand why he did not take the action I believe he should have taken earlier. When the company went into liquidation it owed $46,915 to the State Government, through the Department of Agriculture, for inspection fees.

The Opposition freely admits that when the company was going through financial difficulties it approached the Premier and the Treasurer and made certain suggestions that may have helped the company. All transactions had to take place through the Shire of Donald and some six months ago a deputation from the Opposition approached the company and the shire seeking to inspect the company books. The deputation included a highly skilled accountant and an experienced businessman, and it did not take long to discover that one of the men involved in the company was not honest in his dealings. I believe he would try to sell ice to the Eskimos. He put it over the Government, he put it over the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and he attempted to put it over the Opposition.

Not only did the company owe money to the Victorian Department of Agriculture but it also owed $131,467 to the Federal Department of Primary Industry. As a result of overtures made by the Opposition through Senator Primmer, it was ascertained from the Federal Minister for Primary Industry that the company was not the only Victorian company that owed money to the Department of Primary Industry, although the amounts owed by other companies were lower than that outstanding against Countryside Meats Pty Ltd.

Following receipt of the information contained in the answer supplied by the Minister of Agriculture, I was able to ascertain that as at 21 October there were 62 meat processing establishments in Victoria which owed the Department of Agriculture amounts which had been outstanding beyond two months. I will now have to ask a
follow-up question on notice to ascertain the amounts owing, but I do know that substantial companies are involved. They include Wm Angliss and Co (Aust.) Pty Ltd, Protean (Holdings) Ltd and a number of other substantial companies, but I am anxious to ascertain exactly how much is owing to the Government by way of inspection fees charged through the Department of Agriculture.

However, when dealing with a company such as Countryside Meats Pty Ltd it was able to get away with murder. The honourable member for Murray Valley spoke about the actions of some trade unions and indicated what should be done to prevent strikes and so on, but by God, there are more scallywags on the employers' side. Countryside Meats Pty Ltd has taken the Government for something like $200,000 in unpaid inspection fees, and it has also touched the Shire of Donald; but worse, it has touched the ordinary worker. The Company owes approximately $233,000 in annual leave and long service leave payments and other entitlements to its former employees who are ordinary workers.

The Minister of Agriculture is now at the table and I repeat for the benefit of the honourable gentlemen that I believe he made a genuine attempt to allow Countryside Meats Pty Ltd time to trade out of its trouble, but I consider the Minister went a little too far and was too easy because meat inspection is a service and if assistance was to be given to the company, it should have been by way of loan or for the Government to act as guarantor as this would have enabled the Parliament to have a say on how the company could be assisted.

I repeat that the company owes the employees approximately $233,000. That money is owed to the poor worker who is running around trying to make ends meet and who is in need of that money. When a company is subject to close scrutiny by the Government, surely action should have been taken to prevent this occurring. As the Minister has indicated, he did take action after August 1979.

However the Department of Labour and Industry is also involved. It should be remembered that the workers in a meatworks are not all covered by State awards, but inspectors from the Department of Labour and Industry should do a proper and thorough check of all establishments. When an inspector goes to an establishment it should be mandatory for him to inspect the books to ascertain whether or not the company has provided for annual leave and long service leave payments for its employees, should it go into liquidation, voluntary or involuntary, at some future date. The deputation from the Opposition which visited Donald was able to ascertain within a quarter of an hour that the company had made no provision for its employees.

The Minister of Labour and Industry should give serious consideration to implementing a system whereby when a factory inspector visits an establishment he should examine the books to ascertain whether provision has been made for the payment of long service and annual leave, a payment which belongs to the employees and not the company involved.

A further point is that members of the legal profession, and even bookies, have a system whereby if anyone absconds or welches on a deal, a fund is provided from which the person who is victimized by that action can be paid. Possibly the Minister of Labour and Industry could give consideration to that point.

The workers who were caught in the situation which prevailed at Donald some six months ago cannot afford to be touched and after all, although the feature movie on television tonight was The Last Outlaw, I suggest the last of the outlaws was at Donald six months ago.

On the motion of MR KIRKWOOD (Preston), the debate was adjourned.

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

The House adjourned at 2.45 a.m. (Wednesday).
The following answers to questions on notice were circulated—

FORENSIC PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES
(Question No. 46)

Mr ROPER (Brunswick) asked the Minister of Health:

In respect of Forensic Psychiatric Services, and further to question No. 378 answered on 26 June 1979:

1. Whether the report of the committee which met during 1978 is now available; if so, whether a copy of the report will be made available to the member for Brunswick?

2. Whether the broader committee established by the Health Commission to look at the broad range of prison health services has finalized its report; if so—(a) when; (b) what is the membership of the committee to inquire into the entire range of prison health services; (c) whether it is still meeting; (d) how many meetings it has had to date; (e) what reports have been made to the Minister; (f) what are its deliberations; and (g) what action has been taken?

Mr BORTHWICK (Minister of Health)—The answer is:

1. Yes.

Yes—a copy has this day been forwarded to the honourable member.

2. No.

(a) Not applicable.

(b) Dr. J. L. Evans, Commissioner, Health Commission of Victoria—Chairman.

Mr L. Reddoch, Assistant Secretary, Mental Health Division—Secretary;

Dr J. Grigor, Chief Clinical Officer, Mental Health Division;

Dr A. Kessell, Deputy Director, Mental Health Division;

Dr T. Stephens, Director, Alcohol and Drug Services and Acting Superintendent, Forensic Psychiatric Services;

Dr B. McCloskey, Director, Public Health Division;

Dr W. N. Sloan, Deputy Director, Public Health Division;

Dr J. Wolstenholme, Superintendent, Prison Health Services;

Dr W. M. C. Keane, Medical Superintendent, St Vincent’s Hospital;

Mr G. Myers, Superintendent, H. M. Prison, Pentridge;

Mr D. Room, Deputy Director, Correctional Services, Department of Community Welfare Services.

Mr N. Howard, Co-ordinator, Correctional Field Services, Department of Community Welfare Services.

(c) Yes.

(d) Twenty-one meetings.

(e) None.

(f) The working party has considered a wide range of matters including the principles underlying prison health services, employment of prison hospital officers, the integration of medical and psychiatric services, the effective integration of the Pentridge Hospital with St. Augustine’s Ward at St. Vincent’s Hospital, etc.

(g) No major results have as yet flowed from the meetings of the Working Party but a significant number of decisions on matters of details have been made and either have been or are in the process of being implemented.

It is expected that a number of recommendations on a variety of topics will be forwarded within the next couple of months to the Chairman of the Health Commission and the Director-General of the Department of Community Welfare Services.

ACCOMMODATION FOR TEACHERS AT CHILDREN’S SCHOOL CAMP, SOMERS
(Question No. 63)

Mr ROPER (Brunswick) asked the Minister of Education:

In respect of accommodation for staff teachers at the Children’s School Camp, Somers:

1. Whether he is aware that most of the accommodation is seriously inadequate and unfit for use?

2. When it was first proposed that the accommodation be replaced, and why no action was taken?

3. Whether this proposal for replacement has been the reason for the lack of any funds for maintenance services for the past four years?

4. Whether funds can be made available for urgent immediate maintenance services, or whether it is proposed to proceed with the replacement as a matter of urgency and, if so, when it is expected that work will commence?

Mr HUNT (Minister of Education)—The answer is:

1, 2 and 3. The department was aware of the problems with living accommodation for teachers and the first proposal to replace the single staff quarters at Somers was prepared in 1976. Because of financial considerations and because of other priorities it was not possible to put the work in hand earlier than the current financial year.
4. Documentation for the replacement of residential accommodation is now completed and the project is planned to go to tender before the end of this calendar year. General maintenance is a regional responsibility. Essential minor works would need to be carried out as necessary pending the new construction.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING

(Question No. 81)

Mr CATHIE (Carrum) asked the Minister of Housing:

With regard to recent and ongoing restructuring of the Ministry of Housing and consideration of further regionalization:

1. What reports have been prepared, and whether the reports will be made available?

2. What new arrangements are proposed with regard to regional and district boundaries, functions, staffing levels and structure?

3. What steps are being taken to determine the level and nature of housing needs on a regional basis?

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—

The answer is:

1. Internal reports have been prepared in connection with Restructuring and Decentralization, Estate Management and Teacher Housing Division, Housing Development Division, Policy Planning Research and Evaluation Division, Internal Audit, Neighbourhood Re-development, etc.

These reports were compiled basically to assisting senior management in the preparation of submissions to the Public Service Board on the revised organization structure and staffing levels.

A report has been prepared by the Public Service Board Research and Special Projects Division on the Teacher Housing programme and the activities of the Teacher Housing Authority.

The reports have had limited distribution and will not be generally available.

2. Because of the high proportion of housing units which have been sold in some metropolitan districts, the effective number of rental units to be administered has declined to the point where it has become logical to amalgamate two adjoining districts. This procedure, to be carried out in two areas, will provide more effective use of staff resources.

One suburban rental office will be upgraded to the status of a district office and a district office will become a regional office.

Following the Public Service Board's consideration of detailed submission regarding the Estate Management and Teacher Housing Division, the staffing establishment of the restructured division is to be increased by thirteen officers, including—at the top management and policy levels—the creation of two positions of assistant general manager. Some managerial positions will be reclassified.

The establishment of a small project section and the creation of fifteen additional maintenance supervisory positions will further enhance the effectiveness of the division.

The Housing Development Division, re-organized on the Project Management system, will continue to operate on a regional basis which accords with the Victorian Government's regional boundaries.

The Ministry is also working on a plan to enable all other activities to be classified on a Victorian Government region basis. The first phase, to produce operating information so classified should begin operating this financial year. The procedure should aid in planning and evaluation programmes.

Furthermore, the Ministry is now represented on each of the eighteen FACS Regional Consultative Committees. One effect of this involvement will be to ensure the Ministry is kept aware of and involved in community needs and expectations in housing.

3. When computerization of applications for housing is completed, a comprehensive list of the level and nature of housing needs on a regional basis will be readily available. At present these records are kept manually in each regional office.

The Policy Planning Research and Evaluation Division of the Ministry of Housing is currently preparing long-term housing plans for each region of the State.

PERFORMING ARTS CENTRES

(Question No. 95)

Mr CATHIE (Carrum) asked the Minister of the Arts:

1. How many centres for performing arts have been built in Victoria, indicating—(a) where; (b) their capital cost and running expenses (including salaries of staff); and (c) their sources of income, including the Government contribution?

2. How many centres for performing arts are—(a) currently being built; and (b) proposed to be built, indicating—(i) where; (ii) estimated costs; (iii) sources of those funds; (iv) estimated running expenses (including salaries of staff); and (v) the Government contribution in each case?

3. What is the current commitment in Victoria of the Ministry for the Arts in relation to—(a) capital costs; and (b) running costs of all performing arts centres?

Mr LACY (Minister of the Arts)—

The answer is:

1. (a) Ararat, Echuca, Kyneton, Mildura, Portland, Robinvale, Traralgon, Warburton.

(b) Ararat—$997 400 (capital cost)—$55 500 per annum (estimated operating cost).

Echuca—$820 000 (capital cost)—$55 500 per annum (estimated operating cost).

Kyneton—$127 000 (capital cost)—$1400 (estimated operating cost).

2. (a) Currently being built—(i) Ararat, Echuca, Kyneton, Mildura, Portland, Robinvale, Traralgon, Warburton.

(b) Proposed to be built—(i) Ararat, Echuca, Kyneton, Mildura, Portland, Robinvale, Traralgon, Warburton.


(b) Running costs—(i) Ararat, Echuca, Kyneton, Mildura, Portland, Robinvale, Traralgon, Warburton.
Mildura—Capital cost was raised completely from local sources. No State government funds were supplied towards construction costs. Centre includes a museum, art gallery and theatre—$39,777 (operating costs for theatre only).

Portland—$150,000 (capital cost)—$14,000 (estimate operating cost).

Robinvale—$827,000 (capital cost)—$20,000 (estimate operating cost).

Traralgon—$200,000 (capital cost)—$23,500 (estimate operating cost).

Warranbool—$270,000 (capital cost)—$32,500 (estimate operating cost).

(c) In all cases the sources of income are: box office returns, rental of space and local government subvention. No State Government contribution is made towards running costs.

2. (a) (i) Geelong—Warragul.

(ii) Geelong—$7,938,000 (State Government approved costs as at February 1980—$7,100,972)—Warragul—$3,000,000.

(iii) Geelong—$5,796,160 (State Government contribution—$1,304,812 Local contribution—Warragul—$2,130,000 State Government contribution—$670,000 local contribution.

(iv) Geelong—$346,000 (estimate by Geelong and District Cultural Arts Centre)—Warragul—No estimate is yet available.

(v) Geelong—No commitment as yet to running expenses. Warragul—No commitment as yet to running expenses.

(b) Warrnambool—Sale.

(ii) Warrnambool—$1,600,000. Sale—$1,664,030.

(iii) Warrnambool—$1,000,000 State Government contribution—$600,000 local contribution. Sale—$1,109,353 State Government contribution—$554,677 local contribution.

(iv) Warrnambool—No estimate is yet available. Sale—$118,000 (estimate by City of Sale at as October 1979).

(v) Warrnambool—No commitment as yet to running expenses. Sale—No commitment as yet to running expenses.

3. (a) As at 30 June 1980 the outstanding commitments towards Regional Performing Arts Centres in Victoria were:

(i) Capital Costs

Geelong—$1,798,836.
Warragul—$1,834,249.
Sale—$1,109,353.
Warrnambool—$980,716.

(b) Nil.

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT BODIES

(Question No. 98)

Mr MATHEWS (Oakleigh) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

What is the name of each Victorian Government body with—(a) policy; and (b) administrative responsibility in the area of—(i) liquid fuel; and (ii) other energy matters, and what are the responsibilities in each case?

Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:

(a) The Energy Division of the Department of Minerals and Energy has full responsibility for co-ordinating policy advice on all matters relating to liquid fuels and other energy matters. That division assists the permanent head and the Minister to determine the means by which present and future resources and supplies of all forms of energy in Victoria can be managed to the best advantage of the people of Victoria.

(b) Administrative responsibility for liquid fuels matters is the responsibility of the Department of Minerals and Energy, specifically the Energy Division and the Oil and Gas Division. The department also administers the overall exploration, production and pipelining of natural gas and the exploration and production of other energy materials.

(c) The State Electricity Commission has statutory obligations to administer the production and distribution of electricity within Victoria, and the Gas and Fuel Corporation administers the marketing and distribution of most of the natural gas within Victoria. However, some natural gas sales are made directly by the Esso-BHP partnership.

COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT BODIES

(Question No. 99)

Mr MATHEWS (Oakleigh) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

What is the name of each Commonwealth Government body with—(a) policy; and (b) administrative responsibility in the area of—(i) liquid fuel; and (ii) other energy matters, which includes Victorian Government representation and what are the responsibilities in each case?

Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:

The Commonwealth Government body with policy and administrative responsibility in the area of liquid fuel and other energy matters is the Department of National Development and Energy. However, as a Commonwealth Government Department, it does not have State Government representation.

Co-ordination of energy matters at the federal level is the responsibility of the Australian Minerals and Energy Council consisting of the Commonwealth and State Ministers responsible for minerals and energy matters. This council has endorsed a number of advisory committees consisting of officials with representatives of the States. These committees cover petroleum planning, oil supplies, LPG, energy conservation and matters relating to the International Energy Agency.
Questions on Notice

SITE FOR 24-HOUR POLICE STATION
(Question No. 122)

Mr MATHEWS (Oakleigh) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

What point has been reached in negotiations for the purchase of land at the north-east corner of Springvale and Fern Tree Gully roads as the site for a 24-hour police station and when an announcement can be expected?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

Negotiations have been completed and the property has been purchased by the Government.

VICTORIAN EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE PROJECTS
(Question No. 178)

Mr MATHEWS (Oakleigh) asked the Minister of Labour and Industry:

Which elements of the major youth employment programme, formulated prior to the establishment of the Victorian employment Committee by the Standing Committee on Youth Employment, have now been incorporated in Victorian Employment Committee projects?

Mr RAMSAY (Minister of Labour and Industry)—The answer is:

This information was provided to the honourable member for Oakleigh in reply to question No. 125 asked on 17 September 1980. There have been no changes in respect of this matter since then.

HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSE PURCHASES
(Question No. 193)

Mr MATHEWS (Oakleigh) asked the Minister of Housing:

On what dates since October 1974 the Housing Commission has bought houses from Vanvliet and Gardner (Vic.) Pty Ltd, indicating in each case—(a) the location; (b) the number; (c) the price; and (d) any instances of rectification being required?

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—The answer is:

Property records show that 50 allotments at Wodonga were purchased from Vanvliet and Gardner (Vic.) Pty Ltd on 12 March 1976, at a consideration of $355,550 (average of $7111 per lot), 29 lots were in the Marimba Park estate and 21 in the De Kerilleau estate.

A negotiated building contract for the construction of 50 "Armed Service Type" homes, at an average of $23,954 per unit, was entered into as a separate transaction.

No rectification was required on those 50 homes, other than normal builders' maintenance.

MEAT EXPORTS
(Question No. 198)

Mr FOGARTY (Sunshine) asked the Minister of Agriculture:

Whether a Victorian based company, Food Handling Constructions Pty Ltd of Surrey Hills, Victoria, designed and constructed a cold storage complex at Dubai; if so, whether the Government entered into negotiations at Commonwealth level for Victoria/Australia to utilize the cold stores for Australian meat products and, in that event, what was the results of the negotiations and whether it is possible to utilize the design and experience of the Victorian-based company to assist promoting frozen meat exports to Middle East countries?

Mr I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture)—The answer is:

I am advised that Food Handling Constructions Pty Ltd of Surrey Hills, Victoria, has designed and constructed three cold storage complexes at Dubai.

I am not aware of any negotiations by the Victorian Government to utilize any of these cold stores for Australian meat products.

The Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation is responsible for market development and promotion of meat and livestock overseas. It maintains regular contact with importers of Australian meat in the Middle East through its office in Bahrain. However, Australian exporters have no control over the storage of the meat they sell to those importers.

BELL POST HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
(Question No. 217)

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Assistant Minister of Education:

When it is expected that the following works will be undertaken at the Bell Post Hill Primary School:

(a) art/craft centre;
(b) multi-purpose room;
(c) administration upgrade;
(d) canteen;
(e) library extensions; and
(f) improved staff facilities, particularly bearing in mind that plans for these works were completed in December 1977?

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—The answer is:

A master plan conforming to the department's Core-Plus policy has been prepared and includes art/craft, multi-purpose, administration, canteen, library extensions and improved
staff facilities. However, because of the funds position for Major Works projects in the Geelong region I cannot say when these works will be undertaken.

CRIB POINT PRIMARY SCHOOL
(Question No. 226)

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Assistant Minister of Education:

What is the reason for the delay in the relocation of the Crib Point Primary School from their present inadequate site to Crown land fronting Milne Street, Crib Point?

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—The answer is:

The project is on the south eastern metropolitan regions list of major works in a position which indicates it is unlikely to be funded before late 1981–82. The projects position is also subject to review by the Regional Priorities Review Committee.

The Crown land bounded by Milne Street, Colin Parade, and Martin Street has been investigated and, subject to approval by the Public Works Department, a recommendation will be made to the Department's Sites Committee that the land be acquired for relocation of the school.

CHILD MIGRANT EDUCATION
(Question No. 227)

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Assistant Minister of Education:

1. What was the total outlay of funds by the Education Department in the area of Child Migrant Education in each of the years 1977 to 1979 inclusive?
2. What is the planned allocation of funds in 1980?
3. In respect of the above-mentioned funds what amounts came from Commonwealth sources?
4. For each of the years 1977 to 1979 inclusive, what amount of money was expended on the Child Migrant Education Programme for—(a) salaries of staff employed in government schools teaching English as a second language in the classroom; (b) rent of the Myer House offices used by the Child Migrant Education Office; (c) salaries of administrators working within the offices; (d) salaries of (i) consultants in English as a second language; (ii) ethnic consultants; and (e) the development of curriculum materials in (i) English as a second language; and (ii) other areas of education for a multi-cultural society?

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—The answer is:

1 and 2. The Department does not maintain such figures.

What should be realized is that the Victorian State Schools system does not segregate child migrants and their teachers. They are integrated in the school situation and consequently share State Government expenditure on education in the same way as other pupils and teachers. In line with this statement, Commonwealth funds flowing to Victoria for Migrant Education are paid into the Consolidated Fund and equivalent amounts are appropriated, together with State Funds, under relevant Education Department Votes for recurrent expenditure on government primary and secondary schools.

3. Funds allocated to Victoria from Commonwealth sources for the Child Migrant Education Programme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1978</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$8.714 m</td>
<td>$9.186 m</td>
<td>$9.313 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. (a) In respect of salaries of staff employed in Government schools teaching English as a second language in the classroom I refer the honourable member to comments in parts 1 and 2 above.

(b) Rental of Myer House office—costs are met by the Commonwealth Department of Education at the rate of approximately $77,800 per annum. Occupancy commenced in October 1977.

(c) Salaries of administrators working within Child Migrant Education Services—three positions are involved:

Assistant Director of Special Services (Ethnic Education)—Professional Officers’ salary scale.

Supervisor, Child Migrant Education Services—Special Class Principal.

Deputy Supervisor, Child Migrant Education Services—Assistant Class Teacher:

1977 1978 1979
$57,727 $63,860 $67,909

(d) Average expenditure on salaries of:

(i) consultants in English as a Second Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1977</th>
<th>1978</th>
<th>1979</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$218,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$240,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) ethnic consultants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1977</th>
<th>1978</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$96,000</td>
<td>$152,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(e) The development of curriculum materials in:

(i) English as a Second Language—no expenditure has been incurred in this area. School-based programmes in English as a Second Language are catered for as part of the individual budgeting of each school;

(ii) other areas of education for a multicultural society—In-service education for teachers and school administrators and materials development is generally catered for by VISEC funding. Approximate expenditure has been as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1977</th>
<th>1978</th>
<th>1979</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$84,660</td>
<td>$13,512</td>
<td>$12,826</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. What is the increase in funding by the Commonwealth as a result of the Galbally Report on the Child Migrant Education Programme for the years 1979, 1980 and 1981?

2. In 1978 $23,000 was made available to Victoria through the Curriculum Development Centre for projects in multicultural education. These funds were administered by a State Disbursing Committee established for the purpose.

3. In 1979 under the joint programmes of the Schools Commission $143,000 was allocated to Multicultural Education in Victoria to be administered by the Victorian Advisory Committee on Migrant and Multicultural Education which advises the Assistant Minister of Education on matters relating to migrant and multicultural education.

4. In 1980 the allocation is $348,000 and for 1981 it is $720,000. The latter figure is based on December 1978 price levels.

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—The answer is:

1. The amounts allocated to Victoria for the Child Migrant Education Programme through the Schools Commission have been:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>$9,186 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>$9,313 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation three of the Galbally Report (page 15) reads:

"An extra $10 million should be provided over the next three years to Government and non-Government school systems for the teaching of English as a second language, and the funds be distributed so as to reflect the needs of children of non-English speaking background in different areas."

Allocations were to be made as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>$1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>$3 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>$6 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of this additional funding was received by Victoria in 1979 since the total amount available was used in an attempt to redress imbalances between States' allocations. The Schools Commission provision of a total of $21,927 million for migrant education in government schools for 1980 represents a total increase of $1,419 million on the amount for 1979 and is in line with Recommendation three of the Galbally Report as stated above. Seventy per cent of this amount has been allocated to making further progress towards redressing the imbalance in funding between the States and Territories. The remainder has been allocated to all States and Territories, enabling each to gain some access to the additional funds provided by the Federal Government in implementing the Galbally Report. Victoria's share of this 25 per cent remainder for 1980 is $127,000 estimated at December 1978 price levels. No allocation has yet been made for 1981.

2. What is the increase in funding by the Commonwealth in the fields of multi-cultural education for the years 1979, 1980 and 1981?

3. With respect to this increase in expenditure, what amount has been spent in the year 1979, and will be spent in the years 1980 and 1981 for—(a) salaries of staff employed in government schools teaching English as a second language in the classroom; (b) rent of the Myer House offices used by Child Migrant Education; (c) salaries of administrators working within the Child Migrant Education Office; (d) salaries of consultants in English as a second language and ethnic consultants; (e) the development of curriculum materials in English as a second language; and (f) any other specific area?

4. With respect to the increase in the years 1979, 1980 and 1981, what have been and what will be the specific areas of projects that funds of the Galbally Multi-cultural Education have been or will be expended?

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Assistant Minister of Education:

In 1980 until the end of 1981 using funds specified for this purpose within the overall allocation.
The operating costs of the Victorian Advisory Committee on Migrant and Multicultural Education are also met from this allocation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Grantee</th>
<th>Name and Address of School</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) State Primary Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Ms. K. Richter</td>
<td>Brunswick South Primary School, 58 Brunswick Road, Brunswick East 3057</td>
<td>Community Language Programme</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Ms. K. Richter</td>
<td>Brunswick South Primary School, 58 Brunswick Road, Brunswick East 3057</td>
<td>Community Language Programme (Greek)</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211</td>
<td>Mrs. J. Royal</td>
<td>Maribyrnong Primary School, Warrs Road, Maribyrnong 3032</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness Programme</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ms. F. Mischleson/Mrs. Anne Sgro</td>
<td>Coburg Primary School, Bell Street, Coburg 3058</td>
<td>Community Language Programme</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>194</td>
<td>Mrs. R. Galle</td>
<td>Donburn Primary School, Colombo Drive, East Doncaster 3109</td>
<td>Community Language Programme (Italian)</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Mr. H. Azopardi</td>
<td>Prince Hill Primary School, Pigeon Street, North Carlton 3054</td>
<td>Bilingual Programme (Italian)</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160</td>
<td>Mrs. C. Klose</td>
<td>Hughesdale Primary School, Brine Street, Hughesdale 3166</td>
<td>Community Language</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>164</td>
<td>Ms. M. Merrell</td>
<td>North Melbourne Primary School, Boundary Road, North Melbourne 3051</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mrs. J. Scott</td>
<td>Lalor Primary School, Maxwell Street, Lalor 3073</td>
<td>Community Language Programme</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Mr. D. Dyer (Principal)</td>
<td>North Melbourne Primary School, Boundary Road, North Melbourne 3051</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness Music</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>196</td>
<td>Mrs. C. Money</td>
<td>Auburn South Primary School, 419 Tooronga Road, Hawthorn East 3123</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>Ms. A. Geraghty</td>
<td>Richmond Central Primary School, 270 Highett Street, Richmond 3121</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Ms. K. Frith</td>
<td>Gembrook Primary School, Main Road, Gembrook 3783</td>
<td>Italian Language Programme (Teacher's Salary)</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Ms. M. Kocher</td>
<td>Ferntree Gully Primary School, Corner Burwood Highway and Dorset Road, Ferntree Gully 3156</td>
<td>Community Language Program—Ethnic Studies Programme</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>193</td>
<td>Miss Sue Morton</td>
<td>Deepdene Primary School, 958a Burke Road, Deepdene 3103</td>
<td>Community Language</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Catholic Primary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Grantee</th>
<th>Name and Address of School</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>181</td>
<td>Miss M. Linard</td>
<td>Holy Name Primary School, Rock Street, East Preston 3073</td>
<td>Community Language</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sr. Mary Kay</td>
<td>St. Joseph's Primary School, 91-93 Boundary Street, Cobram 3644</td>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
<td>1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Ms. M. Pace</td>
<td>St. Joseph the Worker, 79 Wilson Avenue, Reservoir 3073</td>
<td>Community Language</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Miss J. Augello</td>
<td>St. Paul's Primary School, 653 Sydney Road, Coburg 3056</td>
<td>Community Language Programme (Italian)</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mrs. M. Minack</td>
<td>St. Michael's Primary School, 268 High Street, Ashburton 3147</td>
<td>Community Language Programme</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210</td>
<td>Mrs. B. Arnott</td>
<td>St. Mary's Primary School, Watkin Street, Robinville 3549</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>Mr. C. Doherty</td>
<td>Out Lady of the Assumption, 9 Centre Dandenong Road, Cheltenham, 3192</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151</td>
<td>Mr. C. McGrath</td>
<td>St. Margaret's Primary School, The Esplanade, Maribyrnong 3032</td>
<td>Community Language (Spanish) and Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Ms. J. Pavlis</td>
<td>St. Mary's Primary School, Corner High and Mansfield Streets, Thornbury 3071</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Mrs. F. McDonald</td>
<td>St. Gabriel's, Spring Street, Reservoir 3073</td>
<td>Bilingual Programme</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness Programme (Italian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mr. W. J. Fleming</td>
<td>St. James Primary School, Brickwood Street, Cardenvale 3185</td>
<td>Community Language Programme (Italian)</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Mrs. A. Ghidetti</td>
<td>St. Mary's Primary School, McLennan Street, Mooroolbark 3132</td>
<td>Italian Language Programme</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>Mrs. F. Fedele</td>
<td>St. Margaret's Primary School, 15 Tunalee Parade, Keon Park 3073</td>
<td>Community Language Programme (Italian)</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Miss J. Augello</td>
<td>St. Paul's Primary School, 653 Sydney Road, Coburg 3058</td>
<td>Teacher-side (Lebanese)</td>
<td>1420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Miss S. Salavati</td>
<td>St. Joseph's Primary School, 185A Hope Street, West Brunswick 3055</td>
<td>Community Language</td>
<td>1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Ms. J. Bite</td>
<td>St. Anne's Primary School, 11-19 Beresford Street, East Kew 3102</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness Programme</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Mr. T. Brandenburg</td>
<td>St. Joseph's, 7 Fitzroy Avenue, Redcliffe 3496</td>
<td>Community Language Programme</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Mrs. R. Piccolo</td>
<td>St. Marks Primary School, Argyle Street, Fawkner 3060</td>
<td>Cultural Maintenance</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Miss A. M. Ryan</td>
<td>Sacred Heart Primary School, 107 King William Street, Fitzroy 3065</td>
<td>Cultural Maintenance Programme</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Miss M. C. Belluzzo</td>
<td>St. Patrick's Petrel Street, Geelong West 3218</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness Programme</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name of Grantee</td>
<td>Name and Address of School</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Ms. H. Matthews</td>
<td>St. Ambrose's Primary School, 1-3 Dawson Street, Brunswick 3056</td>
<td>Community Languages</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>148</td>
<td>Ms. D. McLean</td>
<td>Holy Spirit Primary School, 197 Clarendon Street, East Thornbury 3071</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness Programme</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>172</td>
<td>Mrs. El-Leissy</td>
<td>St. Mary's Primary School, 116 Cecil Street, Williamstown 3016</td>
<td>Cultural Maintenance</td>
<td>$1,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>177</td>
<td>Mrs. R. Sapietro</td>
<td>St. Monica's Primary School, Robinson Street, Moonee Ponds 3039</td>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
<td>$1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197</td>
<td>Ms. L. Slaviero</td>
<td>Our Lady Help of Christians 49 Nicholson Street, East Brunswick 3057</td>
<td>Community Language (Italian)</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Sr. J. Harrington</td>
<td>St. Matthew's Primary School, William Street, Northcote 3070</td>
<td>Community Language (Italian)</td>
<td>$1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>214</td>
<td>Sr. Anita Lipski</td>
<td>St. Kieran's Primary School, Lloyd Street, Moonee Ponds 3050</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>$540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156</td>
<td>Mrs. P. Lo Cascio</td>
<td>Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, 141 Beaconsfield Parade, Middle Park 3206</td>
<td>Community Language (Italian)</td>
<td>$1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167</td>
<td>Mrs. S. Zemmaro</td>
<td>St. Mary's Primary School, 210 Grimshaw Street, Greensborough 3086</td>
<td>Community Language (Italian)</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Miss C. Martire</td>
<td>St. Joseph's Primary School, 212 Boronia Road, Boronia 3155</td>
<td>Community Language Programme (Italian)</td>
<td>$540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A. Radcliffe</td>
<td>St. Augustine's Primary School, Church Street, Kyabram 3620</td>
<td>Community Language</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** $42,360

(c) State Secondary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Grantee</th>
<th>Name and Address of School</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>195</td>
<td>Mr. Leslie Terry</td>
<td>Lalor North High School, Childs Road, Epping 3076</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Mr. P. Moon</td>
<td>Thomastown High School, Main Street, Thomastown 3074</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Ms. R. Conroy</td>
<td>Mooroolbanna High School, P.O. Box 183, Mooroolbanna 3629</td>
<td>Community Language</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td>Ms. A. Witcombe</td>
<td>Footscray High School, Wembury Avenue, Spotswood 3015</td>
<td>Multilingual Newspaper</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>Ms. M. Scodella</td>
<td>Gladstone High School, Taylor Drive, Tullamarine 3043</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td>Mr. S. Murphy</td>
<td>Leongatha Technical School, P.O. Box 252, Leongatha 3953</td>
<td>Teacher-aide (A. V. technician)</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Mr. M. Georgiou</td>
<td>Footscray Technical School, Ballarat Road, Footscray 3011</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Ms. K. Primeas</td>
<td>Kealba High School, Drieos's Road, Kealba 3021</td>
<td>Community Language and Involvement Programme</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154</td>
<td>Ms. J. Brooks</td>
<td>Prahran High School, Molesworth Street, Prahran 3181</td>
<td>Bilingual and TESL Programmes</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** $10,050

(d) Catholic Secondary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Grantee</th>
<th>Name and Address of School</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Mr. Paul Urban</td>
<td>St. Augustine's College, Church Street, Kyabram 3620</td>
<td>Community Language Programme (Italian)</td>
<td>$950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Mr. R. Trafficante</td>
<td>St. John's Regional College, Caroline Street, Dandenong 3175</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness Programme</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Mrs. M. Nolan</td>
<td>St. Colman's College, 152 Knight Street, Shepparton 3630</td>
<td>Community Language Programme</td>
<td>$270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** $1,120

(e) Independent Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Grantee</th>
<th>Name and Address of School</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>129</td>
<td>Emmy Albaum</td>
<td>Yeshivah College, 92 Hotham Street, East St. Kilda 3183</td>
<td>Community Language Programme (Russian)</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** $2,000

(f) Miscellaneous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Grantee</th>
<th>Name and Address of School</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>208</td>
<td>Vong Pesay Lach</td>
<td>Midway and Eastbridge Child Migrant Language Reception Centre, c/- 1st Floor—Myer House, 250 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne 3000</td>
<td>Community Language (Khmer)</td>
<td>$1,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>G. Martini-Piovano</td>
<td>Italian Assistance Association, 304 Drummond Street, Carlton 3053</td>
<td>Community Languages Programme</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>A. Trucchi</td>
<td>Italo-Australian Education Foundation, 224 Faraday Street, Carlton, 3053</td>
<td>Community Language Programme (Italian)</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** $5,850

**TOTALS:**

(a) State Primary Schools $23,130
(b) Catholic Primary Schools $42,360
(c) State Secondary Schools $10,050
(d) Catholic Secondary Schools $1,120
(e) Independent Schools $2,000
(f) Miscellaneous $5,850

**Total:** $85,210
LANGUAGE CENTRES
(Question No. 237)

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray) asked the Assistant Minister of Education:

What progress has been made in the establishment of intensive language centres for each region and what submissions have been received from each of the relevant regional committees on these projects?

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—The answer is:

Intensive Language Centres now operate at the following venues:

1. Myer House, 250 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne—Four teachers.
2. Noble Park: Buckley Street, Noble Park—Two teachers.
3. Kuranda, 174 Punt Road, Prahran—Two teachers commenced duty late in Term Two in alternative accommodation on the site. Proposed works for the development of the combined Intensive Language Centre/Community Settlement Centre have gone to tender. Completion date is set for February/March 1981.

Intensive Language Centres proposed for development in combination with Community Settlement Centres are:

1. Brunswick, Dawson Street, Brunswick (Millers Ropeworks)—Design scheme and estimate stage has been reached. Completion date is set for the end of 1981. No staff have been appointed.
2. Footscray, Corner Geelong Road/Barkly Street—located premises are currently being negotiated. Operation to commence February 1981 if not earlier. No staff have been appointed.
3. Oakleigh—Moorabbin—No suitable site has been determined.

YOUTH ACCOMMODATION SERVICES PROGRAMME
(Question No. 263)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Community Welfare Services:

1. What amount was spent on the Youth Accommodation Services Programme during 1979–80 according to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moondana Hostel</td>
<td>27,907.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army—Homeless Youth Project</td>
<td>54,020.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army—Shepparton</td>
<td>29,564.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ace/Fusion Community Group</td>
<td>21,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army—Bayside Unemployed Self Help (BUSH)</td>
<td>9,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western County Housing Group</td>
<td>44,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne City Mission (“Stopover”)</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West Regional Housing Group</td>
<td>42,576.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westcoast Regional Housing Group</td>
<td>38,196.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outer East Youth Needs Group</td>
<td>18,553.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wimmera (Region) Housing Group</td>
<td>9,548.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project UMYAC</td>
<td>18,223.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackburn Baptist and Uniting Churches (SHAC)</td>
<td>3,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montrose House</td>
<td>2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boronia Baptist Family and Youth Services</td>
<td>3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments to Agencies</td>
<td>311,441.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus Salaries and Allowances</td>
<td>11,386.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Evaluation Costs</td>
<td>1,490.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>334,071.79</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH, SPORT AND RECREATION
(Question No. 264)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:

1. How many staff are employed in the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation?
2. How many staff are employed in the office of Youth Affairs, and when this number was last increased?
3. What is the nature of the staff positions in the Office of Youth Affairs?

Mr DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation)—The answer is:

1. There are currently 168 permanent staff positions with the department. Within staff ceilings the department is permitted to fill 164 of these positions.
2. There are seven staff positions in the department's Office of Youth Affairs, six of these positions are permanent with one position being for an exempt officer.
3. The seven positions in the Office of Youth Affairs:
   (i) Co-ordinator, Youth Affairs “YR2”;
   (ii) Youth Affairs Officer “W2”;
   (iii) Community Recreation Officer;
   (iv) Two Administrative Officers Class “C1”;

In February 1980, approval was given for the position of a Research Officer (exempt) to be advertised to the Victorian Employment Committee to deal with matters concerning youth employment. The officer commenced duty in September 1980.

In addition, the 1980–81 State Budget has made provision for a permanent position of Research Officer.
CORRECTIONAL SERVICES COUNCIL

(Question No. 265)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Community Welfare Services:
Who are the members of the Correctional Services Council and what are their occupations?

Mr JONA (Minister for Community Welfare Services)—The answer is:

The names of the members of the Correctional Services Council and their occupations are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>His Honour Judge J. H. Forrest (Chairman)</td>
<td>Judge of the County Court of Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. M. J. Dawes</td>
<td>Director of Correctional Services, Department of Community Welfare Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. C. Benjamin</td>
<td>Director of Regional Services, Department of Community Welfare Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. K. I. Williams</td>
<td>Director of Family and Adolescent Services, Department of Community Welfare Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. G. Hampel, Q.C.</td>
<td>Barrister and Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. J. M. G. Grigor</td>
<td>Psychiatrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detective Inspector E. G. A. White</td>
<td>Member of the Victoria Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. D. Sinclair</td>
<td>Officer of the Education Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. N. P. Banner</td>
<td>Senior Prison Officer, Department of Community Welfare Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. S. W. Johnston</td>
<td>Criminologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. K. H. McGregor</td>
<td>Company Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. E. Morgan</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. P. Mountain</td>
<td>Honorary Probation Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. M. O'Brien</td>
<td>Legal Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cr. B. J. Powell</td>
<td>Company Managing Director and Municipal Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. C. Benjamin</td>
<td>Welfare Officer (voluntary community worker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dame Phyllis Frost, DBE, JP</td>
<td>Voluntary Community Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. B. Brodrick</td>
<td>Medical Practitioner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS

(Question No. 268)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister of Public Works:
In each of the past three years, how many contracts were let costing more than $500,000 and what were the projects?

Mr AUSTIN (Minister of Public Works)—The answer is:

Number of contracts let from 1-7-77 to 30-6-78.

Erection of Stage 1, Technical/High School Whittlesea.
Erection of new Primary School 5098 Meadow Fair North.
Erection of Stage 2, Technical School Belmont.
Supply of 10 No. 5 module Primary relocatable classroom buildings, Melbourne.
Supply of 44 No. 5 module Primary relocatable classroom buildings, Melbourne.
Supply of 41 No. 5 module Primary relocatable classroom buildings, Melbourne.
Supply of 25 No. 5 module Primary and 25 No. Post Primary relocatable buildings, Melbourne.
Erection of 2 storey block, library/classroom, High School, Dandenong.
Alterations and extensions, Primary School 2744, Orbost.
Supply of 24 No. 8 Cubicle and 8 No. 4 Cubicle relocatable toilet blocks; 16 No. relocatable storerooms, 6 No. relocatable canteens, and 6 No. covered play areas, Education Department, Turner Street, Port Melbourne.
Humanities Block and Trade Wing extensions, High School, Seymour.
External repairs and painting, Primary School 1112, Mansfield.
Erection of Blocks A, B, D, and H, High School Heathmont.
Replacement School—Stage 1, High School Cranbourne.
Renovations and additional wing, Primary School 2537, Moreland.
Erection of 2nd stage, Blocks E, G, and J, High School Springvale South.
New catering service, Mental Hospital, Beechworth.
Erection of new school, Primary School 5121 Kalinda.
Erection of Special School 5109, Ascot Vale.
Construction of Primary School community complex. Primary School 4682, Frankston.
Erection of library, 10 classrooms, staff centre and siteworks. Girls High School, Canterbury.
Erection of a 24-hour Police Station and District Headquarters. Police Station. Horsham.
Erection of 2nd stage—Blocks E, G, and J, High School, Springvale South.
Erection of Gymnasium/canteen, Technical School Blackburn.
Erection of multi-purpose hall, High School Wellington.
Erection of new school building, Primary School 5133, Eastbourne.

Erection of new school building, Stage 2, High School, Noble Park North.

Erection of Stage 1, new school building, Technical School, Huntingdale.

Replace school building of ten classrooms, Primary School 2185, Trafalgar.

Construction of a Psychiatric Centre Mildura.

Erection of a Court House and Tying pool Building Court House, Moe.

Erection of new school, Primary School 5139, Movelle.

Erection of multi-purpose hall, High School Fairhills.

Erection of library, six classrooms, staff work space, and covered lunch area and canteen, High School, Williamstown.

Erection of a high security unit. H.M. Prison, "Pentridge".

New multi-purpose hall, High School, Doncaster East.

Erection of high security unit, provisions of pneumatically operated doors, H.M. Prison, "Pentridge".

Alterations and renovations to existing Industrial Building. Technical College, Richmond. Trade Annexes, 85-119 Cubitt Street, Richmond.

Erection of new Primary School 5136, Endeavour Hills.

Erection of new 24 hour police station. Police State Altona North.

Erection of multi-purpose hall, High School, Waverley.

Erection of a Technical College, Stage 1, Phase 1, Technical College, Box Hill.

Supply of thirty-five (35) No. 4 module, and eight (8) No. 5 module relocatable library buildings, Sites in the State of Victoria.

Construction of a technical college, Stage 1, Phase 2, Technical College Newport.

Erection of Library Resource Centre, Technical College, Preston.

Floating pipeline and associated items, M.V. "April Hamer".

Supply of 24 No. 5 module special services relocatable buildings, Melbourne. Various sites in State of Victoria.

Supply of 80 No. 5 module standard Primary and 20 No. 5 module post primary relocatable buildings. Various sites in Victoria.

Number of contracts let from 1 July 1979 to 30 June 1980 - 26.

Erection of New State Offices Complex, Ballarat State Public Offices.


Erection of Business Studies/General Studies Wing, Preston Technical College.

Erection of Special School, Nepean Special School 4290.

Erection of new School Building, Eltham North Primary School 4212.

Stage 2, Alterations and additions, Rosewood Downs Primary School 5087. Murray Road, North Dandenong.

Erection of standard Block MN, Murray Road, North Dandenong.

Erection of Stage II, Sunshine Technical School 7350.

Erection of Library, Art/Craft Centre, Staff improvements, etc. Primary School 4894, Upwey South.

Erection of Stage II, High School, Berwick.

Erection of Multi-purpose Hall, Kyabram High School.

Erection of multi-purpose hall, Block MN Revised. Paisley High School.

Erection of a Performing Arts Centre, Monash High School.


Erection of a Three Storey Complex, Morland High School.

Construction of a new Library/Drama Complex, Banyule High School.

Erection of multi-purpose hall, Merrilands High School.

Erection of an Admission Unit, Mental Hospital, Royal Park.

Erection of new school, Mt Clear Technical/High School.

Erection of new classrooms, library, art/craft etc. Portland Primary School 489.

Erection of new classrooms and staff administration, Stawell High School 8340.

Combined Library facility, Warrnambool High and North Technical School.


Erection of Library, Staff improvements, Canteen and Classroom upgrade. Colac West Primary School.

Erection of new School Building, Yuille Primary School 5198.

Number of contracts let from 1 July 1979 to 30 June 1980 - 42.

Erection of replacement school building; Greensborough Primary School 5198.

Alterations and additions to existing school, Geelong Special School.


Supply of relocatable buildings, Marine Science Laboratories, Queenscliff.

Alterations and additions, Central School 3515, Mallacoota.

Erection of library, canteen, staff administration improvements, Primary School 1075, Kew.

Supply and delivery of 49 No. 5 Module Post Primary Relocatable Modular Buildings, P.W.D. Storeyard, Graham Street, Port Melbourne.

Erection of new school building, Weeden Heights Primary School 5157.

Erection of new school building, Chirnside Park Primary School 5194.

Erection of new Primary School, Thomas-town Meadows Primary School.

Additions and alterations, East Loddon Consolidated School 6217.

Erection of Trade Block, Technical School, Luth Street, Echuca.

Erection of new school building, Whittington Primary School 5123.

Construction of new “Core Plus” School Billanook Primary School.

Staff administration, art/craft and home economics, upgrade, Williamstown High School.

Erection of Stage I, Art and Trade Facilities Brandon Park Technical School.

Erection of staff/administration block, classrooms, toilet facilities and linkways, Bright Higher Elementary School.

Erection of Phase 2B, RMIT, Technical College.

Erection of a Technical College, Stage I, Phase three, Box Hill.

Internal works and part external works. Shamrock Hotel, Bendigo.

Erection of new police station, Cranbourne.

Erection of Travencore Developmental Centre, Flemington.

Erection of Stage 2, Baxter Technical School No. 7028.

Erection of 24-hour Police Station and Divisional Offices, Hastings.

Erection of new school building, Ardeer High School 7522.

Erection of new extensions, Preston Technical School 7296.

Supply and commissioning of communication control centre—Stage I. Police and Emergency Services. Police Station, Russell Street, Melbourne.

Erection of new school buildings, Wonthaggi North Primary School 3716.

Erection of Sunraysia College of T.A.F.E. Mildura.

Erection of new school building, Riddells Creek Primary School 528.

Erection of Yallourn Technical College, Stage I.

New administration block, student toilets and upgrade. Coburg North Primary School 4543.


Erection of new school buildings, Traralgon East Primary School 3499.

Trades Block, Wendouree High/Technical School.

Erection of Stage II, Blocks E, G and J. Corio North High School.

ALTERNATIVE FUELS
(Question No. 272)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

1. What research into alternative fuels was undertaken by the Government during the past three years?

2. Whether the Government is aware of any research into alternative fuels undertaken by other bodies in Victoria?

3. Whether the Government keeps informed of developments in alternative fuels undertaken by other States or countries; if so, how?

Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:

1. During the past three years the Victorian Brown Coal Research and Development Committee and subsequently the Victorian Brown Coal Council, commissioned research into alternative fuels derived from brown coal. The Victorian Solar Energy Research Committee also commissioned a number of research projects. Other research activities were carried out by the State Electricity Commission of Victoria on basic research into the constitution and chemistry of brown coal and by the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria into the utilization of solar energy.

2. Yes. The National Energy Research, Development and Demonstration Council has supported a number of projects in Victoria involving alternative fuels. Research into the production and utilization of alternative sources of energy and fuels has also been carried out by universities, by CSIRO, and by commercial enterprises.

3. Yes. Officers of the Department of Minerals and Energy study technical reports and attend appropriate conferences and seminars.
OIL DRILLS
(Question No. 273)
Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:
How many oil drills were operating within Victoria as at 30 June 1980, and where they were located?
Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:
As at 30 June 1980 two oil drilling rigs were operating in the adjacent area to Victoria. The rigs in question are both involved in development oil drilling and one is located on the Mackeral Platform and the other on the Tuna Platform.

OIL RESERVES IN VICTORIA
(Question No. 274)
Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:
What known reserves of oil exist in Victoria?
Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:
As at 30 June 1980 the remaining recoverable reserves of stabilized crude oil are 1673 million barrels (266 giga litres). All of these reserves are in the oil and gas fields located offshore in the Gippsland Basin.

INTEREST RATES ON LOANS
(Question No. 277)
Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:
Whether the State Electricity Commission or the Gas and Fuel Corporation have been negotiating loans with interest at 18 per cent or more; if so, what is the reason for the high interest rates, and what are the details of the loans?
Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:
The State Electricity Commission has negotiated some overseas loans on a floating interest rate basis. The interest rate on the United States component of these loans is determined by the tenderers on a confidential basis, details cannot be made public. However, it can be said that the State Electricity Commission has been able to attract the most competitive terms available. Commonwealth and State authorities are fully informed on these matters and the arrangements, of course, have been in accordance with Australian Loan Council guidelines.

ELECTRICITY BLACKOUTS
(Question No. 281)
Dr COGHILL (Werribee) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:
In respect of electricity blackouts during the recent industrial dispute involving the State Electricity Commission of Victoria, what was the time and duration of each blackout on each day—(a) in the area of residence of the Chairman of the Commission; (b) in the area of residence of each officer of the State Electricity Commission responsible for deciding areas to be blacked-out; and (c) in each area used for blackout purposes within the electoral district of Werribee, indicating the reason for excluding any area from blackouts?
Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:
(a) The Chairman of the State Electricity Commission resides in an area which is supplied by the Heidelberg City Council. The area in which his residence is located was blacked out on the following occasions:
Tuesday 24 June 1980—
7.50 a.m. to 9.37 a.m. (1 hour 47 minutes).
1.07 p.m. to 3.33 p.m. (2 hours 26 minutes).
Thursday 26 June 1980—
5.10 p.m. to 6.11 p.m. (1 hour 1 minute).
(b) This information can be provided, but would involve considerable time and effort.
(c) The electoral district of Werribee is supplied by 32 feeders emanating from four zone substations. Of the total of 32 feeders, 14 were exempt from any load shedding as they supply sewerage works, hospitals, the Government Explosives Factory, Victorian Railways signalling and the RAAF bases at Laverton and Point Cook. The remaining 18 feeders were disconnected as follows:
Tuesday 24 June—
All non-exempt feeders were disconnected once and some twice. The period of disconnection varied between one and two hours.
Wednesday 25 June—
Because of a reduced need for load shedding the areas of Werribee, Laverton and outer Sunshine were disconnected only once and for periods varying from 45 minutes to one and a half hours.
Thursday 26 June—
The areas of Werribee, Laverton and outer Sunshine were each disconnected up to four times. Any one customer was not interrupted for more than a total period of 4 hours 12 minutes.
Friday 27 June—
There were no disconnections in the Werribee electorate on this day.
YOUTH FUND
(Question No. 284)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:
1. What amount has been spent by the Youth Fund in each of the past five years?
2. What have been the major projects in each of the past three years?

Mr DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation)—The answer is:
1. The expenditure from the Youth Fund has been:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>$1,831,689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>$2,208,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>$2,031,736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>$2,208,353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>$2,023,515</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Full details of the first four years' expenditures were given in my department's annual reports. The 1979-80 annual report is currently being prepared.

2. 1979-80 Youth 2000 Consultation “Youth 2009 Local Youth Policy Development” project.
  1977-78 Youth 2000 Consultation “Youth 2007 Local Government” project.

The Youth Fund has supported the Youth 2000 Consultation Series which has been conducted by the Youth Council of Victoria. The Youth Council of Victoria using a variety of consultative mechanisms has increased awareness amongst young people of the impact of these issues on their lives and has encouraged young people to articulate their views on the issues.

The Youth Fund, in addition to its project funding provides substantial recurrent funding to federating and Statewide youth agencies. Local youth and community groups also have access to financial assistance under the youth development programmes.

The Special Youth Development Programme provides 32 salary subsidies to youth, community and local government agencies for the employment of special youth and outreach youth workers.

The Youth Fund also contributes one third of the funds for the 79 Municipal Recreation Officer salary subsidies.

STATE YOUTH COUNCIL
(Question No. 285)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:
Who are the members of the State Youth Council, and what are their occupations?

Mr DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation)—The answer is:
Dr Denham Grierson (Chairman)—Minister of religion and teacher;
Mr Peter Evans—Manager, Leisure Department, City of Knox;
Rev Fr Joe Giacobbe—Minister of religion, Director, Doxa Welfare Foundation;
Mr Bill Manallack—Director, Task Force Young Community Volunteers, Prahran;
Mr Ray Judd—Unemployed;
Cr Jan Bateman—Mayor, City of Berwick;
Miss Elise Carter—Administrative Secretary, YWCA;
Miss Fran Pomeranska—Training and Recruitment Officer, Try Youth Club;
Mr David Maunders—Co-ordinator, Graduate Diploma of Youth Work and Community Students—Coburg State College;
Mr Peter Coghlan—Counsellor, Catholic Family Welfare, Ringwood;
Mr Ross Langmead—Co-ordinator, Education Programme for Employed Youth, Kensington;
Mr Richard Bluck—Lecturer, Melbourne State College;
Mr John Harris—Development Officer, Youth Affairs Council of Victoria;
Two vacancies.

MUNICIPAL RECREATION OFFICERS
(Question No. 286)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:
1. How many municipal recreation officers are employed by local government and subsidized by the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation?
2. Whether there has ever been a review of this scheme; if so, whether the results of the review are available to the public?

Mr DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation)—The answer is:
1. Currently there are 76 Municipal Recreation Officers subsidized by the department.
2. There was a review of the Municipal Recreation Officer Scheme in 1976. The results of that review were made available to interested persons.

An evaluation of the Municipal Recreation Officer Scheme is at present being conducted by my department.

PRIVATE SECTOR PROJECTS
(Question No. 288)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Treasurer:
If he will ascertain and inform the House:
1. What are the seven major private sector projects involving new capital expenditure of over $2 billion as mentioned on page 49 of his Budget Speech?
2. What is the new capital expenditure for each project?
3. How many persons are currently employed in the construction of each project?
4. What is the estimated number of persons who will be employed in each project on completion?

5. Whether any of these projects are not proceeding?

Mr THOMPSON (Treasurer)—The answer is:
1. The seven projects are:
   (a) ICI petro-chemical plant at Point Wilson;
   (b) ICI petro-chemical complex at Altona;
   (c) Esso/BHP Bass Strait further development;
   (d) Alcoa aluminium smelter at Portland;
   (e) Alcoa expansion of aluminium smelter at Point Henry;
   (f) GMH engine plant at Fishermen's Bend;
   (g) Shell Chemicals petro-chemical expansion at Geelong;

2, 3 and 4. These details are a matter for the individual companies concerned, and as such, I am unable to provide the honourable member with the information he requests.

5. The seven projects are all under way.

PUBLIC SECTOR PROJECTS
(Question No. 302)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Treasurer:
1. What are the 24 current major public sector projects which are each costing over $5 million?
2. How many persons are currently employed in the construction of each project?
3. Whether any of these projects are not proceeding?

Mr THOMPSON (Treasurer)—The answer is:
1. A list of major projects by semi-Government authorities estimated to cost more than $5 million which are in progress or planned to commence in 1980-81 is included in the Budget Papers 1980-81 on page 80 for the information of honourable members.

2. These details are a matter for the individual authorities concerned and include private contractor employees, day labour and permanent staff. As such, I am unable to provide the honourable member with the information he requests.

3. All the projects referred to in the 1979-80 Budget Speech are either completed or are included in the list of projects referred to above.

PETROL SERVICE STATIONS
(Question No. 304)

Mr STIRLING (Williamstown) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

In respect of a question without notice regarding closure of petrol service stations asked on 16 October 1979, whether any further consideration has been given to making adequate regulations to cover the safety and security of underground storage tanks, on the closure of any petrol service station, and providing protection for any councils concerned?

Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:

The matter of laying down the proper safety measures to be taken when an underground tank is no longer needed for storing petrol has been under study, along with other matters regarding safety at service stations.

I have had some discussion with my colleague, the Honourable the Minister for Local Government on this subject. I understand his view now is that, rather than update the present regulations under the Petrol Pumps Act, as had been contemplated, it would be better to make suitable provisions within the framework of certain general legislation to control dangerous goods that is now being planned. This legislation would apply to storage facilities for various kinds of hazardous commodities.

I have instructed my departmental officers who are engaged in this planning to take account of what may be needed as regards petrol service stations and underground tanks there.

INSPECTION OF PREMISES IN COBURG
(Question No. 309)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister of Health:
1. What premises in Coburg are registered with the Industrial Hygiene Section to handle hazardous substances?
2. When inspections are made of the plant at these premises?
3. What were the results of the inspections made in the past two years, and what action has been necessary?

Mr BORTHWICK (Minister of Health)—The answer is:

Under the Dangerous Trades Regulation, a sandblasting business is registered at 125 Gaffney Street, Coburg.

The premises were inspected on 8 August 1979 prior to registration in September 1979; there has been no re-inspection since then.

HOMES PURCHASED FROM VANVLIEFT AND GARDNER
(Question No. 312)

Mr CAIN (Bundoora) asked the Minister of Housing:

With regard to the 40 homes purchased from Vanvliet and Gardner (Vic.) Pty Ltd and subsequently sold by the Housing Commission:
1. Whether purchasers of such homes were in receipt of incomes in excess of the maximum amount stipulated by the commission; if so, how many?

2. How many of the purchasers had been on commission waiting lists for period shorter than one year, two years, and three years, respectively?

3. What portion of the moneys required to finance the contract of sale of these homes for these buyers was provided by the Commonwealth under the provisions of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement?

Mr Dixon (Minister of Housing) — The answer is:

1. Purchasers in receipt of incomes in excess of maximum at time of allocation—28.

2. Period purchasers were on the waiting list before allocation of dwellings—
   - Shorter than one year—nineteen.
   - Shorter than two years (but longer than one year)—five.
   - Shorter than three years (but longer than two years)—three.
   (The remaining thirteen applicants waited longer than three years.)

3. Twelve of the forty units purchased were financed from funds provided by the Commonwealth, under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement.

TOTALIZATOR AGENCY BOARD SERVICE
(Question No. 316)

Mr Trezise (Geelong North) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:

What is the Totalizator Agency Board policy for providing sufficient operating windows open to overcome complaints of long waiting periods?

Mr Dixon (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation) — The answer is:

The Totalizator Agency Board has provided me with the following answer:

The board has seven metropolitan and five country regional managers continually monitoring the service levels at agencies by day to day inspections during peak periods to ensure that adequate service is provided.

Computer printouts are extracted periodically which show operator performance and the windows that are manned in each agency, and if necessary corrective action is taken.

The introduction of the CRISP system in the near future will provide for the recording of multiple betting combinations on one ticket and this will have a significant effect on queue lengths and waiting periods.

SPECIAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME STAFF
(Question No. 317)

Mr Wilkes (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister of Labour and Industry:

How many persons are currently employed by the Government under the Special Youth Employment Training Programme and how many are—(a) employed by each Government department or authority; and (b) training for each industry or skill category?

Mr Ramsay (Minister of Labour and Industry) — The answer is:

The State Government has, to date, provided training for some 3250 young people within State Government departments and authorities, under the Special Youth Employment Training Programme.

The last two intakes, each of 500 young people, arranged by the State Government commenced training from 11 February 1980 and 24 March 1980 respectively.

Attachment 1 provides details about the number of training positions made available under the last two intakes within each State Government department and authority.

Under programme arrangements, it is the responsibility of the employing department or authority, in consultation with the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Youth Affairs, to nominate actual training positions. From records kept by them, the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Youth Affairs have provided this information and Attachment 2 provides details.

As the programme training period is set at seventeen weeks, trainees under these intakes would have completed their training in June 1980 and July 1980 respectively. Hence no trainees are currently employed under the programme.

The State Government has shown a continuing commitment to the Special Youth Employment Training Programme and a further 1000 trainees will be employed in State Government departments and authorities in 1980-81.

Prior to the State Government organising any intakes of young people under the programme, it is first necessary to gain the agreement of the Commonwealth Minister of Employment and Youth Affairs to State Government participation in the programme. A telex has been sent to the Minister, seeking his agreement to two further intakes, each of 500 young people, being organised by the Victorian Government in 1980-81.
Special Youth Employment Training Programme

Training Positions Allocated to State Government Departments and Authorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department or Authority</th>
<th>Intake of 11 February 1980</th>
<th>Intake of 24 March 1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forests Commission</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry for Planning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry for Conservation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Crown Lands and Survey</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Electricity Commission</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Mines and Energy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Rivers and Water Supply Commission</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geelong Harbor Trust</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Department</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Roads Board</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works Department</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Community Welfare Services</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Agriculture</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geelong Regional Commission</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport Regulation Board</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Labour and Industry</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of State Development, Decentralization and Tourism</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Commission</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Department</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry for the Arts</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Police and Emergency Services</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service Board</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geelong Waterworks and Sewerage Trust</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Department</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Insurance Office</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Housing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Adult Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Yarra Valley and Danembro Ranges Authority</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Accidents Board</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Property and Services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attachment 2**

Special Youth Employment Training Programme

Dissection of Training Positions by Industry/Skill Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry/Skill Category</th>
<th>Intake of 11 February 1980</th>
<th>Intake of 24 March 1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clerical/Office Duties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Assistant</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Assistant/Typist</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopy Tamper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephonist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Operator/Lobbyist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptionist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Duties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistant</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technician Clerk</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafting Assistant</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory Assistant</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory Technician</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Assistant</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual Assistant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display Assistant</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark Room Assistant</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Operator/Assistant</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Assistant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Services Assistant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming/Gardening Duties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spray Assistant</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Worker</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Gardener</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ECONOMIC FACTORS IN VICTORIAN INDUSTRY**

(Question No. 318)

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism:

1. What is the mechanism and the regional framework used by the Department to monitor the impact on industry of economic factors such as internal trade flows, migration patterns, transport costs, and employment multipliers, and on what date this monitoring process commenced?

2. Whether he will make available to the Leader of the Opposition any departmental surveys which have been completed in the past two years, assessing the impact of economic factors on Victorian industry?

Mr HAMER (Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism)—The answer is:

The regional framework used by the Department of State Development Decentralization and Tourism is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Regions for Victoria. The monitoring of impact on industry of economic factors commenced over 5 years ago.

(i) (a) Studies of specific areas such as the Green Triangle Region, Loddon Campaspe Region and Central Highlands Region.
Questions on Notice

21 October 1980

(b) In-flow of information from departmental officers based in regional locations who have an intimate knowledge of industry and its problems in their particular regions.

(c) Specific investigations conducted into industry sectors. An example is an input/output study of likely unemployment impact in the clothing and textiles industry in Wangaratta and Warrnambool which was presented to the Industries Assistance Commission.

(d) Regular liaison with industry, and Commonwealth and other State agencies.

(ii) I will be pleased to make available those surveys which have been completed in the past two years, this includes the Green Triangle Study, the departmental submission to the Victorian Transport Inquiry and the departmental submission to the Industries Assistance Commission on clothing.

DECENTRALIZATION CONCESSIONS

(Question No. 319)

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism:

How many industries which have received State Government assistance in the form of decentralization concessions, subsidies or loans in the past five years have—(a) closed down plant operations; (b) reduced employment size; or (c) consolidated in another location?

Mr HAMER (Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism)—The answer is:

Records are not available within the department of the number of industries which have closed down plant operations, reduced employment size or consolidated in another location.

HOUSING COMMISSION

(Question No. 321)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister of Housing:

1. How many new homes were built by the Housing Commission during 1979-80?

2. How many homes were bought by the commission during 1979-80?

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—The answer is:

1. 1181, comprising 709 Villas, 307 elderly person units, 94 cluster houses, and 71 medium density houses.

2. During 1979-80, the Housing Commission bought 142 houses to meet the following programmes:

(a) Spot Purchase 67
(b) Aboriginal Housing 54
(c) Neighbourhood Redevelopment 13
(d) Special Cases 6

(e) Fitzroy/Collingwood Rental Housing Association

PROPOSED CORIO POLICE STATION

(Question No. 322)

Mr TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

1. Whether the proposed Corio police station is classified as an urgent project?

2. What is the proposed police establishment strength for such station?

3. When it is planned that the station will be opened for use?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

1. The establishment of a 24-hour Police Station and Divisional Headquarters at Corio occupies a prominent position in the works programme of the Police Department. However, in view of the 24-hour policing service provided to the Corio District from the nearby Norlane Police Station, the project is not considered urgent at present.

2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Police Complex at Corio</th>
<th>Proposed personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divisional Headquarters ..</td>
<td>1 Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Senior Constable or Constable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Station .. ..</td>
<td>1 Senior Sergeant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 Sergeants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 Senior Constables or Constables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Branch Investigation</td>
<td>1 Senior Sergeant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Sergeants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Senior Constables or Constables</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Having regard to present priorities attaching to other Police projects and to the availability of funds, it is not envisaged that the Station would commence operation before 1985.

TOTALIZATOR AGENCY BOARD

(Question No. 324)

Mr TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:

Whether the Totalizator Agency Board is obligated to verify that a telephone account subscriber is registered under his correct name and address; if not, why and whether consideration is being given to amending such situation?

Mr DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation)—The answer is:

Applicants, when completing application cards for telephone betting accounts, insert
the name and address and also provide a specimen signature. There is no check made by the Totalizator Agency Board as to the authenticity of the name and current address.

The account holder's signature is checked by one of the board's officers when withdrawals are being made from the account.

It would be extremely difficult for the board to verify that the names and addresses of its 113,000 account holders are correct and as clients are not establishing a credit rating, the board cannot see any valid reason why a check should be made.

**LICENSED RACEHORSE TRAINERS**

(Question No. 326)

**Mr TREZISE** (Geelong North) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:

Whether he will ascertain and advise how many licensed trainers operate and racehorses are trained on each licensed racecourse in Victoria?

**Mr DIXON** (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation)—The answer is:

The Victoria Racing Club has provided me with the following answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of trainers with A licence</th>
<th>90</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of trainers with Permit to Train</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of trainers with B licence</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-Trainer A</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-Trainer B</td>
<td>587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainers approved for Picnic Meetings only</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**N.B. A—Metropolitan area**

**B—Outside metropolitan area**

Number of horses trained at various courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Number of Horses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flemington</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caulfield</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epsom</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figures are averages, that is, they indicate the average number of horses in training at any one time at the particular courses. They are supplied only for metropolitan courses and for those country courses which regularly submit returns showing an average of ten or more horses in training.

The Trotting Control Board has submitted the following information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of licensed trainers</th>
<th>Metropolitan</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of horses trained at various courses</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>3387</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many trainers do not routinely use licensed racecourses for general training purposes as they have access to private or public training tracks. Figures for the number of horses trained at specific racecourses are unavailable.

**TOTALIZATOR AGENCY BOARD HOLD-UPS**

(Question No. 328)

**Mr TREZISE** (Geelong North) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:

1. How many Totalizator Agency Board agencies were subject to holdups in each of the years 1975 to 1979 and in this year to date?
2. What total sum of money was stolen from agencies in each of the above years?

**Mr DIXON** (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation)—The answer is:

The Totalizator Agency Board has provided me with the following answer:
Questions on Notice

Number of Amount
Year holdups stolen $  
1975 4 1 855  
1976 13 27349  
1977 35 51000  
1978 18 21027  
1979 39 153422  
1980 (to date) 38 77000

PERSONNEL IN BARWON POLICE DISTRICT
(Question No. 329)
Mr TREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:
How many police personnel were stationed in the Barwon Police District at June 1970, 1975 and 1980, respectively?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June, 1970</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June, 1975</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June, 1980</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PAUPERS' FUNERALS
(Question No. 333)
Mr EDMUNDS (Ascot Vale) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:
How many paupers' funerals were provided for from departmental grants in the financial years 1976-77 to 1978-79, respectively and what estimated number will be provided for in 1980-81?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of paupers' funerals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81 (to 31-8-80)</td>
<td>100 (estimate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VICTORIA POLICE FORCE
(Question No. 345)
Mr EDMUNDS (Ascot Vale) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:
1. What is the net growth rate in the actual strength of the Victoria Police Force in this year to date?
2. What are the losses through retirement, ill-health, resignation and dismissal, respectively, and what has been the net gain?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

1. The net growth rate in the actual strength of the Police Force from 1 January to 19 September 1980 was 2.26 per cent.
2. Losses of personnel during that period were:
   (a) Retirements—
      (i) age 20
      (ii) ill-health 79
   (b) Resignations 104
   (c) Dismissals 1
   (d) Deaths 12
   (e) Termination of services 3
   Total 219

The net gain during that period was 171 members.

POLICE MOUNTED BRANCH
(Question No. 346)
Mr EDMUNDS (Ascot Vale) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:
1. Whether arrangements have been finalized for accommodating the Police Mounted Branch as a result of the transfer of the existing premises in St Kilda Road to the Victorian Council of the Arts?
2. Whether a decision has been made as to where the branch will be located?

3. When it is expected that the move from the present location will take place?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

The working party established to consider the relocation of the Victoria Police Mounted Branch has recommended that the branch should not be relocated but continue to occupy its present site and facilities at St Kilda Road. The Government has accepted that recommendation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of vehicles reported stolen*</th>
<th>Number of vehicles recovered*</th>
<th>Number of motor cycles recovered</th>
<th>Number of motor cycles reported stolen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>11 643</td>
<td>11 142</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>13 092</td>
<td>12 584</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>12 146</td>
<td>11 810</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>10 759</td>
<td>10 370</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>10 590</td>
<td>10 252</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>10 643</td>
<td>10 240</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>11 552</td>
<td>11 165</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>14 638</td>
<td>13 984</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>15 055</td>
<td>14 594</td>
<td>1 075</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>15 926</td>
<td>15 361</td>
<td>1 033</td>
<td>591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 (to 19 September 1980)</td>
<td>11 473</td>
<td>10 196</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes cars, trucks, and motor cycles. Separate statistics on stolen trucks are not maintained.

THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLES
(Question No. 349)

Mr EDMUNDS (Ascot Vale) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

1. How many motor vehicles have been stolen in each of the years from 1970 to date detailing cars, trucks and motor cycles?

2. How many vehicles in each category have been recovered in each of the years specified?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Applications Granted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 (to 23.9.80)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. One authorisation relating to one device was still in effect on 23 September 1980.

3. Initial Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Initial Reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>7 plus a second and third report in one instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>8 plus a second report in one instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>13 plus a second report in five instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 (to 23 September)</td>
<td>15 plus a second report in two instances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. It is considered inappropriate to divulge the details of the circumstances in which listening devices are used as this may be prejudicial to the persons involved and could be detrimental to police effectiveness.

AUTHORIZATIONS FOR LISTENING DEVICES
(Question No. 352)

Mr EDMUNDS (Ascot Vale) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

1. How many applications for approval and authorization have been heard and granted under the Listening Devices Act 1969 in each of the years 1973 to 1979 inclusive and in this year to date.

2. How many approved authorizations for installing a listening device are still in effect, indicating how many devices are installed and in use by any member of the Victoria Police Force?

3. How many reports the Chief Commissioner of Police has submitted to the Minister in respect of each authorization of a device for the years 1977 to 1979, respectively and in this year to date?

4. Whether he will provide a copy of each report to the member for Ascot Vale; if not, why?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Initial Reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>7 plus a second and third report in one instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>8 plus a second report in one instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>13 plus a second report in five instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 (to 23 September)</td>
<td>15 plus a second report in two instances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. It is considered inappropriate to divulge the details of the circumstances in which listening devices are used as this may be prejudicial to the persons involved and could be detrimental to police effectiveness.
ALTERNATIVE FUNDING
(Question No. 358)

Mr EDMUNDS (Ascot Vale) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

1. How many meetings have been held by the working party set up to inquire into alternative methods of funding of operational expenditure of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board and the Country Fire Authority?

2. What alternative methods of funding are being examined?

3. When recommendations are expected to be made and announced to the House?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

1. The working party has met on three occasions.

2. Members of the working party have advanced a number of alternative methods of funding and variations on these methods for examination. The major alternatives under consideration are funding by a levy on property values and complete funding by the State and/or Commonwealth Governments.

3. The report of the working party is expected before the end of 1980.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY
(Question No. 359)

Mr EDMUNDS (Ascot Vale) asked the Premier:

1. What representations have been made to the Commonwealth Government regarding difficulties associated with the fixing of the Queen's Birthday Public Holiday on an "as decreed" basis rather than on a set day?

2. What has been the response from the Commonwealth Government?

Mr HAMER (Premier)—The answer is:

1 and 2. Following my letter to the Prime Minister on 31 January 1979 the matter was considered at the June 1979 Premiers' Conference. A decision was taken at that Conference that, from 1981, the Queen's Birthday public holiday would be observed on the second Monday in June in all States and Territories with the exception of Western Australia. Advice has since been received from the Commonwealth Government that this arrangement has been accepted by Her Majesty the Queen.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT REGIONS
(Question No. 362)

Dr COGHILL (Werribee) asked the Assistant Minister of Education:

In respect of each Education Department region, what is the number of special developmental schools, indicating—(a) the number of each grade of such schools; (b) the number of students catered for at such schools; (c) the number of (i) principals; (ii) deputy principals; (iii) teachers; and (iv) assistants at such schools; and (d) any steps being taken to correct any imbalance between regions in the number of students catered for by each region?

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—The answer is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>(a) Enrolment</th>
<th>(b) Principal</th>
<th>(c) Vice-principal</th>
<th>(d) Teachers</th>
<th>(e) Assistants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balwyn</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milparinka</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Melbourne</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Metropolitan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djerriwarrh</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyndham</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Eastern</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankston</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakleigh</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarrabah</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Metropolitan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heidelberg</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preston</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions on Notice

(a) (b) (c) (d)

Enrolment Principal Vice- Teachers Assistants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eastern Metropolitan</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>61</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nadesca</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benalla</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corowa</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kallemendonah</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numurkah</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wodonga</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepparton</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Metropolitan</td>
<td></td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traralgon</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirridong</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gippsland</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyndalyn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepparton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that all Principals and Vice Principals carry teaching duties.

(d) Entry into the Education Department of Special Developmental Schools is at the expressed request of an existing Day Training Centre Management Committee to the relieved of the responsibility of education of school age persons. Under these circumstances location of services is not the subject of Education Department control.

CAPITAL WORKS ASSISTANCE TO RACING INDUSTRIES

(Question No. 365)

Mr TEREZISE (Geelong North) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:

What venues of the three racing industries have lodged applications for approved capital works assistance in excess of $10 000 for the financial years 1979-80 and 1980-81, indicating (a) which applications were approved; and (b) what are the details of the respective works?

Mr DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation)—The answer is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Improvements Sought</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
<th>Date Considered</th>
<th>Result of Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ballarat</td>
<td>Trainer's complex</td>
<td>$42 000</td>
<td>27 July, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$42 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echuca</td>
<td>Training complex</td>
<td>$11 854</td>
<td>27 July, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$10 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edenhope</td>
<td>Track water system and others</td>
<td>$14 169</td>
<td>9 August, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$14 169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranbourne</td>
<td>Beting Shelter—to be shared with</td>
<td>$133 824</td>
<td>15 August, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$33 827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caterine</td>
<td>Horse Stalls (50)</td>
<td>$20 000</td>
<td>14 September, 1979</td>
<td>Deferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanging Rock</td>
<td>Committee room</td>
<td>$20 000</td>
<td>14 September, 1979</td>
<td>Not approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wangaratta</td>
<td>Dining and bar facilities</td>
<td>$66 500</td>
<td>4 October, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/grant/$64 362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benalla</td>
<td>Watering system</td>
<td>$16 600</td>
<td>26 October, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$16 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bendigo</td>
<td>Totalizator building</td>
<td>$132 499</td>
<td>26 October, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$132 499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caulfield</td>
<td>Administration complex</td>
<td>$1 318 775</td>
<td>26 October, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$1 318 775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilmore</td>
<td>Track reconstruction—Stage 1</td>
<td>$13 253</td>
<td>26 October, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$13 253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan Hill</td>
<td>Luncheon roon</td>
<td>$26 285</td>
<td>26 October, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$26 285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stony Creek</td>
<td>Administration building—Stage 2</td>
<td>$60 000</td>
<td>7 December, 1979</td>
<td>Deferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Werribee</td>
<td>Toilet facilities—additional costs</td>
<td>$17 157</td>
<td>7 December, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$16 640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Replacement—viewing stand</td>
<td>$52 110</td>
<td>7 December, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$17 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ararat</td>
<td>Track water system</td>
<td>$22 600</td>
<td>7 December, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$20 230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mornington</td>
<td>Moveable running rail—2000 metres</td>
<td>$13 200</td>
<td>7 December, 1979</td>
<td>Approved/$13 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatura</td>
<td>Moveable running rail—2780 metres</td>
<td>$18 348</td>
<td>7 December, 1979</td>
<td>Not approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawthorn</td>
<td>Alterations—members' and betting ring</td>
<td>$29 373</td>
<td>8 February, 1980</td>
<td>Approved/$37 575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moonee Valley</td>
<td>Refinancing existing liabilities (re new grandstand)</td>
<td>$500 000</td>
<td>19 March, 1980</td>
<td>Approved/$500 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casterton</td>
<td>Horse stalls (60)</td>
<td>$16 425</td>
<td>28 March, 1980</td>
<td>Approved/$16 425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milawa</td>
<td>Track water system</td>
<td>$12 186</td>
<td>28 March, 1980</td>
<td>Approved/$12 186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bendigo</td>
<td>Tote odds induction system</td>
<td>$16 474</td>
<td>28 March, 1980</td>
<td>Approved/$16 474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsham</td>
<td>Tote odds semaphore board</td>
<td>$23 372</td>
<td>9 May, 1980</td>
<td>Not approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moe</td>
<td>Storage shed—District starting stalls</td>
<td>$17 847</td>
<td>9 May, 1980</td>
<td>Approved/$17 848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bendigo</td>
<td>Horse stalls replacement—Stage 2</td>
<td>$49 168</td>
<td>9 May, 1980</td>
<td>Approved/$49 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echuca</td>
<td>Starting stall shed including horse stalls</td>
<td>$10 330</td>
<td>30 June, 1980</td>
<td>Approved/$10 330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mr FOGARTY (Sunshine) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

Whether foreign fishing vessels permitted to fish in Australian waters off the Victorian coastline have been guaranteed supplies of distillate or other types of fuel; if so—(a) whether any limits will be placed upon that supply; and (b) what will be the basis of price per litre?

Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:

I am not aware of any arrangements whereby foreign fishing vessels have been guaranteed supplies of distillate or other fuel at Victorian ports.
DISCHARGE OF CHEMICALS INTO THE AIR
(Question No. 446)

Mr SPYKER (Heatherton) asked the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for the Minister for Conservation:

1. What powers are exercised to ensure that unlicensed emissions of chemicals are not discharged into the atmosphere?
2. Whether environmental impact studies are carried out prior to purchase and installation of major plant by industry?

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation is:

1. Industrial, trade and commercial premises are inspected for waste discharges to the atmosphere during frequent area surveys.
Where such discharges are detected the premises are brought within the licensing system, commencing with formal notification to apply for a licence.

The exceptions are those premises which are exempt under the schedules provided by Governor in Council orders or where a case of pollution exists. Exempt premises are controlled by means of the Clean Air Regulations.

Section 27 (1) of the Environment Protection Act provides for penalties for unlicensed discharges.

2. Private industry may purchase equipment at any time it sees fit without specifying or applying for a licence.

An Environment Effect Statement may have to be produced by a private company in order to obtain planning approval to proceed with a major project. Prior purchase of equipment would not normally be taken into account when making a planning decision.

COUNTRYSIDE MEATS PTY LTD, DONALD
(Question No. 447)

Mr FOGARTY (Sunshine) asked the Minister of Agriculture:

1. Whether Countryside Meats Pty Ltd, Donald, Victoria has gone into liquidation?
2. Whether the company owes the Victorian State Government and Commonwealth Government substantial sums on account of inspection fees and levies; if so—(a) what is the amount involved; (b) what was the maximum amount owed at any time during the past four years; and (c) what was the reason for allowing the debt to accrue?
3. What other meatworks in Victoria owe the State Government amounts extending over two months?

Mr I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture)—The answer is:

1. Yes.
2. Information on any amounts owing by the company to the Commonwealth Government is not available to me:
   (a) The amount owing to the Victorian Government for inspection fees is $46,915.01.
   (b) The maximum amount owed at any time during the past four years was $189,638.60 as at 20 August 1979.
   (c) Meat inspection services were maintained during the period in which the Government sought to recover the amount owed by Countryside Meats Pty Ltd, Donald, without forcing the company into liquidation and thus the closure of the works.
3. Meatworks in Victoria that owe the State Government amounts extending over two months are:

Countryside Meats Pty Ltd, Donald, Victoria has gone into liquidation—The answer is:

1. Yes.
2. Information on any amounts owing by the company to the Commonwealth Government is not available to me:
   (a) The amount owing to the Victorian Government for inspection fees is $46,915.01.
   (b) The maximum amount owed at any time during the past four years was $189,638.60 as at 20 August 1979.
   (c) Meat inspection services were maintained during the period in which the Government sought to recover the amount owed by Countryside Meats Pty Ltd, Donald, without forcing the company into liquidation and thus the closure of the works.
3. Meatworks in Victoria that owe the State Government amounts extending over two months are:
21 October 1980] Questions on Notice

ILLEGAL TRADING IN NATIVE BIRDS
(Question No. 449)

Mr HOCKLEY (Bentleigh) asked the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for the Minister for Conservation:

Whether there was a case of illegal trading in native birds at the Sir Colin MacKenzie Fauna Park, Healesville during 1979?

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation is:

The Fisheries and Wildlife Division as the agency directly responsible for enforcing any illegal trading in native birds, advises that they have no record of any illegal trading by the Sir Colin MacKenzie Fauna Park during 1979 nor at any other time.

MONTE CARLO CIRCUS
(Question No. 450)

Mr HOCKLEY (Bentleigh) asked the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for the Minister for Conservation:

Whether officers of the Fisheries and Wildlife Division charged the Monte Carlo Circus for breaking the regulations in relation to the sizes of cages during February 1980; if so, what was the result of the case?

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation is:

The Monte Carlo Circus, as such was not charged with any offences in 1980. However, two persons who were responsible for the conduct of the circus whilst it was operating in Victoria, were charged with offences relating to cage sizes. These people were convicted and fined a total of $700 with $200 costs.

STATE RECREATION COUNCIL
(Question No. 453)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation:

Who are the members of the State Recreation Council, indicating their occupations?

Mr DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation)—The answer is:

Major General K. Green, O.B.E., E.D.—Secretary, Department of the Premier.

Mr J. Barry, M.B.E.—Managing Director, Stationery Manufacturer.

Mr T. Arthur—Chief Technical Officer, National Parks Service, M.M.B.W.

Dr I. Bennett—Community Education Consultant, Victorian Education Department.

Mr S. Calder—Branch Head, Forestry Commission.

Mrs J. Grimwade, O.B.E.—Home duties.

Mr L. Langan—Lecturer, Art Education.

Dr B. McCloskey—Director, Health Commission.

Mr G. McIntosh—Own business.

Mr H. Meserow—Manager, Culture and Education, City of Caulfield.

Mr A. Moor—Co-ordinator, Special Programmes, Council of Adult Education.

Miss E. Murphy—Senior Lecturer in charge of recreation, Footscray Institute of Technology.

Mr J. Patching, O.B.E.—Supervisor of Recreation Services, Melbourne City Council.

Mr I. Pedersen, D.F.C.—Assistant Director, Royal Agricultural Society.

Mr H. Penhall—Director of Camps, Education Department.

Mr D. Saunders—Director of National Parks.

Mr H. Schaap—Research Scientist, State Electricity Commission.

Mr D. Thompson—Manager of Planning, Shire of Lillydale.

Mr W. Tickner—Retired.

Miss E. Walpole—Head of Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Burwood State College.

Mr A. Warrick—Executive Director, Australian Institute of Management.

Dr A. Willee—Chairman, Department of Human Movement Studies, University of Melbourne.

Dr J. Refshauge—Doctor of Medicine.

Miss A. Knight—Home duties.

PETITION
(Question No. 455)

Mr HOCKLEY (Bentleigh) asked the Premier:

Whether a petition signed by Ballarat citizens opposing the fluoridation of water supplies and forwarded to Her Majesty the Queen was returned to the Department of the Premier over twelve months ago; if so, whether the department forwarded the petition to Parliament for the purposes of presentation to the House and, in that event, when?

Mr HAMER (Premier)—The answer is:

Yes; Yes, in May 1979.
ENIRONMENT
(Question No. 456)

Mr SPYKER (Heatherton) asked the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for the Minister for Conservation:

What assurances are provided by the Ministry for Conservation that the environment and health of residents near major industry is safeguarded by the Environment Protection Authority, in view of that authority being unable to objectively check concentrations of chemicals either in the ambient air or even for compliance with its issued licences?

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation is:

The Environment Protection Authority monitors for major pollutants and checks for compliance with issued licences.

Within manpower and equipment constraints an ambient air testing programme and other water sampling programmes have been proceeding since 1973. The authority tests for compliance to discharge limits and gathers data for prosecution purposes.

The Environment Protection Authority staff tries to inspect all licenced premises at least once per year. Major discharges receive more than one inspection per year. A proposed revision of this schedule will result in more frequent checking of major discharges and emissions and less frequent checking of minor emissions.

A constraint on inspection of industrial air emissions is Environment Protection Authority's limited capacity to undertake stack testing. Currently the capacity is approximately 20 stack tests per year which includes both enforcement and licence application assessment testing.

Inspectors also provide a complaints investigations service designed to locate and evaluate sources of pollution. Many major industries are required by licence conditions to carry out self monitoring of their discharges and emissions and the data from such monitoring are provided to the Environment Protection Authority. If complaints or other information pinpoint a need to test, testing follows.

GIFTS TO ART FOUNDATION
(Question No. 457)

Mr HOCKLEY (Bentleigh) asked the Premier:

Further to the answer to question No. 2297 provided to the member for Bentleigh on 15 July 1980:

1. When, where, and how the people of Victoria were advised of the gifts to the Art Foundation of Victoria by Alcoa of Australia?

2. Whether he will provide copies of such announcements to press, radio and television?

Mr HAMER (Premier)—The answer is:

1. On 3 December 1976 Mr Hugh M. Morgan, Chairman of the Art Foundation of Victoria, issued a news release announcing donations to the foundation. The Age newspaper published these details on 4 December 1976.

2. I am not in a position to provide the honourable member with a copy of Mr Morgan's news release.

HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSES
(Question No. 460)

Mr CATHIE (Carrum) asked the Minister of Housing:

In respect of each of the past three financial years:

1. What surplus or deficit resulted from the home sales operations of the Housing Commission, indicating how any surplus was utilized?

2. What surplus or deficit resulted from the rental operations of the Housing Commission, indicating how any surplus was utilized?

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—The answer is:

Results of home sales and rental operations over the past three financial years are listed in the table below. (The letters "S" and "D" in the table indicate surplus and deficiency respectively.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Result of house sales operations</th>
<th>Result of rental operations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>(S) 14 143 801</td>
<td>(S) 847 662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>(S) 2 510 960</td>
<td>(D) 148 122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>(S) 3 696 344</td>
<td>(D) 141 011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both surpluses and deficiencies are transferred at the end of each financial year to the Accumulated Surplus Account. Moneys in the Accumulated Surplus Account are used by the commission to assist in financing the Capital Works Programme as cash is received; e.g. house purchasers repayments.

SMELTER FOR VICTORIA
(Question No. 464)

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Premier:

1. Whether a Cabinet sub-committee reported to him on 28 February 1979 on a recommended offer to be made to Nabalco in response to its submission for the establishment of an aluminium smelter in Victoria?

2. Whether he made a similar offer to Alcoa by telephone on 1 March 1979 and whether
the Premier received a letter in response from Alcoa on the same day agreeing to proceed with the construction of a smelter in Victoria.

Mr HAMER (Premier)—The answer is:

(i) The Honourable Minister for State Development, Decentralization and Tourism in a letter of 28 February 1979 to the Premier confirmed a decision made by the sub-committee of Cabinet in relation to the provision of power for the establishment of a smelter at Portland by Nabalco.

(ii) In a telephone conversation with the Premier on 1 March 1979 the Managing Director of Alcoa of Australia Ltd did inform him of Alcoa's decision to build a new smelter on a site to be selected in Victoria.

A letter from Alcoa dated 1 March 1979 confirming this conversation was received on 2 March 1979.

PREMIER'S OVERSEAS TRIPS

(Question No. 474)

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Premier:

1. How many overseas trips have been made by the Premier and the Deputy Premier, respectively, in the past financial year?

2. What was the date, cost and purpose of each overseas trip?

3. Who accompanied the Premier and the Deputy Premier in each case?

Mr HAMER (Premier)—The answer is:

Premier

1. Five.

2. (i) 5-7-79 to 10-7-79; $2077; official visit to the Republic of Korea and to Japan.

(ii) 11-8-79 to 27-8-79; $57016; Government of Victoria Mission to Asia 1979.

(iii) 26-1-80 to 3-2-80; $3543; attendance at Pacific Area Travel Association Conference in Manila as Minister for Tourism.

(iv) 9-5-80 to 18-5-80; $8538; to examine and discuss Victorian Government representation in North America and to address the Convention of the National Council of State Garden Clubs.

(v) 31-5-80 to 25-6-80; $45 525; heading the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce Mission to Europe 1980.

3. (i) Mr D. W. Ford

Mr K. A. Hall

Mr R. D. A. Thomas

(ii) Mr K. D. Green

Mr M. B. Breteron

Dr D. E. Hare

Mr D. W. Ford

Mr B. J. Joyce

Mr F. R. G. Strickland

Mr R. Paddon

Mr N. M. Blyton

Mr F. J. Horsfield (from Japan)

Mr G. Wilson

Mr M. Pointer

(iii) Mr J. J. McFarlane

Mr B. D. Johnston

Miss K. Delanty

Miss J. M. Dunham

(iv) Mr R. J. Mulcahy

(v) Mr D. W. Ford

Mr H. G. Osborne

Mr K. Jones

Mr R. D. A. Thomas

Deputy Premier

1. One.

2. 16-2-80 to 29-2-80; $12 531; Victorian Government representation at opening of motels in Jiangsu Province, and then official call on Aichi Prefecture on police matters.

3. Mrs. Thompson

Dr A. T. Griffin

Mr F. J. Horsfield (from Japan).

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE PROJECTS

(Question No. 486)

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister of Labour and Industry:

1. What are the criteria for funding Victorian Employment Committee projects?

2. What projects have been funded by the Victorian Employment Committee to date?

3. In which electorates each of the projects funded by the Victorian Employment Committee is located?

Mr RAMSAY (Minister of Labour and Industry)—The answer is:

Victorian Employment Committee projects fall into two categories—(a) self-help projects and (b) study projects.

1. (a) In general, each self-help project should combine three activities:

(i) the enhancement of participants' employability at the employment preparation, placement and maintenance stages;

(ii) the targeting of activities at workforce members who are marginally placed or excluded by reason of impairment, disability or handicap; and

(iii) the creation of new jobs requiring skills appropriate to the social and technological future and the conservation of existing jobs or employment.

In particular, any self-help project should:

(i) be innovative;

(ii) be ineligible under regular Federal or State funding arrangements, whether or not such funding is forthcoming;

(iii) not create jobs having the foreseeable effect of employment loss elsewhere;

(iv) aim at creating employment opportunities in the traditional labour market rather than in areas of marginal employment;
(v) have the potential for equipping the participants with marketable skills;
(vi) if possible, be dissimilar to previously funded projects;
(vii) base its activities on clear identification of the target group's needs;
(viii) have a sponsoring group able to effectively manage and promote the proposed project and to develop an effective recording system which would permit accurate evaluative reports;
(ix) have the potential to achieve eventual self-sufficiency or alternative funding;
(x) be aimed at creating or facilitating permanent employment;
(xi) be given priority if exploring the use of new service or material technologies;
(xii) be labour intensive rather than capital intensive;
(xiii) tap local resources, integrate the activities of local institutions and attempt to meet local needs;
(xiv) emphasize opportunities for disadvantaged unemployed workers;
(xv) include training, education and support counselling if necessary;
(xvi) improve the quality of life and produce socially useful goods and services; and
(xvii) create jobs which are physically, intellectually and emotionally sustaining.

(b) Study projects are designed to increase understanding of various employment choices by the community.

2. and 3. The projects, together with the relevant local areas indicated in brackets, are:
(a) Self-help projects—
(i) Job Line/Job Show (State wide)
(ii) Socially Handicapped Youth Employment Project (Ballarat)
(iii) Neighbourhood Employment Development Programme (Williamstown and Box Hill)
(iv) Community Work Society Co-operative Ltd (Hawthorn)
(v) Employer Action for Employment (Noble Park)
(vi) Maryborough Bootstrap Co-operative (Ripon)
(vii) Malvern Employment and Training Programme (Malvern)
(viii) Warragul Workshop (Narracan)
(ix) Centre for Education and Research Environmental Strategies (Brunswick)
(x) Whitehorse Co-operative (Box Hill)
(xi) Local Employment Development Programme (regions not selected yet)
(xii) Loch Ard Producers Co-operative (Warrnambool).
(b) Study projects—
(i) Employment Status of the Disabled Study (—)
(ii) Three Part Investigation into Migrant Unemployment Study (—)
(iii) Youth Employment Study (State wide)
(iv) Shepparton Employment Study (Shepparton)
(v) Skills Development Task Force Study (—)
(vi) Unemployment Amongst Women Survey (Bennettswood)
(vii) Permanent Part-time Work Study (—)
(viii) Small Business and Co-operatives Study (State wide).

CHILDREN ADMITTED TO CARE

(Question No. 491)

Mrs TONER (Greensborough) asked the Minister for Community Welfare Services:

Whether the second part of the Survey of Children admitted to Care from Lone Father Families (referred to in the Report of the State Co-ordination Council of 4 March 1977) has been completed; if so—(a) what use has been made of Parts 1 and 2 of the survey; (b) whether the survey is available to voluntary welfare agencies so that its recommendations can be implemented; and (c) whether he will make this survey (Parts 1 and 2) available to members of the Opposition?

Mr JONA (Minister for Community Welfare Services)—The answer is:

The second part of the Survey of Children admitted to Care from Lone Father Families has been completed. Due to the very small number of cases (five only) reported during the period of 1 November 1976 to 31 January 1977 the survey was extended to cover the period 1 November 1976 to 31 October 1977. During this period 33 ward admissions from eighteen district lone father families were recorded.

(a) The results obtained from parts 1 and 2 of the survey were used in the preparation of the report on the Future of Social Welfare in Victoria which was presented to the Legislative Assembly, 28 November 1978.

In particular these results were used in the formulation of the following policies: "The Community Welfare Services Department will be authorized to develop alternative programmes for the institutions currently holding Wards of State, with a view to reducing the number of children and young persons in custodial care, and establishing family and community based substitute care throughout the State." And "Preventive pre-Court, post-Court and after-care programmes will be provided for children, young persons and adults to restore individual family and community functioning."

As a result of these policies the Government has substantially amended those sections of the Social Welfare Act 1970 dealing with
admission to Wardship (Sections 31 to 35). In particular Section 31 (2) now requires that the Director-General, "must be satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken by the department to provide such services as are necessary to enable the child to remain in the care of his family, prior to any child being admitted to Wardship".

Subsequently, my department has actively encouraged and supported the development of many such services through the Family Support Services Program which provides: Financial Counselling, Family Aide and Emergency Accommodation Services; and the Family and Community Services Program, through which many community based family support services have been developed and funded.

(b) The survey is available to voluntary welfare agencies from the Office of Research and Social Policy of my department.

Officers of my department are available to assist any voluntary agency wishing to develop services for lone father families.

(c) Yes.

UNEMPLOYMENT
(Question No. 495)

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Treasurer:

Whether Victoria's unemployment rate is below the national average and whether this is due solely to movement interstate of residents who lose their jobs?

Mr THOMPSON (Treasurer)—The answer is:

There are two sources of unemployment statistics, the Commonwealth Employment Service which reports registrations of those seeking full time work and the Australian Bureau of Statistics which conducts a monthly labour force survey which records those looking for full time work and total unemployment (full time and part time).

According to all three measures in August 1980, the latest month for which all measures are available and in September 1980 for those available from the bureau, the unemployment rate in Victoria, as shown below, was lower than the national average.

Unemployment Rates: Victoria and Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full Time per cent</th>
<th>Total per cent</th>
<th>Commonwealth Employment per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1980</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1980</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>not applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Bureau of Statistics does not publish the employment status of those who change residence between States.

HAIRDRESSERS REGISTRATION BOARD
(Question No. 507)

Mr CULPIN (Glenroy) asked the Minister of Labour and Industry:

1. What is the cost to the Hairdressers Registration Board to examine students of private hairdressing schools?
2. What fees these schools pay to the board?
3. Whether these fees cover the cost of examining these students; if not, who is paying the examining costs?

Mr RAMSAY (Minister of Labour and Industry)—The answer is:

1. An estimate of the share of the cost of running the board's operation applicable to the conduct of examinations, including the cost of an examiner, office staff, rent and cleaning and electricity was $24,000 in 1979, whilst receipts for examination fees (paid by students) totalled approximately $7,000. The net cost to the board was therefore approximately $17,000.
2. Each school pays $40 registration fee per year to the board.
3. No. The difference between fees paid by students and the estimated cost of the examinations is met from general revenue collected in respect of other annual fees, registration fees, etc.

CONSERVATION COUNCIL MEETINGS
(Question No. 512)

Mr B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East) asked the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for the Minister for Conservation:

Whether, in view of grants to the Conservation Council of Victoria and the Victorian National Parks Association of $12,000 and $6,000, respectively, the Minister will ascertain and advise how many meetings each organization held during the 1979-80 financial year, how many people attended each meeting and where organizations were represented, the name and address of the organization each such person represented?

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation is:

No.

The Conservation Council of Victoria and the Victorian National Parks Association are independent organizations. The purpose of the grants is to assist with meeting the costs associated with the running of their respective offices and bears no relationship to the meetings held, the numbers in attendance or the organizations represented.
Mr AMOS (Morwell) asked the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for the Minister for Conservation:

1. How many submissions the Land Conservation Council has received in respect of its proposed recommendations on the north central study area?

2. Why the council prepared a draft final report on this area when the period of receiving submissions had not passed?

3. What assurances the Government will give concerned people who have taken the trouble of preparing and providing submissions, that their views will be given every consideration by the council?

4. What steps have been taken to acquaint the council with the meaning of exempted and/ or excepted Crown Land as defined by the Mines Act 1958, indicating whether legal opinion has been sought and, if so, what opinion?

5. Whether the Minister is aware of any legal opinion on these terms sought by any other Ministry or department as a result of the council's proposed recommendations and reference to them?

6. In view of the controversy over the council's proposed recommendations, why the Minister did not agree to the request by the member for Morwell to extend the period for the receipt of public submissions?

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation is:

1. Received by the closing date — 855
   Received after the closing date — 319.

2. The council did not consider any recommendations for the north central area prior to the closing date for submissions.

3. All submissions received by the council are carefully considered.

4. The Department of Minerals and Energy is represented on the council and the council has sought the advice of that department. The council has not sought a legal opinion.

5. I understand the Department of Minerals and Energy has sought the opinion of the Crown Solicitor regarding some sections of the Mines Act 1958.

6. The Land Conservation Act 1970 provides for submissions to be considered by the council if received within 60 days of notice being given of the publication of the report in the Government Gazette.

The member for Morwell was informed on 26 August that there would not be a formal extension of the period for receiving formal comments. However, late submissions received up to Monday, 8 September would receive proper consideration.

Mr AMOS (Morwell) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

In view of question No. 2061 first asked on 19 March 1980 remaining unanswered at the end of the last sessional period:

1. How many total fire ban days have been declared in each of the past five years including this year to 1 March 1980, indicating summer period peaks?

2. Whether, in view of the many total fire ban days declared this past summer period which included days which did not reach the fire danger potential expected, he will review the procedures for declaring such days; if so, whether the review will take into consideration relaxing the ban on fixed gas fired barbecues in the urban areas?

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

1. Days declared as total fire ban days since 1975–76 up to 1 March 1980 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>4 January, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>19 January, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>31 January, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1 February, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>13 February, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>14 February, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>17 February, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>18 February, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>22 December, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>31 December, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>20 January, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>9 February, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>11 February, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>12 February, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>13 December, 1977</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>14 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>15 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>16 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>19 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>20 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>21 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>23 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>24 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>25 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>26 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>27 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>28 December, 1977</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>29 January, 1978</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>1 February, 1978</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>2 February, 1978</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10 February, 1979</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>11 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>12 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>13 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>14 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>15 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>16 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>17 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>18 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>19 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>20 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>21 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>22 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>23 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>24 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>25 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>26 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>27 February, 1979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The Country Fire Authority Act was amended in the 1980 Autumn Session of Parliament to empower the authority to revoke a declaration of a day of total fire ban at
any time if changes in the weather so warrant. The amendment also empowered the authority to declare a day of total fire ban during the day in question should sudden weather changes so warrant, such declaration being operative for the balance of the day.

The Country Fire Authority is examining the feasibility of introducing a system of declaring days of total fire ban on a regional basis. I expect that the authority's report will also contain a recommendation on the subject of the use of fixed gas barbecues in urban areas on days of total fire ban.

**KOMINIC CONSORTIUM VISITING MELBOURNE**

(Question No. 526)

Mr AMOS (Morwell) asked the Premier:

In view of question No. 2393 first asked on 6 May 1980 remaining unanswered at the end of the last sessional period, relating to representatives of the Komic consortium visiting Melbourne on 28-29 April 1980:

1. Whether the Government or any statutory bodies had discussions with these representatives concerning the building of a solvent refined coal plant in the Latrobe Valley; if so, as a result of such discussions—(a) when and where the plant will be built; (b) what is the size and cost of the plant; and (c) what financial contribution the State Government will make to the establishment of the plant?

2. Whether he is aware of a document from the consortium which is being used to obtain quotations for the construction of a SRC plant; if so, whether he will make a copy available?

Mr HAMER (Premier)—The answer is:

1. Executive officers of the Victorian Brown Coal Council had discussions with these representatives on technological matters, but the matters set out in the question were not discussed.

2. No.

**PESTICIDE LEVELS IN DRAINAGE CHANNELS**

(Question No. 527)

Dr COGHILL (Werribee) asked the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for the Minister for Conservation:

What studies are being conducted of pesticide levels in irrigation drainage channels, the Werribee River and areas of Port Phillip Bay adjacent to the Werribee South irrigation area and the discharges of the associated drainage channels, indicating the terms of reference of each study and the date by which a report is expected?

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation is:

The Environment Protection Authority has undertaken a pilot survey of pesticide levels in waters and sediments at selected sites in the Werribee and Little River systems. A total of eight stations were sampled once fortnightly for three months including:

—four stations in the Werribee River.

—one station in the Werribee Irrigation District drain D5.

—one station in the Lerderderg River.

—two stations in the Little River.

The objectives of the short survey were to determine the levels of selected pesticides in the Werribee and Little River systems and to determine the need for further investigations.

Chemical analysis of samples is not yet complete. Available results indicate very low levels of the pesticides selected for analysis. In view of the limited nature of the survey the Environment Protection Authority does not intend to publish the results in a report.

**DISCHARGES FROM LITTLE RIVER**

(Question No. 528)

Dr COGHILL (Werribee) asked the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for the Minister for Conservation:

In respect of the Environmental Studies Programme Report on P.C.B.'s in the Port Phillip region, whether sampling station locations Nos. 23, 24 and 25 were related to the discharge from Little River, whether the P.C.B.'s detected at the sampling stations were likely to have been included in discharges from the Little River into Port Phillip Bay and if so, whether the metropolitan Sewerage Farm is likely to have been the immediate source for the P.C.B.'s?

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation is:

Sampling stations Nos. 23, 24 and 25 are in the general area of the Little River, but samples were not taken specifically from the plume of Little River, or from any of the other Sewerage Farm discharge points.

Because of the wind and tide induced movement of water in the Werribee segment of Port Phillip Bay it is very difficult to relate P.C.B. levels in mussels in the area to a specific discharge, such as the Little River.

However, because the sewerage system collects both domestic and trade wastes and as the M.M.B.W. Farm is the major discharger in the area, it seems likely that the M.M.B.W. Farm is the source of P.C.B.'s in the area. However, it is stressed that because of the per-
sistence of P.C.B.'s in the environment, it is not possible to say when the P.C.B.'s detected at the sampling stations were discharged to the environment.

**REVIEW OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICES ACT**
(Question No. 530)

Dr COGHILL (Werribee) asked the Minister of Health:

Whether the Psychological Practices Act 1965 as it affects the Church of Scientology is currently under review; if so, when the review is expected to be completed?

Mr Borthwick (Minister of Health) — The answer is:

The Psychological Practices Act is currently being reviewed but I have already stated (see Hansard of 1979, page 3851) that the provisions of the Act dealing specifically with Scientology do not come within the terms of reference of the Working Party.

I anticipate that the review of the Act will be completed late in 1980.

**COMMUNITY ARTS CO-OPERATIVE**
(Question No. 558)

Mr CATHIE (Carrum) asked the Minister of the Arts:

1. Whether any budget allocations have been made to the Community Arts Co-operative; if so—(a) what was the year involved and the amounts; and (b) whether an application was received for part funding of a secretary; if so, when and with what results?

2. Whether a decision has been made on co-operative representation on the Victorian Council for the Arts; if so, what decision?

3. Whether an allocation has been made for the co-operative at the Meat Market building?

Mr Lacy (Minister of the Arts) — The answer is:

1. Yes.
   (a) 1980, $1500.
   (b) No application has been received.

2. No; the needs of the community arts will be considered when making future appointments to the Victorian Council of the Arts.

3. No; no application has been received by the Meat Market Craft Centre.

**CATTLE SLAUGHTER**
(Question No. 562)

Dr COGHILL (Werribee) asked the Minister of Agriculture:

How many calves, cows, bullocks and steers and bulls, respectively, were slaughtered in Victoria for the most recent twelve months period for which figures are available?

Mr I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture) — The answer is:

Bovine slaughterings for the period 1 September 1979 to 31 August 1980 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>1979-80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulls</td>
<td>32,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cows</td>
<td>471,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxen</td>
<td>526,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vealers</td>
<td>516,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calves</td>
<td>690,320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STAMP DUTY**
(Question No. 563)

Dr COGHILL (Werribee) asked the Treasurer:

What amount of cattle compensation stamp duty was collected in each month in the period 1 July 1978 to 30 June 1980?

Mr THOMPSON (Treasurer) — The answer is:

The following statement shows the amount of cattle compensation stamp duty collected each month in the period 1 July 1978 to 30 June 1980:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>1978-79</th>
<th>1979-80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July ...</td>
<td>50,032</td>
<td>52,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>50,840</td>
<td>49,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>45,293</td>
<td>64,111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>44,440</td>
<td>84,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>53,151</td>
<td>59,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>43,664</td>
<td>68,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>41,858</td>
<td>77,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>42,372</td>
<td>69,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>47,051</td>
<td>91,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>47,083</td>
<td>66,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>45,638</td>
<td>71,737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>52,173</td>
<td>82,967</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total for year 563,597  837,981

**YARRAPARK**
(Question No. 567)

Mr WILTON (Broadmeadows) asked the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for the Minister of Lands:

1. When that part of Yarra Park taken as a temporary measure to allow the Melbourne Underground Rail Loop Authority to construct a tunnel to service the Caulfield and Burnley lines will be returned to Yarra Park?

2. What authority will be responsible for the cost of restoring the area of land as part of the above Park?

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs) — The answer supplied by the Minister of Lands is:

1. I am informed that arrangements have been made for the land in question to be restored as parkland in the near future.
2. The work will be carried out by the Council of the City of Melbourne at the cost of the Victorian Railways Board.

CATTLE SALES
(Question No. 568)

Dr COGHILL (Werribee) asked the Minister of Agriculture:

How many cattle of each category of weight, sex and age were sold in saleyards in Victoria for the most recent twelve month period for which figures are available?

Mr I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture)—The answer is:

The number of cattle and calves sold in all saleyards during the 12 month period ending 30 September 1979 was 2,093,868 and 327,806 respectively. Statistics are not kept on the weight, sex and age of the animals sold at all saleyards in Victoria.

HAIRDRESSING
(Question No. 571)

Mr CULPIN (Glenroy) asked the Minister of Labour and Industry:

Whether the hairdressing industry will be given the opportunity to view any pending draft regulations to make sure that they have been brought up to date in accordance with the needs of the industry?

Mr RAMSAY (Minister of Labour and Industry)—The answer is:

The Hairdressers Registration Board, which prepares the draft regulations, is constituted on a representative basis. It is the responsibility of the members representing the hairdressing industry to maintain communication between the board and their organizations with respect to draft regulations as well as to other matters.

ELECTRIC POWER
(Question No. 574)

Mr WHITING (Mildura) asked the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

1. Whether any consumers of electric power are in receipt of a subsidized rate for power used; if so, which companies are in receipt of subsidies and what amounts are involved in each case?

2. In relation to the proposed supply of electric power to Alcoa at Portland, where this power will be generated and what method will be used to convey it to its destination?

Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The answer is:

1. Standard tariffs, each of which is equally available to similar new customers have been uniformly applied in Victoria for more than fifteen years. Under these tariffs no company receives any subsidy.

2. The Portland smelter will be supplied with power via a double circuit 500 kV overhead transmission line connected at Geelong to the State interconnected generation and transmission system. All Victorian power stations are connected to and supply into this system which is also interconnected with the New South Wales system.

COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMME
(Question No. 592)

Mr ROPER (Brunswick) asked the Minister of Health:

What total amount of Commonwealth funds was spent in each of the past three financial years for the Community Health Programme, specifying whether for recurrent or capital purposes?

Mr BORTHWICK (Minister of Health)—The answer is:

Expenditures by the Health Commission as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>Recurrent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>$3,715</td>
<td>$12,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>$1,932</td>
<td>$11,109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>$800</td>
<td>$13,119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GOONAWARRA ESTATE, SUNBURY
(Question No. 630)

Mr CATHIE (Carrum) asked the Minister of Housing:

In relation to the Goonawarra Estate at Sunbury, how many blocks have been sold in—(a) the public sector; and (b) the private sector, indicating average prices paid in each case?

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—The answer is:

(a) To 30 September 1980 nineteen allotments had been included in house and land packages to persons on the commission’s waiting list at an average price per allotment of $12,031.

(b) To 30 September 1980 29 allotments had been sold to private purchasers at an average price per allotment of $14,762.

A further 80 allotments had been committed to builders, under contractual agreements to purchase.
The PRESIDENT (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade) took the chair at 4.3 p.m. and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION APPEAL BOARD

The Hon. E. H. WALKER (Melbourne Province)—I ask the Minister for Conservation: Is it correct that the Environment Protection Appeal Board this morning denied legal standing to the Australian Conservation Foundation when it wished to appeal against the issue of licences by the Environment Protection Authority to Shell Refining (Australia) Pty Ltd? If so, will the Government, firstly, amend the legislation to remove any doubt that incorporated bodies such as the Australian Conservation Foundation have access to the appeal board and, secondly, provide assistance to the foundation to mount a Supreme Court appeal in this instance?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—The Environment Protection Appeal Board did find that the Australian Conservation Foundation had no standing at the appeal about the issue of licences to Shell Refining (Australia) Pty Ltd. Obviously, there is a deficiency in the Act. I have requested the Chairman of the Environmental Protection Authority to examine the Act and to recommend amendments to correct the situation. It does not appear proper that bodies such as the foundation, the National Parks Association and so on do not have any standing before the appeal board. I hope to put that matter right.

The question of legal assistance for an appeal to be heard at the Supreme Court is more a matter for the attention of the Attorney-General. I doubt whether in this case it would be justified, but I am expressing a private, personal and fairly uninformed opinion—and there is no need for honourable members to agree with me on that. I have suggested to the foundation that until a decision has been made on amendments to the Act the foundation should forget this case and try another.

SCHOOL REPORTS

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North Western Province)—I refer to the practice of many schools not to issue written reports to parents unless requested and that some schools do not provide written reports at all. Will the Minister of Education ensure that it is a compulsory requirement for schools to provide written reports so that parents can assess the progress of their children?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I would have thought the important issue was to ensure that parents who desire reports should have access to them without any problems. I shall certainly take up the question immediately. Mr Dunn has not made it plain whether he is talking of schools of every division.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—I am.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT—I shall take the matter up with the three divisional directors.

LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM FOR TRAINS

The Hon. D. N. SALTMARSH (Waverley Province)—I direct a question to the Minister for Local Government, representing the Minister of Transport. I am a fairly regular user of public transport, in particular trains. On several occasions trains have been delayed perhaps because of an accident or various other events. Frequently, passengers are inconvenienced and do not know what is happening, and may be curious about why there is a delay and so on. At times there has been danger involved as passengers have alighted from trains not at a station. Will the Minister consider the possibility of passenger trains
being installed with a loudspeaker system throughout the carriages so that passengers can be advised by the driver of any delays and their causes to allay the concerns of the passengers?

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER (Minister for Local Government)—There is merit in the proposal of Mr Saltmarsh and I shall be happy to convey the suggestion to my colleague in another place, the Minister of Transport.

PROTECTION OF WHALES

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE (Geelong Province)—I ask the Minister for Conservation whether, now that the Commonwealth Government has proclaimed legislation for the protection of whales, complementary legislation will be initiated in Victoria and, if so, when?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—The question of initiating complementary legislation in the Victorian Parliament to follow the Commonwealth legislation has not been considered. If the honourable member suggests that it ought to be considered, I shall take up that particular point and advise him. It seems to me that the protection of whales taken up by the Commonwealth Government would apply to all waters where the whales are and it may not be necessary to have complementary legislation. However, I will investigate the matter.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

The Hon. H. G. BAYLOR (Boronia Province)—Will the Minister for Local Government advise the House of the present position concerning Mr Sanaghan who was elected to the council of the City of Northcote but refused to make a declaration or take the oath of allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen as required by the Local Government Act?

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER (Minister for Local Government)—On my instructions, this matter has been investigated by an inspector of municipal administration. His report is now to hand and has been referred by me to the Crown Solicitor for advice.

THE CHAIRMAN, MELBOURNE AND METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province)—Has the Minister of Water Supply any knowledge of the possible early retirement of the present Chairman of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works; if so, is it proposed that Mr John King, a part-time member of the board, replace him as chairman?

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply)—I have no knowledge of an early retirement by the present Chairman of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works and I have no knowledge that Mr John King will replace him.

TREES IN VICTORIA

The Hon. W. R. BAXTER (North Eastern Province)—I direct a question without notice to the Minister for Conservation concerning the decline in the number of trees in the Victorian landscape. Does the Minister's department view this situation with alarm, bearing in mind the importance of trees in salinity control, soil erosion control and so on? Is his department aware of the Focus on Farm Trees conference to be held next month under the auspices of the Council of Adult Education; and will his Ministry be officially represented at that conference?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—The Ministry for Conservation is most concerned about the disappearance of trees from the Australian landscape. Time and again in this House honourable members have debated the issue of forest practices and farming practices. The principal responsibility for the disappearance of trees from the Victorian countryside rests with the farmer. Very often they have disappeared for good reasons.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—What about the State Electricity Commission?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON—I am aware that the State Electricity Commission has also removed a few trees. Compared with the number removed by
farmers, the farmers have beaten the State Electricity Commission hands down.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—You know that that is not true.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON—The use to which the farmers put the land may be better than the use to which it was formerly devoted, to trees. It undoubtedly is, in some areas of the State; but we should all consider the conservation of our forests and I have not noticed the National Party being particularly co-operative about that, either in this House or around the traps.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—We are trying to conserve farmers.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON—The matter of farm salting is also absolutely vital and the existence of trees is an important factor in keeping down the water table.

In short, my answer to the honourable member's question is that the Department of Conservation is concerned about the matter and the conference which has been called by the Conservation League will be attended by some members of the department.

LIMITED TENURE TEACHERS

The Hon. H. R. WARD (South Eastern Province)—I direct my question without notice to the Minister of Education. The ravages of time and age are great with men, particularly with myself who ought to wear a hair piece; but it is with pleasure that I acknowledge the new and pleasing hairstyle of our colleague, Mrs Coxsedge. My question relates to the photograph in a local newspaper of the Honourable Alan Hunt. I want to know whether the limited tenure refers to the chignon he is wearing on his head, is it bad photography or does the article actually refer to the provocation of himself with that hairpiece or is it actually the question of limited tenure that is being referred to?

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—Order! I believe the honourable member was inviting the Minister to make comment about some press cutting and I ask him to give me the reference to the article.

The Hon. H. R. WARD—I refer to the Ringwood—Croydon Times which depicts the Minister wearing a chignon but I wonder just what is the provocation that is being questioned.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province)—I know Mr Ward does have difficulty understanding the English language from time to time, Mr President, but your request was quite clear. I should like to know not only the name but also the date of the publication and he has not yet given that to the House.

The Hon. H. R. WARD (South Eastern Province)—The paper is dated 15 October 1980 and the article to which I refer appears on page 28.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I have never had any pretensions to being photogenic; but in the series of advertisements preceding these persistent strikes on the limited tenure issue the teacher unions I must admit that I appear worse than ever. I take it that the advertisement relates to today's teacher strike. I am happy to report to the House that 80 per cent of teachers in the eastern suburbs attended for duty today, despite the advertising to which the honourable member refers.

WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION

The Hon. JOAN COXSEDGE (Melbourne West Province)—Further to the question asked yesterday of the Minister of Education by a member representing the Ballarat Province regarding the serious dislocation of apprenticeship classes in many Victorian technical schools, including those at Sunshine, Tottenham and Williamstown in my own province; what will be the effect of this arbitrary, bureaucratic, empire-building decision on the Minister's forthcoming White Paper and on the employment and conditions of apprenticeship teachers; further, does this decision emasculate the thrust of the White Paper?
The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—The thrust of the White Paper will be made known to the House when the document is presented, and not before. Certainly, decisions of the kind referred to by Mrs Coxedge may well be taken into account in the formulation of the White Paper.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

BUILDINGS

The Hon. D. M. EVANS (North Eastern Province)—I direct a question to the attention of the Minister of Education. Following the proclamation and passing of the amendments to the Education Act in 1975 which allowed the Education Department to take a greater responsibility for buildings, does the Minister see that in future the general direction of education buildings in Victoria will be to shift the responsibility from the Public Works Department to the Education Department? If that is the case, will there be sufficient staff and resources made available, particularly to the regions, to carry out contract work in the building field for the Education Department directly through the regions and through the Education Department?

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I think Mr Evans is also seeking to inquire into the possible contents of the White Paper! He will recognize that the policy both of myself and the Assistant Minister is to avoid duplication of activities wherever possible and to rationalize administration activities where that is necessary to achieve efficiency and administrative simplicity, and he may be sure that those thrusts will emerge in the White Paper.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

The Hon. C. J. KENNEDY (Waverley Province)—I direct a question without notice to the Minister for Local Government, who is the representative in this place of the Minister of Transport. Is the Minister aware of a fares racket being worked by the prosecutions section of the Victorian Railways, and what does he propose to do about it?

The way it works is that young people go to the railway station and, because it is unattended, they cannot pay a fare. They need to reach their destination in a hurry and, when they reach the other end or are halfway through their trip, they are accosted by an inspector and, in due course, are given a bill for $10 and told to pay up or else be fined $100. That is flagrant intimidation and I ask what the Minister intends to do about it?

The Hon. D. G. CROZIER (Minister for Local Government)—I am not aware of any fares racket on any section of the Victorian Railways. However, I suggest that Mr Kennedy detail his complaint in writing direct to the Minister of Transport.

RELIGIOUS SECTS

The Hon. I. B. TRAYLING (Melbourne Province)—Is the Attorney-General aware of a practice being perpetrated on Government property, particularly at railway stations in Victoria, by members of certain so-called religious sects conning money out of gullible people? I refer to an example where a short time ago a young member of the Parliamentary staff was relieved of $10 in exchange for a small material substitute for a flower which was the size of a cent and probably cost about that much. The information provided to the young member of the Parliamentary staff was that the person purported to represent the Youth Rehabilitation League, but it was subsequently found that the person was a member of the Hare Krishna sect. I understand that a prosecution is pending but it is a fairly common practice in Melbourne and apparently it is being perpetrated on Government properties which appear to be more susceptible than other areas.

Is the Attorney-General aware of this and, if so, will the honourable gentleman inform the House what action the Government proposes to take to stamp it out? If the Attorney-General is not aware of the practice, will he inform the House what measures the Government will propose to take to stamp it out?
The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General)—I am not aware of the practice mentioned by Mr Trayling. The example he gave sounds to me like nothing more or less than common theft, the person receiving a small material or flower costing a small amount in exchange for $10 and the person then running away with the $10. If the person who did that is apprehended and in fact did that, then he will be prosecuted and should be dealt with by the court.

The Hon. I. B. Trayling—It was a she.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY—He or she. I understood Mr Trayling to state that it was a he, but he or she, whichever it may be, should be prosecuted. I hope people, particularly young people, who might fall prey to these tactics will exercise more care and when they believe they are being taken down, they will report it to the authorities. It is the function of the police to prosecute such offences, but I will pass on the comments made by Mr Trayling to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and ask him to have the police look into this practice and if there is evidence of it occurring, then to take whatever steps can be taken to safeguard people.

SALE OF LAND (DEPOSITS AMENDMENT) BILL

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Sale of Land Act 1962, to make provision in relation to deposit moneys in transactions for the sale of land and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

DRUG PROBLEM IN VICTORIA

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General)—By leave, I move:

That there be laid before this House a copy of the report of the Inter-departmental Working Party on the Drug Problem in Victoria, Volume 2.

The motion was agreed to.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General) presented the report in compliance with the foregoing order.

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

On the motion of the Hon. E. H. WALKER (Melbourne Province), it was ordered that the report be taken into consideration on the next day of meeting.

PAPER

The following paper, pursuant to the direction of an Act of Parliament was laid on the table by the Acting Clerk:


On the motion of the Hon. E. H. WALKER (Melbourne Province), it was ordered that the report be taken into consideration on the next day of meeting.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (CLEAN AIR) BILL

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—By leave, I move:

That I have leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Environment Protection Act 1970, to repeal the Clean Air Act 1958 and for other purposes.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province)—I understand that I have a firm undertaking from the Government with respect to legislation it plans to introduce that the Opposition be given reasonable notice beforehand. I have not denied leave in the case of the Bill proposed by the Minister for Conservation. However, I would like to make the point that it seems a matter of courtesy so far as the good running of this House is concerned that notice of the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill be given. I think my record in the twelve months that I have been Leader of the Opposition in this House suggests that I have endeavoured to co-operate with the Government when it seeks to bring in legislation according to the forms of the House. The Government needs the co-operation of the Opposition to do so.

I believe members of the Opposition should at least be given the courtesy of receiving notification in advance, as agreed, prior to the introduction of proposed legislation. That has not occurred
with respect to this Bill. I observe that the Leader of the Government, his deputy, and at least one other Minister are strong observers of the undertaking. I suggest to the honourable member’s colleagues, particularly the Minister for Conservation, that they respect that undertaking in future. The Opposition will let the Minister for Conservation off the hook on this occasion but will make no exception in the future.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I confirm that the understanding is as outlined by the Leader of the Opposition. The granting of leave is an indulgence to facilitate the passage of business and if that indulgence is desired by a Minister, he should at least speak to the Leader of the Opposition in advance. I understand perfectly that that is the basis on which leave is granted.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation) (By leave)—I do not argue with the fact that leave was refused; that is in accordance with the forms of this House, and I am not concerned about that. If I have failed to notify the Leader of the Opposition, in accordance with some undertaking that has been made with the Leader of the Government, and have to give notice before it appears on the Notice Paper, that seems to be an acceptable alternative so far as the House is concerned and is in accordance with the forms of the House. I do not seek leave so that I can rush a Bill through in a hurry. I do so in order to expedite the business of the House. If that is not to be, I accept that position.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

DANDENONG VALLEY AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply), moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 13 of the Dandenong Valley Authority Act 1963 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF MEDIA

The Hon. D. R. WHITE (Doutta Galla Province)—I move:

That there be a Select Committee of eight Members appointed to inquire into and report upon the ownership and control of all media in Victoria; the Committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records; three to be the quorum.

On Wednesday 17 December 1979 the Premier announced that the Government would appoint an all-party committee to investigate media ownership and control in Victoria. In the press release Mr Hamer made the following comments to justify the establishment, in his view, of an all-party Parliamentary committee. The Premier stated that this was needed because freedom and independence of the media are vital elements in any democratic society and that competition and diversity in our media are important to the free and open presentation of news and opinion.

The Premier went on to say:

It is important that control of the media does not fall into too few hands.

The Premier also stated in that press release of December last year that the present take-over legislation is not readily applicable in many circumstances. The Premier went on to say that the Government would be seeking the views of the all-party committee on news to guarantee the integrity of the media. The Premier further stated:

That as a Government we would not normally consider interfering in the control of companies but the media must be in a very specific position and our aim will be to find a formula agreeable to a wide range of people that will protect an independent and competitive environment for the media operating in Victoria.

Therefore, the position of the Premier in December 1979 on the need for an inquiry was quite categorical and his promise and assurance to the people of Victoria was clear-cut. However, in the typical spirit of the weak vacillating Leader that Mr Hamer has become, in answer to a question without notice in another place, the honourable gentleman is reported as saying on Tuesday 30 September that the Government has not taken any further steps in this matter because it is not a current issue.
Today the Premier announced an inquiry into the printed media which will be conducted by Mr Justice Norris. The Premier has changed his mind again. Today it was announced in the newspaper by both major parties in the Federal Parliament that they were agreed upon the view and were seeking to persuade a 73 year-old judge, Mr Justice Dunphy, to retire.

Today, Mr Justice Norris has been appointed by the Premier to conduct an inquiry into the print media. According to the 1980 edition of Who's Who, Mr Justice Norris is 77 years of age. His Honour certainly has a lot in common with the Premier, who is almost 64 years of age, and Victoria is quickly reaching the stage where it will have Government by geriatrics. It is clear that the average age of members on the front bench of this House is some reason for the poor performance of the Victorian branch of the Liberal Party at last Saturday's Federal election. It is also clear that Mr Justice Norris is not a suitable or appropriate person to conduct an inquiry because of his age.

Is the appointment of an all-party parliamentary committee of inquiry preferable? It is preferable for at least four reasons: Firstly, in December of last year the Premier considered that it was the most appropriate course to take; secondly, the role and structure of the operations of the print and electronic media is a responsibility and an issue capable of being discussed and resolved by the Parliament and Parliamentarians. So long as that remains the case with any important issue, there is no need to delegate the responsibility to a judicial authority. Thirdly, Parliamentarians are more in touch with community opinion on such an important issue than a 77 years old judge. It is hard to understand how His Honour in reaching a decision on this issue would have a perceptive view of the needs of the community. Fourthly, it is important to have an all-party Parliamentary committee of inquiry that examines all aspects of the media and not only the print media.

It is important to put in perspective the background to the present situation which has given rise to the need for an inquiry. The present inquiry into the print media is too restrictive, and although I recognize that there is some substance in Mr Hamilton's interjection that the electronic media is mainly the responsibility of the Federal Government, it still behoves the Parliament to obtain some view on how Victoria's electronic media ought to be managed. I will explain why that is the case as the debate proceeds.

The Hon. H. M. Hamilton—We have no rights at all.

The Hon. D. R. White—If Mr Hamilton examined the constitutional issue carefully, he would realize that Parliament has a wide scope for laying down policy and introducing legislation even on electronic media.

The result of Rupert Murdoch's attempt to gain control of the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd has been the acquisition of 15 per cent ownership of the Herald and Weekly Times by John Fairfax and Sons Ltd in retaliation. John Fairfax and Sons owns more than 50 per cent of David Syme and Co. Ltd, which publishes the Age. The Herald and Weekly Times owns 14 per cent of David Syme. The interlocking interest of the Herald and Weekly Times with John Fairfax means that competition between the two companies is reduced to almost a duo-oply. The other participant in today's print media is Rupert Murdoch.

However, the reality is that in Victoria, the Australian, owned by Rupert Murdoch, sells only 25 000 copies a day and has a circulation less than the average trade union or business journal. So long as that remains the case, there is a virtual absence of competition in Victoria in the metropolitan print media.

In the Age on 29 November 1979, Mr Murdoch is quoted as saying:

If the News Limited bid for the Herald had succeeded it would have produced competing newspapers in every capital city.

If Mr Murdoch had succeeded, he would have wiped out the Herald as a separate entity. Murdoch's bid was not the answer for greater diversity and nor was Fairfax's retaliation to the Murdoch bid. The affect of the free-play of market...
forces will inevitably lead to greater concentration of media ownership and control.

In response to the intervention by Fairfax in the Herald and Weekly Times, Ranald Macdonald on 29 November 1979 in the *Australian Financial Review* is reported as having said:

Two companies have virtual control of the media. I think it is the continuation of a trend which is disastrous.

Ranald Macdonald went on to say:

There are now two groups which effectively control all of Australia. There is domination of the Melbourne market and no competition in the printed media in Victoria.

Ranald Macdonald called on John Fairfax to sell its majority holding of 57 per cent in David Syme and Co., publishers of the Age.

Following the refusal by John Fairfax to agree, Ranald Macdonald sought legal action before the Trade Practices Commission to force John Fairfax to sell its shares in the Age. However, Mr Macdonald was unsuccessful. The Age is 71 per cent controlled by John Fairfax and Herald and Weekly Times interests because John Fairfax has a 57 per cent holding in the Age and the Herald and Weekly Times a 14 per cent holding.

The Age is no longer independent of the rest of the metropolitan print media. The Age is no more than an adjunct of the Herald and Fairfax companies. My source for saying that the Age is no longer an independent newspaper is Ranald Macdonald. During the period in which he was making public statements on the issue—

The Hon. H. R. Ward—is he prepared to say that he was directed to write editorials by the other papers?

The Hon. D. R. WHITE—I will come to that issue. The Fairfax investment in the Herald and Weekly Times, when it took a 14 per cent interest, was $50 million late last year. That represents five times the amount of money it invested in the Age approximately fifteen years ago.

In the *Age* on 1 December 1979, Ranald Macdonald is quoted as having said:

It is hard, I would feel, for our readers and for the community to say any longer that the *Age* is fiercely competitive with the Melbourne *Herald* and is editorially and otherwise independent.

It has to be remembered that from 1974 there has been evidence of intervention by the Fairfax board of directors in the editorial policy of the Age. Prior to that time, for a period of approximately ten years, there was a form of gentleman's agreement in which it was understood by the similar interests at the *Age* that the board of directors would not intervene in the editorial policy. However, the reality is that in 1974, at the time of the Federal election, the board of directors did intervene and did direct the editor, Mr Perkin, and Mr Macdonald, and they did direct the *Age* editors to produce an editorial at that time which was contrary to the editorial that Mr Macdonald and Mr Perkins wished to see printed.

The Hon. P. D. Block—Mr Perkins offered his resignation.

The Hon. D. R. WHITE—I understand both of them contemplated resigning but they did not proceed to do so. It is also true, as I understand it, that the editorial policy of the board changed from that date. Fairfax paid $16 million above the market price to protect the *Herald* from Murdoch and was forced to divest itself of two television stations. That was the action that Fairfax had to take to protect the *Herald* from Murdoch.

As Ranald Macdonald points out, obviously Fairfax and the *Herald* work more closely together. The reality is that since that spontaneous outburst by Ranald Macdonald during the time when Murdoch was attempting to make a 50 per cent offer for the *Herald* and during the period in which Fairfax had retaliated and purchased 15 per cent to protect the *Herald*, Ranald Macdonald was speaking out. He was clearly seeking some public response which would bring pressure to bear on Fairfax to divest itself of its interest. In fact, he took the issue to the board and to the
Age, but since the time he took the proposal to the board, seeking to divest themselves of an interest, Ranald Macdonald has been effectively gagged by his co-directors in Fairfax in the name of freedom of speech and in the name of freedom of the press. The managing director, Ranald Macdonald, has been effectively gagged on this issue.

It is also clear that at the time he was seeking a public response, and the question is where is Ranald Macdonald, who was once so veracious about this issue, who was prepared to speak so freely in public, and prepared to hold public meetings on this issue, today? Why has he been effectively silenced by his co-directors of the Age?

The Hon. P. D. Block—This is all supposition.

The Hon. D. R. WHITE—I will produce evidence to support the proposition. The Liberal Party referred to the Age as the Spencer Street podium. Where is the continuing debate which was initiated by Mr Macdonald? The reality is that he has been silenced by the Herald and the Fairfax group in the name of freedom of the press so that this important public debate cannot proceed. A democracy is a community in which the individual not only has a right and an opportunity to be informed about the major issues of the day, he also has an obligation to participate in these issues. If he fails to do so he would not be found wanting in a totalitarian State. In the name of freedom of speech, in the name of freedom of discussion and in the name of maximizing discussion, the Premier should, as a matter of urgency, be opening up this debate—not handing it over to a geriatric—and should be appointing an all-party committee of inquiry.

But what of Mr Macdonald? At a meeting at the Malvern Town Hall in December last year about 400 people attended and passed the resolution of recording admiration and respect for Ranald Macdonald’s stand to gain independence for the Age—not the “aged”, but the Age. The meeting also resolved that the Australian Press Council be requested to investigate the ownership and control of media in Australia. In addition, the meeting called on John Fairfax Ltd to sell its shares in David Syme & Co. Ltd. The meeting at the Malvern Town Hall was attended by senior Age journalists, cartoonists such as Les Tanner, Bruce Petty, advertising executive Philip Adams, and the Victorian Secretary of the Australian Journalists Association, Mr Graham Walsh. What has happened since is that Ranald Macdonald has been silenced by Fairfax and the Herald. I believe if he speaks up on this issue he will lose his job as a director on the Age, in the name of freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and freedom of discussion.

The consequences of Mr Macdonald’s current inactivity and the decision by the Herald and John Fairfax to silence public discussion on this issue in the name of freedom of the press, is to hasten the day when Victoria will have a State assisted co-operatively owned newspaper operating in competition with the existing control of the daily media by Fairfax and the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. If this is the attitude that Fairfax, Murdoch and the Herald and Weekly Times wish to adopt to ensure that all we have in Victoria is some form of single control of the metropolitan printed media, then they are hastening the day when Victoria has a State assisted co-operatively owned newspaper. When private interests, independent of the big four in the media, are given the opportunity with State assistance to run a more independent newspaper, the people of Victoria can have some choice in the editorial policy and content of newspapers.

In an article in the Age of 1 December 1979, Ranald Macdonald indicated that he thought the best way to conduct the campaign was by a publicity campaign. I contacted the Parliamentary Library and its officers indicated that they had been unable to find any statements on this topic by Mr Macdonald since January 1980. The Parliamentary Library contacted the staff of the Age library and were informed that the only 1980 statement of which they were aware was one which did not seem to present anything new and which
Ownership and Control of Media

appeared under Mr Macdonald's name in the April edition of the *Australian Playboy*. There is a postscript:

Today in the *Age* it is reported that Ranald Macdonald has joined Derryn Hinch and 3AW in their campaign to alter the Broadcasting Act regarding electronic broadcasting in the period immediately before an election.

Incidentally, of course, Fairfax has substantial interests in the Macquarie broadcasting network which includes 3AW. But there is no evidence of Mr Macdonald continuing since that board meeting his campaign to have public debate of the issue of Fairfax divesting its 50 per cent interest in the *Age*. At the time he said that he did not want to give in directly to the politicians in the first instance. But he wanted the people of Victoria to understand the issues and produce a spontaneous reaction in the hope that as a result of that move efforts would be brought to bear in the political arena to ensure that Fairfax divested itself of its 57 per cent interest in what was once an independent newspaper, namely the *Age*.

I now turn to another aspect of this issue, which is the electronic media which the Premier has seen fit in his announcement today to ignore. The Premier, Mr Hamer, has confined his attention to the printed media. The broadcasting and television industry in Australia has now entered the most critical period in its history. For the first time since 1956 the statutory limits of the control of licences appears to have been rendered ineffective. This results from two unprecedented developments. In the Federal Parliament on Wednesday, 13 August, the Prime Minister and the former Minister for Post and Telecommunications, Mr Staley, stated that as a matter of convention the Government does not enforce the criminal sanctions included in the Broadcasting and Television Act by Parliament to ensure compliance with that Act.

The second unprecedented development is the decision of the Broadcasting Tribunal in the TVQ 0 licence renewal inquiry to approve of the warehousing of shares as a legitimate way of avoiding those sections of the Broadcasting and Television Act designed to limit to two the control of television stations.

These two developments mean there is now no bar to restraining the four major media groups—Packer, Murdoch, Fairfax and the Herald—from engaging in some form of civil war to ensure their own ever-increasing concentration of ownership.

On 13 August, in his public statement, the Prime Minister indicated that past breaches of the law had been ignored and that accordingly the Minister at the time, Mr Staley, was justified in ignoring the breach of the law on this occasion. The Prime Minister listed seven companies which he said had breached the law in the past without action being taken against them. The major distinction between the companies cited on the list provided by the Prime Minister and the News Ltd endeavour is that in none of the cases cited was there anything except an indifference on behalf of the companies concerned.

It is clear that News Ltd knew what the law was and set out on a deliberate campaign to gain control of Ansett Transport Industries and assumed that with a nod and a wink from the appropriate Minister and Mr Gyngell, the former tribunal chairman, it would subsequently take over. This would have happened, but for the Labor Party intervention and insistence that the law be upheld.

It is also argued that no other course is available to a company bent on takeover, in terms of business, than to circumvent the Broadcasting Tribunal, make a takeover bid and then justify the actions taken.

The reality is that before Mr Holmes a'Court sought to obtain a controlling interest in Ansett Transport Industries, he went to the Broadcasting Tribunal and obtained its assent to making a takeover bid for Ansett Transport Industries. Mr Murdoch did not take that course because he considered he had Mr Staley and Mr Gyngell in his pocket.

On Friday 26 September the Broadcasting Tribunal Chairman who replaced Mr Gyngell, David Jones, blocked approaches by Mr Murdoch's News group to the Melbourne television station, ATV 10. This is the first such refusal by
the Broadcasting Tribunal since the inception of television in 1956. The decision was a victory for the Labor Party which vigorously pushed the argument that News Ltd was in breach of the broadcasting legislation. Without that Labor Party initiative Mr Gyngell would still be chairman of the News Ltd group.

The Hon. P. D. Block—Mr Gyngell was operating on a one-year basis. He had already resigned.

The Hon. D. R. WHITE—As. Terry McCrann, indicated in an article in the Age on 25 September, the News group may soon be in a position to make a full bid for the Herald and Weekly Times. He bases his analysis on the case that if the News Ltd appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and subsequently, if necessary, to the High Court is a failure, given the appreciation in the value of the shares since Mr Murdoch intervened, he may well be in a position today to sell off his interest in Ansett Transport Industries at a significant capital appreciation which would then give him the funds to enable him to make a renewed bid for the Herald and Weekly Times, which is still susceptible to a takeover—not a 50 per cent takeover but a full takeover of the Herald and Weekly Times. I recommend that honourable members read that article.

It was announced today that Mr Murdoch has lodged an appeal against the decision of the Broadcasting Tribunal to block buying into Melbourne television station ATV 10. The appeal is to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. In his words—reflecting on the decision of the Broadcasting Tribunal Chairman when he handed down his 95 page decision on this issue.

The tribunal chairman was quoted in the Australian Financial Review on 14 October 1980 as saying:

"The tribunal ruled that the concentration of the News group's media interests resulting from its common ownership of TV stations in Sydney and Melbourne would have an adverse effect on the freedom of (programming) choice of other stations of the Channel Ten network, and would not be in the public interest."

"We have also noted with concern the other television interests of the News group... and are of the opinion that further dominance by this group would not be in the public interest," the tribunal ruled.

It is in the light of that current statement by the new Chairman of the Broadcasting Tribunal, Mr David Jones, that we believe there is a case for extending the Premier's proposed inquiry to an all-party inquiry which includes the electronic area.

The Hon. Glyn Jenkins—Even though we have no jurisdiction?

The Hon. D. R. WHITE—I will get to that later. It has been brought to my attention.

The Hon. H. M. Hamilton—I do not see how you can override the Act?

The Hon. D. R. WHITE—I will get to that later too. All Government members are in a position to get into this issue. The measure I have proposed may not be the most appropriate form of investigation.

The argument is that there may be constitutional reasons which will inhibit the State Government from proceeding unilaterally, that it would be more appropriate to refer issues to the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General in the hope that they will arrive at a suitable nationwide decision. I maintain that would not be the appropriate initial step, nor the limited inquiry proposed by the Premier today.

Firstly, Victoria does possess the constitutional power to take unilateral action in respect of the printed media. Victoria has taken unilateral action in respect of the supply and distribution of produce which comes into Victoria from over the border. Victoria and Queensland have taken unilateral action in respect of the supply and distribution from over the border of what they describe as pornographic material which ought to be censored. I therefore contend that action could be taken to declare that a company or companies should divest its holdings in David Syme or any other company.

The practical problem that may arise is that although this issue could be policed effectively within Victoria there may be difficulties in stopping certain groups or companies from purchasing shares in the designated company—Syme or Fairfax—if it trades interstate. If that is the case, the first step is not
to go to the other States or the Commonwealth but for the people of Victoria, through this Parliament, to call for an investigation to openly and forthrightly investigate and determine the most appropriate action.

Honourable members also know that under the laws of defamation, if a television channel or radio station makes a nationwide broadcast and an aggrieved person finds that he has been defamed by that television or radio broadcast, he takes a defamation action in the State in which he believes he has been most grossly affected or defamed because there are different laws of defamation in each State.

It is also clear with respect to the Ansett takeover bid in 1972, that the Victorian Government saw fit to take unilateral action on that occasion without knowing that it was dealing with an Australia-wide company.

It is also clear with respect to the electronic media and in respect of the print media, that the Parliament has a responsibility, on behalf of the people of Victoria to decide the nature of the problem and what it wants to do before it goes to the other States. It must have a clear idea, after informed open public debate.

The Labor Party, the next Government in Victoria, is opposed to unilaterally handing that issue over to the Premier or the Attorney-General. Both honourable gentlemen have a conspicuous public record of being weak and vacillating on major public issues. The Labor Party has no confidence in handing over the issue either to the Premier, to a geriatric judge or to a committee of Attorneys-General.

The Hon. H. R. WARD (South Eastern Province)—On a point of order, Mr President, this is not a fit and proper place for a person of the court to be referred to as geriatric. The word was used in a derogatory sense and I draw your attention to the remark, Mr President.

The Hon. D. R. WHITE (Doutta Galla Province)—On the point or order, as I pointed out during this debate, we have a situation where both major political parties have seen fit to publicly state that Mr Justice Dunphy should retire as a judge and he is only 73 years of age, for the reason that the people of Australia have cast a view that judges should retire at 70 years of age. The Premier has not seen fit to heed that referendum decision or the decision of both major political parties in Canberra with respect to Mr Justice Dunphy, but has seen fit to appoint a 77-year-old judge to be the head of an inquiry into this all-important issue of the printed media. I stand by the belief that a 77-year-old person is not fit and proper to take on this role and it is appropriate to describe him as geriatric and he should not have the job.

The Hon. H. M. Hamilton—Does Mr White know him.

The Hon. D. R. WHITE—I know of him and I know of his performance when he handled the inquiry into the Beach inquiry.

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province)—On the point of order, it is not so long ago when the Leader of the Government—in fact defended his own legislation which denied a well-respected, although elderly citizen of Geelong—he was considerably younger than the judge who has been appointed today, and that is the question in the point or order—to take his position on an organization which was being created legislatively, an organization for which the particular individual had campaigned for virtually all of his adult life. It seems extraordinary that a Government supporter would take a point of order on the very point on which the Leader of the Government had entertained this House for such a long period not so long ago.

The Hon. P. D. BLOCK (Nunawading Province)—On the point or order, Mr President, Mr Landeryou has missed the point. I do not think the complaint against Mr White was based on his talking about an elderly judge; it was for using the term "geriatric", which in my opinion is derogatory and unparliamentary and therefore should be withdrawn. It is a discourtesy to describe someone as geriatric and there is no question that to describe someone as geriatric
calls into question their mental capacity and capacity to undertake certain functions and on that basis the word should be withdrawn.

Naming and Suspension of Member

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—On the point of order, as honourable members know it is the way a word is used rather than the word itself that is relevant. The word "geriatric" can be used and perhaps be not offensive, but it seems to me, as Mr Block has stated, that the way in which that word has been used was offensive and I ask Mr White to withdraw his expression.

The Hon. D. R. WHITE (Doutta Galla Province)—I wish to indicate, for the benefit of the House, that in no circumstances do I intend to withdraw the word.

The Hon. J. V. C. GUEST (Monash Province)—On the point of order, I do not wish in any way to be seen as upholding Mr White's position, but Mr White was referring to a member who is a retired judge, and it seems to me he was not referring to that person as taking up a judicial position. The person referred to is no longer a member of the judiciary so in one way that covers the situation.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—I appeal to Mr White to rephrase his remarks. Some honourable members have taken exception to the word "geriatric" being used in a sense which implies the judge concerned has somehow lost his faculties or has a diminished capacity to undertake a certain task. That is one way in which the word can be used, but I am sure Mr White does not intend to imply that His Honour was in a period of decline, but was intending to merely refer to his age.

If Mr White is merely making the point that the fact he is 77 years of age and that it is his belief that he is too old, then that is a point which Mr White is perfectly entitled to make.

I appeal to Mr White, in the light of the ruling you have given Mr President, to rephrase his remarks in deference to you, Mr President, in deference to the traditions of the House and in deference to the judge himself about whom, as I said, there should be no such imputation.

I am not asking Mr White to in any way change his argument, but perhaps simply to rephrase his comments to avoid action which no honourable member wants to see occur in the House.

The Hon. D. R. WHITE (Doutta Galla Province)—I take note of what the Leader of the House has said but I indicate that so far as I am concerned, Mr Justice Norris is too old to do the job. He is 77 years of age. He is not eligible to be appointed to the judiciary in Victoria and if he does conduct the inquiry he will not be around to see the fruits of his work. I believe it is appropriate for someone else to be appointed.

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—I have asked Mr White to withdraw the word he has used. The word "geriatric" has been used in a sense which certain honourable members have found to be offensive. I draw the attention of Mr White to Standing Order No. 141 which provides, inter alia:

If any member be named by the President, or reported by the Chairman of Committees for—(a) . . .

(b) . . .

(c) using objectionable words and refusing to withdraw the same or behaving offensively and refusing to make a satisfactory apology, or

(d) . . .

(e) . . .

such Member shall be called upon to make any explanation or apology he thinks fit. . . . and then certain things may flow. I again invite Mr White to withdraw the word he used.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (Minister of Education)—By leave, I wonder whether Mr White could take a further note. Mr White has made his point in the explanation he has given. The explanation was given in a perfectly reasonable way and honourable members understand the point he is making, that in his view it is age that is worrying him and all Mr White is being asked to do is to withdraw the word "geriatric" which
may be taken as reflecting upon the gentleman. That is the way it has been taken and the problem is—

The Hon. D. R. White—I used it in the context in which I just stated it.

The Hon. A. J. Hunt—I make this entreaty in the light of your request, Mr President, Mr White has explained himself perfectly well and all he needs to do in those circumstances is to withdraw the word. Of course, the exchange which has taken place has made his argument perfectly clear.

The President (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—Order! I would like Mr White to hear what I am about to say. I have asked him to withdraw the word because, in the way in which he used it, it has been considered to be objectionable. However, I will name the honourable member in a moment for wilfully disregarding the authority of the Chair if he does not withdraw the word immediately.

The Hon. D. R. White (Doutta Galla Province)—I do not wish to withdraw the use of the term in the context in which I used it.

The President—I name Mr White for wilfully disregarding the authority of the Chair. I call upon the honourable member to make any explanation or apology he sees it.

The Hon. D. R. White—I do not intend to withdraw the word.

The Hon. A. J. Hunt (Minister of Education)—Before I have the unpleasant duty of upholding the authority vested in me as Leader of the House, I seek the indulgence of the Chair to invite Mr White, in view of the fact that he has had the opportunity of reading the dictionary to see the way in which the word is used, to explain what he intended. I suggest that that would enable him to convey his meaning to the House without the use of the word objected to. I implore the honourable member to respect the authority of the Chair in the matter and simply to withdraw the word without in any way affecting his argument.

Session 1980—49

As I have waited for some time since that request, it is with regret that I now move:

That the Honourable D. R. White be suspended from the service of the Council during the remainder of the sitting.

The House divided on the motion (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade in the chair).

Ayes . . . 26
Noes . . . 12

Majority for the motion 14

AYES

Mr Baxter
Mrs Baylor
Mr Block
Mr Bubb
Mr Campbell
Mr Chamberlain
Mr Crozier
Mr Dunn
Mr Evans
Mr Granter
Mr Guest
Mr Hauser
Mr Hayward
Mr Houghton

Mr Hunt
Mr Jenkins
Mr Lawson
Mr Long
Mr Saltmarsh
Mr Stacey
Mr Storey
Mr Taylor
Mr Ward
Mr Wright
Tellers:
Mr Hamilton
Mr Knowles

NOES

Mr Butler
Mr Kennedy
Mr Kent
Mr Landeryou
Mr Mackenzie
Mr Sgro
Mr Thomas

Mr Trayling
Mr Walker
Mr Walton
Tellers:
Mrs Coxsedge
Mr Eddy
I regret also that he is not present to listen to the debate in response and to exercise his right of reply.

The Government agrees with much of the substance of what Mr White had to say. We disagreed on a number of points and we disagreed that it was necessary for him to take this step.

Mr Justice Norris is a man who is spry in every respect and he is in full possession of all his faculties in every way. He is a valued member of the Melbourne University Council and was recently re-elected by members of that council to head the three most important committees of the council.

He has been re-elected as chairman of the Legislation Committee of the Council of the University of Melbourne because of his considerable legal knowledge, because of the acuity of his mind and because of the depth of his perception. He is chairman of the committee which constantly reviews the constitution of the student body. That is a difficult and problematic committee. He is chairman of the whole range of administrative committees which deal with student relations and the internal workings of the university. His re-election to those three committees demonstrates the respect and regard in which he is universally held by persons who work with him and who know him.

I wish to make clear the Government's policy on the question of age. The Government has a firm policy that judges shall retire at the age of 72 years. It also has a policy that no one shall be appointed or reappointed to an ongoing board after attaining the age of 72 years. That policy is absolutely essential for obvious reasons. It is true that many people who have given good public service tend to decline in their ability in their later years, without themselves recognizing it. It is a matter of severe embarrassment to have to ask a person who has given good public service over a lifetime to resign or to have to tell him that his colleagues do not believe he is as able as he was a few years earlier. For that reason, there is this clear rule. It does not presuppose that everyone declines in mental perception after the age of 72 years. No such proposition is tenable. Many people retain their full faculties for a long time after that age but this clear rule avoids embarrassment and enables young blood to come up in the judiciary and the ongoing appointments.

Many people who have to leave the judiciary at that age have full possession of their mental faculties and are available for use by the Government, by the public, and by institutions in positions in which their ability can be used. Retired judges are frequently appointed, if their abilities warrant it, to head boards of inquiry of one kind or another, and that is precisely the position with His Honour Mr Justice Norris who, as I have indicated, is universally respected by all with whom he works. The Government is indeed pleased to have been able to avail itself of his experience, abilities and clear talents.

Mr White's second attack was on the Attorney-General. Without hesitation I say that the Honourable Haddon Storey has been a reforming Attorney-General who deserves the highest praise for the way in which he has carried out his duties. Just as the Labor Party looks back to the days of the late William Slater and points to him as a great reforming Attorney-General, so I point to the work of the Honourable Haddon Storey. A personal attack on him was quite unwarranted.

I now refer to the arguments by Mr White. Firstly, he said that the control of the press and the media generally is an issue. Members of the Government party agree with that, for the very reasons that Mr White gave, for the reasons which the Premier also gave last December, and for the reasons that the Premier gave for making the announcement of the appointment of the current inquiry into the printing media. Secondly, Mr White said that this issue is suitable for Parliament to consider, and members of the Government party agree with that is so. However, the real question is whether Parliament is the best body to act in an investigatory way on this issue. I shall return to that question in a moment.

As his third argument Mr White said that this Parliament exists to reflect community opinion and would be

The Hon. A. J. Hunt
more in touch with community opinion in determining policy. I accept that. If legislation is to flow, this Parliament will determine the nature of that legislation and what it contains, and the legislation will be debated in this House. However, the inquiry is involved first and foremost in a fact-finding mission and although initially the Government tended to favour a Parliamentary inquiry, it now believes a judicial style of inquiry is more appropriate for ascertaining the really relevant facts.

The second aspect of the judicial inquiry will be a recommendation on the measures, if any, which ought to be implemented. At that stage it will become a matter for the elected representatives of the people to decide whether the recommendations made ought to be implemented in the form proposed or ought to be modified in some way.

Mr White's fourth argument was that his proposal related to all media while the Government's proposal related only to the printed media. I shall deal with that question for a moment, because all honourable members agree that control of the major metropolitan media and of the electronic media are equally matters of concern to the community at large. Of course, all honourable members are aware that the broadcasting and television media are controlled under the Commonwealth Broadcasting Acts. Those Acts place certain limitations on the number of prescribed interests that a person may have in broadcasting stations and television channels. A prescribed interest is defined as directly or indirectly a holding of 15 per cent.

The tracing provisions enable the interest to be traced through any number of different companies, trustee companies or intermediaries, back to the person who is the beneficiary. No more than two television licences may be the subject of a prescribed interest. That was the basis upon which the Broadcasting Tribunal recently objected to the purchase by the Murdoch group of certain shares. One of the major questions is whether controls of that kind should be applied to the printing media. The Commonwealth has already acted in a field in which it has constitutional responsibility, namely, broadcasting and television.

I accept Mr White's statement that it would be possible under the ruling you have given recently, Mr President, to enable this Parliament to involve itself in Federal affairs, for this Parliament to engage in an investigation outside its jurisdiction, because that is the consequence of your ruling. However, it would be a barren inquiry when it is a matter in which the Parliament has no jurisdiction to act. The Government therefore believed it was pointless to conduct an inquiry on a matter where the Commonwealth had already legislated and where the board it had established had recently shown very plainly to the whole of Australia that it certainly did have teeth, which some people previously doubted. It is being dealt with, and it is outside the jurisdiction of this Parliament. Therefore, the Government came to the conclusion that it was absolutely pointless for an inquiry into the media to traverse that issue.

Thus what was at stake was a consideration of the printing media to supplement the steps taken by the Commonwealth in respect to the electronic media.

Consideration was given to whether this ought to be done on an all-Australia basis or in Victoria, and there is no doubt that if any action is ultimately taken for full effectiveness, it will need to be done on a joint basis with other States and the Commonwealth, or, if that does not occur, then the effects of Victorian legislation could well be avoided by companies moving their offices interstate, and it would be found that effective legislation did not exist.

Further, the conclusion that the Government came to was that that step was one that should be pursued by the Attorney-General after the results of an inquiry here in Victoria were undertaken, after factual results were produced, after recommendations of the inquiry were considered, and after draft legislation had been prepared. When that stage is reached the Attorney-General, if it appears that joint co-operative action of other Parliaments is desired, will take
it up with the Standing Committees of Attorneys-General with a view to ensuring that what we do is effective.

I would hope the Opposition, equally with the Government, would believe there is little point in this Parliament passing ineffective laws when all of us desire to see that the laws we pass have the greatest effectiveness possible. Those are the factors that influenced the Government. It believed a separate policy making by this Parliament, from the independent and judicial-style, fact finding and recommendations of an inquiry, headed by a judge, were preferable to the initial proposal for a Parliamentary Select Committee. That does not deny in any way this Parliament from making the ultimate policy. That right will certainly be reserved in any legislation that comes to this Parliament so the representatives of the people, and their views, can be heard.

I will certainly make arrangements to ensure that the report of Mr Justice Norris, when it is available, is tabled in the House. I desire, for the information of the House, to tender the full terms of reference as announced by the Premier. I seek leave to lay them on the table, but will read them in full, if so desired.

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—I would like the Minister to do that.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT—The terms of reference are as follows:

To inquire into and report upon—

1. The extent to which the beneficial ownership of shares or the power to control the exercise of voting rights in respect of shares in corporations publishing newspapers having a substantial circulation in Victoria or any part of Victoria is concentrated in particular persons or groups of associated persons.

2. Whether it would be in the public interest—

(a) to regulate the ownership and control of corporations publishing such newspapers or any class of such newspapers;

(b) to restrict the number of shares in such corporations publishing such newspapers or any class of such newspapers which may be beneficially held by any one person or group of associated persons;

(c) to restrict the number of votes which any one person or group of associated persons can direct or control at meetings of such corporations publishing such newspapers or any class of such newspapers—and, if so, what form of regulation or restrictions are considered warranted and desirable.

Mr President, in the light of the remarks I have made, the Government believes, although many of the arguments were valid, that the passage of the motion is not warranted.

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North Western Province)—The motion moved by Mr White calls for the appointment of a Select Committee of eight members to inquire into and report on the media in Victoria. The members of the National Party listened quite attentively to Mr White's speech. Although the issue is not a world shattering one, or an overwhelming problem, at least we agree with a great deal of what Mr White said. We appreciate, as has been pointed out by the Leader of the House, that television, radio and the electronic media, come under Commonwealth legislation.

We appreciate that there are considerable restrictions on the ownership of television and radio, and it is of interest to note something which Mr White mentioned, the interlocking ownership arrangements between the various media in Australia. It could be referred to as a somewhat incestuous relationship. John Fairfax Ltd has a 57·5 per cent interest in David Syme. I am quoting from the Age of 29 November 1979. The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd has a 14·1 per cent interest in David Syme. David Syme, in turn, has a 50 per cent interest in the Sunday Press. John Fairfax Ltd has a 50 per cent interest in Australian Newsprint Mills. The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd has a 50 per cent interest in Australian Newsprint Mills, and so I could go on. There is a diagram that illustrates this point perfectly.

Mention was also made of the television and radio blackout two days prior to an election. I believe that is ridiculous. The only argument put in favour of it is that somebody could come out on the day before the election and
make some damaging statement about a candidate. My experience has been that the newspapers exercise this responsibility in a worthwhile manner. If there is something coming up for the Friday issue, they contact the person affected and say, "We have this comment that we propose to print, but we will give you the opportunity of giving your side of it, so that it can go into that issue simultaneously." I believe the same thing would apply to radio and television. It has in the past, and I cannot see why it should not in the future, and I commend that this legislation be revoked by the Commonwealth.

The main purpose of the Printers and Newspapers Act is to prevent a newspaper being either printed or published by a person or persons unknown so that in the event of libel action and so on the persons aggrieved have the opportunity of taking procedures against the appropriate person.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—The Attorney-General will tell you about that and the Toorak Times correspondent.

The Hon. K. I. Wright—The Toorak Times appears to be a law unto itself.

The Hon. W. A. Landeryou—It is in breach of the law and neither you nor the Attorney-General are doing anything about it.

The Hon. K. I. Wright—that is another issue. The existing State legislation has very little to do. It does not have much teeth in it and it should be examined in the future.

It has been stated already that newspapers appear to be controlled primarily by three groups in the Australian capital cities which also control many regional dailies. The Bendigo Advertiser and the Geelong Advertiser are two newspapers in that category.

Earlier this year the Australian Journalists Association called for a Royal Commission into the press because it considered that the press was a monopoly and that it sought to mould society. They felt this question should be examined by a Royal Commission.

I have referred to the Age diagram which demonstrates the interlocking ownership of the three groups. That should be inquired into. The National Party considers that there ought to be a greater diversity of ownership. There is a need for more competition which would give an opportunity of greater quality of journalism and of advancement of journalists in those newspaper companies.

Much comment has been made about the media in the metropolitan area, but I shall refer to media ownership in country Victoria. I commend the many instances of long-standing family ownerships of some of those newspapers and the contribution that they have made to the community. The Donald Times has been in the ownership of the one family for 104 years. It was established by Mr Morgan, a colleague of Charles Dickens, the well-known novelist. As a very young man, Mr Morgan had a newspaper business in Bath, England, prior to coming to Australia. He settled in Donald. His grandson, Mr Geoff Letts has reported the Donald Shire Council meetings for 50 years and his son Rob and grandson David are both working for the newspaper. There is no disputing the ownership of that newspaper. It is an objective and interesting newspaper to read.

The Elliott newspaper group owns newspapers at Mildura, Swan Hill, Traralgon and elsewhere. It was a somewhat political ownership when in the 1920s it was owned by Senator R. D. Elliott, the Honourable P. G. Stewart and the Honourable Earle Page, a leader of the Country Party for many years as most honourable members will know. Eventually, Senator Elliott was left in control of this newspaper. He purchased similar businesses—newspapers, radio stations and the like. He was a great citizen of Victoria. He was interested in many community organizations and he is one of the initiators of the Murray Valley Development League. After his death much of the ownership was assumed by Mr Charles Lanyon who was most deservedly awarded an OBE several years ago. His son Bill Lanyon is now general manager of that newspaper.
The editor of the Sunraysia Daily, an excellent daily newspaper, is Mr George Tilley, who was recently awarded an MBE for his services to journalism and the community. He has been selected by the Premier as one who is most worthy in serving in a leading role in planning Victoria's 150th anniversary celebrations.

I note that the self-centred Mr Landeryou is leaving the Chamber. He cannot bear to listen to a speech by anyone talking on any matter other than those applying to the metropolitan area. That is why the Labor Party is not doing well in country Victoria.

The Swan Hill Guardian prints five or six other newspapers as well and employs 34 people. It is the biggest private industry employer in the city. The Wimmera-Mail Times in Horsham has a tremendous circulation throughout the Wimmera of more than 10,000, which is excellent for a country area of that population.

In many other areas of the country owner-editors control newspapers. They practically write the content, compose the printing, bring the paper out, and sell advertising and the newspaper. I take this opportunity of commending their work. Newspapers in that category are in Kerang, Wedderburn, Dimboola and other places. There are even smaller newspapers, just as good. Some owners work long hours in conditions where they earn less than they would if they took an employment position elsewhere on another newspaper. I commend their dedication to the local community.

The Hon. W. R. Baxter—They provide a great local service.

The Hon. K. I. Wright—That is correct. They are providing employment and are keeping the people of the area informed. They provide unbiased news to their readers. They are prepared to print news items about all political parties and, if someone disagrees with what has been printed, there is ample opportunity given for rebuttal.

Mr Hunt spoke after the untimely conclusion of Mr White's remarks. He spoke in defence of Judge Norris despite His Honour's age. He also spoke in defence of the Attorney-General. I did not really hear all of those remarks. In any dealings I have had with the Attorney-General he has given prompt service. If he cannot accede to requests of the National Party, and he mostly does, he always says so promptly. The Minister of Education also doubted the jurisdiction of the proposed Select Committee to deal with the ownership and control of television and radio stations, which fall within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth. However, if such a committee is appointed and it is found that there are difficulties, those matters can be referred back to the Commonwealth.

The Hon. R. A. Mackenzie—Do you support the appointment of a 77-year-old judge?

The Hon. K. I. Wright—in reply to that interjection by Mr Mackenzie—

The President (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—I would ignore it, if I were in Mr Wright's place.

The Hon. K. I. Wright—I will accept your advice, Mr President. I do not want to meet Mr White's end.

The Hon. Joan Coxsedge—There is not much chance of that.

The Hon. K. I. Wright—That sounds rather like a reflection on the Chair. Today's Herald includes under the heading "State to probe print media", an article which repeats the terms of reference mentioned by the Minister. However, it does not mention the age of the judge. It notes that no time limit has been set for an end to the inquiry, and that section of the report, if it is true, concerns me.

The Hon. W. R. Baxter—if a time limit is set it will be like the Housing Commission inquiry. The time limit will have to be extended again and again!

The Hon. K. I. Wright—that is what worries me. The article then goes on to state that Mr Hamer said that a decision would be made on whether the hearing is to be held in public or otherwise. I should be most concerned if such a hearing were held any other
way than in public. It is most important that it should be held in public. The article continues:

Mr Hamer said the government wanted to determine if the same rules that applied to the electronic media should "in any way apply to the print media also."

At this stage it would be difficult to say that this should be so, but that should be one of the prime duties of whatever inquiry is set up.

The National Party must consider two proposals—firstly, the proposal of the Government that a one-man board should be appointed to inquire into the matter; secondly, a motion calling for the appointment of a Select Committee. The National Party believes the scope of a one-man board is limited. It is to inquire into only the print media. A point I made before Mr White commenced to speak was that the judge appointed is an elderly man.

Turning to the advantages and disadvantages of a Select Committee, the proposal is that its terms of reference should include all the media. Such a committee would be an all-party committee, so its members should be abundantly aware of the thinking of all the people concerned. Considering all those matters, and also that the National Party believes Mr White's motion precipitated the decision by the Government we will support the motion.

The Hon. I. B. TRAYLING (Melbourne Province)—It is in favour of the motion that the National Party supports it. Usually, by inclination or policy, the National Party is a little to the right of Ghengis Khan.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—The National Party supports matters on their merit.

The Hon. I. B. TRAYLING—If the National Party supports this motion, surely the Government must at least be inclined to examine its opposition and perhaps reconsider the matter and support my colleague, Mr White, in moving the motion.

Mr White correctly pointed out that the motion was for an inquiry into the media. If the Government concedes the need to inquire into one section of the media, surely there is a need to inquire into the media generally and to include what is certainly the most influential section of the conglomerate media in this State, that is, the electronic media. The electronic media are more influential on political and other matters than the newspapers. It is indeed a curious inquiry which calls only for an investigation of newspapers. It is so conspicuous that the Government omits from its terms of reference a parallel or joint inquiry into the electronic media that there is an air of mystery, even an air of suspicion, about why this should be so. Why would the Government take up the call to conduct an inquiry into one section of the media while excluding from that inquiry the most influential area of the media?

The Government's response, if one could call it that, to Mr White's motion on the Notice Paper, was to announce an inquiry which all members of the House, including Government supporters, must find a little puzzling. If there is to be an inquiry, the opportunity should be taken to inquire into all aspects of the media in this State. They are so interwoven, so interlinked and so incestuous in so many respects that it is not possible to consider an inquiry into the newspapers divorced from an investigation into the other areas of the media in this State.

I will make a prediction now which I am sure will prove to be correct, namely, that Judge Norris in his findings will make reference to that very point. It will be no satisfaction for members on this side of the House to confidently predict that he will make a reference to the unsatisfactory nature of his terms of reference when he hands in his report because the job then will not be done. In terms of the Government's inquiry and in terms of what the motion calls for, there is no question that Mr White's motion should be preferred.

I now take up some comments by the Minister of Education in respect of age. Mr White referred to this matter in his address to the House and was suspended as a result of intemperate remarks that he made. I, personally, do not consider that a man of 77 is necessarily disqualified from conducting such an inquiry. At the same time, I should like to suggest that perhaps the inquiry
Ought to be broadened to include a couple of other members. There have been some quite notable men in contemporary history in countries other than Australia, men in their seventies and eighties, who have done brilliant work. I can think of recent presidents of countries, such as Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, and President Tito of Yugoslavia, and men like Pablo Picasso, a brilliant artist. In Australia we find people like Sir Laurence Hartnett, who is doing brilliant work at his age.

Notwithstanding that, the Government invites criticism because of its inconsistent attitude towards the use of people of certain age. The Minister referred to statutory provisions under which people are caused to retire at age 72. The Labor Party agrees that the provisions of the Companies Act and the provisions of the Constitution which require judges of the High Court to retire at 72 are sound and proper. The Australian community believes that and so does the Victorian community.

As I pointed out during the last session of this Parliament, the Government is inconsistent because under the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (Amendment) Act the composition of the Board of Works was changed from part-time commissioners to a board of seven members. That Act does not provide for a retiring age and it means that a person of 90 years of age could become a member of the Board of Works. It may be all right for the Minister of Education to interject that there should be no need to provide a retiring age for an elected representative, but what the Opposition is referring to is a statutory body where the Government reduced the number of commissioners from more than 50 to 7 members. I was in favour of that move, but it provided a situation where a man of any age could retain a position with the Board of Works and that is not desirable.

At least in the case of an appointment by the Government, it is a matter of judgment whether or not a man is capable or has the capacity to perform a task. That type of consideration can be given to appointments made to the Board of Works, whether the person is suitable and has the capacity to properly perform the task because of age.

The Hon. A. J. Hunt—Such a person could be elected to this Chamber.

The Hon. I. B. Trayling—There is no judgment in that case, but the Minister has fought this issue before and is inconsistent in his arguments. There is tacit acknowledgment of that fact, but I predict that in time an amendment will be made to the principal Act—probably when I am out of here—to bring in a compulsory retiring age or setting an age for whether or not a person can become a commissioner of the Board of Works if he is already at the age of 72 years or will reach that age of 72 years during his term of office. I do not think anyone would argue about that.

As I stated, the Minister of Education invites criticism because of his inconsistency, but members of the Opposition will not go along with the actions of the Government unless it can illustrate that it is prepared to take action to overcome these anomalies.

The Hon. J. V. C. Guest (Monash Province)—Mr White should stick to the half truths he can glean from documents which fall from the back of trucks, as he likes to describe it, because in this matter he has put in the forefront of his case an allegation which is wholly untrue. Mr White stated that Mr Ranald Macdonald had been gagged from continuing his campaign for an inquiry into the ownership and control of the media, and the independence of the Age. Mr White made it clear that the matter was one of urgency because of the stand which it had positively taken.

I have taken the trouble to do what I know Mr Walker could have done and even Mr White himself. I rang up Mr Macdonald as soon as this was said and he has told me that I may quote him as saying unequivocally that he has in no way been gagged or inhibited from public discussion by the Fairfax or Herald groups or his fellow directors. He has discussed the matter freely ever since the issue arose and will be heard today and tomorrow on radio and television as
welcoming the inquiry which has been announced, and he will explain why he supports it.

The appropriate approach to the extremely important issues associated with the media is to approach them carefully and cautiously and seek consensus on principles in an area which is a vital element in the functioning of Parliamentary democracy.

Mr White has rushed in by suggesting to the House that there should be a Select Committee of eight members appointed to undertake a very lengthy and complicated inquiry, and now the National Party has rather thoughtlessly decided to support the Labor Party. On the Notice Paper there are seven or eight motions from the Opposition and the Labor Party proposing the appointment of Select Committees. One has to ask what serious attention to priorities does the Labor Party give in relation to those proposals when its members know perfectly well what was involved in the small inquiry undertaken into the veracity of some precise or limited comments made by Mr White?

I am afraid that Mr White, to his considerable discredit, could not accept that he had been scooped. Obviously that has upset him and I suggest that is the reason he has chosen to have himself removed from the Chamber to gain a little publicity which otherwise he would not have received.

Nonetheless I am surprised that despite his real interest in the subject-matter and his intelligence, he did not seek leave to amend his motion. I am sure leave would have been granted because it would have been appropriate at this stage to discuss the terms of reference of the inquiry which has been announced. That would have been a timely thing to undertake and perhaps Mr White may have suggested something which could have been added to the terms of reference and honourable members would have heard his reasons for that.

The Hon. I. B. Trayling—Does Mr Guest propose to move an amendment?

The Hon. J. V. C. GUEST—I am not proposing that as I consider no amendment is required, but Mr White could have addressed himself to that aspect with profit. As it is, the alternative was for Mr White, having regard to the seriousness of the subject-matter under discussion, to have sought in due course a debate on the findings which will be arrived at by Mr Norris. I am sure that will in fact occur and that will be appropriate because then honourable members will have a factual basis on which to base their arguments and there will be time to devote to the difficult task of defining principles. Then we will be able to participate in a profitable debate.

I want to mention a matter which Mr White overlooked. It seems to me that instead of going on like a long-playing record which had been cut weeks or months ago, Mr White might have considered, in relation to the terms of reference announced today, the true impact on the media of the number of shares held and beneficial ownership to which the inquiry is specifically directed. Mr White might have drawn attention to the principal source of control of the Age. I would have thought that members of the Opposition, if they were interested in this subject-matter, would have discovered and directed attention to the fact that there is an agreement—I think it has about 50 years to run—under which the Syme family and the Fairfax organization directly exercise control over David Syme and Co. It is an agreement which, notwithstanding the 57 per cent share-holding of the Fairfax company in the Syme company, does guarantee certain rights to members of the Syme family.

Honourable members might ask whether the terms of reference allow this form of control to be investigated. That is a real question, although I think the terms of reference do allow such investigation and I do not object to these terms of reference which I consider to be adequate, but that is a question to which Mr White might properly have exercised his mind.

The sitting was suspended at 6.19 p.m. until 8.5 p.m.

The Hon. J. V. C. GUEST—Before the suspension of the sitting I pointed out that a truly constructive approach by
Mr White would have led him to consider debating, at this point, the terms of reference of the inquiry which has been set up. One of the matters with which he might have dealt at some length, since he purportedly undertook considerable research into that industry, concerns the well-publicized Syme-Fairfax agreement which I think I said had 50 years to run. I understand that on another interpretation it is a perpetual agreement. In any case it ensures that the Syme family and the Fairfax company each have the nomination of the three directors.

There are seven objectives in the agreement, although possibly not all of them are enforceable. The first objective is that David Syme and Co. Ltd should remain a Victorian company. Another objective of the agreement is to maintain the Age as an independent newspaper of independent character. Yet another seeks to ensure that the chairman is a Victorian. Obviously the appointment of directors is critical. But all these matters should be within the terms of reference of the inquiry and they are clearly critical to the consideration which Mr White put first, right at the forefront of his argument, that is the continued independence of the Age.

I shall deal with the reason why I think it is right that the honourable member referred to the independence of the Age as the forefront of his argument in a moment. Another point I wish to make about the terms of reference of the inquiry is that Mr Norris will have to examine the whole context in which the press operates because quite obviously any recommendation on the regulation of the printed media must have regard to the total context of information available to people on public affairs in the community. Such a study would involve examination of the kinds of information available through the electronic media and the sources of that information. Therefore, it is not true for Mr White to say that the proposed inquiry neglects a vital area of the media. Nor is it correct to say that it renders the whole of the inquiry nugatory as Mr Trayling suggested.

Honourable members have heard a considerable discussion from Mr White about what is supposed to be—although it is not—the current situation in the control of the printed media in Victoria. Mr White has spoken about the matter as he seems to think it now exists. Immense changes can occur through the introduction or the demise of a single personality. Everybody involved viewed the death of Graham Perkins as an important event for the printed media. Likewise, small changes in ownership of shares or in opinion amongst the family members who control the shares could be important factors for change in policy. It is a matter of considering the many possible permutations and combinations of change which may occur and for which honourable members will have to find appropriate rules—if honourable members can find rules at all—to impose on the media.

Honourable members should consider the kind of long running discussions leading to a development of something like a consensus which has to take place on sensitive issues. I instance the change in opinion on the subject of homosexual law reform. Even two years ago one would have found much less of a consensus than exists now in that area. It is a subject on which people
have deep seated assumptions which are not fully thought out, analyzed and intellectually refined.

It is only after they have realized what their preconceptions are that they begin to think effectively about it. One is so used to sloganeering in the media when asserting, for example, the freedom of the press as one of the fundamental principles of society and discussing the freedom of speech as a fundamental principle. Society has naturally accepted the types of media it has grown used to and the kind of ownership and control that underly the current operation of the media. Until these clichés and preconceptions are penetrated, the House is not in a position to examine the media in depth, analyze its operations and arrive at conclusions which will govern the provisions and application of the law for decades to come.

A step-by-step approach must be taken after listening carefully to what others have to say and carefully examining the facts. The Premier's proposal is precisely right. An experienced former judge will ascertain the facts, irrespective of one's opinions on the validity his opinions will have in the sensitive area of media control. Mr Justice Norris is an experienced man in ascertaining the types of underlying facts which will be the basis for discussion when his report is debated. The correct step is being taken to enable the House to discuss effectively at a later date any questions thought relevant in relation to the control and ownership of the media.

At the forefront of his argument, Mr White mentioned the independence of the Age and the possibility that the Murdoch organization might make another bid for the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. The House may as well be properly informed at this stage rather than wait some months until there is a report on the subject. It is correct to examine individual newspapers because it is fairly obvious that in a city the size of Melbourne only three newspapers are financially viable. Melbourne has two morning newspapers, the Sun and the Age, and one evening newspaper, the Herald, which are viable. The City of New York can support no more newspapers than that, therefore, it is unlikely that the economics of publication in Melbourne would allow any more than three newspapers to be viable.

It is worth noting that the Australian only survives because of heavy subsidy by other Murdoch publications, which include that worthy source of information, the News of the World, published in England. The issues are obviously far more complicated than the argument presented by Mr White. Whatever objections one might take to the policies of Mr Murdoch's news stable of companies, the Australian serves a useful competitive and informational function in the community. Many people, for example, regard the financial section in the Australian as excellent. It is significant that if it were not for what the Opposition regards as the huge octopus-like structure of the Murdoch organization, the Australian would not survive. To take another example where there would be less controversy about the desirability of newspaper survival, the Times of London would not survive if it were not for the oil revenue derived by the Thomson organization. There are no simple answers or simple views on the media which can claim any true validity.

The independence of the Age is fundamental to his case and Mr White insisted that in 1974 the editorial independence of the Age was lost when the board of directors overruled Mr Perkins. There was, I believe, a confrontation but a compromise was reached, after which the board backed off and since then the board receives reports on the editor's proposed policy and discusses it but does not override him. For example, the board would have received a report on the editor's policy on the Federal election. The board would have discussed the matter with the editor but would have honoured the editorial independence of the Age. That independence is claimed as one of the major merits of that newspaper which takes pride in ensuring that the editor whom it employs
Ownership and Control of Media

is a first-class man and the editorial staff are given the freedom commensurate with their professional ability.

Editorial freedom is reality at the Age. But one could argue whether what is said in the editorials really matters. It is commonly said that only politicians read editorials and it is of much more concern to the effective functioning of the media in its role as an essential support of democratic Government that the problems which arise out of some of its peculiarities should be dealt with.

For example, I refer to the fact that most of Melbourne's newspapers are daily publications. The constraints placed upon members of the press who are required to produce stories to a deadline every day and sometimes produce daily "think pieces" on political matters are obviously such as to make many issues quite impossible to report properly to the public. The problems which have arisen generally for the print media as a result of competition with the electronic media also have to be faced. In many respects newspapers have gone out of the provision of straight news simply because most readers find it easier to watch the box for a few minutes for easily-digestible audio-visual input.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—That is fair enough though, is it not?

The Hon. J. V. C. GUEST—It is fair enough from one point of view, but nonetheless, it presents a real problem. If one is concerned about whether the public which elects politicians is receiving adequate information, one has to consider what sources of information are open and how that provision of information should operate. Whether one decides later to interfere is another matter. It is patently true that television is inadequate to inform the community properly about the issues of the day.

Yet another problem is that of the unelected pundit. Honourable members can have their speeches printed from that if they like. The unelected member of the staff of any newspaper, especially one such as the Age which gives considerable freedom to its staff, who has chosen the career of journalism, will have a far bigger audience long before he has had anything like the experience of life and career than the average politician has had. I wonder whether that is not an issue that should be debated if one is taking a serious interest in the role of the media in the community. I could go on for some time about these real questions and the performance of the media in its job of informing the public which is real matter for debate and concern.

Mr White presented a rather inconsistent concern about the possibility that the Murdoch organization might make another bid for the Herald. That might or might not result in all sorts of problems. It does illustrate the difficulties faced by an inquiry in trying to prescribe rules and regulations ahead of time which would have to deal with any of the problems which might arise in the future.

I point out that in fact if the Herald were taken over it would provide what Mr White wants—it would detach the Herald altogether from the Age so that one would have the Herald organization owned by a group which is at present not represented very well in Victoria. I do not regard the Australian as an important information source for the people of Victoria. Thus it ought to be borne in mind that this prospect does not necessarily have to be evil, as Mr White seems to suggest.

Turning to the electronic media I would have thought that the performance of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal was an excellent independent performance. I do not wish to pass judgment on what it has decided but only on the fact that it has obviously exercised a great deal of independence of mind. In view of that performance, it might have been recognized that the real question for us is how we can achieve the necessary co-operation between the States
and the Commonwealth and various instrumentalities dealing with the different organs of the media and the different places from which the media springs because that will be absolutely critical if ever the time arrives when we want to do something positive in the way of regulating the media.

In this connection, it should be borne in mind that the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal already has considerable power to make judgments on public interest and a Senate committee on Education and the Arts has taken a positive interest in the media. That committee offers much better opportunities to examine the electronic media and its ownership and make recommendations than any State Committee.

I wish to make one slight point of correction, if I may, to what Mr White said, namely, that the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal has accepted the Labor Party's argument that the takeover of Ansett Transport Industries was, under the circumstances, illegal. As I read the newspaper reports of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal's decision, the tribunal said it would not, on that ground alone, decide the case against the News group but only on the public interest ground, that is only on the ground of excessive concentration of ownership of the electronic media.

The step taken by the Government to establish an inquiry which will lay bare the central facts, and certainly, make recommendations as well, is the desirable first step. It would be inappropriate for a number of us who have so many tasks which we perform and ought to perform, to spend our time in a fact-gathering exercise.

The time will come when we can have a lively debate on the facts which have been revealed by the report when we can seek to establish a consensus about principles which should apply to Government intervention in the ownership and control of the media and debate any other aspects of the media or the performance of the media which may seem appropriate. That will be the time at which Mr White's interest in this subject can be most fruitfully expressed.

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE (Geelong Province)—I support my colleague, Mr White, and his motion that there be a Select Committee of eight members appointed to inquire into and report upon the ownership and control of all media in Victoria; the Committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records; three to be the quorum.

I believe Mr White has realized that the inquiry as proposed by the Government is not the type of inquiry that will bring to light either the information required or the investigation needed to make any difference to the media. There are dangers in the way this inquiry has been structured. Previous Government inquiries which have been structured in a similar manner, with small groups appointed and members of the judiciary in charge, have had no impact, were not believed and did not have the same credibility as an all-party Parliamentary committee.

An all-party Parliamentary committee is recognized by the public as being unbiased, as members from all sides of the political spectrum take part in the inquiry. It does not matter who the appointees are, there is always an element of doubt regarding the outcome of the inquiry. That was demonstrated in the appointment of the Newport review panel. The results of that inquiry left much to be desired. An inquiry by an all-party Parliamentary committee is different. It is an important inquiry.

The media has an important role to play and has much influence on the community. It not only can create public viewpoints but can also be used as a base for political purposes. I admit that perhaps Victorian newspapers are less biased than some of their counterparts in other States. One need go only to New South Wales to see what biased political reporting is like.

The Hon. N. F. Stacey—Perhaps Mr Wran likes it.

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE—No, I am sure he does not. There is need for an investigation, not only into the print media but all media. I venture to say that the electronic media, especially
television, plays a far bigger role in influencing the lives of Victorians than any other form of media.

In fact, if one were to conduct a survey it would show that most people rely on television for most of their news and surprisingly few people get their news from newspapers. They often read newspapers for reasons other than to obtain information on world events.

A Parliamentary committee of inquiry should include an investigation into all aspects of the media. I support Mr White strongly on that point. The only thing that worries me is that the Government is actually holding an inquiry, because it is unlike the Government to hold an inquiry such as this. Admittedly there has been some pressure and some commitments were made, but even so I am surprised that the Government is actually having an inquiry. Having taken that step, it should take a further step and set up an all-party Parliamentary committee.

I also raise the question of the appointment of the judge and the age of the judge. Mr Wright calls him an elderly person. I ask honourable members to cast their minds back to the debate which took place in this House during the last sessional period, a debate I remember well because it concerned the non-appointment in Geelong of a well-respected member of the Geelong community who has spent 30 years of his life trying to establish a performing arts centre in Geelong. The arguments advanced by the Government on that occasion were a little different from those advanced tonight. There has been a complete turn around, a blatant piece of hypocrisy by the Government. I am sorry the Minister of Education is not present. On that occasion he said that the Government could not appoint someone over the age of 72 years. The Labor Party demonstrated that it could be done by making the initial appointment only at 72 years and providing that the person could be appointed once only and would be compulsorily retired at the end of three years. Now, just a few weeks later, the Government has appointed a 77-year-old judge in similar circumstances.

I take that as an insult to the people of Geelong and it is certainly an insult to Councillor Leach who is a broken man and a bitter man as a result of this treatment. He was hurt in a very personal way by the actions of the Government on that occasion. The people of Geelong feel strongly about that action and this appointment will rub salt into their wounds. It is blatant hypocrisy, in my view, and it demonstrates the dishonesty of the Government.

I strongly support the views of my colleague, Mr White, and I commend his motion to the House.

The Hon. H. R. WARD (South Eastern Province)—I oppose the proposition advanced by Mr White.

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Chelsea Province)—I raise a point or order, Mr President. Would it not be appropriate for Mr Ward to state his pecuniary interest in the print media?

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—Order! There is no point of order.

The Hon. H. R. WARD (South Eastern Province)—I should like to point out to Mr Kent that I have at least 1 million readers in this State. I do not think he has 1 million listeners. Many of the problems which cause the public malaise in relation to the press have been created by members of Parliament. It is well known that I have an interest in every form of the media and I am proud to be associated with them. I am interested not only in the media; there is hardly a thing within this world in which I do not take some interest.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—that is a big claim.

The Hon. H. R. WARD—it is a big claim and it is a fact, and that is more than Mr Walker can say. It is all very well for those honourable members on their own parochial dunghills to produce some smelly argument. The whole inference of Mr White's motion on the ownership and control of the media is an insidious threat against journalists and their jobs, a threat to the integrity of journalists and the integrity of the media in this State against which I have no complaint whatsoever.
There is no evidence that directions are handed down from the management of any organization here to journalists. I have worked with the media for some 30 years and never at any time have I been directed on how to present a story. The Press Council lays down certain rules and journalists abide by them. They make reports with scrupulous honesty and fairness, and from both sides. I assure Mr Walker that I have done so in fairness to one of his colleagues at times without any problem as to the political influence I may exert in some area. The freedom to speak and the right of expression have not been threatened in any way by the management of newspapers within this State and there is no evidence to support such a claim. The statements made tonight regarding Ranald Macdonald are, in my opinion, a fabrication. There is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that he was gagged, as was stated. I believe that statement was made to denigrate people involved in the management of the press.

All the newspapers in Victoria are a business. The media is their business. They are involved in every part of the business of reporting and writing. They are involved in newspapers, radio, television, films, magazines, books, advertising and all other such business. I can assure honourable members on the other side of this House that, not only the David Syme organization, but also the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd from time to time has been asked in a businesslike and commercial way to assist smaller newspapers in this State. As far as I am aware, at no time has the David Syme organization or the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd exerted any specific editorial influence on the management of those newspapers which it has assisted in country areas. There is no evidence to support such a claim. They have provided skilled management when requested but again there has been no specific direction from the management or the directors of the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd or of the David Syme organization as to what those newspapers ought to publish. The remarks made tonight in reference to this matter are a discredit to the Opposition.

A number of newspapers in country areas are there today as a result of the support given by the central media in Melbourne, and by that I mean the two newspaper organizations I have mentioned. The Warrnambool Standard required assistance to be developed for the benefit of the people in that district and I understand that the David Syme organization assisted it, but there has been no influence on what that newspaper ought to publish and how it should be published.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—Are you a member of the board?

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—Order! Interjections are disorderly and, when made by members sitting out of their places, they are even more disorderly.

The Hon. H. R. WARD—The Liberal Party thanks Mr Walker for his assistance in this debate, even though he was interjecting while out of his place. I have mentioned assistance given by Melbourne organizations to country newspapers and such assistance can likewise be seen in regard to suburban newspapers and newspapers in the Gippsland area. Ill-informed comments and complaints are made about influence on and by the media, but I point out that members of Parliament sometimes think they ought to be the editors of the rubbish that is sometimes released to newspapers. Some of it ought to be “spiked” and thrown out. I cannot understand why editors of newspapers are so patient with the press releases they received. Yet they expect that what they say ought to be published and declare that in their opinion it is news. That is the opinion of the members of Parliament. Members of Parliament are the great abusers of the Queen’s English—they never fail to do it. Have a look at the press releases they put out. They want to be their own editors. They believe politics is the only thing that really counts; they think everybody is a political animal. The ordinary people are sick and tired of what has been written about politics.
Members of Parliament are people of ubiquitous habits and believe they are omnipresent at all times, yet they are an amorphous group in society—totally shapeless. They rely upon the media to put together in some reasonable form the comments that they might make, diaphanous as those comments may be. The selection of eight members of Parliament who have created a public malaise towards the media to inquire into the media would be the worst thing that could ever happen in this country. One could not allow it to be done, because members of Parliament have created the situation to use the media.

I shall refer to the 1972 issue, about which I know a great deal. The Australian Labor Party used the Australian and News Ltd, and when the Australian Labor Party failed, it complained about News Ltd turning around and dumping the party. That is exactly what happened, and members of the Opposition should not forget it. They should not blame the media. It was all right when the Australian Labor Party wanted to use the media up, but then Labor Party members found themselves in another situation.

Members of Parliament as a mass, because they did not get their own ends, have threatened the independence of newspapers. I repeat that they have created a public malaise. That is one of the best phrases I have picked up and I am grateful to the publication called "The Australian Press Council—Its Aims and Practices"—because it is used there, and it is most important.

Journalists and people who work for newspapers are basically ordinary working people, but journalists are trained to be perceptive. They annoy members of Parliament because they question what they say—and so they should. They question what they are thinking and what they are about, in the interests of the public. Journalists collect information and endeavour to report faithfully what they can out of the mess that has been provided by members of Parliament to cover up some of their own miserable traits in the interests of politics.

The Hon. H. R. Ward

The better solution is to support what the Government has proposed about an inquiry into this aspect of the media, and certainly not to allow eight members of Parliament to investigate the media, which they choose to love when they like and generally choose to hate when they can.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler (Thomastown Province)—Firstly, I want it recorded that in general politicians always scream about their media coverage, but I wonder whether they ever bother to check their mileage, because in essence the Labor Party and the Liberal Party just about break even in general coverage and reporting. Of course the Labor Party is at a big disadvantage when it comes to the purchase of advertising time, because it simply cannot match what the Liberal Party is able to pay. The Labor Party cannot afford to pay $25,000 a week for advertising in the Age, the Sun and the Herald.

However, I would not scream about the press, as some of our colleagues on the other side of the House seem to do, because if one looks at the general coverage during the last election, one sees that the media gave all parties a reasonable coverage, including the party that should not have got anywhere near as much coverage as it received. When Mr Chipp rejoins the Liberal Party, which may well happen in the future—

The Hon. V. T. Hauser—He might join the Labor Party!

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—There is no way he would join the Labor Party, we would not have him. The Liberal Party can have him. The only reason Mr Chipp is in the Australian Democrats is because he started the party, and when the Liberal Party has removed Mr Fraser as its Federal Leader, Mr Chipp will rejoin the Liberal Party.

I suspect that the best thing that could happen in this country is for the media to be totally controlled by an independent authority so that there would be no press barons who curry favour with either the Liberal Party or the Labor Party. It should be a media service to the general public which should be independent of either the Liberal
Party or Labor Party. It would report factually and correctly to the general public what has occurred in given circumstances.

The Hon. N. F. Stacey—Who would measure it?

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—The question of who measures it depends on one's concept of democracy. The Liberal Party's concept of democracy is to foul up the system so long as it thinks it can get away with it by gerrymandering and by having a political structure in which it declares that democracy occurs, without having the guts to say that there shall be X number of seats in the State of Victoria, equally divided, so that the public may determine who shall be the members of Parliament. The media has an influence on the electoral system. The Liberal Party used the polls to its advantage last week.

The Hon. W. R. Baxter—I think it was causing a fair bit of panic.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—It caused no panic in our ranks, but a lot of panic in the Liberal Party and National Party ranks, because Mr Anthony thought if he had not made a few side agreements, he might have been in trouble. The Liberal Party is in trouble because the Labor Party will never make a deal with it again. That will go on record to the disadvantage of the Liberal Party.

The Hon. W. R. Baxter—We had a fairly good Federal election, though.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—The Australian Labor Party in Victoria had a very successful result. Members of the National Party are scurrying around trying to win Ballarat!

The Hon. W. R. Baxter—Not me!

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—The Government is, not the Opposition, which means that the media projected the Gallup polls. If the Government could understand the Australian National Opinion Polls, the Alister McNair and other polls, it would realize that those polls are conducted by competent people.

The Hon. W. R. Baxter—Exactly; they did not gallop, did they?

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—The Labor Party did gallop; the polls told us what the result would be in Victoria. Unfortunately, it did not happen in the Commonwealth of Australia and honourable members here are not in the Federal Government so it is unfortunately our loss. However, it will be the Labor Party's victory in 1983 and it will be our victory in 1982 in the State of Victoria. Just in case somebody did not hear it last night, it will be under the leadership of Frank Wilkes. I repeat that because some people were supporting the sort of surreptitious rumours that were advocated by the media.

The President (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade)—Order! I draw the honourable member's attention to the wording of the motion which is to, "inquire into and report upon the ownership and control of all media in Victoria". I advise the honourable member that he has dealt with peripheral issues long enough.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—I accept that advice and I will deal with the ownership of the media. Does anybody in Australia, for one silly moment, think that we are not governed by the media? There are three press barons in Australia and, if Mr Murdoch has his way, there will be one. I make the prediction that Mr Murdoch will determine the results of the 1986 elections.

The Government has allowed the ownership of the media to evolve into three hands over an historical period of 100 years. It is now faced with the problem of one person wanting to own the media. The Government may consider that is good because, after all, he is a capable, capitalist entrepreneur who knows what he is doing and where he is going. That is to the dissatisfaction of some people within the Liberal movement. The facts of life are that he will determine ultimately which party will be in Government.

Every politician knows that when it comes to actually being involved in media coverage, we jump like donkeys to get our photographs in the papers. All politicians tarry around, left right and centre, to get their hands into these things. Politicians are conditioned to that. What the Age, the Sun or the
Herald report tomorrow will condition how politicians think tomorrow. What those reports contain will determine how honourable members will react in Parliament tomorrow and the issues in the newspapers will be raised.

The Hon. H. R. Ward—Are you accusing the journalists of bias?

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—I am not saying that. Journalists do their jobs, sub-editors do their jobs and owners of newspapers do their jobs. However, the Government should not kid itself for one moment that the position is otherwise. The media do condition politicians one way or another, because politicians have a bad habit of screaming about the press.

What they ought to do is to be responsible to the press because, in many instances, the press simply reports what it sees. Newspaper reporters have certainly done that on a number of Insight articles concerning the environment and situations in Victoria. What is the Government upset about?

The Hon. D. M. Evans—Are you for or against the motion?

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—Obviously, I support the motion because that is the Opposition’s stand. The President has allowed me the opportunity, as he did for National Party spokesmen earlier—although they did not speak to the motion—of saying a few words on what is, after all, an important matter. It concerns the question of who controls the minds of people, not only in this State, but also in the Commonwealth of Australia and, more importantly, internationally.

The Hon. N. F. Stacey—Should there be a 48-hour blackout of coverage on radio and television before elections?

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—No, I do not support that. If the media have the opportunity of controlling the minds of people, they will do so. Legislation was introduced by the Whitlam Labor Government, but Mr Stacey and his friends decided that they did not want to be part of that. The Government has the numbers to introduce legislation to change the position.

The Hon. N. F. Stacey—It happens to be a matter for Canberra.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—Mr Stacey should not squeal about being a politician with no rights, because he has all the rights in the world.

The Hon. W. R. Baxter—Not here; we do not have them.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—The Government does have those rights; the only thing that constricts it is the Governor. If Mr Stacey honestly believes that it is wrong to have a blackout of coverage on television and radio for 48 hours before elections, he should introduce a Bill to change the law. What is more, the Labor Party will support such a Bill; it introduced such a Bill in the Federal Parliament. Many people in the Government ranks whinge about this matter, and some people on the Opposition benches whinge about it. The facts are: that the media, rightly or wrongly, only record what they see. It is like saying that public servants are a pack of—

The Hon. D. M. Evans—They are highly intelligent, very professional people.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—In the limited period of twelve months that I have been in this House, it has amazed me to find so many excuses for saying that public servants do not do certain things. I frankly believe that it is a question of politicians not bringing them about because they do not have the courage or conviction to get up and say, “Do it”. I am a member of the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee and I am beginning to wonder whether that committee will get to the accounts of 1979. It is still dealing with accounts of 1978–79 and that is a problem. I understand I am not entitled to deal with that matter, so I shall return to the question of the media.

The Government ought to stop complaining about the media, and I suppose that could be true of some members on the Opposition side. However, Opposition members do not complain about the media, we are sensible enough not to do so. I repeat that when considering the control of media in many
instances, whether it be Mr Murdoch or a number of other people, one must ask whether they will control our lives.

The Hon. W. V. Houghton—Never!

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—I am sorry, but they do control our lives. Tomorrow morning the Minister will be looking at the press reports and he will be wondering whether or not he has to respond to questions or general conversation concerning what the media wrote about him. That, unfortunately, is our lot. It is not only the problem of the Government; it is the problem of the Labor Party, too. I have seen the most scurrilous reports about the Labor Party. I have been to meetings, and after I have walked out of the door I have thought we had done a good job and solved the problem, but the next morning, on reading the press, one would think that the Labor Party had not been there. This happens because of misinformation being given to the media. I do not squeal about it. I do not attack the media, because I believe that it has a responsibility, and has to print as it sees a story.

The Hon. H. A. Thomas—They have to answer to a boss.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—Yes, the media has to do that, too. The media has to record via three channels, and that is what appears on the front pages and in the back-room scenes. Politicians should stop screaming about the media. If one is a good politician, one never gets bad press reports.

The Hon. W. V. Houghton—You could take my filibuster record off my file.

The Hon. G. A. S. Butler—I certainly do not want to take that record away from the Minister. I will conclude, Mr President, and thank you for your indulgence, by saying that any politician ought to know that if he has something to say and he says it honestly and forthrightly, the media will publish it. If he is dishonest, and attempts to con the media, he will not.

The Hon. C. J. Kennedy (Waverley Province)—I listened with great interest, particularly to Mr Ward, who unfortunately has deserted us for a little while. I had not intended speaking on this motion, but Mr Ward raised a number of matters. He is obviously not aware of how the press started and who owns it. In Melbourne, 40 papers are distributed, at no cost to those who get the paper. Originally these papers were shopping guides and, as the years went by, they contained a bit of news and they became specific newspapers employing journalists, layout people, advertising people, and so on.

In the past three or four years the local newspapers, which are popular in my electorate, have fallen into the hands of the three major groups, just as has happened to the daily press. The daily press is owned by David Syme, the Fairfax organization, the Murdoch organization, or the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. I do not know anything about the country newspapers, except the Bendigo Advertiser, the Ballarat Courier and the Geelong Advertiser, and I believe they are owned by the Herald organization. The Standard News is now owned by the Herald Leader and associated newspapers, and the Cumber-land Press, which takes in a number of areas around Dandenong and Footscray, is owned by the David Syme organization. A few years ago those papers were bought from the Murdoch organization.

Mr Ward said earlier that no direction is given to journalists and editors. The simple fact of life is that there is no need to give any direction to journalists and editors because they know the goodies and the baddies. The baddies are invariably members of the Labor Party, particularly as an election comes close, and the goodies are the members of the Liberal Party.

The Hon. D. M. Saltmarsh—What about the papers at Dandenong?

The Hon. C. J. Kennedy—Some have not been too bad, and some have not been too good, but as an election comes closer, the Liberal Party comes to the front of the newspaper, and the Labor Party goes to the back with the fat cattle. These papers are widely read and are very influential. People's politics and beliefs are largely governed by the input in these papers. The print media
Ownership and Control of Media

Ownership and Control of Media in this State is still very influential on most people who are delivered at least one newspaper a day, and in parts of Melbourne many people have two local newspapers delivered free every week, and sometimes three.

It is vital that the terms of the inquiry should cover all sections of the press, but the inquiry should also closely examine the suburban press and its degree of control, particularly when elections come upon us.

The House divided on the motion (the Hon. F. S. Grimwade in the chair).

Ayes . . . 16
Noes . . . 25

Majority against the motion . . . 9

AYES
Mr Baxter Mr Thomas
Mr Butler Mr Trayling
Mrs Coxsedge Mr Walker
Mr Dunn Mr Walton
Mr Eddy Mr Wright
Mr Kent
Mr Landeryou
Mr Mackenzie Tellers:
Mr Sgro Mr Evans
Mr Sgro Mr Kennedy

NOES
Mrs Baylor Mr Hunt
Mr Block Mr Jenkins
Mr Bubb Mr Knowles
Mr Campbell Mr Long
Mr Chamberlain Mr Reid
Dr Foley Mr Salmash
Mr Granter Mr Stacey
Mr Guest Mr Storey
Mr Hamilton Mr Taylor
Mr Hauser Mr Ward
Mr Hayward Tellers:
Mr Houghton Mr Lawson
Dr Howard Mr Radford

CHIROPRACTORS AND OSTEOPATHS (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE (Geelong Province)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to amend the Chiropractors and Osteopaths Act 1978 by altering section 8 (4) (a) and inserting a new provision. The new provision will enable experienced chiropractors and osteopaths to be registered by the Chiropractors and Osteopaths Registration Board of Victoria. The new provision states:

"(iii) applied for registration within the period specified in this sub-section and has satisfied the Board that he has within the period of nine years immediately preceding 1 January 1979, been bona-fide engaged in the practice of chiropractic or osteopathy in Victoria for a period of or periods totalling not less than four years;".

Over the years, chiropractors and osteopaths have been victimized as, indeed, have their patients because, as the law now stands, persons cannot receive any medical benefits for treatment by chiropractors and osteopaths. In the grand old days of the Whitlam Government, when the Medibank system flourished, in order to compete private health funds were forced to extend their services to cover many aspects other than traditional medical services. When they extended their services they also covered treatment by chiropractors and osteopaths. This worked quite well at the time and seemed to create no problem.

Also at about this period or in the dying days of the Whitlam Government, the Federal Government carried out an investigation into whether chiropractors, osteopaths and naturopaths should be registered. A committee inquired into all the natural therapies and a report was prepared. That report, which was made public in 1976 about twelve months after the dismissal of the Whitlam Government, became known as the Webb report and contained recommendations which stated that both chiropractors and osteopaths should be registered, in order to protect the public.

A reading of the report makes it obvious that Professor Webb considered that all States in Australia should have uniform legislation relating to this matter. Also at about the time the Webb report became available, or perhaps a little earlier, the Victorian Government instituted an all-party committee to investigate the chiropractic and osteopathic field of the natural therapies specified. At that time, there were four groups of associations using manipulative therapies. They were the Australian National Therapists Association (ANTA), which consisted of persons
trained in natural therapies at the Southern School of Natural Therapies in Melbourne; the Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA), which was made up only of persons trained in chiropractic in the United States of America and Canada which had about 100 members; the United Chiropractors Association (UCA), which consisted of chiropractors who had trained at one of the association's schools in New South Wales or Victoria which had a similar standard to the Southern School which I have already mentioned; and the Australian Osteopathic Association, which consisted of people trained in osteopathy at the British College and which boasted about ten members. They were the four associations of practitioners operating at that time.

Following the Webb report and the Victorian Government's report, an Act was formulated and passed by this Government in 1978. That Act provided that members of those boards should be represented on the registration board but, for some reason or other, the Australian National Therapists Association was not represented. Worse, not long after the board was established the ACA and the UCA amalgamated to form one group and the Australian Natural Therapists Association was left without representation on the board.

The board then set out to ensure that all those wishing to be registered should undergo a stringent examination and the problems began. New South Wales and Western Australia in their wisdom had provided what became known as grandfather clauses and later South Australia was to follow. The grandfather clauses stated that a person who had been bona fide operating as a chiropractor or osteopath for a certain period prior to the enactment of the legislation could be automatically registered.

I am sure all communities contain people who have worked as chiropractors and osteopaths, perhaps without any formal training, but with a natural talent for this practice. I could name several such men in Geelong who are well known. One chiropractor in Geelong without any formal training is quite an old man. I use the word "old"; he is not geriatric at this stage. This gentleman averages about 50 patients a day, or something like 10,000 per annum. Not only is he recognized by the public as being an expert in his field, but doctors send their patients to him. These are the types of people that the Acts in the other States were designed to cover and the types of people that the Webb report intended should be covered by the insertion of a grandfather clause in the legislation.

Not only does the grandfather clause enable practitioners of the type I have mentioned to be registered; it also entitles their patients to receive medical benefits. That has been one of the hardships caused by the current legislation. To judge from the correspondence I have received and from discussions I have had, there is no doubt that the present board is biased against these people. There is also no doubt that the board has been established to protect its own; and that is one of the reasons why grandfather clauses, similar to those which are working well in New South Wales, should be included in the Victorian legislation.

The Hon. H. M. Hamilton—What is your opinion about the acupuncturist who was in the news recently? She had been practising for a number of years. Would you register her?

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE—The Bill does not cater for acupuncturists. That is another area altogether.

The Hon. H. M. Hamilton—You would not register her?

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE—The Bill does not cater for that category. Acupuncturists would have to be dealt with by a separate Bill. This Bill covers only chiropractors and osteopaths. There is considerable concern about the belief within the profession that there is bias in the board. If practitioners attempt to become registered, they are subjected to an intense examination.

I have a letter received by a chiropractor in Geelong who anticipated taking this examination and he was given 35 medical text books to study before taking the examination. Those books covered a wide range of medical science which he would be required to
know. Some people who have undergone this examination have had the humiliating experience of having to demonstrate on an empty chair how they would carry out manipulative practices. It is impossible to demonstrate on a vacant chair the treatment of a patient.

The Hon. N. F. Stacey—How would you react to a grandfather clause dealing with plumbers? I have been putting pipes together for ten years. Should I be a licensed plumber?

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE—one can be registered without passing formal training as a plumber.

The Hon. N. F. Stacey—And charge the same fee?

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE—Yes.

The Hon. N. F. Stacey—Under sewerage authorities?

The Hon. R. A. MACKENZIE—Yes. Without undertaking an apprenticeship, one can sit for and pass an examination. There is an annual examination held, but perhaps that aspect could be looked at. However, as a plumber I would not be averse to that occurring.

I am not speaking about people who are quacks, but people who have a regular clientele. It would be open for the registration board to register them as chiropractors or osteopaths, but not everyone would be registered. Even though a person has been operating for a period of time, the registration board may decide that that person could not be registered. Each case would be decided on its merits and only those persons who had a regular clientele and could demonstrate that they were able to perform the science of chiropractic and osteopathy would be registered.

I quoted an example before, but I am sure in every honourable member's electorate there would be people who would fall into this category, people who have been operating successfully as chiropractors and assisting many people. In Geelong, these people actually have patients referred to them by doctors.

That is another reason why it is hard to understand the current position because in the summary of the recommendations made by the Victorian committee, although it did not suggest a grandfather clause, it did provide for another way by which people could become registered. The recommendation provided for a "R" registration which would permit the payment of medical benefits upon the written referral of a medical practitioner. That means that people who obtained referrals from medical practitioners to attend the chiropractor or osteopath would be entitled to receive medical benefits if that provision had been inserted into the Victorian legislation.

This small Bill seeks to make a slight amendment to the principal Act and to provide for the insertion of a grandfather clause. As I mentioned earlier, such a provision has worked successfully in other States. The period of time that a person has to be involved before being eligible for registration varies from state to state.

For instance, in Western Australia the legislation provides for a period of five years at least of practising chiropractic, the last two years of which should have occurred in Western Australia. Under the New South Wales legislation the time specified is a period of ten years and a person must be engaged in the field of chiropractic in New South Wales for that period or periods totalling not less than four years before becoming eligible for the registration.

The South Australian legislation provides for a similar provision and all that this Bill seeks is the insertion of a grandfather clause which would read:

Applied for registration within the period specified in this sub-section and has satisfied the Board that he has within the period of nine years immediately preceding 1 January 1979, been bona-fide engaged in the practice of chiropractic or osteopathy in Victoria for a period of or periods totalling not less than four years;".

Summing up, it means that a person who has been practising the science of chiropractic or osteopathy for a period or periods totalling not less than four years of a total of nine years prior to 1 January 1979, would be eligible for registration.
The provision is similar to the New South Wales provision, but it should be remembered that not everyone who desires registration would be registered. There will be many who will not be able to satisfy the board or will not have been engaged in the science for the prescribed time or will not have performed the activities of a chiropractor or osteopath.

Any registration provision creates a certain amount of tension between protection of the public and protection of the people who have traditionally practised in this area. This is the way under which control can be exercised and in which justice can be meted out to those who have served the community for a number of years. They should be allowed to continue practising and the provision in the Bill will cover those who are not covered by the current legislation.

I mentioned what has occurred in Geelong and I repeat that everyone in Geelong knows this person's ability and no one hesitates to go to him with their ailments which can be healed through manipulation. It is that type of person that this measure will protect and it will enable medical benefits to be received after a referral note has been given by a medical practitioner. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of the Hon. H. R. WARD (South Eastern Province), the debate was adjourned.

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

**YOUNG FARMER ESTABLISHMENT SCHEME**

The debate (adjourned from October 1) was resumed on the motion of the Hon. B. P. Dunn (North Western Province):

That this House is of opinion that the Young Farmers Finance Council should be requested to investigate and report as a matter of urgency on the implementation of a Young Farmer Establishment Scheme involving the purchase of some 100 properties a year for initial lease to suitable applicants and their eventual purchase on low deposits at concessional rates of interest.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister of Lands)—At the outset I indicate that the Government intends to support the motion moved by Mr Dunn. I congratulate Mr Dunn for bringing forward such an important matter for discussion before the Parliament.

It is important to provide finance for young farmers to enable them to take up the occupation of farming which is today, as it always has been, one of the important industries in this State, and certainly in this country. The motion will make it possible, so far as it can be carried out, for young men with some experience and a limited amount of capital to be able to be involved in this industry. However, to be involved in this industry requires large sums of capital in order to get started.

As has been mentioned in the debate on the motion moved by Mr Dunn, an amount of up to $200,000 is required, and probably even more than that, to establish a farm today. Even by today's standards that is a considerable amount of capital which is not readily available to every young person desiring to engage in the occupation of farming. This particularly applies to those who have not had the benefit of having their parents engaged in a farming pursuit and being brought up on the land. Usually, if the parents are farmers, then the children are able to carry on the tradition and conduct the family farm but to some, because of the amount of capital involved, they have been unable to accumulate the required amount of capital and if they wish or desire to go on to the land, they have been unable to purchase the required areas of land.

Beyond that field exist a large number of young men who possess ability in various industrial operations such as sharefarming and who have shown their practical ability and capability of succeeding in the farming industry. During their farming lives—generally not very long farming lives but, nevertheless, extremely intensive—these young farmers have succeeded in amassing a relatively small amount of capital. They may have acquired a herd of dairy cows or, if they were share farmers in the cropping industries, wheat harvesting machinery. Even though these farmers may have managed to accumulate some capital, they cannot see the opportunity.
available of purchasing a farm to earn the sort of living which is expected by the average wage earner today. That sort of farm would require a large amount of capital.

Mr Dunn pointed out the importance of primary industries to Australia and Victoria. He indicated to honourable members that the wheat industry now leads the field in primary production with an income in excess of $2000 million. That is followed by the coal mining industry which, in a sense, is a primary industry. That industry produces national revenue and wealth in excess of $1500 million. The vital wool industry, on which Australia has thrived and become prosperous for so long, last financial year produced a national revenue of $1200 million. The meat and fruit industries are also important farming industries.

These industries have not only contributed tremendously to national revenues, but have also contributed significantly to employment. Victoria has 46,626 commercial farmers; that is, farmers who earn their living from the land. That figure does not include those persons who dabble in farming as a hobby. On those farms 49,000 people are employed. When one considers the manufacturing industry scale that figure represents an extremely large employment base.

Australia has more than 169,000 farmers and the total number of people employed by those farmers is approximately 134,000. One must consider not only the importance of the direct revenues which are derived from primary products, but also the indirect revenues which give impetus to our country towns and the large regional and capital centres. When one visits a place like Queensland, one is immediately impressed by the immensity of the State behind which is a large hinterland. When one reads the newspapers in Brisbane one recognizes immediately that Queensland has a primary industry which is vital even to the capital city. Regrettably, one does not gain the same impression in Melbourne despite the fact that while Victoria comprises only 3 per cent of the total land mass it produces over 60 per cent of the primary products of the nation.

In the dairying industry, in which Australia is particularly favoured, almost 80 per cent of the total production originates from Victoria. There is no denying the great importance and potential of primary industry to the State and the nation. The “green revolution” of nearly 50 years ago gave a tremendous impetus to food production in the world and to Australia in particular. This impetus has enabled Australia to help feed the rest of the world. People in some countries around the world are still suffering from starvation. Undoubtedly it is true of a large part of Africa and parts of India. However, I do not think it is true of many other parts of the world now. I was fortunate enough to visit China recently and, although I did not travel through the entire country, no starvation was evident amongst its population.

The Hon. R. A. Mackenzie—They have a good system there!

The Hon. W. V. Houghton—The system is extremely interesting and depends on the enormous population. China thrives on a population of one billion people and, at the end of this year, the population will be eighteen million more than it was at the end of last year. Accordingly, China gears its agricultural methods to the needs of that enormous population.

The Hon. R. A. Mackenzie—It does not have a Liberal Government either!

The Hon. W. V. Houghton—That is not necessarily correct. If there were a Liberal Government in China one might see a little more agriculture. Actually the agricultural manpower in China is achieving a great deal. The Chinese do not have a standard of living as high as that which Australian farmers enjoy. Far from it! It is interesting to realize that the rural people in China not only produce their goods efficiently, but also achieve their efficiency by manpower alone. Machines are not used at all. The Chinese farmers are also reasonably healthy and happy.
Considering that background to the agricultural situation, honourable members can appreciate the need to start a plan to establish young men on the land which will enable them to gather together and receive financial assistance to undertake the task of their choice in life.

The Hon R. A. Mackenzie—The Heytesbury Forest scheme was not successful.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON—I will come to that in a moment. Did the honourable member say "unsuccessful"?

The Hon. R. A. Mackenzie—Yes.

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON—The honourable member must be seriously misinformed. Perhaps we can help to inform him correctly about that important primary enterprise.

About a year ago the Government introduced legislation to establish the Young Farmer Establishment Scheme. Eight months have passed since the members of the finance advisory council were appointed. That council was appointed with extremely wide and flexible terms of reference and comprised experts experienced in primary industries. They are people who have gone through the mill. The council is chaired by a person who enjoys considerable status in the primary industry in Victoria, Mr Bob Balderstone. He is also the President of the Victorian Agricultural Societies Association. Mr Balderstone is a man of considerable farming experience and considerable ability and displays enormous sympathy towards helping young farmers develop their properties or acquire the necessary capital to make a start.

The advisory council was charged with the responsibility of advising not only on the possible purchase of farming land but also on the possibility of leasing farming areas. In another place, the National Party has produced an interesting table illustrating the way in which it proposes such a scheme could operate over the next 30 years. It is an interesting table, and is a proposal about interest subsidies and contributions to capital by the State Government. Regrettably, it is one of the options that involves a large amount of capital, at least $20 million a year. One of the problems in this time of rapidly inflated costs of farmlands is that a would-be purchaser, even though he can borrow money at concessional rates from the Rural Finance Commission, or obtain Government guarantees at concessional rates, would have to go beyond the proper purchase price that would make the land viable. I do not criticize that proposal, but it ought to be seen as one of the options that the Young Farmer Establishment Scheme ought to examine.

It is true that the Young Farmers Finance Council has not yet been able to provide an answer to these problems. It has worked diligently, and has sent representatives to other countries to study land bank schemes and the assistance schemes that exist in Canada and New Zealand. It has also been working diligently to assist the Minister of Agriculture. In the period it has been operating, it has only been able to settle one person on the land out of the 500 applications it has processed.

It would be a pity if it were not pointed out during the course of this debate the important role than the Rural Finance Commission has played in the settlement of young men on the land. I know that there have been a few women also, but not many young women have sought assistance from the commission.

The Victorian soldier settlement scheme was the best scheme in Australia for soldier settlement after the second world war. Land was bought in a variety of places in Victoria, at Yanakie, the irrigation areas of Yangery and Heytesbury. These settlement schemes have been operating since the second world war, and 6000 young people have been settled on properties during their operation. Many of the settlers had given five and six years of their life to the service of their country in war. I must include myself among those people. I had the good fortune to be an ex-serviceman and was able to take advantage of the scheme. It enabled me to earn my living for many many years, and to bring up an Australian family. I was grateful for the opportunity, as
were many of my colleagues, particularly my comrades in arms, to take advantage of that scheme and to settle on the land. Most of us came from that conflict in the second world war without the financial ability to get ourselves settled, so I remember the soldier settlement scheme with some affection.

The Hon. R. A. Mackenzie—A Labor Government set that up.

The Hon. W. V. Houghton—I am not arguing who did it. I am saying what a good scheme it was. Currently, the Government is disposing of the land that has been left over from those settlement schemes. Honourable members will recall that at times those settlement schemes slowed down because of the pressure in the primary industries. The Rochester irrigation scheme is a typical example. It had to be slowed down because the price of milk and dairy products was low, and the farmers already in the business were having trouble staying in business. The Government did not want to put more farmers on the land with that level of prices. When the prices improved, the Rochester irrigation scheme was completed.

The land at Haytesbury is currently being disposed of. There is a large settlement at Palpara near Heywood in western Victoria. That scheme will provide for many farmers who have been settled by the Rural Finance Commission in the past and will give them the opportunity of taking up more land and extending their operations. That has been the successful story of the recent developments with assistance from the Rural Finance Commission.

The Hon. R. A. Mackenzie—How do you feel about long-term leasehold?

The Hon. W. V. Houghton—Victoria is a State of freehold land and private ownership—private enterprise. Victoria is well tied into that particular system of land tenure in Victoria. It is not so in most other States of the Commonwealth. Areas of leasehold land in other States have been leased to farmers for a long time. The pastoral leases in the western division of New South Wales become very much like the ownership of freehold land. The land is leased on a long-term basis and when it changes hands the purchaser pays a price for the leasehold that is almost equivalent to what might be regarded as freehold land in the same area. There is not much difference in the wide pastoral areas between the land schemes and the land tenures. I prefer the Victorian system. Most people do. They like the security they have in freehold land and I would not want to move away from that system of land tenure although I believe some people in the Labor Party would be delighted to see the Government do so. I do not think it would make that much difference and I do not think it would make people happy.

I am glad that the National Party has seen fit to produce a scheme but I regard it as being too rigid. By producing that scheme, I do not think they mean it is the only scheme that should be considered. I can assure honourable members that the council will be looking at it seriously.

The way should be left open for a wide range of different young farmer establishment schemes. There seems to be many possibilities, but the problem is compounded at the moment by the rising cost of land and high capital costs which are likely to create difficulties for young farmers unless a great deal of care is exercised in the development of a scheme. The Government supports the motion.

The Hon. D. E. Kent (Chelsea Province)—This is one case in which it is impossible to disagree with the sentiments expressed, but there is a difficulty that is similar to that desirable state we all believe in and value, namely, motherhood. We all believe in it but do not know the best means of bringing it about. That is one of the problems that has to be faced.

We know what people would like to see happen and regret that it is becoming increasingly difficult for younger people to acquire the necessary capital to own their own property. Because of various factors, some of which have been within the control of the Government and some of which have not, farm-
ing properties have become larger and instead of becoming labour intensive they have become capital intensive. Inevitably the amount of capital-involved to conduct a modern and efficient farming operation, in nearly every aspect of farming, is much greater than it has ever been in the past. It stands to reason that the majority of people who have access to that sort of capital tend to be older.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—Not geriatrics.

The Hon. D. E. KENT—They are certainly not geriatrics because the state of mind we associate with the geriatric condition is not dependent on the number of years a person happens to have lived. There are some good examples in this place. That is the crux of the problem.

Because of increased technology and equipment one person can farm much larger areas of land and produce much greater quantities of agricultural production so there has necessarily been a greater demand for the amount of capital required and a substantial reduction in manpower and, of course, the number of people who are able to own farms.

Mr Dunn has put forward one desirable objective, one which was able to be practised for many years in Australia when Australia had a growing population and a large area of land still in the process of being cleared. That situation existed until twenty years ago when it was possible in many instances for farmers who had 1, 2 or 3 sons to establish them fairly cheaply on farming properties. That situation no longer exists and will not return.

In the past the people associated with the land valued the opportunity of providing land for their children to follow in their footsteps—they tended to regard it as a right, but that is not possible nowadays. That brings us to the difficulty of adopting a consistent attitude.

People in many occupations and professions have sons and daughters who might wish to follow in their footsteps, but society is not prepared nor does it have the capacity to guarantee that even a significant number of them will be able to be established in the trade, business or profession of their choice.

Any proposal which will increase the number of young people who can settle on the land, not necessarily the sons or daughters of existing farmers, would be welcome. However those who would meet the necessary qualifications to be eligible for this sort of land would number very few indeed. There would be a privileged group and the processes of selection would need to be firmly laid down so that there could be no suggestion of favouritism or privilege.

I will not criticize the administration or the allocation of properties under past schemes, but I agree that the soldier settlement schemes implemented after the second world war were the most successful ever established in Australia and provided a wonderful opportunity for a substantial number of people, many of them farmers' sons, but also returned soldiers, and in later years other private citizens to establish themselves on farms and to become owners of a substantial amount of capital. I should not like to see a re-establishment of the conditions which obtained then because, under the economic and social situation in which we now live, it is not possible or responsible for the community at large to provide what really are capital gifts to those people. They were given generous interest rate concessions. They were well established and after a few years were able to dispose of their properties if they so chose. Every member of this House who is acquainted with the situation in country areas knows that many of them within relatively few years cashed their properties at tremendous capital gains advanced by the community by way of low interest rates. There was no recompense to the community from those sales to establish a recurring fund to provide that sort of finance for people wishing to continue.

Many properties were amalgamated into holdings, perhaps not as large as those from which the original settlements came, but into quite large properties which were frequently under absentee ownership. They came into
the ownership of people who were buying property as an investment and not for that way of life for themselves or their families. That is one of the aspects which Mr Dunn and members of the National Party regard as important. The farming way of life associated with primary industry is something which many people find desirable, something worth a sacrifice in economic terms, but not something which the community can be expected to finance indiscriminately for large numbers of people.

So there is a real problem as to whether the community can do something about the causes of the rapid inflation of land values which has made it difficult for members such as Mr Dunn to present a rational argument. Many situations which have occurred are the result of policies advocated by his party and which, through its numbers in the Federal coalition Government, his party has been able to implement. By means of the depreciation allowance and other investment allowances available for farming, they have made it an attractive avenue for investment.

The Hon. W. V. Houghton—How long did you stick to it?

The Hon. D. E. KENT—I have stuck to it all my life and I am still sticking to it.

The Hon. W. V. Houghton—You must be rich on the Country Party’s policies!

The Hon. D. E. KENT—I regret that the Minister for Conservation has shown his ignorance of the basis of the arguments I am submitting. Those sorts of advantages have accrued to those people who have had wealth and who have had income from outside so that they have been able to provide the inputs to derive investment allowances. Small farmers have been disadvantaged and that is one reason why they have been sold up by other people. They have had a variety of other forms of income, some of them from membership of this Parliament.

This is a problem and if the community is to be asked to provide concessional finance to place a limited number of young people in one industry—and it is only one of many—it will be necessary to make provision to take land or whatever resources on which they are receiving that concessional rate out of the speculative market. If that is not done, the community will be financing capital gains for people to make profits almost indiscriminately. It will increase the pressures on inflation and will not alleviate the situation which Mr Dunn deplores so strongly. The sorts of policies which his party has been prominent in promoting have stimulated the pressures to worsen the situation; I will not say those pressures have created it completely, but all honourable members know there are continuing pressures.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—Primary industry is in better shape than it has ever been in before.

The Hon. D. E. KENT—I regret that I have not got the figures here, but I did read in the Australian Financial Review and some other publications this week that the National Farmers Federation is already preparing its claims for something like $6000 million worth of export losses on account of the difficulties—

The Hon. B. A. Chamberlain—That is the estimated losses.

The Hon. D. E. KENT—I know from experience that they will be seeking a considerable amount of assistance from the Government to compensate for these losses which they expect to sustain.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—It is a loss to the nation.

The Hon. D. E. KENT—Many things are a loss to the nation. One of the major losses to the nation is the fact that in this country, supposedly an independent country, we encourage outsiders to invest in existing businesses and existing property and to take out of this country the products and benefits produced from our soil, our resources and the work of Australians. If we are to support people, we must ensure that the support we give is contributing not only to the fulfilment of the ambitions of people in other businesses, but also to the betterment of the whole nation.
The Hon. B. P. Dunn—Should we stop foreign ownership of our agricultural land?

The Hon. D. E. KENT—We should stop foreign ownership of agricultural land in Australia, foreign ownership of our mining land and foreign ownership of our resources. That would reduce the inflationary pressures considerably.

Mr Dunn's one purpose is to divert me from the theme I was developing. I was about to say that, if this is to be an effective scheme which will enable young people to become farmers, it is necessary to ensure that there is a means of determining whether they are interested in becoming farmers or whether they want to be landowners with a large amount of capital they can dispose of whenever and wherever they choose. The provision of land for leasehold should be investigated. Mr Dunn's motion does propose that properties should be available for leasehold but he emphasizes that after a few years it should be made available for purchase. He advocates substantial concessions during that period, that the Government should provide funds to purchase land, that it should provide low interest rates to young farmers who are granted leases for several years and should then continue to provide concessional finance over a period of years after they take over ownership, something he would like to see occur within a few years.

It is important, in my view, for the speculative element to be removed from land on which concessional rates are being provided by the Government, and consideration needs to be given to attempting to produce available land for leasehold. Some of that may not necessarily require Government purchase. It may require Government guarantee whereby people who are ready to leave their land may be prepared to enter into agreements to lease the property.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—That is about what we have now.

The Hon. D. E. KENT—We have it in a limited sense, but it is an important principle. If a scheme is established which merely repeats the basis of the soldier settlement schemes which were successful to a degree, it will only enable a few farmers to practise their profession for a few years and they will then be able to please themselves whether they capitalize the gains which the community has financed. That type of scheme does nothing of any lasting value for the community or the farmers.

The Bureau of Agricultural Statistics and various documents provide evidence to support the claim that farm population, both owners and people employed, has deceased substantially since the peak of the 1950s, which was a period of expansion after the war.

The Hon. R. I. Knowles—It rose last year.

The Hon. D. E. KENT—I challenge the validity of the statement made by Mr Knowles.

The Hon. R. I. Knowles—It came from the bureau you quoted a moment ago.

The Hon. D. E. KENT—I suggest that many of the properties he is quoting are in fact hobby farms or non-productive farms. I am prepared to discuss that question with the honourable member but I think there is no clarification in the figures about whether they are genuine farms or hobby farms which are not productive and which are certainly not of economic size. There is no disputing that farm numbers in the production sense have decreased considerably.

We have heard many quotations about land finance schemes in Tasmania and New Zealand, and I acknowledge the assistance that has been given through the Rural Finance Commission to people to develop their holdings and the important role which it has played in assisting people in the many emergency situations that occur with amazing frequency in farming. However, what we are talking about now is something on a more permanent basis which is beyond the capacity and outside the role of the Rural Finance Commission and the Commonwealth Development Bank, which no doubt will continue to exist and operate ineffectively. We are looking at something completely different.
Reference has been made to the Saskatchewan Land Bank, which has been seen by many people in Australia as providing at least a part solution to the problem or certainly guidelines to the sorts of schemes that we would hope to establish here to further the purpose which the motion moved by Mr Dunn desires. Thanks to the generosity of my colleagues in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association I had the privilege of visiting the State of Saskatchewan and discussing with the people responsible for the land bank scheme its various activities. That scheme has been successful. The people involved with it do not like to regard it as a land bank, although that is its title, but rather as a refinancing agency. Contrary to the opinions I expressed a few minutes ago, they do not want to become owners of a large amount of land, because they do not want to have a lot of capital tied up in land ownership.

They encourage leasing and purchase after a few years, but there is a distinct difference in certain other aspects in that they have rigid control over the entry into agriculture of people; they will not accept foreign owners and they have very strict control over the operations that are carried out on any property which receives financial assistance from the Government. The land bank scheme provides a lot of assistance for farming operations which do not involve large areas of land. They may involve a transition from, for instance, dairying, or part of a property where the son of a farmer is being financed to help him establish a poultry industry, a pig or cattle fattening industry, or something like that. Rigid control is also exercised over the practices which are carried out, and the scheme has proved very successful.

One of the important factors is the necessity of taking steps which will prevent the inflow of foreign or non-farming capital into the market. Nevertheless, they still have pressures; despite those attempts to control land prices, land prices are increasing. I am sure Mr Dunn would be interested to know that, assuming that land has been leased for five years and the lessee wishes to purchase it after that time, he cannot obtain it at the market price which applied when he leased the land, but must pay the existing market price. That is a very good reason why members of the National Party should be concerned to promote measures which will take pressure off the continuing inflation of land prices, of which Mr Dunn is very much aware.

I do not pretend to have all the answers to this problem, but I emphasize again that it is not a simple problem. We all believe that it is desirable that young people should have the opportunity of running their own farms, although whether they should own them is another matter. The most important thing is that they should know they have the security of being able to work those farms. The real test is whether they are interested in the land for farming or only to make money from the sale of the property.

The Hon. B. P. Dunn—There are not many of those.

The Hon. D. E. Kent—I have lived amongst other farmers, and Mr Dunn and the Minister for Conservation cannot tell me that, so they should not try to pretend that I am not aware of the motivation behind many farmers. This will have to be curbed otherwise it will not be possible to establish such a scheme, and it would not be responsible for Governments to provide the sort of easy financial support which Mr Dunn would like to be provided.

As I said, this is a subject in which we are all interested; we all believe the scheme is desirable and that there are thousands of people in other areas of the community in commercial enterprise and the domestic situation who have similar needs—greater needs, perhaps—and who have the same rights to receive the financial concessions and support and protection which governments can provide. The Labor Party supports the principles involved here. We believe there is a case for further investigation of the possibilities which may exist in line with the responsible attitude of the rest of the community.
The Hon. D. M. EVANS (North Eastern Province)—I support the motion capably moved by my Leader, Mr Dunn, some weeks ago on this issue. Since the scheme proposed by the National Party was publicized through the press five or six weeks ago, there has been a great deal of interest in the propositions that we have put forward. Although the National Party has attempted to develop a reasonably complete scheme, there are a number of areas in which further information can be taken and amendments made for the betterment of the scheme. We particularly appreciate the positive comments and input by the Minister and by Mr Kent on this issue.

It is worth noting that before the last State elections every political party supported the setting up of some form of land bank scheme or young farmer settlement scheme, based generally on the Saskatchewan Land Bank scheme to which Mr Kent referred. As the Minister also correctly reminded us, following the State election the Victorian Government introduced the Young Farmers Finance Council. Again, as he informed us, up to now it has not been very successful in the limited area in which it operated, which was that of a guarantee of loan finance for young farmers settling on the land. That is basically because under the present borrowing conditions any young man can borrow as much finance as he is able to service under current interest rates from various borrowing sources. There was no need for an additional guarantee. All it means is that a young farmer could get into considerable economic trouble because he could not get finance beyond the present borrowing limits. The most interesting aspect of the Young Farmers Finance Council was the provision that it should have the responsibility of investigating and recommending to the Minister further methods of establishing young men and women on the land.

The scheme proposed by the National Party and, incidentally, forwarded to the Young Farmers Finance Council for perusal, is currently under direct investigation by that council, so the debate tonight is appropriate. If the Government and political parties in Victoria are serious about the establishment of young people on the land—all parties have assured the National Party that they are—positive action needs to be taken. The steps proposed by the National Party in this motion are positive. Resources need to be devoted to the scheme. It is intended to extend the opportunity for people to become farmers in their own right on their own properties, whereas under the current situation in relation to financing, they would not be able to do so. How many young men in the trade of farming, if our scheme is adopted, will have the opportunity of becoming full-time farmers in their own right?

I believe full-time farmers have their lifetimes to consider because a farm is in effect a set of tools with which to earn a living. The people to whom this scheme is directed will regard a farm in this fashion. I give the warning that we should ensure that those who are regarded as eligible, should the scheme be introduced, do not have the opportunity of obtaining finance, necessary land or necessary backing to become farmers from some other source. They must be young men who do not have the capital that is required to purchase a farm at the time.

The comment was made earlier that an enormous amount of money would need to be devoted to the scheme. Certainly, for 20 or 30 years the sum required would be large. In the first year, the interest subsidy would be somewhere in the region of $1 million. It would rise each year until the sixth year when the first of the yearly capital repayments would be expected. It is interesting to note that to give some degree of balance to the amount of money involved, the Primary Industry Bank of Australia Ltd in its first two years of operation lent somewhere in the region of $250 million on an Australia-wide basis, whereas in the first year of its operations the scheme proposed by my party would envisage an investment of about $20 million of borrowed capital. The scheme proposed envisages that the young farmer who may apply to become a land operator under the scheme would
need to have some capital already. He would need to have capital for stock and plant with which to operate that property, or cash.

It is intended that the properties should be leased for a period of approximately five years which would enable the farmer to demonstrate whether he had the capability to continue on the land. At the end of that period, he would have the option of purchasing the land at the initial price which was paid. No capital gain would be added to the land value. The Young Farmers Finance Council would simply recoup its original investment.

The young farmer would be expected to have 10 per cent deposit. That is part of the testing process which the applicants would have to pass. If he is not capable of accumulating some additional capital through his operations in the first five years, either through the farm or his wife working—either possibility is likely to a person deeply interested in establishing on the land—in the view of the National Party that person does not have the capabilities to succeed. That is one of the first tests to pass.

It is interesting that if one wishes to buy into a viable farming property under the current situation, one would need not only stock and plant, but also about 50 per cent of the purchase price of the property. Otherwise, it would not be a viable proposition with current interest rates, even on a long-term borrowing basis.

The National Party recognizes that safeguards must be provided so that land valuations are not forced up unduly. That is one of the points constantly brought forward and it is perfectly valid. However, I point out that under the scheme proposed, a young farmer would be purchasing the land eventually and it would be in his own interests to ensure that the purchase price was kept at the lowest possible level. One always seeks to buy at the lowest market rate and to sell at the highest market rate. A young farmer who engages in the leasehold property with the idea of eventually purchasing the property, would be aware that he would be paying the price paid for the land. He has a vested interest in keeping that price down.

The actual method by which the land should be obtained are that, in theory, the young farmers who desire to participate in the scheme should actively seek a viable farm and then seek approval of the Young Farmer Establishment Scheme to purchase that property.

As Mr Dunn outlined, the National Party intends that the scheme be operated by the Rural Finance Commission, which has considerable expertise in this field. The commission has an excellent record in cost benefits of management. It has a good track record in managing at a reasonable and economic rate. Thus the cost of management, which would need to be added to the cost of the scheme, under the Rural Finance Commission should be reasonable.

I do not intend to go through all the details of the scheme as outlined by Mr Dunn. The National Party recognizes that it is a concessional scheme. It is intended to be concessional, particularly in the initial stages. For that reason, we propose that the tables which have been referred to and are available to the House, and certainly have been available to the Young Farmers Finance Council for further evaluation, should apply. In the first ten years after purchase, the interest rate on the capital should be 5 per cent, between ten and fifteen years, the interest rate should be 7.5 per cent and for the final 15 to 30 years, it should be 10 per cent.

It may be necessary to recognize some mechanism which ties this interest rate to the long-term bond rate which, as honourable members will be aware, is a measure of inflation in the community. As a young farmer proceeds further into land ownership and becomes more established, it is reasonable that he should pay a greater interest rate. He would be in a better financial position to do so at that stage, remembering always that the actual capital borrowing remains static. Due to inflation, over a long term the commodity prices

The Hon. D. M. Evans
could increase, although costing also will increase. The actual percentage of gross income paid out in interest on the farm, even if the interest is adjusted as we suggest, could well remain static; therefore, an increase in the percentage interest would not be unreasonable.

We believe that such an increase in interest is reasonable because it gives young farmers the opportunity of becoming established with the assistance being given when they need it most in the early stages.

In summary, the National Party has put forward this scheme as a positive contribution in 1980 to the settlement of young farmers in Victoria. National Party members are pleased at the support that has been given to the motion by the Government. I point out that there are two types of geniuses—one who thinks of a good idea and one who recognizes it and is prepared to act upon it. In this case, I think the Government has demonstrated genius in the second degree. I support the motion.

The Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Ballarat Province)—Taking up the last point made by Mr Evans, surely it is clear that the Government would accept the motion, as indicated to the House when the Bill establishing the Young Farmers Finance Council was brought in. One of the reasons for setting up that council was to examine schemes that would do the very thing which is proposed in this motion.

The Minister of Lands made a number of points about what has been achieved in terms of the rural finance when last year 250 persons under the age of 40 years were assisted in purchasing properties. Many of those persons would be sons and daughters of existing farmers who were looking to extend their farming enterprises. There have been many cases where rural finance has assisted young persons in the purchase of their first farms.

Under the present scheme an applicant is expected to own the stock and plant and not borrow more than 50 per cent of the purchase price of the farm. Under today's land prices, the borrowing figure is conservative and militates against a young person purchasing his first farm.

When examining the Young Farmer Establishment Scheme, the Government should be careful not to distort the price of land because a purchaser pays a figure based upon the cost of money borrowed to purchase the land.

A matter that is of concern on the wording of the motion moved by Mr Dunn is that it calls upon the Young Farmers Finance Council to urgently investigate the implementation of a scheme. I trust that does not automatically imply that the National Party wants a scheme urgently implemented on the basis of its proposal. Mr Evans made reference to that by stating that if another buyer is in the market that would increase the price of land.

The Hon. D. M. Evans—Not really; I said that we had to be careful that it would not increase the price of land.

The Hon. R. I. KNOWLES—Under the scheme proposed by the National Party an additional $20 million would be injected into the financial market for agricultural land. That will inflate the price of land. Presently land is going through the third high price cycle in twenty years. It would be irresponsible for the Government to finance young persons who would be under-capitalized because of the price of land being at an all time high. That would be like putting a rope around their necks. The Government would be obliged to rescue those persons in a few years time.

Another problem is the impact such action would have on land prices. Farmers who are able to obtain low interest finance pay more for land than if they borrowed money at commercial interest rates. Interest rates are not as critical to the success of young persons entering farming as many persons believe. The critical issue is the term and the basis of repayment.
If the Government provided low interest rates, that would be reflected in a higher price paid for land which would be of no assistance to farmers. Under the scheme the Government should introduce a standard instalment repayment over a period of fifteen years. If the person selected has the ability, which his assessors believed he had, that person should be sufficiently well established to negotiate his refinancing on the open market.

No matter how much finance the Government injects into the scheme there will still be many young persons who will wish to purchase their own farms, but for whom the scheme cannot cater. The Government will have to be careful that it does not provide two distinct categories of young farmers—those who are generously assisted and those who are competing on the open market at a disadvantage because they do not have access to low interest rates or because land prices have been inflated by the scheme coming into force when land prices are high. Such a scheme would certainly have the advantage during troughs of land prices of providing a bottom. Often that is of immense assistance to farmers because it maintains their liquidity for the security of lenders, whether it be bank or private lenders, and, therefore, avoids the pressure to dispose of assets.

There is a need for the scheme to be carefully thought through if an interest subsidy is to be provided. That should be under constant review. Persons will immediately recognize that if a farmer has access to finance at a concessional interest rate and he has a profitable year, which can be anticipated as being one in three or one in five, he would be a poor businessman if he paid off the finance owed. He would be well advised to invest the money in the commercial money market. Therefore, the Government would be providing assistance which could not be justified. If the farmer were obliged or encouraged to repay his debt it would provide an opportunity to assist more young farmers.

I support the concept of the Government encouraging and providing assistance for young persons to enter into primary industry through the purchase of their own farms. However, the Government should ensure that assistance is based upon logic and common sense and commercial approaches, with assistance provided on the terms of loans and in the methods of repayment.

If the Government provides a wholesale subsidy, it will provide a commitment of nearly $35 million which would be unacceptable to the rest of the farming community, but, more importantly, to Victorians generally. With those few words, I indicate my qualified support for the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

SALE OF LAND (DEPOSITS AMENDMENT) BILL

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The House will recall that during the last session a Bill was introduced to provide that deposits paid in the purchase of real estate should be preserved, so that they could be repaid in the event the sale of the property went off through no fault of the purchaser.

This Bill gave effect to the recommendations of the Interim Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Conveyancing. The recommendations were made after receipt of submissions from the Real Estate and Stock Institute and the Law Institute of Victoria, amongst others, and in principle embodied the views of the Law Institute.

After the Bill became an Act, further submissions were made on the detail of the Act.

It became apparent that there were two practical problems in the Act. Firstly, there was no provision for the transfer of deposit moneys from an estate agent to another estate agent or to the vendor’s solicitor. Secondly, there was no requirement for a purchaser to authorize the release of deposit moneys even when he was satisfied with the particulars supplied to
him by the vendor. The Government undertook to remedy these problems by appropriate amendments to the Act.

Apart from those amendments a number of other drafting points were made by various bodies and persons. A number of these depended upon the interpretation of the Act, and in the Government's view did not merit the initiation of amending legislation. However, in view of the fact that it is necessary to amend the Act to deal with the two problems mentioned earlier, the Government has agreed to make further amendments to the Act so that its effect may be put beyond question. I should point out that these amendments have been discussed in detail with both the Real Estate and Stock Institute and the Law Institute of Victoria. I believe that the provisions of the Bill have been approved of by the representatives of these two bodies.

The important provisions of the Bill before the House are those that permit the transfer of deposit moneys from one estate agent to another and from an estate agent to the vendor's solicitor. There is also provision for the transfer of deposit moneys from one solicitor to another where the vendor changes his solicitor.

There are also provisions which require a purchaser to agree to the release of deposit moneys to enable the vendor to apply those to some other purpose. These provisions of course operate only in circumstances where, as far as is possible, it has been ascertained that the release of the deposit moneys will not be to the detriment of the purchaser.

The remainder of the amendments are dealt with in the notes circulated with the Bill and I will not go into those in any more detail. It is hoped that the amendments, even where they are not strictly necessary, will clarify certain matters that were creating concern and thereby assist the smooth and efficient operation of the Act.

I must point out that the Government does not necessarily consider the Bill as the last word on purchasers' deposits. Its effect must be considered in practice, and the Government will monitor its operation very closely. In the meantime it is expected that this legislation will achieve its major objective of protection of purchasers' deposits and, having been modified in consultation with those affected by its provisions, it will work in a practical and effective way. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of the Hon. E. H. Walker, for the Hon. G. A. S. BUTLER (Thomastown Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 28.

DANDENONG VALLEY AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It amends section 13 of the Dandenong Valley Authority Act 1963. This provision at present provides for the authority to enter into arrangements with public authorities to:

(a) make available the services of an officer of the authority to the public authority; or
(b) make available the services of an officer of the public authority to the authority.

These arrangements, which are subject to the approval of both the Minister of Water Supply and the Minister administering the Act under which the public authority is constituted, allow the authority to carry out studies in the areas of urban drainage and waterway management for the public authority concerned.

A recent request to the authority for it to carry out a feasibility study into the development of an international standard rowing course on the Patterson River for the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation has revealed a deficiency in the Act. The present definition of a "public authority" for the purposes of the Act is quite specific and effectively excludes the Crown and Government departments administered by Ministers of the Crown.
In view of the authority’s considerable expertise in its field it is desirable that it be empowered to enter into such arrangements with all types of public authorities. Clause 2 of the Bill provides accordingly.

Clause 1 of the Bill cites the short title and provides for the Act to come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation of the Governor in Council published in the Government Gazette. I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of the Hon. E. H. Walker, for the Hon. D. R. WHITE (Doutta Galla Province), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, October 28.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Export of cockatoos and galahs—
Evaporative coolers in schools—
Traffic problems at Monash University—
Delays at Department of Minerals and Energy—
Voting rights of prisoners—
Expanded higher school certificate curriculum—
Arrangements at polling booths

**The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General)**—I move:

That the Council, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, 28 October at half-past four o’clock.

The motion was agreed to.

**The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General)**—I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

**The Hon. G. A. SGRO (Melbourne North Province)**—I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Conservation, to whom I have already spoken. It concerns me that in this country, after sowing spring crops, farmers scream their heads off about cockatoos and galahs destroying those crops. I sympathize with the farmers but I suggest that it may be better if the Government allowed those beautiful birds to be caught, instead of exterminated by farmers, and to be sold overseas. There is a tremendous overseas market. Many countries in the world would love to have those birds. Yet farmers are slaughtering them in their thousands. I urge the Minister to consider from time to time allowing those farmers who slaughter the birds to catch them instead and to sell them on the international market instead of the birds being exterminated.

**The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North Western Province)**—I refer a matter to the Minister of Education concerning the pig-headed and ill-advised refusal of the Public Works Department to install evaporative coolers in schools in the Sunraysia district. I refer specifically to five modular classrooms erected in various schools in the district and directly to the Mildura West Primary School. Rather than erecting evaporative coolers, they have installed reverse cycle coolers which are most unsuitable for this area. They do not cool the class-rooms because they have insufficient capacity; public health requirements are not met because the air change does not take place the required six or eight times an hour; the price of the reverse cycle coolers is eight times that of evaporative coolers; running costs are much higher; service and maintenance costs are higher; and the noise factor seriously inhibits the ability of the students to learn and of the teachers to teach.

The programme originally agreed upon several years ago by the then Minister involved the provision of evaporative units. A tremendous programme was carried out at a much lower cost and I now ask the Minister whether common sense will prevail here, along with the wishes of the parents, the students and the school councils and the comfort of the students and staff, and if he will use his influence to persuade the Public Works Department to continue to provide evaporative coolers in schools in the Mildura area.

**The Hon. C. J. KENNEDY (Waverley Province)**—I raise a matter of some urgency with the Minister who in this place represents the Minister of Transport. It concerns a serious traffic problem at Monash University where some 14 000 students and 3000 staff attend daily, together with an increasing number of people from the general community. The fact
is that the lack of public transport forces many students on low incomes, if any at all, to buy and run cars they cannot afford. They occupy a considerable amount of road space, by virtue of their numbers. Accidents occur from time to time and those cars consume large amounts of petrol.

In view of the talk about VFL Park at Waverley being used as one of the venues for the Olympic Games in 1988 if Melbourne's application is successful, it is obvious that a railway line from Huntingdale Road or a system of trolleybuses along Wellington Road is a matter of urgency and would provide a valuable service to the almost 20,000 people who use Monash University daily.

The Hon. R. A. MACKEENZIE (Geelong Province) — I direct a matter to the attention of the Minister who in this place represents the Minister for Minerals and Energy. It has been drawn to my attention by some people in my electorate that long delays are occurring in the issuing of miners' rights permits to search for minerals. I understand that, because of the current mining boom and the discovery of gold nuggets here and there, the number of applicants for these miners' rights search permits has doubled and it is taking a long time to process them because of the shortage of staff in the Department of Minerals and Energy. Delays of six months and more are occurring. I have contacted members of staff in the department who have informed me that the delays are caused by the excessive number of applications for permits and that they are unable to cope.

I ask the Minister to pass that information on to the responsible Minister to ensure that additional staff are provided, even if only on a temporary basis, to overtake the backlog in this area.

The Hon. R. J. EDDY (Thomastown Province) — I refer the Attorney-General to a matter which I consider important, the matter of the voting rights of prisoners throughout Victoria. I tried to contact the Minister early last week in regard to the matter because there was confusion at Pentridge. I do not know what the situation was at the country prisons.

Prisoners at Pentridge were informed that they had the right to vote, but that only those prisoners serving sentences of less than twelve months could do so. Section 104 (3) of the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1978 provides:

A person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment or detention imposed by a court upon a conviction for an offence and who has resided in Victoria for a period of not less than three months before that conviction shall be deemed to reside at the address at which he resided at the time of his conviction.

I think all honourable members understand the Act as it applies to the State of Victoria, but I am concerned that the prisoners were confused. A number of prisoners wishing to vote were deprived of the opportunity of doing so. I ask the Minister to raise this matter with the Federal Attorney-General in an attempt to achieve uniformity in respect to voting rights for prisoners at both State and Federal elections, at least within Victoria.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North Western Province) — The Minister of Education will be well aware that, through the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education, a much wider range of subjects will now be offered in the final year of secondary education. That range of subjects will involve firstly a core and then a number of optional subjects that can be adopted by various schools.

The point has been made to me by many secondary schools that this will place a severe burden on them in the provision of the reference material necessary for students and in the provision of class sets, teacher reference sources and so on. The point therefore comes to my notice, and I direct it to the attention of the Minister, although he is probably well aware of it, that schools may need further assistance in providing the type of reference material necessary to back up these courses.

I ask the Minister whether he is aware of this fact and what action he is taking to ensure that secondary schools have adequate finance and resource material available to them to present these courses adequately.
The Hon. N. F. Stacey (Chelsea Province)—I direct a matter to the attention of the Minister representing the Minister for Property and Services who, I understand, has under his purview matters relating to the Electoral Act. I ask the Minister to consider the problems encountered at polling booths at the recent Federal election when the system was changed so that people attending a polling booth could go to a table without reference to the alphabetical order of their surnames. Many honourable members would be aware that this caused considerable inconvenience in a number of polling booths. I suppose it was contributed to by the fact that many Victorian citizens were anxious to cast their votes as early as possible and the resulting crush inconvenienced people. I refer particularly to the polling booth at Carrum Primary School, where, at 9.15 a.m., 45 people were waiting outside to vote. I ask the Minister to bring this matter to the attention of the Minister for Property and Services.

The Hon. A. J. Hunt (Minister of Education)—Mr Wright raised a question affecting air conditioning of schools in the area he represents. The Government fully recognizes that in the north-western corner of the State, special problems arise which do not exist in other areas. However, I certainly would not give a definitive answer on what ought to be done for individual schools. I invite Mr Wright to speak with the Assistant Minister of Education about the problems in that area.

Mr Dunn raised a question relating to the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education. I understood what he was stating and I hope neither he nor anybody else believes every school can provide the whole range of new secondary subjects. I recognize that there will be problems in providing the range.

The department is seeking to ensure the greatest diversity possible. In city areas, it is actively encouraging the movement of pupils between adjacent schools so that the range of subjects available shall be increased.

That is difficult to achieve in country areas, but I invite Mr Dunn to have discussions with me with a view to ensuring that country students have at least the same opportunities as those available to metropolitan students.

The Hon. Haddon Storey (Attorney-General)—Mr Eddy raised a question about the voting rights of prisoners. As he would have realized, at the election last week-end, the rights of prisoners were governed by Commonwealth laws and not by State laws. Mr Eddy pointed out that there was confusion because of the different laws operating at State and Federal elections.

It is really a matter for the Minister for Property and Services, who now administers the Electoral Act which covers this matter. I will speak to him and ask him to take up with his Federal colleague the question of bringing Federal laws into line with our State laws, which were recently introduced and supported by all parties in the House. The honourable gentleman might also take up the question of closing the polling booths at 6 p.m. rather than at 8 p.m. so we can all get to bed earlier in the night.

The Hon. D. G. Crozier (Minister Local Government)—Mr Kennedy has drawn the attention of the House to what he considers is a dearth of public transport to Monash University. I will draw his comments to the attention of the Minister of Transport.

The Hon. W. V. Houghton (Minister for Conservation)—Mr Sgro raised a question which had been asked as recently as yesterday. It related to corellas and sulphur-crested cockatoos and posed the possibility of considering the export of those birds. As I pointed out in answer to a previous question on this subject, the Australian Environment Council has over a long period of time considered this proposition. The consideration commenced about ten years ago and the South Australian Government did in fact introduce such a scheme but was forced to abandon it because of difficulties.
I will make available to Mr Sgro some of the background papers to that question which was examined by the Standing Committee of the Australian Environment Council. However, I point out that there are many Australians who would take a dim view of exporting our wildlife for sale in other countries. I sound that particular note of warning; that it is not altogether popular amongst the Australian people.

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply)—Mr Mackenzie raised the matter of the long delay in the issue of a miner's right to people wishing to search for minerals, especially those minerals which are so prominent today and which have been found in the Wedderburn and Inglewood areas. Mr Mackenzie referred to the long delays which people have to endure in seeking these permits to search for minerals. I will bring this matter to the attention of the Minister for Minerals and Energy and suggest to him, as Mr Mackenzie did, that perhaps extra temporary staff be employed.

I also believe these permits should be available—and I think they are—in the Bendigo Mines Department office. If they are not already available, I will suggest to the Minister that they should be made available in those areas because that is where these permits would be sought the most.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.16 p.m. until Tuesday, October 28.

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### PRE-SCHOOLS

(Question No. 7)

The Hon. W. A. LANDERYOU (Doutta Galla Province) asked the Minister for Conservation, for the Minister of Health:

How many pre-schools are in each Legislative Council province?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—The answer supplied by the Minister of Health is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Provinces</th>
<th>No. of Pre-schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Western</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bendigo</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geelong</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballarat</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Eastern</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gippsland</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Eastern</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Provinces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomastown</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne North</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Yarra</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelsea</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higginbotham</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waverley</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunawading</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boronia</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Templestowe</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doutta Galla</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne West</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1224

#### FOOTBALL INCIDENT

(Question No. 48)

The Hon. C. J. KENNEDY (Waverley Province) asked the Attorney-General, for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Will police action be taken following the incident on Saturday, 6 September 1980 between the coaches of Carlton and Richmond Football clubs at VFL Park, Waverley?

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (Attorney-General)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services is:

No.

#### AMBULANCE DESIGN COMMITTEE MEMBERS

(Question No. 51)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North Western Province) asked the Minister for Conservation, for the Minister of Health:

(a) What are the names and qualifications of members of the Ambulance Design Committee appointed for a further term in 1980?

(b) Were any changes made to the committee; if not, what opportunity was given for alternative appointments?
The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON
(Minister for Conservation)—The answer supplied by the Minister of Health is:

(a) The names and qualifications of the members of the Ambulance Design Sub-committee are:
Mr G. K. Hoinville, Chairman, automotive engineer.
Mr. H. G. Berry, Chief Superintendent, ambulance service—Melbourne.
Mr F. Bonser, Ambulance Officer, vehicle user.
Mr R. Donald, Operations Manager, ambulance service—Melbourne.
Mr R. May, Assistant Superintendent, ambulance service—Melbourne.
Mr N. Mills, Secretary.
Mr J. Rowe, Superintendent, Central Victoria District Ambulance Service.
Mr W. Simmons, Ambulance Employees Association, general secretary.
Mr J. Skinner, Ambulance Officer, AEA shop steward, fitter and turner.
Mr. E. W. Thomas, Superintendent, Goulburn Valley Ambulance Service.
Mr G. Trinca, Surgeon.

All except Mr May were appointed for a three-year term in November 1978.

(b) Yes. During 1980, Mr Hoinville succeeded Mr A. Chamberlain as chairman and Mr May replaced Mr K. Atkinson.

RIVER MURRAY COMMISSION
(Question No. 55)

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North Western Province) asked the Minister of Water Supply:

(a) What action is being taken by the Victorian Government to finalize the preparation and signing of a new River Murray agreement to extend the powers of the River Murray Commission?

(b) What additional powers are to be delegated to the commission, and under what conditions?

The Hon. F. J. GRANTER (Minister of Water Supply)—The answer is:

(a) By arrangement between the Governments concerned the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor has prepared the first draft of a new agreement as the basis for discussion between the four Government’s advisers. It is expected that the draft amendments will be formally transmitted to the State Governments for consideration and ratification in the near future.

(b) The River Murray Commission was set up in 1916 by the River Murray Waters Agreement, to administer the provisions of the agreement. The original agreement has been amended a number of times, with ratification by Acts of the Parliaments of the Commonwealth and the States of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

In its present form the agreement deals essentially with construction of water conservation works approved by the four Governments (Hume and Dartmouth reservoirs, Lake Victoria storage and weirs and locks), operation and maintenance of those works, sharing of the waters of the River Murray between the three States, protection of the catchment above Hume Reservoir, the limited provision of dilution flows to combat salinity and carrying out of works on certain sections of the river to prevent the loss of regulated flows. The financing of new works is shared equally between the four Governments while the cost of maintenance is met in equal shares by the three States.

The existing powers of the commission are primarily to operate its storages in order to enhance water conservation, irrigation and navigation. The amendments propose that the commission, at its discretion, may have regard to other water management objectives in managing the works. In particular, the four Governments have agreed to broaden the functions of the River Murray Commission with particular regard to water quality and water management objectives.

It is also proposed that the commission may act in regard to the provision of remedial or preventive works arising out of the operation of its major works. This would allow, for example, action by the River Murray Commission in relation to existing problems of access along the River Murray downstream of Hume reservoir arising from high regulated flows during the summer months. It would also allow for work on the Mitta Mitta River should this become necessary as a result of the operation of Dartmouth reservoir. At the request of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria provision is also to be made that the operating procedures for Dartmouth dam should not be changed without consultation between that commission and the River Murray Commission.

In general terms, the powers of the River Murray Commission are being broadened to enable better management of River Murray waters for the mutual benefit of the citizens of the three States, and as a national resource. While providing for better co-ordination and management, the proposed amendments do not involve the delegation of any existing State powers to the River Murray Commission.

ADULT PAROLE BOARD
(Question No. 98)

The Hon. R. J. EDDY (Thomastown Province) asked the Minister for Conservation, for the Minister for Community Welfare Services:

(a) On what day or days and during what hours does the Adult Parole Board meet?
(b) What average number of cases are considered on each occasion and what percentage of those cases are reviews of persons on parole?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Community Welfare Services is:

(a) The Adult Parole Board meets every Friday morning at 9.30 except during public holidays. The meetings usually end before 1.00 p.m.

(b) An average of 50 to 60 cases are considered at each meeting. Between 25 and 30 per cent of these cases are reviews of persons either on parole or on supervision.

MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF CHILDREN

(Question No. 115)

The Hon. B. P. DUNN (North Western Province) asked the Minister for Conservation, for the Minister of Health:

In relation to school and pre-school medical examination of children—(i) what form of sight testing is carried out, and is it adequate to detect all problems; and (ii) will a more extensive test be considered and introduced?

The Hon. W. V. HOUGHTON (Minister for Conservation)—The answer supplied by the Minister of Health is:

(i) The form of sight testing most frequently performed in pre-schools is the 7 letter Sheridan Gardiner test. The single "E" is used by some doctors.

In schools the most frequently used test is the Snellen Chart. The illiterate E, the single "E" and the Sheridan Gardiner 7 letter test are used when the Snellen test cannot be performed.

School nurses and medical officers also use the presence of symptoms, observations from teachers and squint testing in determining the need for referral of children. These tests detect refractive errors and other medical conditions which are likely to cause difficulty in education and which are treatable.

(ii) This matter is currently under review.
The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman) took the chair at 2.6 p.m. and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MEDIA OWNERSHIP

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition)—I draw the attention of the Premier to a press statement he issued on 2 January this year announcing that the Government would appoint an all-party committee to investigate media ownership and control in Victoria. I also remind the Premier of an answer that he gave to a question asked in this Chamber some three weeks ago when he stated that media ownership was not a current problem.

In the light of those two statements by the Premier, can the honourable gentleman advise the House why he has now decided to appoint a retired, 77-year-old judge to carry out an inquiry into the media, and how he proposes to overcome in the terms of reference, the constitutional difficulty of an examination into the electronic media and its relationship to the inquiry which he has announced today?

Mr HAMER (Premier)—First of all, I deplore the reference by the Leader of the Opposition to the man selected for this task. He is a very distinguished jurist and has had long experience as a judge in the Supreme Court and in the County Court before that. He has had years of experience in legal matters. It is the decision of the Government that this kind of investigation is best made by an independent person. The report, when it eventually becomes available, will be made public, and if honourable members want to debate it, then they will be free to do so. TheLeader of the Opposition is making a number of unfortunate assumptions before the investigation commences.

The second part of the question related to the electronic media. I remind the Leader of the Opposition that, under the Constitution, this is a Federal matter, and it is not intended and was not intended at any time that any investigation should relate to them directly. Where they come into the picture is that certain protections and precautions are afforded to the electronic media in the form of restrictions on ownership and on voting power, and the question to be answered is whether some similar form of restriction or protection should be applied to the print media as well.

Furthermore, I remind the House that Parliament has in the past enacted legislation to give protection under certain conditions to bodies such as trustee companies by way of restricting voting power, so as to protect them against takeover by individuals or groups. This is also a factor to be taken into account, as required by the terms of reference for the inquiry.

I believe the best action which could be taken is to await the outcome of what I am sure will be a thorough and completely independent inquiry, and then the Leader of the Opposition or anyone else can make his own contribution to the debate.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—Can the Premier advise the House whether the opportunity will be given to the House to debate the terms of reference of the proposed inquiry and whether legislation will be introduced if necessary? If not, will the opportunity be given to debate the terms of reference and the area of the investigation?
Mr HAMER (Premier)—The introduction of legislation is not necessary. The inquiry will be established in due course under the ordinary provisions by the Governor in Council.

If the Leader of the Opposition or the Leader of the National Party have any propositions to make as to the terms of reference, I shall be glad to consider them.

HOUSING COMMISSION CONTRACTS

Mr COLEMAN (Syndal)—I refer the Minister of Housing to an article which appeared in today's Sun stating that a Mrs Ross, who is purported to be the representative of the Wodonga group of tenants who saw the Minister yesterday, said that when the contracts of sale which were written when Wodonga residents purchased their houses were returned by the Housing Commission, a clause had been added to them relating to the escalation of interest rates up to the bond rate. I ask the Minister whether that is a fact and whether the matter has been brought to his attention in any way.

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—The situation is not as it has been reported. The purchase title documents for the properties at Wodonga have been examined and reveal that in each case the purchasers had signed a conditional offer form prior to the signing of a contract of sale, and one of the clauses in the conditional offer form stated:

The Housing Commission reserves the right to vary the interest rates as set out therein to a new rate as may be determined from time to time and also the principal proportion of the instalment.

This would in effect reduce the term of the contract. Those conditional offers were then referred to the Housing Commission and the contracts were prepared, again including a clause providing for interest escalation. They were forwarded to the commission's agents at Wodonga, who arranged for them to be signed by the purchasers and returned to Melbourne. At no stage was an additional clause added to the contract of sale.

However, when the contract of sale was again returned to the purchasers an additional note was added drawing the attention of the purchasers to the interest escalation clause and to the clause saying that there could be no resale of the property for five years.

CO-OPERATIVE FARMERS AND GRAZIERS DIRECT MEAT SUPPLY LTD

Mr FOGARTY (Sunshine)—I ask the Treasurer whether tenders for the sale of Co-operative Farmers and Graziers Direct Meat Supply Ltd closed last week on or about Wednesday, 15 October. If so, was the Treasurer kept informed of the intentions of the company because of its financial involvement as a guarantor to Barclay's Bank? If that is the case, can the Treasurer assure the House that the rights of the Government, of the employees and of the shareholders have been protected?

Mr THOMPSON (Treasurer)—I expect to receive a report on that matter later this week. The interests of the Government will be considered carefully before any action is taken.

RAILWAY LOOP LINES

Mr McGrath (Lowan)—The Minister of Transport will be aware of the various loop lines that have been installed on the main Adelaide to Melbourne line. One of them is the loop between Pimpinio and Dimboola. Can the honourable gentleman inform me when the signals will be installed so that the loop lines can be put into operation, as they will be needed to accommodate wheat carrying trains during the forthcoming harvest?

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—At this stage I do not have from VicRail information on when the signals will be installed. However, I have asked that all capital improvements intended to be operational for this year's grain harvest be made the subject of a report. I shall obtain that report from VicRail and make it available to the honourable member.
BRIGHTON—SANDRINGHAM RAILWAY LINE

Mrs PATRICK (Brighton)—Referring to the Lonie report, can the Minister of Transport advise whether the Government has any intention of closing the Brighton—Sandringham line?

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—In reply to the honourable member for Brighton and any other honourable member who might be inclined to make a disorderly interjection, the answer is, “No decision has been made”.

SHIRE OF BASS PLANNING SCHEME

Mr CAIN (Bundoora)—Does the Minister for Planning currently have before him an application to amend a planning scheme with a matching interim development order for the Shire of Bass? If so, as land concerned in that plan is critically affected by these proposals and as that land is held by companies of which the Minister of Transport is a director and a shareholder and as these companies currently have subdivision applications pending, will the honourable gentleman assure the House that the strong advice given to him by the Western Port Regional Planning Authority to reject the interim development order because it had a potential for conferring benefits and was controversial, will be followed by him? If so, when will the Minister do so and will he also advise, in view of the allegations of secrecy and conflict of interest, why the matter has not been made public?

Mr LIEBERMAN (Minister for Planning)—The question asked by the honourable member for Bundoora contains various inferences which I believe he will greatly regret having made in so far as they reflect unfairly on people.

I am considering a report in respect of a proposed Shire of Bass interim development order which was referred by me to the Western Port Regional Planning Authority for comment and advice, which, I am sure, the honourable member for Bundoora will agree was a proper course of action for me. I have not yet received that advice and have not studied it but when I study it, it will receive the attention it requires under the Act.

SPECIAL SCHOOL FACILITIES

Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston)—The Assistant Minister of Education will be aware of the policy of special schools in their treatment of the handicapped in endeavouring to integrate as many handicapped children as possible into other schools. This leaves some facilities of special schools unused. Has the department considered using those facilities for some other purpose?

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—It is the policy of the Special Services Division and of the Education Department generally to try wherever possible to integrate handicapped children into schools attended by children without handicaps. That has been achieved by modifications to building design where children, with their parents’ consent and on the advice of the department, attend ordinary primary, secondary or technical schools.

It has come to notice that a number of special schools for handicapped children are under-enrolled and a process of reversing the procedure has been embarked upon in a number of situations where groups of children without handicaps are being brought into special schools to allow them to learn in the same context of handicapped children. This experiment or action is being carefully supervised by the division and to date has been successful in providing an understanding by those students of the handicapped child.

AUDITOR-GENERAL’S REPORT

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray)—I remind the Treasurer of the statement in the Auditor-General’s report that many departments and Government organizations are still refusing to implement appropriate internal audit systems and because such internal audit systems upgrade the level of performance of Government departments and contribute significantly to eliminating waste and efficiency, will the Treasurer agree to take whatever steps are necessary to
ensure that all Government departments and organizations institute these appropriate internal audit systems?

Mr THOMPSON (Treasurer)—The answer in general is, "Yes". I will be having discussions with the Auditor-General on certain aspects of the report. The question of the provision of auditing facilities and the appointment of auditors for various school councils is one that occupied the attention of the Auditor-General in his report presented yesterday. A major change has taken place in the Education Department by way of providing increased authority to school councils.

Previously the auditing responsibilities were carried out by the central auditing branch. The Government is encouraging more school councils particularly in the primary area, to carry out their own audits. The Auditor-General drew attention to approximately 800 schools that had not provided the type of auditing system which the Auditor-General considered desirable. That is one aspect to which the Auditor-General drew special attention and I am well aware of it in view of my experience in the education portfolio.

However, there are other references in the report of the Auditor-General to methods of auditing and it would be the aim of the discussions to take necessary action to ensure that the recommendations contained in the report are carried out.

HAND OF FAITH GOLD NUGGET

Mr HANN (Rodney)—Following the recent announcement on the finding of the Hand of Faith gold nugget at Wedderburn, can the Premier, as Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism, explain why no attempt was made to advise the North Central Regional Tourist Authority of the publicity concerning the find and why the Premier did not use the occasion as an opportunity to promote regional tourism in Victoria?

Mr HAMER (Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism)—The finding of the Hand of Faith gold nugget was an immense surprise and coup for the finders and has aroused world-wide interest. I have received press cuttings on the nugget from America, Portugal and Germany. I am sorry if the North Central Regional Tourist Authority was not present at the announcement. However, that nugget was committed to a dealer in Melbourne and he brought it to me. I arranged for him to bring it the next day and to show it to the assembled media. That is all that happened, but I have to say this to the honourable member, that the whole thing was done in the context of what effect it might have not only on the north central region, but on all the regions of Victoria where gold has been discovered in the past. It is not just confined to one area. It is of immense importance to the whole area, and the fact is that it has had that effect. There is, especially at week-ends, a great increase in the number of people going out with detectors and picks and shovels trying to make their fortunes.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS FOR BALLARAT INTERSECTION

Mr A. T. EVANS (Ballarat North)—Is the Minister for Police and Emergency Services aware that since Bridge Street, Ballarat, was converted into a mall, that the west-bound traffic on the Western Highway is diverted into Little Bridge Street and this has created a dangerous crossing at the intersection of Peel Street and Little Bridge Street. Could the honourable gentleman inform the House when the Road Safety and Traffic Authority will approve funds for the installation of traffic lights at this intersection before there is a fatality.

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—I recall that when this particular area was to be made part of the Western Highway it was found that it was part of a Crown reservation, and to include it as part of the Western Highway and to install traffic lights would involve an Act of Parliament.

In view of the obvious need to provide some lights at this area, I will see what can be done to have them installed and to attend to any legal niceties at a later date.
**DRUG PROBLEMS**

Mr ROPER (Brunswick)—In view of the Premier's renewed interest in the State's drug problems, can the Minister of Health explain to the House why a request last year from the Mental Health Division for $185,000 for non-metropolitan drug problems was refused, and why the total amount for voluntary sector drug problems, apart from Odyssey House, for the whole of the State this financial year is only $150,000, and what action has been taken to provide the additional funds necessary so that drug programmes can be mounted throughout the State.

Mr BORTHWICK (Minister of Health)—The alcohol and drug services group has been meeting with the various voluntary agencies in recent months and has been endeavouring to estimate what in fact they need. The original figure the honourable member quoted was an estimate. Relatively, up until this Budget, there has been no major allotment other than for about nine units. The amount provided in this Budget, which obviously will not cover a full financial year, in my view, is a very good start in an area where we can do something and we are now about to do it.

**ELECTRICITY TARIFFS**

Mr TANNER (Caulfield)—I ask the Minister for Minerals and Energy upon what basis the State Electricity Commission calculates the rates for its various tariffs; why the rate for tariff M option 5 is lower than the domestic and farm domestic general service rate G.B., and whether Alcoa of Australia Ltd will meet the cost of generation and supply of electricity to its proposed aluminium smelter at Portland.

Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—I think the best way to answer the first part of the honourable member's question is to suggest that the honourable member might read the State Electricity Commission report for 1978-79. The information required by the honourable member is contained in the report, including how the accounts are assessed and their basis. Rather than going into a lengthy explanation, I suggest that he read the report.

The tariff M rates are lower than domestic and farm tariffs because of the high usage, or load factor, of 97 per cent, and the high voltage at which the power is taken, at 500,000 volts instead of either 240 volts or 400 volts.

The answer to the last part of the question is, "Yes".

**PETROL STANDARDS**

Mr AMOS (Morwell)—Is the Minister of Consumer Affairs aware of complaints by the Institute of Trading Standards and Automobile Chambers of Commerce that petrol companies are filling the underground tanks of some service stations with sub-standard petrol, thus duping the motorists over the octane rating and clearly ripping them off? One organization claimed that petrol was of a different colour than usual—yellow-green, evil-smelling and not unlike stale horse urine.

If so, will the Minister investigate those complaints and advise the House why the Government has not adopted the Standards Association of Australia standard of colouring super grade petrol red and standard grade petrol yellow, which would prevent such mal-practices?

Mr RAMSAY (Minister of Consumer Affairs)—No, the institute has not complained to me about the matters raised by the honourable member. In the event of the institute doing so, I shall certainly have the matters investigated. If the evil practice to which the honourable member referred exists I am sure that colouring of the petrol would not prevent unprincipled operators from devising suitable colouring for their substituted products.

**CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES**

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—Will the Minister of Housing indicate to the House the amount of funds allocated to co-operative housing societies for the financial year 1980-81 compared with that of last year, explaining why many co-operative housing societies receive considerably less this financial year than
the level of funding that they received last financial year? Further, what criteria was used in setting the levels?

Mr DIXON (Minister of Housing)—The amount of funds in 1980-81 is $38.2 million and the amount allocated in the preceding financial year was approximately the same. I am not certain of the exact figure but I shall obtain it and advise the honourable member.

The differences this year compared to last year result from the Ministry undertaking a sizeable study into the effectiveness of co-operative housing societies in Victoria. Areas under consideration have been the efficiency of the secretaries, the capacities of those societies to raise funds outside and the general way in which the secretaries are conducting their operations.

There are four major criteria that have been used. The fourth is waiting lists which were some indication of the needs in the respective areas. On those four criteria, an assessment was made of every co-operative housing society in Victoria. Funds were allocated according to those assessments. They have diverged, to a degree, from the funds which were made available for the preceding year. The way in which funds were made available in the preceding year was to find out the way in which they had been made available in the year before.

An assessment was required to try to efficiently find out the degree to which extra funds could be raised and the real need that was occurring in the individual areas. The result has been that there have been some alterations, but, as I have said, the over-all level of funds is approximately the same but distinctions of those bases have applied in certain areas.

The other point I make is that the Latrobe Valley and Portland were particularly ear-marked by the Government, both through the Premier's announcement and by myself, as being areas requiring extra attention, and also the area of Mildura because of needs which were shown in that area.

STRIKE BY TEACHER UNIONS

Mr RICHARDSON (Forest Hill)—Is the Assistant Minister of Education aware of the strike called by the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association, the Victorian Teachers Union and the Technical Teachers Association of Victoria which is affecting students of primary, secondary and technical schools in the eastern metropolitan area today? If the Minister is aware of this strike, will he inform the House whether, on the matter of limited tenure employment of teachers, it is a fact that the Education Department refuses to negotiate, as is constantly claimed by the teacher union leadership?

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—On 8 October the Minister of Education, myself and officers of the Education Department met with the three teacher organizations. The matter was thrashed out and a proposal put relating to the abolition of limited tenure appointments. That proposal is still under consideration by the Minister and by the Government.

In spite of that consideration being given to that proposal we have today yet another strike on this issue which, in my view, does not seem to say much about the good faith of the other negotiating party on this matter. One has to give serious thought to the proposal being put forward because in all proposals of this sort there are winners and there are losers.

What is involved in the proposal is a further substantial increase in the relieving teacher force at a cost of approximately $2 million for every 100 teachers added to that relieving teacher pool and a substantial increase in the use of emergency teachers on a 30-day optional renewable basis for emergency teachers.

Because principals will have the right to choose those emergency teachers, rather than the department, and because teachers will have the right to opt not to renew after 30 days there are clear winners and losers. The winners are the more experienced and second family income teachers who are much more likely to be chosen by principals for
emergency teacher appointments and would probably prefer to teach part time anyhow.

The losers are the recently graduated younger teachers who are less likely to get emergency teacher appointments and who are our priority for limited tenure appointments and who, as a result of holding those appointments have priority for further permanent employment. Another loser is the building programme of the department which will suffer a diminution of funds to allow that extra cost to be incurred for this proposal.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! It seems to me that the Minister is debating the question. The question was whether the Minister was aware of the strike happening in the eastern area of the State and was the department and its officers guilty of not negotiating or not meeting with the unions. I ask the Minister to answer the question.

Mr LACY—I was on my last sentence. Finally, I shall explain the reason for the consideration.

Mr FORDHAM (Footscray)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, as you indicated, the question was straightforward; it was also interesting and quite topical. If the Minister wants to debate the matter, as he seems keen to do, I suggest the honourable gentleman prepares a Ministerial statement. The Minister seems to think it is an important matter and he should make the opportunity of debating it available to Parliament rather than using this transitory way of putting forward half the story.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! There is no point of order. The Minister should complete his answer.

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education)—Finally, the losers are the children who, every 30 days, would face the prospect of having a new teacher. Limited tenure employment relates to the total period of the vacancy. What would happen in the proposed circumstances is that every 30 days the children of a class would face the prospect of having a new teacher.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
Loy Yang situation

Mr Balfour (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—I wish to make a statement on the very serious situation which has developed at the Loy Yang construction site in the Latrobe Valley. Facts which are not in dispute are that, because of industrial unrest, the Loy Yang project is now running twelve months behind schedule, and that the longer the delay continues, the more likely become shortages in Victoria's power supplies after 1983 when Loy Yang was scheduled to begin operations.

Let me first deal with two allegations about the State Electricity Commission. The State Electricity Commission has been accused of writing to contractors urging the dismissal of 600 building workers who were laid off last April. It has been accused of wanting to slow progress on site because it lacked money to pay for work done on all contracts.

Both these allegations are utterly baseless. The State Electricity Commission has at no time been short of the necessary funds to carry on the works in full and, in fact, the large majority of the work force, some 1100 men, have remained fully employed on the job. The State Electricity Commission has never urged any dismissals whatever. Its aim and its interest lies in having the disputes resolved as soon as possible.

The hold-up of work at Loy Yang is due entirely to the action of the unions. There are two main factors preventing a return to normal work. One factor is the completely unrealistic pay demands for workers employed there, particularly by the Australian Building Construction Employees and Builders Labourers' Federation (BLF). These claims go to the extent in one case of demanding 27 weeks pay for work that has not been done. The other factor is the inability of the union movement to sort out demarcation disputes between individual unions.

Let me now explain in some detail the industrial situation at Loy Yang.

CARPENTERS DISPUTE

Major trouble commenced in May 1979 when carpenters employed on the Loy Yang site commenced strike action
in support of a claim for a "special class carpenter" classification, claiming an extra $2 per hour. The strike lasted approximately eleven weeks. The action was taken on the grounds of relativity with labourers, and the seat of discontent was a decision of the Arbitration Commission awarding 25 cents per hour extra to steel fixers (BLF Group 2 classification), which put the steel fixer marginally ahead of the carpenter (1 cent per hour). The matter was eventually determined by Commissioner Griffin on 15 August 1979 when the claim was rejected. The carpenters union subsequently filed a further application for an increase in their tool allowance on the Loy Yang site. Judge Alley concluded proceedings on 7 August 1980 by saying "having heard the full submissions I conclude that the claim is bound up with deeper questions of wage relativities that will undoubtedly be considered in the discussions and conferences to be undertaken under the oversight of Mr Justice Marks".

READYMIX DISPUTE

The present concrete batch plant operators' dispute has as its basis a wage rate claim by the BLF of an extra $1.50 per hour for its members employed at the Loy Yang concrete batching plant of the Readymix Company, the company which supplies concrete to a number of contractors. If granted, this would have brought the wage rate for these builders' labourers above that of skilled tradesmen in the building and metal industries.

On 27 November 1979 the Readymix employees imposed an overtime ban in support of their claim, and the Master Builders Association of Victoria notified the Arbitration Commission of a dispute. In December there were several one-day stoppages, and the ban remained in force until 18 December. On 20 December the matter was before Commissioner Griffin, and the BLF did not appear. Commissioner Griffin recommended reclassifying the employees to Group 2 labourer which brought them into line with rates being paid to Australian Workers Union members employed by Pioneer Concrete, who were being paid under the Australian Workers Union Construction and Maintenance Award, which contains a classification for concrete batch plant operator.

Work continued normally until 15 February 1980 when a meeting was held with a BLF organizer present. On 28 February the BLF lodged a claim with the State Wages Board for "increased allowances for concrete testers and concrete batch operators and crew at the Loy Yang power station site". The first meeting of the board was 5 March. Readymix employees met on 6 March and reimposed their overtime ban.

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition)—Mr Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order. I draw your attention to the fact that the subject-matter being discussed by the Minister in this Ministerial statement is subject-matter before the Arbitration Commission adjudicating on the dispute at the present time. I should like to know whether it is in order for the Minister to proceed with this statement at this juncture. Why does he not put his case in the court? Apparently this is the case submitted by the State Electricity Commission to the Arbitration Commission. I would suggest it is unprecedented that the Government should come into this place while a dispute and a case are still being discussed with the hope of resolution.

Mr Tanner—How many years will it take, though?

Mr WILKES—I am putting a question to the Speaker to decide whether the Minister is in order. That is my point of order.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Order! Before we discuss the point of order, and the Leader of the Opposition is obviously referring to the sub judice convention, I ask the Minister whether he can advise the Chair what stage proceedings before the Arbitration Commission have reached and whether this matter would fall within the sub judice convention.

Mr BALFOUR (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—I do not believe it would, Mr Speaker. There is one action, the dispute between the Builders Labourers Federation and the Federated Iron-workers of Australia over who is to
erect the steelwork at the power station. That matter was taken to the Arbitration Commission and a decision was made but was not accepted. An appeal was lodged and it is now back before the Arbitration Commission. I believe the commission will meet on that matter during the first week in November.

Because so much has been said about Loy Yang and the reasons why work is not proceeding, I thought the matter should be set out factually and logically, and that is all I have endeavoured to do here.

**The SPEAKER**—A similar matter relating to an industrial dispute has been before the House and the sub judice convention was applied as that matter was before the Arbitration Commission. The question of sub judice must depend on whether the matters being canvassed or discussed would be likely in any way to prejudice the matter before the Arbitration Commission.

I believe the Ministerial statement is covering the same ground as it is before the Arbitration Commission and I would therefore rule that the matter may possibly be prejudicial while the matter is before the commission, and it is improper therefore for the Minister to proceed with it.

**Mr BIRRELL** (Geelong West)—Mr Speaker, I would like your adjudication on whether it would be permissible for the Minister to detach a portion of his statement and read the rest.

**The SPEAKER**—It would be perfectly in order for the Minister to detach that section of his statement which relates to matters before the commission and to proceed with the rest of the statement, if he so chooses. The matter he is dealing with at present which is, as the Minister says, currently before the Arbitration Commission, would be unacceptable.

**Mr BALFOUR** (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—Mr Speaker, may I suggest, as was suggested by the Leader of the Opposition by interjection, that perhaps the matter could be adjourned so that you may give some thought to it?

**Mr WILKES** (Leader of the Opposition)—Mr Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order. You, Sir, have already ruled on the matter.

**The SPEAKER**—Order! We already have one point of order.

**Mr BALFOUR** (Minister for Minerals and Energy)—The only matter which could have any bearing on the Arbitration Commission is the matter of the dispute on the boilers. Over the past several weeks since Mr Justice Marks was appointed as a commissioner to deal with the Latrobe Valley, there have been meetings; and I suppose one could say that, while people are meeting before him, it could be the subject of conciliation and arbitration.

**The SPEAKER**—I ask the Minister to reconsider his statement, withdrawing those matters that are currently before the commission. Any discussion of matter before the commission would infringe the sub judice convention. I would give the Minister an opportunity later this day, if he so desires, of making a Ministerial statement, with those portions of his statement relating to matters before the commission omitted from it.

**Mr B. J. EVANS** (Gippsland East)—I wish to raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. In view of your ruling, I now ask what is the status of the document circulated, which I have already circulated to the press. Can information contained in that document be discussed publicly?

**The SPEAKER**—Order! That part of the statement that has been read is a document of the House and will be reported in *Hansard*. It therefore attracts the privilege that any material quoted in *Hansard* attracts. That part of the document that has not been read attracts no privilege and is not a document of the House. It is not a public document, it remains the property of the Minister for Minerals and Energy.

**PETITIONS**

**Limited tenure teachers**

**Mr WEIDEMAN** (Frankston) presented a petition from certain citizens opposing the policy of limited tenure em-


ployment for teachers and praying that the system be abolished and that teachers presently employed on limited tenure be given ongoing employment. He stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 1570 signatures.

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

Health and human relations courses

Mr BIRRELL (Geelong West) presented a petition from certain citizens praying that action be taken to suspend all health and human relations courses conducted in Victorian schools and to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the subject-matter. He stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 60 signatures.

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

Country rail passenger services—Sexual offences

Mr REYNOLDS (Gisborne) presented two petitions: 1. From certain citizens opposing the recommendations contained in the report of the Victorian Transport Study for the closure of country rail passenger services, particularly the Melbourne-Kyneton-Bendigo service, and praying that country rail services be maintained and upgraded; 2. From certain members and adherents of the Kyneton Baptist Church praying that the House take no action to diminish the existing law relating to certain sexual offences. He stated that the petitions were respectfully worded, in order, and bore 953 and 34 signatures respectively.

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

Health and human relations courses

Mr McARTHUR (Ringwood) presented a petition from certain citizens praying that action be taken to suspend all health and human relations courses conducted in Victorian schools and to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the subject-matter. He stated that the petition was respectfully worded, in order, and bore 119 signatures.

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

Nuclear power generation

Dr COGHILL (Werribee)—I present a petition from certain citizens praying that there be no nuclear power generation in Victoria. The petition is respectfully worded, in order, and bears 302 signatures. I desire the petition to be read.

The Standing Orders were suspended to enable the petition to be read, and the petition was read by the Clerk. It was in the following terms:

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

The humble petition of the under-signed citizens of the State of Victoria sheweth grave concern at the risks to ourselves, our families and future generations from proposed nuclear power generation, particularly the site near Werribee now being evaluated, and from the unsolved problems of the safe disposal of nuclear waste.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the Victorian Government honour its promises that there will be no nuclear power generation in Victoria.

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

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

DRUG PROBLEM IN VICTORIA

Mr HAMER (Premier)—By leave, I move:

That there be presented to this House a copy of the report of the Inter-departmental Working Party on the Drug Problem in Victoria, Volume 2.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr HAMER (Premier) presented the report in compliance with the foregoing order.

It was ordered that the report be laid on the table and be printed.

PAPER

The following paper, pursuant to the direction of an Act of Parliament, was laid on the table by the Clerk:


STATE FORESTS WORKS AND SERVICES BILL

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman) announced the presentation of a message from His Excellency the
Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the State Forests Works and Services Bill.

Mr I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture), pursuant to Standing Order No. 169, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to authorize expenditure on works and services and other purposes relating to State forests.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

EDUCATIONAL GRANTS (CONTINUATION) BILL

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman) announced the presentation of a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that an appropriation be made from the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the Educational Grants (Continuation) Bill.

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education), pursuant to Standing Order No. 169, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Educational Grants Act 1973.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

POLICE REGULATION (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr THOMPSON (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Police Regulation Act 1958 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

COUNTRY ROADS (ROAD MARKING) BILL

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend section 113 of the Country Roads Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

PUBLIC SERVICE (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr HAMER (Premier) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Public Service Act 1974 and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

CHARLTON (LAND EXCHANGE) BILL

Mr WOOD (Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to provide for the exchange of certain lands in the Parish of Charlton East, and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (GUARANTEES) (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr LACY (Assistant Minister of Education) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Educational Institutions (Guarantees) Act 1976.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

YOUTH, SPORT AND RECREATION (AGREEMENTS) BILL

Mr DIXON (Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Youth, Sport and Recreation Act 1972 with respect to the powers of the Minister to enter into agreements and arrangements and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

AGRICULTURE ACTS (REPEAL) BILL

Mr I. W. SMITH (Minister of Agriculture) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal the Brands Act 1928 and the Cattle Breeding Act 1958.

The motion was agreed to.
The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

HEALTH (REPORTING TO PARLIAMENT) BILL (No. 2)

Mr BORTHWICK (Minister of Health) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend certain Acts administered by the Minister of Health to require bodies established under those Acts to submit reports and financial statements before the Minister of Health, to require the Minister of Health to lay such reports and statements before both Houses of Parliament and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

COUNTRY PASSENGER SERVICES

Mr CRABB (Knox)—I move:

That this House rejects the recommendations contained in the report of the Victorian Transport Study entitled "Country Passenger Services" and directs the Minister of Transport to produce a plan to expand, improve and coordinate existing country rail and bus services.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Is the motion seconded?

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—Yes, Mr Speaker.

Mr CRABB (Knox)—Just as the Government has a mandate in respect of metropolitan public transport, which I outlined at some length to the House yesterday, it also has a mandate in respect of country passenger services.

In recent years, and more particularly during the last election, the Government promised to improve the level and quality of passenger services for the people of country Victoria. That commitment ought to be met by the Government which should have no hesitation in rejecting this study report which calls for the closure of all country passenger rail services, and the substitution not by another public transport system of buses but rather by allowing private entrepreneurs to run buses wherever they can make a profit. That recommendation would inevitably lead to 30 per cent of Victorians who live outside the metropolitan area having virtually no public transport services.

These people who live in country Victoria pay no less taxes than the people who live in the city, and indeed their taxes go towards subsidizing such works as the Melbourne underground rail loop, which Victoria will be funding for the next 40 to 50 years. The situation which is recommended in the report is that any taxes paid by country people will not be returned to country people by way of public transport services. To me that appears to be iniquitous and an inappropriate recommendation to put before the Parliament. However, the task of delineating the series of promises which Government supporters have made to country people and which have appeared in the media will be left to my colleague, the honourable member for Coburg, to produce later in the debate.

I turn to the Lonie report entitled "Country Passenger Services". Again it is a fairly shallow document without any of the objective considerations which one would expect in a recommendation on such an important matter. In this report Mr Lonie gives no consideration to any future potential that the railways may have as distinct from the present situation. The report gives virtually no consideration to rising fuel costs and increasing scarcity of energy and gives no consideration to matters which could be applied to improve the railway system and to expand opportunities for business, such as improving the tourist industry.

Throughout the whole report Mr Lonie never mentions motor rail services, whereas one of the most successful services of Victorian Railways is the motor rail service from Melbourne to Mildura.

Equally, in his report, Mr Lonie does not mention the social cost of accidents, the strain on drivers and so on that is a concomitant because of the increased congestion on country roads which would result from the closure of the public transport system.
Indeed, nowhere in the report is the concept of social cost or social benefit considered. The fact is that most of the country railway lines have at one time or another a level of about 300 passengers on a train. I do not say that is on every train or that it happens every day, but it happens with fair regularity. If 300 passengers could be accommodated in one train, they could be accommodated in 8 buses or 200 cars, considering the way people use their cars. Those factors were not considered by Mr Lonie.

However, perhaps the most damning indictment of this report is that at no stage in it are the figures disaggregated between one service and another. All the country railway services in Victoria are bundled together in one big lump and the decision is made to close them all. It is inevitable that some of those services must be attracting greater patronage than others, and yet Mr Lonie in his report paints them all with the same brush and decides to close them all.

I turn to the report and note that on page 1 of the introduction Mr Lonie referred to the level of country passengers and showed that the number of country passenger journeys in the year ended 30 June 1979 was 3.6 million. He then stated that this figure was the lowest recorded since 1873. That statement is at odds with the information that I have collected from the Victorian Railways annual reports. Indeed, the information I have shows that between 1971 and 1976 country railway patronage increased from 3.4 million passengers to 4.4 million, and yet because of the closure of many country railway lines in the ensuing period, the figure has again been reduced to 3.6 million, which is still higher than 3.4 million which applied a decade ago.

I draw to the attention of the House what I believe is a misinterpretation of the figures by Mr Lonie, but certainly, whatever the true figures are, whether those provided by VicRail or by Mr Lonie, to say that the number of country passenger journeys has reduced over a period without considering that the number of rail services has been reduced equally is hardly an adequate comparison on which to base an analysis.

On page 3 under the heading "Description of Services" Mr Lonie drew attention to one of the most salient facts about country transport services, and that is the condition of the rolling-stock fleet. In paragraph 2.2 he stated that:

...two-thirds of country passenger rolling-stock fleet comprises wooden-bodied vehicles varying between 51 and 73 years of age.

He went on to indicate that they are incapable of travelling at the speed which is appropriate to modern railways and that real safety problems are associated with that.

The wooden-bodied carriages which comprise most of the fleet were built between 1906 and 1927. The rail motors which comprise most of the system were built as long ago as 1928, but even the steel-bodied carriages which comprise the rest of the fleet are now getting pretty old. I am informed that they were built as long ago as 1937, in some cases. The most recent were built in 1963, so even the best carriages on the system are aged between 43 and 17 years. However, Mr Lonie, having noticed that the fleet is rather old, did not go on to suggest or even to consider what level of patronage or what use the community would find in the rail system if it were improved. The option of improving the rail system is not seriously considered at any stage in this report.

It is worth while for the House to reflect on at least a couple of submissions which are summarized in the report. At page 14 it is recorded that the Melton Transport Co-ordination Committee drew the attention of the study group to the problems of that area, and the fact that is worth remarking on is that it demonstrated that the costs of commuting to and from Melbourne by car from Melton were estimated to be $23 a week, or 10 per cent of the average pay. That is a significant factor and one which is likely to increase dramatically, and it is a cost that the people of Melton
are going to be forced into paying unless an adequate public transport service is provided to cater for them.

On page 15 in paragraph 3:20 it is stated that the Healesville railway line was the subject of a number of submissions which drew attention to a number of factors which could possibly be exploited to make that railway service successful. Those factors were the tourist potential of the area, the scope for some increase in freight in the area and the possibility of reintroducing several services. The dinner dance trains, apparently, had been successful at one time; the steam rail excursions are extremely successful when they are provided, and race trains to Yarra Glen and Healesville also attract a large patronage. The final factor upon which the opinion was based was the congested nature of major roads in the area. Any honourable member who has tried to drive from Melbourne to Healesville on a Sunday afternoon will have seen the extent of traffic congestion on the Maroondah Highway. That could be overcome by the provision of an efficient railway service.

At page 20 of the report, which is a section of the submission made by the Loddon-Campaspe Regional Planning Authority, the Bendigo line is mentioned in some detail. That authority submitted that the Bendigo-Melbourne train, when it stops only at Castlemaine and Kyneton, still takes 2 hours 15 minutes to travel the 162 kilometres at an average speed of 72 kilometres an hour.

It suggests that the road journey from Bendigo to Melbourne takes about 2 hours and that the rail service could be much more successful and adequate if it could achieve a speed of something in the order of 128 kilometres an hour, reducing the time of the journey to about 1 hour 15 minutes so that it would then become a feasible alternative to the use of the motor car.

I move from the submissions to the section headed "Financial Aspects" at page 30 of the report. In paragraph 41 Mr Lonie lists a table setting out what are believed by VicRail to be the receipts and expenditure for various sections of its business. It should be pointed out that the costs shown there are not avoidable costs; actually they are aggregate costs. In other words, the overheads or a proportion of the overheads are included in the figures. It is a significant criticism of all the transport study reports, and perhaps particularly of this one, that the figures given are not disaggregated into those amounts of money the payment of which could be avoided. At no level does Mr Lonie consider the actual amounts which were likely to be saved by the closure of any specific railway line or the exchange of the service for a bus or some other type of service.

At page 32 where avoidable costs are used in a table of results by type of train operation, it can be seen—and this is about the only place where the figures are disaggregated in any way—that long haul services, which are not clearly defined, represent about 75 per cent of avoidable costs. In terms of international levels of subsidy for public transport that is an excellent result and one that no Government should be concerned about. However, in his recommendations Mr Lonie does not take that view but aggregates them.

The table also indicates that medium haul services, whatever they are, have a recovery rate of 58 per cent, and the other services have recovery rates of between 38 per cent and 17 per cent in respect of feeder services, which certainly is an indicator that there is something very wrong with the feeder services being provided.

If one considers the infrequency with which rail motors conducting those feeder services manage to provide an adequate service, one realizes the reason why the pattern is so low.

On page 34 of the report is the significant admission that the estimates involved in the avoidable operating costs for country passenger operations involve approximately 2600 people. That is about the most alarming aspect of the report. If the recommendations are adopted by the Government, 2600 people will join the dole queues around Victoria. They will not be just train drivers and shunters but people
at all levels in the VicRail organization, if the table reflects the actuality of the situation. Unfortunately again the transport study does not disaggregate those figures between the different types of country operations. It does not disaggregate them between long hauls and medium haul operations. Therefore the figures are not of much use in making a sophisticated judgment.

On page 36 of the report which is the commencement of the discussion section of that report, it is worth looking at the matters that Mr Lonie took into consideration. His first four points of discussion all relate to costs. Firstly, he said that they cover a smaller proportion of avoidable costs than any of VicRail’s major market segments. That is a true statement only if one aggregates all country passenger services. It is not an accurate statement in relation to the long haul and medium haul country rail services. Secondly, he said that interstate rail passenger services perform better but are still not good. Next he said that viability varies. He then talked about parcel services and the fact that parcel services cannot survive separately from passenger services, considering the cost involved. Only after all of those matters had been discussed did he say:

Service provided by rail is poor in many respects. Rolling stock is outdated and uncomfortable on country services, timetable adherence is poor, terminal facilities are at a most basic standard; journey times often compare unfavourably with road transport and infrequent services often give users little choice of travel times.

All those facts are true and well known to people in country Victoria. The next paragraph reads:

Bus services other than those contracted by VicRail are not in a much better position; they are also experiencing falling patronage and rising subsidies.

Yet, Mr Lonie expects the Government not to improve the country railway services from the appalling conditions into which they have been allowed to fall. Instead, he suggests that they be cut out altogether and given to the bus services of which he is justly critical.

On page 37 of the report there is a peculiar statement which is worthy of consideration by the House. It reads:

Given this situation, the Study Group believes the Government should seriously review its support of these activities and question how passenger transport services might be improved and/or costs lowered. Continuing reviews of rail motor feeder services have been undertaken on a random basis by the Victorian Railways Board and the Ministry of Transport and as a result progressive introduction of replacement bus services has taken place. The Board advised the Study Group however that it has been constrained from taking action on operational and financial grounds on very sub-standard services (the Lilydale-Healesville service perhaps being the best example), for other reasons.

It seems remarkable that the Victorian Government has, against the wishes of the Victorian Railways Board, directed that the board continue an unspecified number of services, including the Lilydale-Healesville service. It implies that the Victorian Railways Board wishes to close the Lilydale-Healesville service and perhaps other services, although that is not made clear in any of the data made available to me.

On page 38 of the report honourable members will find the real hard sell on the buses. Mr Lonie said:

However a general comparison of the two modes shows that:

- Capital costs for buses are substantially less than those for locomotives and rolling stock.

- Fuel usage of buses compares very favourably with all but heavily laden passenger trains.

That is a matter that I would dispute and that I would draw to the Minister’s attention as not having been demonstrated in this report in any way.

Further down the page, Mr Lonie said:

- Comfort standards for modern buses are comparable to the most modern rail carriages.

I dispute that because Victoria does not have the most modern rail carriages. At no stage does Mr Lonie consider the experience of rail services overseas, particularly in Europe where the introduction of extremely modern services attracted vast numbers of new passengers. Mr Lonie then said:

It is difficult to accurately compare and generalize running and operating costs except to note that, on existing replacement services, buses have proved to be far more economical to operate than rail based services.

Mr Crabb
He seems to imply that an empty bus running up and down a road is cheaper to run than an empty train, again taking no consideration of the concept of community cost and benefits. The community is not benefiting from many of the country rail operations. Next Mr Lonie said:

Travel times for bus services in country areas are generally superior to those of rail. That is not the observation that I have made from the representations made to me when trains have been taken off lines for temporary periods and have been replaced by buses. The Minister is interjecting. Presumably, when he contributes to the debate, he will tell me about the Nyora-Wonthaggi replacement.

The Lonie report does not take into consideration rail passenger service systems which are doing well. I am aware that the morning train from Warragul is often packed to over capacity and that it must carry passengers in the guard’s van. That service is presumably filling an excellent community need and should be extended. At random I pick the Frankston to Stony Point rail motor, the patronage of which has increased by 25 per cent in the past five years. All the local authorities believe there will be a continuation of that increase because of the development in the Stony Point area.

Another example of the difficulties that arise in trying to assess this report appears at page 39 of the report where Mr Lonie uses material which he says is from a recent examination of the market undertaken by VicRail in conjunction with consultations. The footnote on that page reads:


That report is not available to the public. It is not in the Parliamentary Library, which has not heard of it. This is yet another example of the Victorian Railways and the Government investigating the public transport system without giving the people who use the system an opportunity of commenting.

At page 48 of the report Mr Lonie dealt at last with some individual services. At paragraph 5.28 he said:

In reviewing the potential savings likely from total replacement of the country passenger services by buses, the Study Group considered the possible retention of the following services:

The first service dealt with was Melbourne-Geelong service. The reason given for the recommended retention of the service was the potential for growth of commuter traffic on the line. The next service mentioned was Melbourne and Melton to Bacchus Marsh for which the same reason was given. Mr Lonie then said, in relation to the Melbourne and Bendigo, including Kyneton, commuter services, that Bendigo was a major urban centre, the third largest outside Melbourne. I am informed that the Bendigo service carries about 4000 passengers a week.

In respect of Melbourne-Ballarat, Mr Lonie drew attention to the fact that the route suffers more than most from unreliability. Anyone who has travelled on it will know that well. The reason given was that there is a single line interstate track with a high level of freight trains on it. Mr Lonie states that Ballarat is served by an almost continuous freeway from Melbourne and comments that Bendigo differs in every respect because it has two tracks and not one and has ample rather than negative capacity and has no freeway. Indeed, there is the Calder Highway and anyone who has driven along that road recently would know the problems associated with that.

The report then lists the lines from Melbourne to Shepparton, Melbourne to Albury and Melbourne to Traralgon, where the line is already electrified. The report then lists the Melbourne to Mildura line where Mr Lonie admits that the Vinelander is the long distance service showing the least loss and is difficult to replace with an equally comparable service. That is the understatement of the century. It is a motor rail service. How would the Government purchase a bus to accommodate cars? The Vinelander cannot be replaced by a bus service or by any other type of service.
That is as far as Mr Lonie goes in drawing attention to these rail lines. The report states that the study group considered the possibility that some mix of rail and bus might work and then the report gets to the crunch where it states:

While some justification for continued suburban type services between Melbourne and Geelong might be forthcoming, no justification for continuing to provide rail-based services on any other routes mentioned can be put forward.

There is no analysis or discussion of what benefits are likely to flow to the community. There is no mention of when those rail lines are to be closed. There is no discussion on the benefit of the cost to the community of the effect on any of the various aspects of community life.

Mr Lonie omits to mention that there are 4000 passengers a week who use the Bendigo line. That works out at approximately twenty buses a day. There are 2000 passengers who use the Shepparton line; 3500 passengers who use the Traralgon line and approximately 1600 passengers use the Mildura line. It is unbelievable that any sensible person could suggest that the rail service to Mildura could adequately be replaced by a bus service. However, that is what the report recommends.

At page 50 of the report, Mr Lonie puts the crunch on Geelong in paragraph 5.34 where he states:

Replacement of all but peak hour services by bus and cancellation of the arrangement for the construction of 36 passenger carriages which are not likely to be operated with any form of economic return within the foreseeable future, is seen to be the least costly alternative in providing regular safe, comfortable and reliable transport between Geelong and Melbourne.

There follows a deliberately cryptic comment:

The capital saved would no doubt be better spent or used to better advantage for the people of Victoria, depending on priorities which government might establish.

What sort of recommendation is that? It does not suggest the capital could be spent somewhere else on public transport to better advantage. It does not suggest that public transport ought to have any money spent on it at all, but says that the Government no doubt would think of something to do with the money, and no doubt the Government would, especially if one examines the way in which the Government has spent money in recent years on world trade centres and the like. The Government would have no difficulty in ripping up the Flinders Street railway yards or doing something equally ludicrous with the money.

At page 51, Mr Lonie comes as close as possible to any positive recommendation on public transport and paragraph 5.39 highlights the truth of the recommendations, where it states:

At this stage the Study Group finds it somewhat difficult to anticipate the network of bus routes that could evolve out of a freely competitive system which permitted an entrepreneurial approach to the provision of bus services over routes other than interstate routes.

What sort of plan is that? What sort of co-ordinated transport plan for the development of Victoria is that? Even the study group finds it difficult to anticipate the network of bus groups that could evolve out of an entrepreneurial system. Of course that type of system is difficult to anticipate. That is not what the people of Victoria want. Victorians want a public transport system that is planned to meet their needs and not a system that is provided at the whim of Mr Lonie's mythical entrepreneurs.

In the conclusions which begin on page 53, there are numerous generalisations and aggregation of information. For example, in paragraph 6.2, Mr Lonie restates his point about the patronage throughout the State having declined to such an extended degree and so on. That is a generalization. It is not true of all the individual rail lines in the State and ought to be seen as being untrue. Mr Lonie then makes the point in paragraph 6.3, which states, *inter alia*:

There is an unwillingness to recognize the costs involved in maintaining and operating a fixed rail passenger service in the light of patronage levels and fares which are not sufficient to cover even the labour costs involved in providing the service.

That is not true of every rail line. Mr Lonie again averages the figures in paragraph 6.4 to talk about a subsidy of $44 million a year to the pas-
senger services and talks about an average subsidy for passengers and so on. Again, these are aggregated figures and are untrue of each individual rail line. In paragraph 6.7, Mr Lonie states:

The Study Group considers that the Government should ensure that any services provided are modern, safe, comfortable, clean, fast, suitable for the travel needs of aged and disabled persons, and above all, reliable.

Mr Lonie does not state how the Government is meant to achieve that, especially when one considers that Mr Lonie believes the services should be provided on an entrepreneurial basis.

Mr Lonie states that initially bus services ought to be operated on a franchise arrangement under the Ministry of Transport, but again hastens to repeat that in the long term these services should evolve to self-supporting, unsubsidized country-based coach services provided presumably by mythical entrepreneurs in the long term. I thought he was talking about a very long term initially and then I read the next section where he states that in any event the change should be effected within a period of three years. This is all meant to happen in three years!

The specific recommendations on the special cases are that the Geelong-Melbourne rail service should be a peak hour service only on a suburban basis. Mr Lonie states that the commuter service should be changed to buses immediately and that the Lilydale-Healesville service should be replaced by buses in the interests of safety and economy. Then, in a two-line sentence, he says that the Mornington to Frankston rail service should be replaced by appropriate bus services.

Originally, the Victorian Transport Study was to provide separate reports on each of those rail lines—the Healesville and the Mornington-Frankston rail line. The Mornington to Frankston rail line hardly gets a mention, apart from the one I have just quoted. The Lilydale-Healesville rail line is mentioned here only in three spots: Firstly, where the submissions on it are summarized; secondly, where it implies that VicRail wants to close the line anyway and, thirdly, where the report says the line should be closed. That is hardly an adequate response to the community of Healesville or to the community of Mornington.

In paragraph 6.14, Mr Lonie recommends that there should be a redundancy plan acceptable to all parties produced as soon as possible in respect to the 2600 persons whose jobs are going to be lost.

Paragraph 6.15 contains a remarkable recommendation where it states:

The Study Group sees the Transport Regulation Board as an authority with experience in the implementation of bus and road coach services, and suggests that the Board be given the task of development of the network of services required, on the basis of private enterprise ownership and operation . . .

How the Victorian Transport Study Group could ever conclude that the Transport Regulation Board is the appropriate authority, is quite beyond me. Those honourable members who represent electorates in Melbourne suburbs where the transport system is basically provided by privately owned buses would know that the transport system is in a complete shambles. It does not provide a system and yet it has been designed and implemented by the Transport Regulation Board.

The Transport Regulation Board is an entirely inappropriate body to provide the design or implement or supervise an integrated public transport system. The Transport Regulation Board is a body designed, and admirably suited, to regulating road freight trucks, and making sure that weight restrictions to axle heads are right, and everything else, but it is not for the designing of bus services.

Finally, in respect of the report, at paragraph 6.16 it is stated, inter alia:

The Study Group has had little time to examine urban bus services in any depth . . . Continuing subsidies will be required to maintain them.

That is the only mention of bus services in provincial cities.

The Opposition rejects those recommendations that will remove public transport entirely from country Vic-
toria, and will leave not one rail passenger service running and, in due course, not too many bus services running either.

The reason why I moved the original motion in the House, which eventually after amendments became the genesis of the Victorian Transport Study, was my concern for the lack of a transport plan of any kind in country Victoria. There has been no planning framework done, to my knowledge, certainly not publicly in respect of passenger services in country Victoria. It was the view of the Opposition, and it remains its view, that these services need to be planned and enquired into in an appropriate way. I believe the sort of study that should have been done to produce a decent report, should have involved country people in the investigation of their transport needs and requirements. They should have been given expert assistance from the Ministry, or consultants, but it should have been essentially a thing done by themselves. The matter that should have been examined in respect of all transport corridors in country Victoria are the following:

1. Routes and stopping places that are in demand at present, and those that will be in demand in the future as development occurs;

2. The frequency of the services that are required now and will be required in the future;

3. The improvements required to rolling stock, tracks, signals, stations, and so on;

4. The structure and level of fares and charges most suitable for the service desired;

5. The ancillary services required, such as car parking, co-ordinated feeder buses, taxi services, goods sheds, motor rail services and all the rest;

6. The volume of parcels, and other small freight, which could have been carried in conjunction with a passenger service;

7. The opportunity for special services for tourists and excursions, and so on, as was suggested by the people of Healesville;

8. Marketing measures to sell the improved service to the community;

9. The costs involved in each potential improvement and what additional patronage it would attract and what additional service that improvement would provide;

10. The social consequences and social cost of changes to the pre-existing service; and

11. What costs would be involved in upgrading roads to accommodate the increased traffic if part, or all, of the pre-existing rail service were closed.

None of those things were done in the study presented to the Parliament, and it ought to be rejected out of hand. The Government is in the same bind with this report as it was in relation to metropolitan transport. The fact is that the Government was elected with a mandate to improve the transport system. It is in receipt of a transport study recommendation that says that it should abolish the country rail system in its entirety.

It is surprising, and disappointing, that the Minister, in answer to a question without notice today from one of his own back-benchers, refused to commit the Government to the promise that it made when it was elected eighteen months ago. That is, to my mind, a denial of the very basis of Parliamentary democracy. If governments are to be elected on a set of promises, and then to consider the total rejection of those promises eighteen months later how can the people of Victoria ever believe anything this Government ever believes again?

These recommendations should have been rejected by the Government out of hand, because the Government was elected on a different policy. If the Government wants to go into the next election with the Lonie recommendations, the Opposition will be happy to accommodate it on the hustings.
Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

I suggest that it be adjourned until tomorrow.

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition)—The Opposition points out, as it did yesterday, that important issues such as this cannot be debated in three segments unless the Government provides a longer time for the debates. The Opposition recognize that, and it put the proposition to the Minister for a three-hour debate in the first place, which was rejected. The Opposition was compelled to have one speaker, the honourable member for Knox, to put the case without any repudiation by the Minister or any input by any other member. That is not debating. It is doing nothing. All that is being done is that the Opposition is putting a point of view to the Parliament. Parliaments are for something more than that. They are for debating the issues, and issues cannot be debated if Ministers are going to adjourn debates the same as they have done yesterday and today.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Birrell)—On the question of time.

Mr WILKES—It is on the question of time. I am suggesting that the Minister ought to reconsider his position and allow the debate to flow so that there will be continuity of cut and thrust in the debate so that the Opposition, the media and the people of Victoria can obtain a view of what the Government intends to do. Here there has been a debate for two days with no suggestion from the Minister of the Government's attitude. Even at Question Time today the Minister was not certain of his attitude to certain railway lines in Victoria. I put it to the Minister that the conducting of the affairs of the Parliament in this way does not do anything for this establishment.

The motion for the adjournment of the debate was agreed to, and it was ordered that the debate be adjourned until next day.

ALCOA (PORTLAND ALUMINIUM SMELTER) BILL

The debate (adjourned from September 11) on the motion of Mr Hamer (Premier) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr WILKES (Leader of the Opposition)—I thank the Minister of Transport for his indulgence in going back to the original agreement with respect to this debate.

This is probably one of the most important measures with which this House has had to deal and address itself to during this sessional period because it is a debate about resources; it is a debate about Victoria; it is a debate about ordinary citizens having to subsidize, through their electricity bills the establishment of Alcoa at Portland; it is a debate about endangering the supply and the capacity of the State Electricity Commission to supply electricity to other industrial users throughout the State; it is a debate about Victoria sacrificing certain of its land rights to Alcoa; and it is a debate that has certainly weakened the capacity of this State to bargain for future development from one end of the State to the other.

This agreement gives away too much and gets back too little. As a State, and as a people, we cannot afford this sort of agreement with Alcoa. We cannot afford it any more than the agreement that was signed and agreed to by the Government with Esso-BHP in respect to oil and gas in Bass Strait.

The honourable member for Bellarine, who is interjecting, knows that the former Premier, Sir Henry Bolte, and the present Premier who is now associated with this agreement will go down in history as men who have given away most of Victoria's valuable resources. When Sir Henry Bolte was in Parliament he gave away Victoria's oil and gas to Esso-BHP in a way that can only be described as a disgraceful act.

Under the Esso-BHP agreement, Victoria loses about $40 million in royalties each year, simply because the Minister cannot work out what the correct royalty level should be. Each
year, the Victorian assets in Bass Strait are being diminished, not for the benefit of Victoria, but for the benefit of private companies which have been given that agreement.

The current Premier is now trying to give away the only other important natural asset Victoria has, namely, its brown coal. Because of that and because of what this agreement proposes—the giving up of Victoria's precious reserves and handing them over to Alcoa in the form of cheap electricity—the Opposition opposes the agreement lock, stock and barrel.

An Honourable Member—That is not unusual.

Mr WILKES—It might be of some interest to the honourable member to make a detailed study of what the agreement means. Before I do that, it will be my responsibility to point out the policy of the Opposition in this matter and what led it to the position of complete and total opposition to the agreement.

On April 30 of this year I outlined the viewpoint of the Opposition regarding the Alcoa project at Portland. During that debate, I stated that an energy impact statement and environmental assessment and an economic evaluation were fundamental requirements to a project of that nature. I said that we supported Alcoa's decision to locate stage I of its smelter at Portland provided that Alcoa met the full cost of electricity supply and certain environmental standards. I further said that we would support the development beyond stage I provided that other provisions were met. Those conditions were that the adequacy of Victoria's reserves would not be placed in any jeopardy—that is a very important condition—and that the living, working, recreational environment of all Victorians would be improved and that the natural environment would not be degraded in any way. That is also fundamental to any such development. Finally, I said that the Victorian electricity consumers should not have to subsidize Alcoa at Portland in any way.

It is clear from the agreement, from the Bill, from reports of leaked documents that the Age newspaper has published, and from energy and environmental analyses and statements by the State Electricity Commission and indeed the Government, that these conditions will not be met, that the company has no intention of meeting these conditions.

Consequently, in the interest of Victoria today and for many years to come, we oppose the agreement. We will oppose it in Parliament, in the community and wherever we can. We believe it to be a bad agreement. It should never have been brought before Parliament in the way it has been. When one talks about the agreement, here is a Government negotiating with Alcoa to go to Portland and agree to matters which I will raise later and then finalizing the agreement and coming to Parliament and asking for the agreement to be rubber stamped.

One is amazed when one looks at the agreement and at what Victoria gets from it. Under clause 4 of Part II of the schedule—page 7 of the Bill—Alcoa is permitted to build a smelter to stage I only with an initial production capacity of not less than 120,000 tonnes of aluminium a year, to use its best endeavours to commence continuous production in commercial quantities by April Fools' Day of 1983 and to ensure the necessary additional housing is provided for employees. That is what the agreement says Victoria is getting from this Bill.

The Premier has made no attempt to cost what Alcoa gets from Victoria in its place. If one looks again at the schedule to the Bill, it points out the obligations of the company to the State of Victoria very precisely. They are the only obligations the company has to the State of Victoria. The Premier has mumbled something about jobs, development and taxes but as of now he has not attempted to spell out, in convincing detail, what he is talking about or what its worth will be to Victoria. Alcoa has been left to make the rules in these issues.
In one of Alcoa's handouts—I do not doubt that honourable members have seen it—it attempted to outline what the Premier now claims are benefits. It is interesting to read this handout. It is headed, "Alcoa's Portland Smelter Key questions and Alcoa's answers on the facts of costs and benefits". It states in question 1:

Much has been said about the cost and benefits of the Portland smelter for Victoria and Australia. Could you clarify just what these costs and benefits are?

The answer provided by Alcoa reads inter alia:

Let's begin with the benefits, then return to the costs.

The financial benefits are in four major categories. Over a smelter life of thirty years we estimate that Australia will receive:

1. About $3 400 million in company and income taxes.
2. Portland rates and other payments—over $60 million.
3. Employment and wages—up to 5650 new direct and indirect jobs—about $2 500 million in wages and benefits.
4. Export earnings—over $15 000 million.

The net of these is a very large sum of financial and economic benefits for Australia, adding up to thousands of millions of dollars over the life of the smelter.

In quoting these figures I point out that between 1961 and 1975—and Alcoa has admitted this—Alcoa of Australia Ltd paid no tax on its operations in Victoria. Moreover, with the investment tax on plant and equipment and other tax write-offs through depreciation and so on, the tax obligation on Alcoa was further significantly reduced. At the same time, its capacity, shared with other multi-national companies, to adopt a complex transfer pricing policy even further reduced its taxation obligations. In effect, Australian aluminium companies can sell aluminium to their overseas subsidiaries or to their parent companies overseas at a loss in order to avoid taxation.

Because of this, in 1978 and 1979 aluminium companies paid tax at an annual rate of about 18 per cent, which, with deferred tax, brings the total to 36 per cent, while the average Australian companies pay tax at around the rate of 46 per cent. Indeed, even the Federal Leader of the National Party, Mr Anthony, has warned of this.

The Government continues to urge Australian exporters to update the pricing provisions of their old contracts. He recognizes the significance of the position in which Alcoa and other aluminium smelters find themselves when competing with Australian companies, but, more importantly, as I shall point out shortly, the benefits it is alleged Victoria will receive pale into insignificance alongside the cost of the agreement to the people of Victoria.

Alcoa has only the three obligations I read earlier to the State, but the State has 26 obligations to Alcoa. It is interesting to compare the State's 26 obligations with Alcoa's three. There are about two and a quarter pages in the schedule to the Bill setting out the obligations of the State of Victoria to Alcoa of Australia Ltd. The boot ought to be on the other foot. The Government and the State will finish up working for Alcoa. The Government's obligations are alarming. They deal with the resiting of an aerodrome, industrial development, leases and land sold to the company. Paragraph (c) states:

The State shall sell to the Company in fee simple at a fair and reasonable valuation to be determined by the Valuer-General such land in the Parish of Portland within the boundaries described in the First Annexure hereto as the Company requires for the purposes of the Smelter and ancillary works including buffer purposes and further that should such land be vested in the Portland Harbor Trust Commissioners at or before the Commencement date then the State shall ensure that the said Commissioners will divest themselves of such land by surrendering all such land to the Crown pursuant to section 19 (4) of the Portland Harbor Trust Act 1958 (as amended) or pursuant to any corresponding statutory enactment and that such surrender of land shall enable the Governor in Council to sell the land to the Company subject to such covenants, conditions, exceptions and reservations as he thinks fit;

That means the Executive Government can sell any land to Alcoa, not only for Alcoa itself.

Mr Kennett—It is done every day of the week.

Mr WILKES—It is not done every day of the week and, as the Opposition develops its argument, the honour-
able member for Burwood may have second thoughts. Just imagine the State of Victoria having 26 obligations to a multi-national company! The honourable member for Burwood does not like that.

Mr Kennett—The honourable member for Burwood does not like your misquoting the situation.

Mr WILKES—I am quoting directly from the schedule to the Bill. I shall go through some of the obligations because most of them commit the State to unspecified financial responsibilities. Outside the agreement is the granting of tariff M option 5 that we have heard about for the supply of power.

Mr Kennett—What is wrong with that?

Mr WILKES—I will tell the honourable member what is wrong with that. There is only one thing wrong with it. It means supplying power to Alcoa at more than half a cent less than it costs to produce.

Mr Kennett—Prove it!

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Richardson)—Order! The honourable member for Burwood will cease interjecting.

Mr WILKES—The question should be whether the honourable member can prove what he says.

Mr Kennett—No, you disprove it!

The ACTING SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Burwood will have an opportunity of contributing to the debate at a later time. Until that time I should be grateful if he would refrain from interjecting.

Mr WILKES—The figures that have been produced by the Opposition cannot be disputed by the Minister for Minerals and Energy or the State Electricity Commission, which is at present paying economists at the Monash University to go through the figures in the hope that they might be able to find a flaw in them. So far, they have found no flaw in the figures and, in fact, the position could be slightly worse. The cost might be slightly more than half a cent per kilowatt hour less than the cost of the production of the power.

Under the agreement, the State and public bodies are committed to assist with the development and construction of pipelines; assist with the development and construction of water mains; provide sewerage works; undertake road works; expand wharf facilities; provide new education facilities; expand health services; resite the Portland airport; and, at the same time, provide new educational facilities; wharfage charges, sewerage rates, trade waste disposal and municipal rates. They will even have to pick up the tab for compensation in cases in which existing leases are broken when land is compulsorily acquired by the State for Alcoa. Those are some of the responsibilities of the State.

One of the worst features of the agreement is that the details of these costs and subsidies are still being kept secret by the Government. It has shown no inclination, even though it talks about costing, to say what these things will cost the people of Victoria. We do not know what they will cost, but we do know that the ordinary State Electricity Commission consumer in Victoria is to underwrite the cost of the Alcoa transmission line by $27.65 million and we do know that electricity is to be supplied at more than half a cent less than it costs to produce. We also know that the State intends to waive, under the agreement, the 5.5 per cent turnover tax on electricity sales. From what we do know it is simple to calculate that over the smelter's 30-year life there will be a transfer of more than $1000 million from other State Electricity customers to Alcoa because of tariff M option 5.

Mr Wood—That is not so!

Mr WILKES—I do not wish to be rude to the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, but he knows nothing about the agreement. He has never read it. I suggest that he should take it home with him this evening, read it, put it under his pillow and have a think about it. He might then come back tomorrow and make some intelligent comment.
The turnover tax holiday will mean that Alcoa will benefit by $176 million over the period and, therefore, the cost to Victorian electricity consumers of having Alcoa at Portland will be $1254 million over 30 years.

Mr Wood—Rubbish!

Mr WILKES—The Minister says, "Rubbish!" The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs is the most junior Minister in the Cabinet, and I defy him to dispute those figures. The figures have been proven; we have issued documents supporting the claim that these figures are correct, and they have not been disputed by this miserable Government.

When one looks at what pensioners have to pay for electricity, one sees that they have to pay the full electricity bill. Their bills contain a component to finance the cost of bringing the electricity to their homes, producing it and developing future production capacity, and paying for the installation, yet Alcoa does not have to meet the full cost of transmitting electricity.

Mr Burgin—Another mistake.

Mr WILKES—There is no mistake about that. It does not have to meet the full cost of producing electricity and of providing future production capacity. Pensioners and ordinary consumers of electricity have to meet all those cost ingredients.

Even allowing for the fact that the exact financial commitment of the State in other areas is not known, we can at least calculate the cost of a whole range of other concessions that are being offered. The rebate on the entire pay-roll tax bill will cost Victoria another $20.2 million; the bulk cargo wharf at Portland will cost the taxpayers at least $5 million; the land tax rebate will cost Victoria about $1.3 million, and the handouts for road and rail freight concessions, fuel subsidies, low-interest loans and so on amount to at least another $1 million.

It appears that the Lysaght company did not receive those benefits; it is the only customer that the Government has on tariff M option 5, and it did not receive any.

Mr Birrell—that is because it is inside the 50-mile radius.

Mr WILKES—Why was it necessary for Alcoa to get that benefit? If one takes all these things together, one sees that, at the very least, the ultimate cost to Victoria of these additional items will be in excess of $107 million over the 30 years of operation of the plant. With all the costs totalled together, Victorians will pay some $1361 million for the privilege of having the Alcoa company at Portland. I repeat that I invite the Minister to do his sums and refute the basis of the comments I am making.

To make the significance of this even more apparent to the Minister I point out that the cost of these Government subsidies and concessions is higher than the estimated yearly wages bill. As I said before, Victoria cannot afford an agreement of this type. If we look at the loss of rights to Victorians, we see that these costs alone are enough to give any responsible Government reason to pause and have another look at the agreement and perhaps compare it with the Esso-BHP agreement, or to examine the sums that add up to these massive proportions and which are going one way to Alcoa.

The agreement contains elements which raise even more serious objections than the costs which I pointed out. In particular, it raises fears that the Victorian Government is handing out to Alcoa rights that no other Victorian has, and, indeed, in the long term it is depriving Victorians of some of their most basic rights. The agreement surrenders the State's sovereignty to Alcoa. It means that the State will be working for Alcoa.

Under section 5(k) of the agreement, up to 880 megawatts of electricity are committed to the company for a minimum of 50 years from April Fool's Day 1983. However, under the agreement Alcoa is now obliged to build stage 1 using only 220 megawatts of power. Why does it need 880 megawatts for 50 years under this agreement when the agreement requires it only to build stage 1, which will need 220 megawatts? The ques-
tion immediately arises of what the company will do with the remaining commitment, and that is worth considering because Alcoa and the Government will tell people that the extra commitment will be used only for stages 2, 3 and 4, but under the agreement that is not the case. Alcoa has a variety of options open to it, and it is one of the only companies operating in Australia that would have this variety of options.

Under section 5(k) of the agreement the power is committed not only to Alcoa but also to its associated companies that are operating on this site. Clause 1(A) of the Bill defines "associated companies" as Alcoa's parent company, subsidiaries, partners and joint ventures or any company which establishes permanent operations adjacent to the smelter site and whose business or operations are substantially dependent on the products or services of Alcoa and in which Alcoa has 20 per cent of the issued capital. That is an extremely wide definition.

The definition of "associated company" in Part I of the Schedule to the Bill reads:

"(i) any company incorporated within the Commonwealth of Australia, the United Kingdom or the United States of America, which establishes manufacturing operations on or adjacent to the smelter site and whose business is or operations are substantially dependent on the products or services of the Company and in which the Company holds directly or indirectly not less than 20 per centum of the issued capital and which the Company gives notice in writing to the State;

(ii) any company of which the company is a subsidiary within the meaning of the Companies Act 1961;

(iii) any company which is a Subsidiary company of the Company;

(iv) any person or company with which the Company carries on any business relating to the smelter in partnership or in joint venture.

There is no doubt about the ramifications of that section of the agreement and the advantage it gives to Alcoa. Alcoa could set up its aluminium window subsidiary company on the site and use cheap power and other entitlements to undercut all other manufacturers and even put them out of business if it wanted to do so. That is an indication of the extremes to which the agreement goes.

The second option that is left open to Alcoa would emerge if the world aluminium market became depressed, and under this agreement Alcoa could then set itself up as a de facto retailer of electricity, even in competition with the State Electricity Commission, if it so desired.

It has 880 megawatts of power for 50 years. There is no way that under this agreement Alcoa should not supply power to subsidiaries out of its own companies' block because it has been guaranteed 880 megawatts. All Alcoa has to do is to ensure that the buyer qualifies for associated company status and it can provide that company with electricity at a tariff slightly below that of the State Electricity Commission. It can do that, and this agreement allows it to do that.

As I said, only one other company in Victoria receives tariffs in option 5, and Alcoa would be in a position to undercut the prices for all other consumers. To exercise this option Alcoa would need a considerable amount of land, and that is precisely what it has. The smelter site is expected to require about 100 hectares for the full development of the smelter, but under this agreement it will receive not the 100 hectares that it needs to build the smelter; it will receive 435 hectares. Why does it need 435 hectares of land to build a plant?

Mr Wood—For a buffer zone.

Mr WILKES—We will talk about the buffer zone. Those words are very important. There is no such thing as a buffer zone. Alcoa can do what it likes with this land which the Minister and the Leader of the National Party state is a buffer zone. Theoretically this buffer zone about which the Minister talks is not covered by planning regulations or any other measures. Instead, the freehold has been given to Alcoa of Australia Ltd. If that company has the freehold of the land which is not covered by any planning ordinances, it can do precisely

Mr Wilkes
what is likes with that land. The agreement gives it the right to do that. No planning ordinances cover the land because the Minister himself said that this is a buffer zone. The same sort of independent production zone has been created in Portland as the zones in countries such as Pakistan, Taiwan, the Philippines and South Korea. In those places situations have been created for other multi-national companies similar to the situation in Victoria—uncontrolled zones, virtually outside the law of the land in which they are situated, in which multi-national companies have the right to ignore the normal civilized behaviour of the country. The only difference between Portland and those Asian zones is that in Asia cheap labour is the incentive and in Portland cheap power is the incentive.

If the amount of land provided is not large enough, under the agreement Alcoa can require the Executive Government to obtain for it some more land. The company has only to ask the Executive Government to do that and the Executive Government is obliged under the agreement to produce more land. The agreement defines the company's land as 435 hectares, "plus any other land which the company purchases hereafter for use, including buffer purposes". It is ludicrous to talk about buffer purposes for the 435 hectares. If the company wants more land, the Government must act as a compulsory acquiring agent. Once that agreement is signed, the Government is obliged to produce whatever land the company wants. If the company decides that it wants the land that has been purchased for the aerodrome on which to set up a subsidiary company, there is nothing to stop it from doing so.

The agreement also states that the Executive Government shall grant to the company any lease, easement licence or other licences necessary or expedient to enable the company to develop the company land. In effect, Alcoa can demand that the Government hands over almost any land currently vested in any public statutory authority. That is indisputable.

The company has another option. Under clause 8 (e) it can simply sell all the entitlements to an associate company, with the consent of the Premier or of the Executive Government. At page 11 of the agreement the following appears:

> Except as provided under this clause the Company shall not assign or otherwise deal with this Agreement or any part of this Agreement—

(i) the Company may assign the whole or any part of this Agreement to any Associated company or to a corporation which within the meaning of sub-section (5) of section 6 of the Companies Act 1961 (as amended) is deemed to be related to the Company.

(ii) the Company may assign this Agreement or any part of this Agreement otherwise than is provided in sub-clause (i) with the consent in writing of the Premier which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld . . .

Can honourable members imagine this Premier withholding any such agreement from Alcoa? The Premier is hell bent on getting Alcoa of Australia Ltd to Portland. I will state the reason for that in a few minutes. The Premier is not permitted to withhold unreasonably, subject to such reasonable conditions that the Premier thinks fit. In other words, the Premier can fix the conditions on which the company can have the other land. That is only part of the problem associated with this agreement.

The additional land that the company needs for its associated companies can be sold and resold as the company wants to do, and the Government has no control over that. That land is within the specified 435 hectares. In relation to land outside the 435 hectares, the company has only to go to the Premier and obtain whatever land it likes.

Clearly the agreement confers astonishing rights that are unprecedented in any other agreement. Even the dreadful Esso-BHP agreement did not contain such rights. The Government has vested rights of this State in a foreign company. If the agreement goes through, this Government and the State of Victoria will be working for Alcoa for the next 30 years.
I now turn to the matter of power capacity of Alcoa which is one of the other areas of major concern. The agreement commits to Alcoa 880 megawatts of power. The Government has assured honourable members that there is nothing to worry about in this regard, yet in April this year the Chairman of the State Electricity Commission, Mr Charles Trethowan, said that the Government was unwilling to commit such a large block of power to Alcoa on a long term contract. Mr Trethowan realized the dangers in committing 880 megawatts over 50 years. He said:

It is vital that we keep the capacity to supply other loads because they employ more people.

The ANZ Bank, in its review of industry, concluded that States allocating large blocks of electricity to aluminium smelters may face electricity shortages during the 1980s. The Victorian Chambers of Manufactures expressed a similar concern and an unknown Liberal member of Parliament who was rather more far-sighted than the Premier, was reported in the Age of 14 October, under the heading, "Alcoa deal a worry—Libs", as having said:

Natural gas is going to cost the State an enormous amount. There is no way Loy Yang will be ready on time and we are faced with blackouts.

State Liberal Members of Parliament are becoming increasingly worried about the long-term implications of the power deal given to Alcoa for its proposed Portland smelter.

A section of the party is concerned that it has been "snowed" by Cabinet and Alcoa over the total cost of the project to the State.

The Liberals are alarmed by revelations that the State will have to provide electricity from gas-fired power stations for up to seven years because of delays in completing the Loy Yang project.

This gas-fired power would cost the State Electricity Commission at least 10 times more to produce than Alcoa would be paying for its power under the agreement signed with the State Government.

I shall not read it all. I do not know whether the member of Parliament involved was the honourable member for Burwood. Whoever it was said:

Mr Wilkes

We accepted the word of Cabinet that this was the best deal, but now a lot of us are feeling that they did not know what they were doing when they made the agreement.

It might have been the honourable member for Noble Park. Unfortunately, members of the Liberal Party were snowed by Cabinet. It was a pity that the members did not raise these matters in the party room. When one looks at the possibility of blackouts because of this closed agreement, it will not be Alcoa that will suffer blackouts; all the manufacturing industries in Melbourne and country Victoria that rely on power will be subjected to the blackouts.

Under this agreement Alcoa has been guaranteed a block of power and special industry status, which puts it in the same league as emergency services in this State. It will not be concerned about blackouts. I will come to Loy Yang in a minute. Surely these comments should give the Government some cause to pause and reconsider the matter, but it has not done that. There has been no suggestion from the Premier. He has said that he has read the agreement, and now Parliament is required to implement this personal agreement on the Premier's behalf.

The implications of the situation are quite clear, and in the debate on the Premier's Ministerial statement I attempted to outline some of those implications. I do not wish to go over them again, except to say that the Premier has now put Victoria in a position where power will not be available for other more labour-intensive industries if they come along. Existing industries will have to be concerned whether they will have continuity of power for their operations, but more importantly, the Premier has put Victoria into a position where the threat of nuclear energy to provide power later this century is a real danger.

An honourable member says, "Raise the standard", but a report in a newspaper this week is quite disturbing. It says that the State Electricity Commission is set to receive a British report on the costing of a nuclear power station in the Portland area. It just happens that the State Electricity
Commission has purchased a piece of land in the Portland area, or the Western District area adjacent to Portland, which just happens to be the precise size necessary for a nuclear power station. It is a coincidence, of course, and we have learnt last June that British scientists spent ten days in Portland, working out the feasibility and cost of nuclear power for the Victorian Government. Here is a Government, before the Federal election, with its Premier stating in Parliament, "No, we are not going to have nuclear power". The Minister for Minerals and Energy said, "No, it is not an option, we are not going to have nuclear power". All the time they are saying that, the Government had British scientists at Portland examining the possibility of a nuclear power station in the area. The statement went on to say:

The report, bound to spark an outcry, follows consistent denials that Victoria is considering nuclear energy.

Chief engineer of the State Electricity Commission's planning department, Mr Ivor Meldrum, said: "The British scientists were looking at giving us a cost for a nuclear power station in the Portland area."

He did not beat about the bush. He was honest, more honest than the Government.

Mr Meldrum said: "The British were considering water reactors for possible production in the United Kingdom.

"We took advantage of the fact that they were doing a thorough review," he said.

COASTLINE

"We got them to do an 'Australianisation' for us on a site that was representative, on the coastline, and with an unpopulated hinterland."

There is not any doubt that, if the Government continued hell-bent with that agreement, that potential would be there for the Government to use, and it will be a sad day for Victoria if the State Electricity Commission has to shift to the nuclear option.

The commitment of the State's brown coal reserves to Alcoa and to oil from coal projects makes this a certain possibility. The Minister knows it, the State Electricity Commission knows it, and the Government knows it. The honourable member says, "Next century" but if Victoria runs out of power before then, I should like to know why the Government has had six British scientists giving it a report on a nuclear reactor for Portland. While all this is going on, the State Electricity Commission's existing liquidity problems will be compounded.

The Minister attempted to tell the House about the State Electricity Commission's liquidity problems today. He made a few denials before he got pulled up, but already it is known that the State Electricity Commission has got itself into a major financial mess and has been forced to borrow large amounts of money overseas at high rates of interest and with high risk attached to it, due to exchange rate variations.

On 12 December 1979, the State Electricity Commission Assistant-General Manager (Administration) wrote in answer to a request for forward capital works estimates put to him by the State Co-Ordinator of Works seven days earlier. His conclusion was that acceleration due to Alcoa's Portland development and so on, made it:

Essential that this commission be granted authority to borrow either domestic or off-shore, a further $160 million in the years 1979-80 and 1980-81, in addition to the proposed authorities assumed for those years in the attachments.

On 18 December 1979, the State Electricity Commission chairman followed up with a letter to the Treasurer, outlining the State Electricity Commission's financial problems, which this Minister said did not exist, and he concluded:

Additional short-term cover and trade credit will be necessary in view of the continuing sharp rise in the necessary works programme, with further difficulties when repayments become due.

On 19 February this year, the Australian Loan Council chairman, and present federal Treasurer, Mr John Howard, wrote to the Victorian Treasurer, suggesting that new coal-based electricity supply proposals be submitted to the Loan Council, prior to 31 March this year, for examination by a joint working party of Commonwealth and State Treasury officers before the June Loan Council meeting.

What happened? On 27 February 1980, the Director of Finance wrote to
the State Electricity Commission chairman notifying him of this advice and requesting a draft proposal for accelerating the development of Loy Yang “B” Power Station.

On 5 March this year the State Electricity Commission chairman responded with a suggestion for an argument to be put to the Loan Council. Alcoa’s Point Henry and Portland projects necessitated the bringing forward of the Loy Yang “B” station by one year, thus changing the timing of the investment and raising the project’s costs by $11 million.

On 15 April this year, the State Electricity Commission Assistant General Manager (Administration) wrote to the Director of Finance about a submission to the Loan Council proposing special additions to finance the acceleration of the Loy Yang “B” power station. At January 1980 prices, the project had cost $1300 million and half as much, $650 million, was sought from the Loan Council.

During April 1980, the Treasurer wrote to the State Electricity Commission chairman posing a series of questions about Loy Yang “B” and the Portland transmission line, both of which were candidates for infrastructure financing at next June’s Loan Council meeting. During May 1980, the joint working party of Commonwealth and State Treasury officers assembled all proposals for infrastructure financing of accelerated coal-based electricity supply development. On 27 and 28 June the Australian Loan Council approved an accelerated programme of infrastructure borrowings for semi-Government authorities. The proposal for accelerated development of Loy Yang “B”, on which so much work had been done, was rejected out of hand and the proposed amount for the Portland line was cut by 20 per cent on the recommendation of the Federal Treasurer. The reason was revealed on 9 July of this year in the Sydney Morning Herald, in a leaked confidential Cabinet memorandum, that the Federal Treasurer argued strongly against the Prime Minister’s acceleration of infrastructure borrowing programmes on economic management grounds. The State Electricity Commission of Victoria was attacked for under-pricing Alcoa of Australia Ltd’s electricity and for not recovering enough of the Portland line cost from Alcoa.

The conclusions are patently obvious. The Premier’s anxiety to locate Alcoa at Portland caused the State Electricity Commission to change its priorities. That fact is indisputable and the Treasurer knows it. The Premier was hell-bent on getting Alcoa to Portland on time. The State Electricity Commission was forced into a serious liquidity problem. It was embarrassed by the decision of the Premier. His Federal colleagues blocked those changed priorities which left the State Electricity Commission in the mess it now experiences. The Loy Yang lockout, of which honourable members will hear more today, was the result of that mess. Blackouts in the years ahead are inevitable unless the Government is prepared to take action on the agreement and on the Loy Yang project.

The loss of bargaining power to Victoria is important. The questions to ask are whether any of these needed to have happened and whether the agreement is appropriate in the circumstances I have outlined. The answers to those questions lie in the strength of the Government’s bargaining position with the various other aluminium companies.

It is now clear that there were two policies for aluminium development in the State: The Hamer policy and the Crozier policy. At about June 1978 the then Minister for State Development and Decentralization, the Hon. D. G. Crozier, sought to encourage Nabalco to locate itself at Portland. It is worth examining the Crozier package because it throws some light on the Alcoa agreement. The Crozier package was costed at $11 million, or $12200 a job created, in annual subsidies from State Treasury to Nabalco including waiving of the State Electricity Commission levy, then 4 per cent of turnover and, significantly, a $5 million annual open subsidy to Nabalco to reduce its final electricity tariff.

Mr Wilkes
In analyzing the package, the Government considered four factors. Firstly, that Nabalco, Alumax and Pechiney wanted to get the Government locked into a low electricity price—an undeniable strategy of aluminium companies. Secondly, that the State Electricity Commission would not offer less than 1.36 cents a kilowatt hour on tariff M option 5 adjusted for interruptibility and the waiving of the turnover tax. Thirdly, that it would be necessary to include all capital charges to cover the full cost of the supply. Fourthly, that Westernport was a preferable site to Portland because of the high transmission costs for Portland.

The Nabalco package was being canvassed by Mr Crozier. The Nabalco proposal to build a smelter at about 175,200 tonnes a year capacity requiring 300 megawatts power was, in essence, the package. At these figures, a $5 million annual open subsidy by Victorian taxpayers would have reduced the 1.36 cents a kilowatt hour offered by the State Electricity Commission by 0.19 cents a kilowatt hour, so Nabalco must have been angling for a tariff of 1.17 cents a kilowatt hour on June 1978 prices. The estimated delivered cost of electricity at Portland was to be 2.1 cents a kilowatt hour at June 1978 prices, yet eighteen months later, the State Electricity Commission swore black and blue that the tariff M option 5 of 1.6 cents a kilowatt hour covered all costs involved in supplying electricity to Alcoa at Portland.

Is there any wonder that there was some dispute between proponents of the Crozier and Hamer packages? Something is drastically wrong when the same organization costs electricity at 2.1 cents a kilowatt hour in June 1978 and prices it 1.6 cents a kilowatt hour in December 1979 following eighteen months of cost inflation. In other words, the Crozier-Nabalco agreement proves the case of the Opposition about the subsidy to the State Electricity Commission under the Hamer-Alcoa package. The Nabalco package was not to go ahead—on 18 December last year the Premier signed the agreement with Alcoa.

During the debate on the Ministerial statement I discussed at length the competitive position of Victoria with Alcoa. I shall make two comments now. Firstly, the situation that then applied has not changed. Electricity supplies in Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia are fully committed to other aluminium projects. Alcoa had to come to Victoria. There was no way it could have gone to either New South Wales, Western Australia or Queensland because those States were fully committed to other aluminium projects. Whether the price would have been reduced or not, Victoria would have had Alcoa eating out of its hands. There was no need for Victoria to plead with Alcoa.

Mr Wood—What about Brazil?

Mr WILKES—Now and then Victoria had the only uncommitted power block available.

Mr Wood—In the world?

Mr WILKES—In Australia. Brazil's hydro resources will take a decade to develop. Secondly, on the overseas market, even at costs above the cost of production, energy supplies in Australia are far more competitive than they are in any overseas country despite all that Mr Miller and others have stated. They are more competitive than any overseas country.

Only a week or so ago the general manager of Alumax, Mr J. J. Miller, stated that his company looked at electricity prices between 1 cent and 2.5 cents a kilowatt hour when it was planning to build a smelter in Australia. He said yesterday that the company looked at electricity prices between 1 cent and 2.5 cents per kilowatt hour when it was planning to build a smelter. The same situation applies in Australia.

In the programme Four Corners on 4 October this year the International Bauxite Association was quoted as having had a report prepared by a leading independent analyst. That report had this to say:

Much of the Australian alumina has been produced at low cost relative to other countries and sold at the lowest recorded prices in the world.
In fact, the West Australian Government boasts that its royalties are bargain basement prices. It charges only $1 a tonne royalty on the bauxite and the end price is something near $260 a tonne. Australia was in no danger of losing Alcoa at any time in the negotiations. Every other State was locked into a situation of full commitment of generating capacity and could not have accommodated the development that Alcoa proposes, so the Premier's actions were quite unnecessary in that regard.

I now turn to the conclusion and the alternatives. There are a number of points which are apparent already: First, there is a subsidy to Alcoa at Portland of about $1300 million; secondly the proposed agreement erodes the rights of Victorians and hands those rights over to Alcoa; thirdly, Victoria's energy future is endangered by this agreement and the spectre of nuclear power is raised by it; and fourthly, Alcoa would have had to locate in Victoria anyway because of overseas and national factors. What we need to look at, however, are the alternatives to this agreement. The question of Alcoa is closely linked with the broader question of the nature and direction of future Australian development.

The Australian Institute of Urban Studies has recently published a report called Urban Strategies for Australia Managing the 80's which raises a number of important questions about development. I quote from that report because it is germane to the issue. Under the heading "Economic and Social Policy Options" it states:

External circumstances and internal responses have clearly pre-determined that the economic and social condition of Australia in the 80's will be very largely influenced by the development of oil and mineral resources. External petroleum and other energy resource prices and the internal adoption of world parity petroleum prices, however politically unpalatable, have dramatically extended the dimensions of Australia's economically realisable oil and alternative energy resources by unlocking reserves which it has hitherto been uneconomic to exploit. The extent to which end, more particularly, the rate at which we extract these resources will determine the extent to which funds are diverted from urban development.

Mr Wilkes

The report also poses fifteen other questions which it says must be answered before embarking on any new development in any direction. I shall not go through the fifteen questions but I commend them to honourable members because they are factors which should be considered in deciding what should be done about this agreement and they support the argument advanced by the Opposition.

In pushing ahead with this proposal the Government has not addressed itself to even one of these questions, nor has it sought to have the Federal Government address itself to those questions. The Four Corners programme I mentioned also addressed itself to these problems. I quote briefly from that programme:

Reporter: One reason why the new smelters will be buying electricity at relatively cheap rates in Australia is that the eastern States have been competing amongst themselves to attract the new smelters:

Mr Kenneth Davidson (Economics Editor of The Age newspaper): Well, it's madness. The only thing one can compare it to was the East India Company, its divide and rule policies in India during the 17th century.

Australians are not benefiting from it; the major aluminium refiners are going to come to Australia in ANY case, because there's abundant coal resources here. The competition just means whether it's going to come in New South Wales, or Queensland, or Victoria.

This situation of competition between the States is ridiculous and it ought to be stopped.

Mr Birrell—It is not between the States.

Mr WILKES—The competition is between States. The aluminium companies have pitted Premier against Premier. It is imperative that we develop a national resources policy with a national resources tax to ensure that Australians and individual States get the maximum possible benefit from such development and from their resources. It is pointless for States, whatever the political complexion of their Governments, to continue in competition in this field. The only beneficiaries are the multi-nationals who use the competition to play each State off against the other. Such a national re-
sources policy is the first step to correct this. Then there are steps which the State Government must take.

Those steps are quite simple; there is nothing unusual about them. First, Alcoa must be required to meet the full cost of the electricity supplied to it. Secondly, it must be required to meet the full cost of the transmission line. Thirdly, there must be a complete and thorough energy impact statement undertaken to establish exactly what impact the Alcoa development will have on Victoria's energy future. Fourthly, there must be a complete economic evaluation of the real costs and benefits of the many concessions this Government is offering to Alcoa. It has not made any attempt to disclose the costs of those benefits and concessions.

Fifthly, the Government must reconsider the legal ramifications of ceding Victorian rights to Alcoa through the agreement contained in this Bill, particularly in reference to the land and the area of the land. Sixthly, we must undertake a complete environmental assessment of the project.

None of those six essential steps has been undertaken by the Government. Without them this Parliament cannot responsibly pass this legislation, nor should it. The Government, in pushing ahead with it, is making the greatest and most serious mistake it has ever made. It is pushing ahead simply to fulfill a personal commitment by the Premier of Victoria, who is hell bent on getting this agreement signed, notwithstanding that Victoria's energy and economic future is to be put in doubt and massive benefits are to be conferred on Alcoa. Some backbenchers in the Government party are aware of the magnitude of the mistake. Certainly the media, the State Electricity Commission and Victorian business and union leaders are aware of the dangers involved, but the Government still refuses to admit the mistake and rectify it.

As I said in the debate on the Ministerial statement, the Government may not be willing to rectify the situation but I put on notice the Liberal Party, Alcoa and the Victorian public that a State Labor Government will rectify it as a matter of urgency.

I can say no more than to appeal to people like the honourable member for Burwood and to members on both sides of Parliament, in the interests of all Victorians and future generations of Victorians, to reject this anti-Victorian agreement which confers on Alcoa rights that it should never have nor should expect.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—The Bill sets out to ratify the agreement between Alcoa and the State Government and should be seen in the context of State development, particularly the development of western Victoria and south eastern South Australia. Portland and the surrounding areas both in Victoria and South Australia are, in effect, a separate geographic division extending from Warrnambool in Victoria to Milli­cent in South Australia, along the coastline and including the cities of Mt Gambier and Hamilton in the interior. The area has been referred to traditionally as the Green Triangle.

Over the years, there has been sporadic pressure by a small minority of residents in the area for it to be declared a separate State. As far as the Victorian side has been concerned, in recent years it has been generally an area of low, and in some cases declining, economic growth, with the exception of the City of Warrnambool.

In an effort to improve the area's economic future, the Government constructed a modern port at Portland, with the objective of exporting the agricultural products of the area's hinterland region. Over the years, some $24 million has been invested in breakwaters, wharves, port services, buildings and plants. These funds have been raised by inscribed stock of $20.4 million and loans from the Victorian Government of $3.8 million. Unfortunately, the port, up to now, has not been a financial success.

Despite having many advantages over both Melbourne and Geelong, including deeper water, being closer to main shipping lines—resulting in lesser pilot-
age, time and distance—the Portland Harbor Trust, over the years, has incurred a revenue deficit, which at 30 June 1979 was nearly $1 million. The major reason for the financial problems encountered by the harbor trust has been the rapid introduction of container shipping. While the port was planned for the export shipment of the produce of the area, namely, grain, meat and wool, only grain has been a significant commodity through the port. Although a wool selling centre is located at Portland, most of the wool sold for export is sent to Melbourne to be placed in containers. Similarly, the Borthwick's Portland meat processing plant has, for a similar reason, shipped only a small part of its export business through Portland.

For a container port to be justified, there must be a demand for both incoming containers and outgoing containers. In Portland's case, there was only a requirement for outgoing containers. Efforts by the Portland Harbor Trust to obtain container business from Adelaide and the western outskirts of Melbourne were frustrated by VicRail freight charges, which made shipment from Melbourne to Adelaide cheaper than from Portland to Melbourne or Portland to Adelaide.

All economic studies of this area of western Victoria have confirmed that the key to obtaining growth is the development of the port of Portland. My party has felt so strongly on this subject that at the last election it issued a specific policy paper on Portland. And I point out that the National Party was the only political party to have one on this subject. Our policy statement says:

What is needed to make the Port viable is a large capital-intensive industry, preferably importing its raw materials and exporting finished goods, thus providing additional employment for those industries within the region which will service the company and its products.

That was an extremely accurate statement in the light of what occurred.

Mr Fordham—Almost prophetic.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS—It was almost prophetic, yes, and it was put on paper. When the first stage of the Alcoa project commences, it is anticipated that the company will be importing through the port 350 000 tonnes of raw materials and exporting 130 000 tonnes of aluminium ingots. It will employ a work force at the plant of some 500 people. That will be the work force of the plant. I shall not go into the spin-off that will occur not only in Portland but also throughout western Victoria.

The Alcoa project, in effect, exactly fits the ideal type of industry needed as a catalyst for future economic development in western Victoria and it has my party's whole-hearted support, as it has the whole-hearted support of the people of south-western Victoria. It is an important matter and I am sure honourable members from all parties who have visited the area would know.

Mr Wilkes—Is it unconditional support?

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS—It is not unconditionally supported but as the agreement stands today it has support. I have spoken to dozens and dozens of people living in the Portland area who I believe understand the agreement. They support the scheme as it is. I have not come across any community leaders in western Victoria who have opposed the project.

Unfortunately, there have been a number of criticisms of the project by the Opposition and the media, particularly the Age newspaper. Basically these boil down to their claim that the Government has given Alcoa too good a deal. That is the only factor that should be debated. The other factors, such as environmental concerns and so on, can be dealt with. It is the cost to the Government of the plant going to Portland that is, in my view, and the view of the National Party, the relevant matter.

These criticisms revolve around the construction of a power line to Portland, the price that the company will pay for electricity, its use of electricity capacity, and other financial incentives given to the company. Many of the criticisms have their basis in an emo-
tional belief that, because Alcoa is a large multi-national company, it is out to rip off the State. Facts are therefore selected to support that argument. The first thing we have to do is to disregard the fact that Alcoa is a multi-national company. We have to examine the case on the facts and whether Alcoa is a multi-national company or an Australian company has no bearing on the facts.

Existing electricity supply arrangements in western Victoria are insufficient to cater for a large electricity consumer such as an aluminium smelter. Members of the National Party, like most honourable members, appreciate—

Mr Wilkes—Why is it not sufficient?

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS—It is not sufficient for a smelter. Members of the National Party accept that and understand it and I think most thinking people would understand it.

In our election policy, we suggested that it would be desirable to establish an electricity generating station in the general “green triangle” area, so avoiding the cost of transmitting power from the Latrobe Valley. It would also provide an insurance against supply interruptions caused by the all-too-frequent strikes occurring in the Latrobe Valley.

Mr Amos—They are all members of the same union, so they would go on strike anyway.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS—The point I am making is that, when the electricity supply is interrupted, it is costly to the community as a whole. I am not going into what caused the strikes, but when they do occur they are disastrous to the community. That should be remembered.

This constructive suggestion prompted an advertisement authorized by the Liberal Party suggesting that our candidate was advocating the construction of a nuclear power station at Portland. Not only was the advertisement misleading, it was possibly also libellous and, as a result of action by the local media, only appeared once. Its content was no credit to the local Liberal organization or to the sitting Government member.

What we were advocating was not a nuclear power station, but the long-term possibility that the large brown coal deposits near Millicent in South Australia could be used for power generation, and there is a lot of sense in that general proposition. A full assessment of the deposits has not yet been completed, and it would be a long time before a power station could be brought into operation.

There has been much talk about a nuclear power station. If any Government today did not investigate and cost a nuclear power station it would be subject to criticism. Surely a Government should investigate and find out the relevant costs, the benefits and disadvantages of it, and make its decision. Although the Opposition keeps talking about a nuclear power station in Victoria, there is no chance of a nuclear power station being built in Victoria in the foreseeable future because of the relative cost structure, apart from any other reason.

It is much cheaper to produce electricity from brown coal, and that rules out the nuclear factor, but if the homework and research had not been done on nuclear power, the Government would have been open to censure from the Opposition and from me. I should prefer not to have a nuclear power station built in Victoria, but dozens of countries in the world have them. They have to have nuclear power because of their geographic position and their lack of natural resources.

Mr Wilkes—We do not need nuclear power.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS—We do not have to have nuclear power and we are not going to have nuclear power, and that should be plain to everybody, including the Leader of the Opposition. First and foremost, the cost would make it prohibitive for Victoria.

Currently the transmission line is estimated to cost $173·8 million on present day prices, and obviously it will cost more than that by the time it is constructed. The line will be capable
of transmitting some 2000 megawatts, of which Alcoa may use up to 880 megawatts.

The State Electricity Commission tariff is expected to return 58 per cent of this cost. Alcoa has agreed to pay 21 per cent and the State Government has agreed to pay the balance, which, on current prices, amounts to some $36 million. That would be the equivalent of the cost of construction of 3 kilometres of an urban freeway.

Any rational cost-benefit analysis in terms of balanced State development would clearly show that this money was being well spent. As the Premier indicated both in his Ministerial statement and in his second-reading speech, Alcoa would pay the standard State Electricity Commission high voltage tariff option 5 with an appropriate allowance for power interruptions up to the first 300 megawatts. The State Electricity Commission is very definite that its scale is set, and as an organization it is making no concessions to Alcoa. I have been convinced that that is true, and if any members of the press want to dispute it, they can do so.

On current tariffs the State Electricity Commission would charge Alcoa 1.814 cents per kilowatt hour or $35.4 million a year during stage 1 of the project. The Opposition and the media claim that this is below the cost of production, which they claim is 2.1 cents per kilowatt hour, compared with the domestic tariff of 4 cents per kilowatt hour. Unfortunately, both the Opposition and the media are displaying a lack of business knowledge, and in particular the techniques of modern management accounting. In capital intensive industry there is no fixed cost of production; it depends entirely on the degree of utilization, and this is the basis of the whole argument. Because Alcoa will utilize a constant amount of electricity—hopefully on 365 days a year—the cost of supplying it is far lower than it is to a domestic consumer whose demand ranges from practically zero to, theoretically, 100 per cent.

An interesting comparison can be made with the airline industry. The airline industry utilizes exactly the same principles when setting its prices as the State Electricity Commission does when setting its tariffs.

Mr Wilkes—What, under a two-airline policy?

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS—I hope the Leader of the Opposition will listen intently to what I am going to say. The normal economy Qantas fare to London is $1505; the excursion economy fare which allows no overnight stopover is $1121, while advance purchase off-peak economy fare is $710. In other words, the dearest economy single fare is approximately 112 per cent higher than the cheapest economy fare.

The State Electricity Commission is a statutory Government body charged with providing Victoria with electricity. It can change its tariffs—and this is an important point—according to its costs, and the tariff being charged to Alcoa is subject to normal increases. If the State Electricity Commission’s costing department is wrong and the tariff quoted to Alcoa is too low, it can be raised. However, I should be most surprised if that is the case, as the State Electricity Commission has a long record of sound management in this State.

Now we come to one of the most interesting comparisons. Unlike the Victorian State Electricity Commission, neither the New South Wales nor Queensland electricity authorities is prepared to disclose what it is charging the aluminium smelters for electricity in these States. If I were a member of the Opposition and quoted figures I had heard but did not know whether they were true, I would be open to criticism. I will not quote any figures, but I am convinced that Queensland is selling electricity more cheaply than Victoria, and New South Wales is selling it more cheaply than Queensland. In other words, it is my belief that Mr Wran has entered into an agreement with an aluminium smelter to sell power more cheaply than it is sold in Queensland.

Mr Wilkes—I have never denied that.
The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr A. T. Evans)—Order! There are far too many interjections in the House. The Leader of the National Party is making a telling point, and members of the Opposition and some Government supporters will have an opportunity of responding to him later.

Mr Ross-Edwards—I have listened to speeches by the former Leader of the Opposition, who is now a member of the Federal Parliament and who preceded the present Leader. One of his standard speeches concerned the Esso-BHP agreement, which was a secret agreement; we did not know the details of it. That was trotted out every year, and rightly so. There is only one other similar agreement, and that was the agreement with Alcoa on Anglesea, and I understand that that agreement will expire in about a year's time. They were secret agreements, but this agreement is public knowledge and is on the line. In New South Wales and Queensland the agreements are supposedly confidential and secret. I commend the Government for coming into the open, because it would have been unpardonable, in my view, to have had that type of agreement in Victoria.

I do not think there is any doubt that the costs charged for electricity in Queensland and New South Wales are considerably less than those in Victoria.

Mr Jolly—How do you know that?

Mr Ross-Edwards—I do not know that; that is my belief, and if I cannot prove it I will not make a definite statement. It is my belief that of the business community in this city and this State.

There has been criticism that the State Electricity Commission could run short of electrical generating capacity owing to demand by Alcoa of Australia Ltd, leading to wide-scale blackouts and the inability to supply new industry with power. That criticism warrants consideration. This financial year the State Electricity Commission has scheduled to bring three new generating stations into service to provide an extra 1025 megawatts.

Next financial year Yallourn W4 is scheduled to come into service to provide an additional 375 megawatts. In the year Alcoa is scheduled to commence its Portland operation, the first stage of Loy Yang power station is due to come into service and that is scheduled to provide 500 megawatts. In that same year it is planned to retire the old peak-load stations of Newport, Richmond and Spencer Street, which presently provide 308 megawatts. That will deliver only a net increase of 192 megawatts.

A difficult situation could arise if the proposed Loy Yang project does not come into operation on schedule. If that happens it could be necessary for the State Electricity Commission to maintain the old peak-load stations and that would be most uneconomical. The continuing disputation at the Loy Yang project is a shocking advertisement for Victoria and, when the cap fits, it should be worn. At a time when new industry is desperately needed to provide jobs, Victoria is in danger of frittering away one of the great advantages it has as a manufacturing location, and that is the capacity to have ample and cheap power.

Another aluminium smelter company would like to set up operations in Victoria but the State Electricity Commission is not in a position to guarantee the necessary electrical power. The Government should take a much more active role in attempting to settle the Loy Yang dispute quickly.

Mr Wilkes—Like it did today in this House?

Mr Ross-Edwards—Governments have their good and bad days and today was a bad one. However, it may not be appreciated that the State Electricity Commission has not guaranteed to supply Alcoa with 888 megawatts of power.

Mr Wilkes—It is in the agreement!

Mr Ross-Edwards—The organization supplying the power has only guaranteed to supply——

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr A. T. Evans)—Order! There are far too many interjections in the House. The Leader
of the Opposition is refusing to accept the directions of the Chair and I again appeal to him to come to order and give a lead to the House.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS—The State Electricity Commission has guaranteed to supply Alcoa with only 440 megawatts of power. Therefore, it has a good safety margin should a construction programme be delayed.

If the Government has to turn off some street lights to provide young persons with jobs, it would have to seriously consider that. It is about time the State got its priorities right.

The Portland Harbor Trust has agreed to build a wharf for Alcoa costing approximately $4 million. It is not clear whether that will be financed initially by additional prescribed loans, in which case there would be no cost to the State or Treasury. At least I am trying to present a balanced view of the matter. The National Party does criticize the Government and does not have two bob each way and does not view matters in black and white as the Opposition does.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr A. T. Evans)—Order! I have repeatedly appealed to members of the Opposition and I now specifically say that the honourable member for Niddrie is out of his place and continually interjecting. The honourable member for Keilor has refused to abide by the ruling of the Chair and the honourable member for Dandenong is persistently interjecting and disrupting the debate. Such behaviour will no longer be tolerated.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS—One of the more important features of the Bill is that the arrival of Alcoa at Portland will allow the Portland Harbor Trust to become profitable and to progressively wipe off its accumulated losses. The rebate of the 5.5 per cent turnover tax out of consolidated revenue for ten years will, at current levels, cost the Government $20 million in lost revenue. The National Party does not believe that is unreasonable.

If the Government wishes to attract new industries to Victoria, it must be prepared to offer tax concessions. It is unfortunate that the various States are competing with each other to attract industry and are therefore to some extent cutting each other's throats, but these are the facts of life one has to live with.

I turn now to the technicalities of the agreement. I am surprised at the lack of information contained under the obligations of Alcoa compared with the detailed information contained in the obligations of the State.

For instance, Alcoa has several obligations which are not listed in the agreement. It is therefore appropriate to ask the Minister for Minerals and Energy to assure the House that those obligations by Alcoa are firm obligations and that the Government has the necessary documentation to ensure that those obligations are honoured. I refer to Alcoa meeting 21 per cent of the cost of the power line; effectively meeting the cost of relocating the airport; carrying out landscaping work at the Alcoa site estimated at $3 million; adhering to laid down conservation or environmental standards and agreeing to provide 267 new houses and flats by 1983, as well as constructing a special village for the construction workers. The National Party has no doubt that those obligations will be met, but I should like the Minister to indicate the agreement to which Alcoa has bound itself to carry out those obligations. If they are not in the agreement, the Government could hardly be surprised if at first the community considers the agreement lopsided.

It is interesting to note that during the Whitlam Government of 1972 to 1975 the Opposition was interested in the development of new growth centres and large amounts of Federal funds were directed towards those centres, very few successful ones bury-Wodonga centre cheap.

Victorian operation of that growth centre as at 30 June 1978 had an outstanding borrowing of nearly $72 million. At that stage it had accumulated losses of more than $16 million. Developing new centres is an
expensive business but, based on the figures presented for Portland that project will be comparatively cheap. The Portland Harbor Trust owes the Government only $3.8 million. To this can be added the $36.5 million for the Government's share of the power line. Even if the amount of lost turnover tax of $20 million is added to these figures, the total cost is well below the costs of Victoria's share in Albury-Wodonga, despite the change in money values as a result of inflation.

I commend the Government on the Alcoa project. I believe it will usher in a new era for western Victoria and it is fully supported by my party. However, there is one point I should like to make very clear before I conclude. I was disturbed by the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition that if Labor came to power this agreement would be renegotiated. That is not the first time the Opposition has made a similar statement. I have said this before and I want to make it very clear that once the Government of a State or nation makes a binding legal agreement, that agreement must be honoured because, if it is not honoured, our reputation is history. We lose our credibility. Credibility is the key word and these obligations must be honoured. Many an agreement made by past Governments of the same political color or another political color may not be popular, but once they are entered into, not by a political party but by the Government of the State, they must be honoured.

I ask the Opposition, and I say this constructively, to give due consideration to that statement, to disown it and to change its policy. I should like the Opposition during the course of this debate to clarify that important principle, because if it is not done, the credibility of the Opposition will be at stake.

Mr AMOS (Morwell)—I am quite happy to respond to the question of the Leader of the National Party concerning the view of the Opposition about this agreement. I want to make it abundantly clear to the honourable member and to other honourable members that at no time today—they can check their Hansards when they are printed—did the Leader of the Opposition say that the Opposition would repudiate the agreement that honourable members are debating today. If honourable members check the Hansard records of the last time this matter was extensively debated in the House, they will find that at no time did members of the Opposition say that they would repudiate that agreement.

It is necessary to say to the Leader of the National Party that the Labor Party believes this agreement is not in the best interests of the State. However, the Labor Party is very conscious of its responsibility and very conscious of the very fabric of society to which the Leader of the National Party refers. If in Government, the Labor Party would not be in the business of repudiating former agreements. It would be trying to renegotiate those agreements if they were clearly not in the best interests of the people of this State whom honourable members represent. What we have also said, for the benefit of the ignorant members on the back bench of the Liberal Party, is that in those areas where matters are not subject to an agreement, such as the tariff rates charged by the State Electricity Commission, we would be ensuring that the people of Victoria were not disadvantaged because of the folly of this stupid Government. That is what we are about.

The Leader of the National Party took time to criticize the assessment carried out by the Opposition on the costs associated with this agreement. Of course he was referring to the debate we had in this place some time before and the costs associated with the supply of electricity to Portland for Alcoa's development. I put on record that at least the Labor Party was the only political party in this State, indeed in this nation, to ever attempt to carry out such an assessment, notwithstanding that the prime responsibility for that assessment rested with the Government which ushered in this shameful document for honourable members' concurrence. The Govern-
ment failed to take that responsibility. No proper assessment was made, either by Treasury or by the Economic Division of the Department of the Premier. During the previous debate, honourable members referred to that very cursory document prepared by the Economic Division of the Department of the Premier. The Leader of the National Party may be correct, members of the Opposition and the media may be wrong in their assessment of costs, but what we are saying is that we are the only people who have undertaken that sort of assessment and on the figures we have been able to show, using historical data only, the most conservative of assessments under these circumstances. We have seen that the rate offered to Alcoa to go to Portland—that is, the tariff option 5—is priced at well over half a cent a kilowatt hour below the cost of production. If those figures are to be disputed, I suggest the Premier should take up the demand made by members of the Opposition and conduct a thorough assessment of the State Electricity Commission's tariff structure. Why not? What has he to hide? What has the State Electricity Commission to hide under those circumstances?

The Leader of the National Party also says that we now have an open agreement, not like the old agreements of the past, the secret agreements of the Alcoa-Point Henry episode; no matter how shabbily it is presented, it is an open agreement. He did not refer to the heads of agreement reached between the State Electricity Commission and Alcoa. We have not sighted that document, although the Premier has attempted to boast that he believes in open Government and he wants the Opposition, the public and the media to know about the arrangements he has entered into with Alcoa. Where then is the openness? Where is this bipartisan approach? It is non-existent. The Leader of the National Party quite correctly referred to the agreement as being one-sided, and one-sided it is. I refer to the obligation involved in the schedule; there are three obligations of the Alcoa company and 26 obligations of the State. One is entitled to ask who wrote this agreement? Was it Alcoa, George Haymaker, or the Premier? Who did write this agreement? No matter, how many detailed examinations I make of the agreement, I have to reach the conclusion that it obviously benefits Alcoa and disadvantages Victoria.

Therefore, my Leader is correct in stating that members of the Opposition cannot accept this agreement. Honourable members will remember that when this matter was previously debated we said that we could support the development of an aluminium smelter provided the full cost of electricity was met, provided certain environmental safeguards were met and, of course, that it reached only a certain stage of development. All other stages of development had to be subject to a further, more precise and detailed assessment, examination and report. This agreement in no way permits that approval.

This agreement takes away from this State and Victorians the very right to determine their economic and energy future.

I am most concerned to confine my remarks to the provision of electricity and the energy future of Victorians. I earlier referred to the assessment that we believe is necessary of the State Electricity Commission's tariff structure. I would have thought that any honourable member, if he or she were to be honest, would have reached the conclusion that the detailed assessment we provided when this matter was debated, clearly showed the necessity of having an independent examination. That is nothing new.

I remind this lazy inept Government about the role played by Conservative Governments overseas. Even the Conservative Thatcher Government has found it necessary to refer the tariff structure of the United Kingdom central generating board to the Monopolies Commission. That is one Conservative Government which has referred a tariff structure to the Monopolies Commission.
I quote from an article which appeared in the Electrical View of 16 May this year:

The Government has ordered the Monopolies Commission to investigate the efficiency and operating costs of the Central Electricity Generating Board.

This move follows the announcement on Monday that electricity prices are to be increased by an average of 10 per cent from 1 August. The last rise of 17 per cent came into effect only last month, on 1 April: in June 1979 electricity prices went up by 8·6 per cent and in September last year by 8 per cent.

The monopolies investigation was ordered by the Minister of Consumer Affairs following the electricity price announcement. Of course, that does not happen here. This Minister cares not about Victorians who have had to fork out two and three times in the past couple of years for increased tariffs. But at least the Minister's Conservative counterpart in the United Kingdom is concerned. The same article quotes her as saying:

The cost of electricity supplied in bulk to areas boards by the Central Electricity Generating Board is a very large element in the final bill to the consumer, which has risen substantially in recent years.

It is important to establish that everything possible is being done by the Central Electricity Generating Board to absorb costs and to increase efficiency in order to keep prices as low as possible.

That is another example of a responsible action being taken. There is no such assessment here in Victoria, not even a cursory assessment by anyone who could be called independent from the control of the State Electricity Commission.

I invite honourable members to examine each of these cost elements, including the production of alumina for the proposed Alcoa smelter at Portland. Even Alcoa tells us that the cost of electricity is something like $30 million with a unit cost of $263 representing some 15 per cent of the total. If alumina is consumed at the rate of 1·95 tonnes per tonne of ingot, about 248 000 tonnes of alumina will be required annually during stage 1. Alcoa's $49·1 million allowance therefore implies a price of $198 a tonne of alumina, which is at the top of the current range of "spot prices" for small consignments. However, most of the alumina refinery's output is sold under long-term contract at considerably lower prices. For example, the average price for alumina exported from Australia during 1978-79 was $120 a tonne. Probably the price of $160 would be reasonable yielding an estimate of $39·68 million which is $312 a tonne of ingot.

If we look at the electricity component consumed at the rate of 15 kilowatt hours a tonne of ingot, we see that about 1908 million kilowatt hours of ingot will be required annually. Alcoa's $30 million allowance therefore implies a price of 1·57 cents a kilowatt hour, which is roughly confirmed by independent calculations based on State Electricity Commission tariff M option 5. However, $1·65 million of the money paid to the State Electricity Commission will be returned to Alcoa as a State Government rebate of the 5·5 per cent turnover tax component. Therefore, a figure of $28·35 million per annum or $223 a tonne is more correct than information supplied by Alcoa.

The Leader of the National Party referred to a $20 million gift in three years from that tax rebate. Over the ten-year period of this exemption my calculations conclude that that turnover tax holiday represents approximately $45 million. At stage 1, as I have indicated, $1·65 million per annum, and at stage 4, $6·39 million per annum. That is a massive $45 million handout to a company that did not ask for that turnover tax exemption. One would think that Victoria as a State has money to throw away. If one then looks at the electricity cost subsidy on that selling of electricity at well over half a cent a kilowatt hour below the cost of production, on our calculations, that represents $9·5 million at stage 1 and $37 million at stage 4. The figures I am quoting are based on December 1979 prices. They have risen considerably since then.

Tariff M option 5, was calculated at 1·6 cents a kilowatt hour in December 1979, and now in 1980 it is more of the order of 1·81 cents a kilowatt hour.
The subsidy of a half cent a kilowatt hour, representing that $9.5 million per annum at stage 1 or $37 million at stage 4—$45 million on turnover tax exemption and something like $58 million on transmission costs, is the cost Victorians will have to meet in terms of electricity. That is too great for Victorians and other electricity consumers to bear.

I should have thought that was bad enough but one can imagine the surprise most Victorians concerned about the price of electricity experienced when they picked up the Age of 18 August this year to learn that the Premier had offered a further turnover tax exemption to Alcoa for the Point Henry extensions and referred to what he called the “greenfields” development elsewhere where turnover tax exemption could be applied. The article states:

The Government takes 5.5 per cent of State Electricity Commission tariffs for general revenue and will give up about $5 million for the five year exemption at Point Henry.

The article quoted the Minister for Minerals and Energy, Mr Balfour, as saying:

... exemption was given only for “Greenfields” project such as Portland.

All said they were unaware of the exemption. (Mr Hamer and Mr Thompson were unavailable.)

Mr Balfour said later that the exemption was an incentive for the company to establish new plants. He said he was not able to comment further as it was not an area within his portfolio.

He did not know and could not answer. He obviously could not say why it was considered that Point Henry, where Alcoa was already in the area, necessitated this 5.5 per cent discount in electricity sold to the company. The article goes on to quote Mr Balfour as saying:

Big companies have become aware of the exemption and are asking for it, he said. One company considering a plant in Geelong has sought exemption, although it is unclear whether it will go to New Zealand.

It is about this time this Government, this Minister and this Premier came to the conclusion and told the people and the Parliament just what it was offering companies—multinational or otherwise—in so-called incentives and what tax-payers’ money is being foregone in this mad desire to excite large businesses, this mad desire to give away incentives that these large industries are not requesting.

My concern today is will there be an availability of electricity for the Alcoa development at Portland in April 1983? During the previous debate I canvassed the details of the calculations the Opposition has made on electricity costs and what that means to the Victorian economy. My colleague, the shadow Minister for economic planning, also canvassed the areas that were pertinent to his responsibility, and my colleagues in another place dealt with questions of the environment and employment. However, the question I raise today has developed since the previous debate: It is the question of the availability of electricity.

The 1976 report on the proposed extension to the State generating system, the Loy Yang project, states—and this is the year that Parliament gave its approval to the project—on page 1:

The construction of this project is programmed to achieve commercial service of the first generating unit in 1983.

When the Bill was later debated, the Minister said:

The development will comprise two 2,000-megawatt power stations with the first station, Loy Yang A, planned to come into service between 1983 and 1988.

After careful consideration of all of these factors, the commission has estimated that demand for electricity will increase at an average of 6.6 per cent per annum over the fifteen years to 1990.

He compared that with a 7.8 per cent growth rate over the past fifteen years. He then said:

The commission’s forecasts indicate that between 1983 and 1992 there will be a need for an additional 4,000 megawatts of base load plant which will provide for the additional energy requirements at a rate which is only slightly higher than the lowest of the forecasts contained in the Government’s White Paper.

At that time it was accepted that Loy Yang—at least stage 1—would be completed by 1983. I now submit to the House that the State Electricity Commission, the Government, the Minister for Minerals and Energy—if he were to be completely honest and disregard the
answer he gave yesterday—would say that Loy Yang will not be available in 1983 when Alcoa will be drawing on the State grid for its Portland development. Press clippings on this subject reveal why this is so.

**An Honourable Member**—Why talk about the press clippings?

Mr AMOS—I take up the interjection, because it is relevant. What we are being asked to do today is to give authority to an agreement that says that by April 1983 Alcoa, with its 26 gifts provided by the agreement—the 26 obligations this State has to fulfil—can draw on the State's system whether the State has the electricity or not. That is the pertinent point of referring to whether Loy Yang will be ready at that time.

An article that appeared in the Sun of 13 October, states:

The chairman of the State Electricity Commission, Mr Charles Trethowan, said the longer the strife went on,—

The reference is to the Loy Yang dispute that was the subject of debate earlier today—

... the greater the chance of eventual power shortages.

The article continues:

He would not say when shortages would be felt, though it is understood this would be some time after 1983-4.

The longer it takes to start working, the greater the gap will grow between demand for electricity, and the ability of the existing power network to supply it.

An article in the Herald of 17 October states:

Alcoa officials have said they will not be able to begin operation of the smelter on the target date of April, 1983, if the first stage of Loy Yang is not completed.

"It's as simple as this. Without Loy Yang, we won't start up," one official said.

One of the main reasons for building the smelter at Portland was the promise from the State Government that Loy Yang would be "on stream" by 1983.

Alcoa considers it is essential for Loy Yang to be on stream in 1983 because of the large amounts of electricity needed for aluminium production.

Of course Alcoa believed that! And, of course, Alcoa will also, as granted by this agreement, draw on the State grid in 1983 whether Loy Yang is ready or not, because under the terms of the agreement it can do that and the State cannot prevent it from doing so. The Age of 26 September 1980 quotes Mr Johnson, the Assistant General Manager of the State Electricity Commission:

Mr Johnson said industry could be shut down for periods of two weeks at a time from 1983. He was referring to the Loy Yang dispute:

But the shutdowns could start as early as next January because the State Electricity Commission has almost no power reserves as a result of delays on Newport and Yallourn W.

Mr Johnson said the delays at Loy Yang would make it difficult for the State Electricity Commission to supply power to Alcoa for its proposed aluminium smelter at Portland in 1983.

Of course, it will be difficult for the State Electricity Commission to supply electricity to Alcoa at Portland in 1983 without Loy Yang, but Alcoa will still take electricity from the grid at that time.

Apart from the delay in starting the first Loy Yang unit, he said there did not seem to be any prospect of bringing in successive units at yearly intervals as planned.

Contrast the concern being expressed by the State Electricity Commission to the comment made by the Minister for Minerals and Energy when the Prime Minister was bold enough to suggest that companies such as Alcoa should build their own power stations, as has already been done for the Alcoa development at Anglesea. Contrast that statement with what appeared in the Melbourne Herald on 6 December last year:

Mr Balfour said the State Government was negotiating with the Nabaco company over the proposed smelter.

He said the power needs of a smelter could be met by speeding up of the State Electricity Commission's development programme—probably accelerating the 4000-megawatt Loy Yang power station.

"The only problem is getting the Commonwealth Government to allow us to borrow the money to let us get on with the work," Mr Balfour said.

I repeat the last paragraph:

"The only problem is getting the Commonwealth Government to allow us to borrow the money to let us get on with the work," Mr Balfour said.

That was on 6 December last year, at a time when we know, because of documentation from the State Electricity
Commission, that the State Electricity Commission was claiming to be in a precarious position and claiming it required additional loan funding powers and additional funds for its Loy Yang project; at a time when the Commonwealth was vacillating, but the Minister nonetheless practically confirmed what I am now saying by the statement that was quoted in the Herald. He said the only problem was Commonwealth funding. Of course it was the only problem, but did we hear a word from the Minister or the Government about this during the last Federal election campaign? No, they completely walked away from their responsibilities and refused to stand up to the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer over their promise to examine the infrastructure requirements of State electricity commissions so that those commissions could increase their electricity generating capacities. They uttered not one word, so Malcolm Fraser, John Howard and the rest of them have got away with the nonsense they peddled and Victorians are left to suffer.

I recall a few minutes ago that honourable members on the Government back benches were questioning the accuracy of press reports. I wonder if they will question the accuracy of reports made available to the Victorian Government and the Federal Government.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr A. T. Evans)—Order! The honourable member has 2 minutes.

On the motion, by leave, of Mr FORDHAM (Footscray), an extension of 5 minutes was granted.

Mr AMOS (Morwell)—I thank the House for its courtesy. What I am attempting to do is to demonstrate to the House that it is not a question of whether those press reports are accurate, but of the seriousness of the State Electricity Commission’s position.

In a report to the Government, the State Electricity Commission acknowledged that for the years 1982–83 through to 1988–89 there is estimated to be no spare energy generation capability in the Victorian system. In fact, an energy deficiency is expected in the years 1983–84 through to 1987–88.

This is based on the above assumptions and on the four units of Loy Yang “A” coming into service in May 1984—not May 1983—August 1985, May 1986, November 1987 and the first two units of Loy Yang “B” in May 1988 and May 1989. To achieve even this situation it will be necessary to negotiate additional supplies of gas to maximize the use of the gas turbines.

We all know what additional cost is involved in running those gas turbines in the Latrobe Valley and the Newport intermediate gas-fired power station, if and when it is commissioned. If one looks at the total generation from gas turbines expected to be made by the Loy Yang “A” and “B” power stations, one sees that for the year 1983–84 there will be a deficiency of 600 gigawatt hours; for 1984–85 the deficiency will be 400 gigawatt hours; for 1985–86, 400 gigawatt hours and for 1986–87, 500 gigawatt hours.

Clearly the State Electricity Commission is claiming that in 1983–84, the year in which Alcoa would want to go on stream at Portland, it is going to have a 600 gigawatt hour deficiency, and here we are being asked to agree to this Bill; we are being asked to give our consent to this agreement, which says that every other industry in this State will be put at risk in 1983 because of Alcoa’s demands and because of this agreement.

Let the Government go to the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce and to the Chamber of Manufactures and tell them that in 1983 they could be blacked out because of the exempt provisions that are probably being offered to in the “heads of agreement” secret document Alcoa for its development at Portland. We do not know what those heads of agreement stated; we do not know whether exempt provisions will apply, but we know this agreement says that Alcoa will get its electricity from the grid in 1983 and that there will be a 600 gigawatt hour deficiency in that year, using the commission’s own figures.

We do know that would mean that other industry in the State is going to be blacked out because of this
agreement, so on those terms alone, forgetting all the other areas covered by the Leader of the Opposition, the Opposition simply cannot afford to agree to the Bill before the House.

*The sitting was suspended at 6.15 p.m. until 8.4 p.m.*

**Mr KENNETT** (Burwood)—Tonight honourable members have heard an incredible debate of contrasts. As a junior member in this House I have heard the Leader of the alternative Government emotionally and quite clearly state that his party will not support one facet of the Bill before the House.

**Mr Amos**—It is a sell-out.

**Mr KENNETT**—An honourable member has called it a sell-out. The Leader of the Opposition continued to slam the Bill, without one hint of positivity or concern for the people of Victoria and without any attempt to present a balanced criticism of the measure. He was followed by the Leader of the National Party who recognized the Bill for what it was, and probably gave the people of this State a much more reasoned and responsible approach to the measure. The Bill is obviously involved with development of opportunities in Victoria.

Through its Leader, the Labor Party has indicated, in the four and a half years in which I have been a member of this Chamber, that its ability to be positive on any issue is hard to pinpoint. It will be difficult for the people of Victoria, on balance, ever to appreciate how the current Opposition will be able to form a Government because it has become cynical and bitter towards any project that may advance the opportunities for Victorians. If that party is ever given the opportunity of governing, I doubt whether its members will be able to change their approach in a responsible manner.

The Leader of the Opposition also said clearly that if this Bill is passed and he is given the opportunity of forming a Government in this State, he will renegotiate the terms of the agreement. The Leader of the National Party said that if any successive Government changes the terms and conditions under which a Government has entered into an agreement with an industry or organization for development, obviously it will put at risk all future development in this State. The Leader of the Opposition indicated that he did not mean to do that and said that he would not repudiate the legislation.

I refer to a debate in this House on 30 April 1980, which was reported at page 8843 of *Hansard*. The Leader of the Opposition has on a previous occasion given the people of Victoria, industry, parents and people looking for work the same clue as to the motivation behind his philosophical approach to the development of this State.

**Mr Wilkes**—The honourable member may not quote that speech because it took place during the current sessional period of Parliament.

**Mr KENNETT**—It took place on 30 April 1980 which was not during the current sessional period. The Leader of the Opposition said:

Under no circumstances will it repudiate any contract entered into by the Premier or this Government with Alcoa. The Labor Party is not in the business of repudiating contracts, no matter what the terms of the contracts are. It will attempt to renegotiate in an effort to correct the mistakes that may or may not have occurred in the contract. If that is impossible and the contract cannot be renegotiated, a Labor Government will use every means possible to ensure that the principles I have outlined are fulfilled—and there is nothing novel about these principles.

I then interjected for some reason, which is most unusual, and said:

You will repudiate.

The Leader of the Opposition continued:

A Labor Government will not repudiate the contract. I have already said that it would attempt to renegotiate and, if that renegotiation failed, the first step, would be to impose a licence fee on the tonnage produced at the smelter to recover the losses due to the ten-year turnover tax exemption. There is nothing new about a licence fee.

You will repudiate.

The Leader of the Opposition then stated that if he could not renegotiate, he would introduce new conditions which would basically make the original agreement invalid. There is no doubt that a Labor Government in this State is the greatest
threat to development, and the development of job creation, for all Victoria. The Labor Party over the next few months will be seen and identified in the community for the faceless men they really are, and for the cynics they are when it comes to development.

I shall now return to the Bill. The Leader of the Labor Party indicated that his basic objection to this Bill fell into four areas: The cost of the power line, the cost of the electricity, the use of the electricity, and other incentives generally. I shall address myself to some of those points, knowing that my colleagues who speak after me will probably deal with the others much better. The Leader of the Opposition, in his normal, emotive, way spoke of the many subsidy incentives that will be a great cost to this community. He does not see it as a responsibility of Government to provide incentives to create better opportunities for Victoria.

The first issue I should like to quickly look at is the site, the 440 hectares of land that was bought by Alcoa. The way the Leader of the Opposition addressed the House, one would have thought that the Government had gone all out backwards to purchase the land and was the only one involved in the negotiations, when in fact the greater part of the land was privately owned, and part of the balance of the land was owned or vested in the Portland Harbor Trust. The Leader of the Opposition would have the community and this Parliament believe that the Portland Harbor Trust was having its arm twisted to sell the land. The trust very much wants development in Portland. The people in Portland want the development of Alcoa at Portland. It seems to me, more and more, that the only people who do not want any development in this State are members of the Labor Party and the few people who are associated with them through a minority of an outspoken, environmental group. There is no foundation for the claims that the Leader of the Opposition made. The Government did no more or less than was expected of it, as a responsible Government, for a developmental programme in this State and, as I have already said, the land had already been purchased by Alcoa.

The second one that was thrown up as a great cost to the community was the re-siting of the airport. Who wants the re-siting of the airport? Certainly Alcoa, and also certainly the community of Portland. Who is going to pay for the re-siting of the airport? Alcoa! So once again the further the Leader of the Opposition went on, the clearer it became that this particular address of his was not his own, because it was not couched in four letter words and simple syllables that all honourable members could understand; it was very much that of his economic adviser, Mr Richardson. I will come back to him later. On two issues the Labor leader is found out, on the site, and on the airport.

What about the port of Portland and the subsidy of approximately $5 million that the Government is going to provide to redevelop the port? Why is the Government spending $5 million in guaranteeing the Portland Harbor Trust? It is because there will be a tremendous influx from that new port of bauxite from Western Australia to feed into the Alcoa plant, and once the finished product is produced it will lead to a greater utilization of the existing wharf, a greater utilization of our development, and a greater utilization of the port, and it will lead to greater opportunities for the people of Portland to have more use of their existing port. The Leader of the Opposition would have us believe that the $5 million expenditure was wasteful and irresponsible. Again his argument was not his own; it was prepared for him. He read most of it, and in words that he would not normally use.

Therefore, the Government has him on three issues, the site, the airport and the new wharf being built by the Portland Harbor Trust. One other area I want to address myself to fairly briefly, is the economic impact of this development at Portland. I will get on to the tariff rate, if the honourable member for Dandenong just waits his turn. It is easy when one is born in a

Mr Kennett
little cell, never been into the outside world, and just reads books. I imagine the honorable member for Dandenong is going to follow me in this debate, and when he does the Parliament will witness another diatribe of facts and figures that have no relation to the real issue and to the people of this State.

Let me refer to the environmental effects at Portland. One matter that interests me considerably is the Leader of the Opposition's call for an in-depth environmental economic statement. I think an energy study was done of that particular area, but so much of the comments of the Labor Party in the press to date have been based on the environmental issue. The Alcoa company, as honourable members know, produced, and put on exhibition, a very detailed and comprehensive environmental effects study. That particular book went on exhibition, and has been available for study since early January 1980. In the first two months 90 submissions were received, and the Minister for Conservation has allowed for submissions to be presented after that expiry date. Therefore, anyone genuinely concerned on that particular issue, with some in-depth knowledge, had the opportunity of making a submission.

The concern of the Australian Labor Party for the heathland has been seen. Where was its concern for the heathland when half of it was destroyed for the existing aerodrome site? There was none. The more one looks into the Australian Labor Party's self-justification on this project, the more one concedes three facts: Either the Australian Labor Party genuinely does not know what it is talking about or it is not prepared to allow Victoria to develop. In the four years I have been in this Parliament there has not been one Government project that the Opposition has accepted in its presented form; not one has the Australian Labor Party put up that would have led to greater opportunities for Victorians. Thirdly, the Leader of the Opposition, without the knowledge, and without the experience, has relied very heavily on the work done by his adviser, Mr Richardson, and he has gone out and locked himself in on Mr Richardson's comments, and cannot get away from them.

Let me look at the benefits of this project with some degree of optimism and faith in our State and our country, and the ideals that we must all work to if we are to create better job opportunities for people in this State. I will only highlight the benefits as I see them. One of the greatest for Victoria is a base for technological information. A new smelter will give Victoria leading world technology, and the flow-on of that information into Victoria and out of Alcoa into other industries is very real. That is unfortunate for the Australian Labor Party, because I am sure its members do not want this project to work.

At full development stage 1200 jobs will be created directly at Alcoa, and that will have a real multiplying effect. The Leader of the National Party has already talked about the whole new potential growth within the Western District from this project. The new development and prospect for so many people will come from Alcoa and the power line, that the Government has seen fit, with the State Electricity Commission, to contribute to its cost, to ensure opportunities for people in the Western District who wish to remain in those areas and can do so with a reasonable hope for job opportunities.

The Leader of the Opposition did not mention the benefits that will flow to Victoria through Portland, the Western District and Geelong by the installation of the new power line. The transmission line gives Victoria a tremendous capacity at a future date for industries to grow from Alcoa, around Alcoa, around Portland and around Geelong—industries that will not need the same sort of power but for which power will be provided from this line.

Another real benefit is that at some stage Australians must address themselves both at Federal and State levels to the question of a national energy grid. The provision of the line from Victoria's basic source of cheap energy
coal—will give the State an ample and good start to forming an important link in this national grid.

The Leader of the Opposition fell flat on his face so easily, readily and as he usually does, when he spoke on tariffs. He has relied on the information provided to him by his so-called experts. If one cares to go to the Library to read the documents prepared by Mr Richardson, one will discern that the four or five documents are of great depth. Mr Richardson had the opportunity of going to the State Electricity Commission, which refuted his report. He went with the honourable member for Morwell. They were there for an hour and a half. They came away from the meeting totally unrepentant and unaccepting of the error of their figures.

The tariff about which the Opposition is so negative in its efforts to present itself as a future Government is the standard electricity tariff from the published tariff rates. No special deals have been done on the base tariff. If in fact the tariff is wrong, as has been suggested by the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Morwell, then probably 74 other industry, commercial, hospital and university users are also paying an incorrect tariff. The spokesman for the Labor Party will not accept that because he is not prepared to slam other industries, universities and hospitals that are paying the same tariff. He is not prepared to call them crooks.

In arriving at the tariff rate for Alcoa there is the discount for interruptibility. Interruptibility means that given the sort of industry it is, while power is being supplied, Alcoa will have access to a base load for continuous use.

Mr Amos—that is not an issue.

Mr KENNETT—it is an issue because the Opposition is concerned that the base rate is wrong. The Opposition accepts that fact because it knows that the whole rationale of its debate is in throwing around words about a wrong tariff: In analysing the tariff arrived at by the Opposition, one can discover that the Opposition in actual fact does accept the figure the State Electricity Commission and the Government have provided.

The interruptability clause means that should an abnormal condition present itself, obviously Alcoa will fit in with the priority already given to it by the State Electricity Commission for the provision of power to persons within the State. It is important for Victorians to know what that priority is because the way in which the Labor Party carries on gives the impression that the Government is concerned only with the provision of power to Alcoa. That is not so. The first priority on restricted availability of electricity is to the health and safety of the community; the second is equity of application to similar customers; the third is other particular hardships to customers—for example, the sale and preservation of foods, educational, communication and transport needs; and the fourth—this is the D classification—is for minimum loss of materials in the manufacturing process.

The Labor Party believes implicitly that the Government has put all its eggs in the Alcoa basket—that it has put all its resources into Alcoa. Alcoa, like any other industry, is only fourth in the list of electricity supply priorities.

Another area of doubt is the turnover tax—the tax paid by Alcoa to the State Electricity Commission—and the concession provided. No Government would get any turnover tax if it were not for companies like Alcoa. The Government has given an incentive to Alcoa by waiving the turnover tax for ten years to eventually obtain an annual return of approximately $7 million. If Alcoa does not establish its smelter plant at Portland there will be no eventual turnover tax from that source. The Government will be able to spread those eventual benefits throughout the community.

The Labor Party is not prepared to be reasonable. It has become obsessed with its own efforts to gain Government and it has lost sight of its re-
sponsibilities and of any State development opportunities which will be of benefit to all individuals.

Mr Amos—You have sold the State out.

Mr KENNEDY—The last time the honourable member for Morwell was positive about anything was when he was lying in a sick bed at Fairfield Hospital. I visited him and found I had great rapport with him when he said that he wanted to get out of the hospital. Ever since, he has been negative. He would be negative in Government. The Alcoa project is important. Other countries are developing capacities for producing energy at much quicker rates than Australia. For example, Canada and Mexico will have a much greater capacity to produce hydro electricity than Australia will have to produce electricity from brown coal; eventually those countries will attract most of the smelters in the world.

Australia needs these industries now for technology and for export earnings. The honourable member for Dandenong continues to blabber. He has accepted the presentation of the Leader of the Opposition and has become so bitter and confused with facts and figures that he also is not prepared to give the State and the people in his electorate any hope for responsible development for job creation.

On the issue of pay-roll tax, the Leader of the Opposition stated that the Government would lose millions of dollars by allowing a pay-roll tax exemption to Alcoa. This exemption is already given to other industries. It is part of the Government's policy for decentralized industries. It is an incentive to those industries so that jobs can be created and opportunities given away from the metropolitan area. I am not sure whether the Opposition wants an abolition of the pay-roll tax exemption, but it has tried to tell the House that the exemption to Alcoa is entirely different from that which the Government gives to other decentralized industries. It is dishonest and hypocritical to present to Victorians a totally different fact from the truth.

The Leader of the Opposition has been a member of Parliament for too long—he should know the facts and he should not be trying to pull that swifty over the community.

I conclude my remarks by referring to an article that appeared in The Age of 25 June 1980, which might explain some of the negative attitude displayed by the Labor Party. When the project was first announced, the Leader of the Opposition and many of his colleagues were prepared to support it, but they then ran into difficulties within the ranks of the Labor Party. The article states:

Senior Australian Labor Party officials met yesterday to discuss a controversy over the party's support for stage one of the Alcoa Aluminium smelter at Portland.

The officials are concerned that a resolution passed at the weekend Australian Labor Party conference could be interpreted as a reversal of the policy endorsed by the State Opposition Leader, Mr Wilkes.

The resolution, moved by the president of the party's anti-uranium committee, Ms Joan Cox-sedge, MLC, called for a moratorium on development of the $1000 million smelter.

That is where the key lies. The Leader of the Opposition cannot be his own man. I believe him to be a man of sincerity who wants the State to develop. When the project was first announced he supported it, but suddenly the left wing, the anti-uranium group within the Australian Labor Party said, "We are going for a moratorium on the project". He had to change his view in order to retain his position. He had to change his view and has put his own position before the interests of the people of Victoria and job opportunities for many Victorians.

This is a good project. It is a big project and one that will cost the State, as I have illustrated, very little in real terms. It will cost moneys the State would not otherwise have received, because it is a decentralized industry. It should be supported by the Australian Labor Party; it should be supported by the press; and it should be supported by the community. If the community turns its back on this sort of project, it will end up in the same sort of sad situation that the Australian Labor Party is now in in Victoria.
Mr JOLLY (Dandenong)—The remarks of the honourable member for Burwood are typical of the approach of the Government party. They were unquestioning and shallow. One should not be surprised at that, because he adopted an approach that did not require any research. The Government is selling Victoria down the drain.

The honourable member for Burwood quoted from Hansard to try to demonstrate that the Leader of the Opposition would repudiate the contract. What he in fact demonstrated was that the Leader of the Opposition would not repudiate the agreement, but would, in Government, ensure that renegotiation took place and that policies were introduced to ensure that the Alcoa development would be for the benefit of Victoria and not for the benefit of foreign investors. That is a major issue to be debated.

One cannot simply listen to the dialogue, and diatribe, that was presented by the honourable member for Burwood. All he did was to put up straw men so that he could knock them down. He failed to deal with the substance of the issues raised so competently by the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Morwell.

The major issue that every honourable member should be thinking about is that the Government should be using its resources so that it maximizes Victorian employment opportunities. The facts are that the decision on Alcoa was made in isolation, with no economic evaluation. Such an evaluation should have been a necessary precondition to the making of a decision. The Premier announced a Green Paper, not in this House, but in the Herald. The Green Paper should have been prepared before consideration was given to the project. Members of the Opposition are particularly concerned about the economic consequences of the development because in our view the ordinary Victorian should not be forced to pay for a multi-national company to develop a project. I shall deal with that in more detail later.

The Alcoa agreement gives no guarantee that the people of Victoria will benefit from the development. Only one study has been undertaken by the Government on economic issues. That was the cost benefit analysis carried out by the economic section of the Department of the Premier. Of course, the honourable member for Burwood made no reference to that study, but I intend to examine it in detail. It highlights the issues involved—what a cost-benefit study is all about, and the next step which should have been carried out by the Government but which was ignored.

The aluminium industry is recognized throughout the world, because of the growth in demand, as a profitable industry in those areas in which there is a low cost of production of electricity. No one denies that that is the position in Victoria, but surely the fundamental principle that should underlie any agreement is that Alcoa should be meeting the full costs of providing electricity. It will not be meeting the full costs of providing that electricity.

Mr Kennett—Prove it!

Mr JOLLY—I point out to the honourable member for Burwood that a number of examinations of the tariff structures have been undertaken in Australia. Mr Colin Richardson carried out a detailed examination of the average cost of production, but there is a need for more information. In fact, members of the Opposition were so concerned about the issue that we raised it with the Premier. We asked the honourable gentleman whether he would allow his economic research section to assess the tariff that Alcoa will be charged, to ascertain whether the company would be meeting the cost of the production and supply of electricity. What did the honourable gentleman do? He refused! Surely that is fundamental information that should be available to the people of Victoria so that they can properly assess whether tariff “M” option 5 covers the cost of production. The preliminary evidence suggests that it does not.
The cost of providing electricity to Alcoa will be much higher than the income that will be derived from tariff "M" option 5, which at the moment is 1.6 cents a kilowatt hour. The Alcoa development will require large public investment and these funds have been borrowed overseas at extremely high rates of interest. In some cases the interest rates on State Electricity Commission borrowings have been more than 18 per cent. Unfortunately, the Government does not like providing members of Parliament with information, and the Opposition does not have the complete range of information concerning interest rate charges on infrastructure borrowings. There is no doubt that these borrowings require the State Electricity Commission to pay high rates of interest.

Other matters that have been referred to in the debate include the subsidies provided under the agreement, and the seventh Government obligation exempts Alcoa from paying the 5.5 per cent turnover tax for ten years. It has already been pointed out by the honourable member for Morwell and the Leader of the Opposition that this will mean that the cost to the Victorian taxpayer and other Victorian electricity consumers for stage 1 will be $1.65 million a year. In order to ensure the best use of the State's electricity resources, information should also be available on the marginal cost of providing electricity to Alcoa. That information is completely non-existent.

The honourable member for Burwood raised the issue of interruptibility. The Opposition recognizes the principle that if there is to be interruptibility of electricity supply a discount should be applicable, but the right tariff must be used in the first place before one can consider the application of that principle.

If the basic tariff "M" option 5 is too low or below the cost of providing electricity, then the point made by the honourable member for Burwood is completely irrelevant. Honourable members know that the honourable member for Burwood is used to debating amongst the young Liberals but not on issues of substance!

Let me now turn to the cost-benefit study undertaken by the economics section of the Department of the Premier. It is very important that honourable members understand what is a cost-benefit study and the nature of this study. Basically, a cost-benefit study seeks to compare the costs and benefits of a particular project. The basic question that is trying to be answered by a cost-benefit study is whether the resources used by the Alcoa project will lead to an increase in domestic product or an increase in output. That is the only question that a cost-benefit study answers, and when the Premier first made his Ministerial statement on this particular issue he relied quite heavily on the cost-benefit study in order to demonstrate that the Government was right.

I have two points to make in relation to that. The first is that it is common knowledge that the Premier made a decision before even the cost-benefit study was proposed, so clearly this was an ex post rationalization of the Government's position.

The second is that even though it may be demonstrated that the aggregate benefit of the Alcoa project may be in excess of the aggregate cost, that in itself does not demonstrate that the people of Victoria are going to be the net beneficiaries of the project. This is a most critical issue.

Let me now turn to the particular cost-benefit study and look at the actual cost figures which were presented in the cost-benefit study undertaken by Mr Stanley and Mr Martin from the Department of the Premier. Their estimates of costs were based on 1979-80 prices and on the basis of the 120,000 tonnes smelter. They stated that the capital cost would be $210 million. The transmission line, costed on 1979-80 prices, was $70 million. The cost of generating capacity was $99 million, which represents the proportion allocated to Alcoa but which may in fact turn out to be conservative, and other capital costs totalled $5
million making in total an aggregate cost, on present-value terms and using 1979–80 prices, of $384 million.

That was the cost-benefit assumption and then one must start deriving the benefits. The benefits of the particular project were basically represented by the surplus flowing to the company. The equation which is used to derive the benefits of the particular project as set out in the paper headed "Aluminium Smelting—A cost-benefit analysis" indicated, first of all, is equal to the change in gross domestic product which is assumed to flow from the particular project minus labour costs and minus income payable overseas.

In order to arrive at the net benefit, certain assumptions have to be made about labour cost. The participants in the cost-benefit study took the unusual approach of providing three different costs associated with labour.

In the first one, they assumed that the labour costs would only equal unemployment benefits. In effect they were saying that everyone who worked or was associated with the Alcoa project was unemployed and in receipt of unemployment benefits. Of course, the writers recognized that as an unrealistic assumption so they took two different assumptions.

The second was simply to take the average wage costs in Australia as a measure of the cost of labour employed on the project. The third assumption was a combination of the two, that is, the average of the unemployment benefits and the average wage costs. Of course each particular labour cost assumption one takes leads to a different result.

In fact, if one takes the assumption that the labour costs are equal to the average wage, the cost-benefit study indicates that there will be a net loss or a net cost which would total $81 million.

If one takes the unemployment benefits as the figure on which labour costs should be assessed, the net benefit position moves from a net cost or net loss position and comes out at a benefit of $546 million.

Mr Jolly

If one takes a mid-point between the unemployment benefits and the average wage costs, and that is the assumption which is favoured by Mr Stanley and Mr Martin, the net benefit is $231 million. However, I stress that the study states absolutely nothing on how these benefits will be distributed.

In order to determine that issue before the House, it is critical for anybody trying to make a reasonable and balanced judgment of the Alcoa project to be provided with information on the cost of providing electricity to Alcoa.

Government supporters who have spoken in this debate have taken the view that because it is the published tariff, it must cover costs. That is absurd. It is well known that the State Electricity Commission is keen to maximize the growth of its sales. It is also well known that it has tried to encourage heavy users of its electricity, and its tariff structure reflects a growth orientation. It cannot be assumed, in fact is it an incorrect assumption, that tariff "M" option 5 would cover the additional costs of providing electricity to Alcoa. I have no doubt that if one looks at the marginal costs of providing electricity to Alcoa, it would be well above tariff "M" option 5.

I challenge the Premier to present the views contained in a draft report of the cost-benefit study on the Alcoa project because it would leave no doubt that the tariff does not cover the full cost of providing electricity. That is the fundamental issue and highlights that the Opposition is concerned about the effect on the people of Victoria. If the tariff does not cover the full costs of providing electricity, there is an element of cross-subsidization occurring. That means that the ordinary domestic consumer will have to pay for the Alcoa development, so money will flow overseas by way of profit from the Alcoa project.

In the view of the Opposition that is an unsatisfactory situation. Opposition members believe as a matter of principle that the tariff charged to Alcoa, at the very least, should cover the full cost of providing electricity to Alcoa. The Alcoa decision, in addition...
to this particular problem with the tariff, which I regard as being exceptionally important, did not consider the economic and social consequences of the development. Nothing has been placed before the House which deals with the economic and social consequences of the Alcoa project.

It is extremely important to examine how the Alcoa development and the increase in existing sales of aluminium exports will affect the manufacturing industry in Victoria. Every honourable member knows and understands that Victoria is the most important manufacturing industry employer in Australia. Our manufacturing industries provide more jobs in this State as a proportion of the labour force than do manufacturing industries in any other State.

It is extremely important to consider the consequences of this aluminium project on the manufacturing industry and to relate it to the over-all economic policy stance of the Victorian Government which is on record as supporting the reduced inflation first policy and the slow growth policy of the Fraser Government of about only 3 per cent per annum. If that policy continues and the Alcoa development as part of the over-all resources boom goes ahead unchecked in the context of slow economic growth, more unemployment will occur in the manufacturing sector of the economy.

I shall briefly explain how this interdependence occurs. It should have been examined in detail before any decision was made by the Government. Firstly, when a new industry such as the aluminium industry or a large extension of an existing industry generates an increase in exports, Australia’s balance of payments position improves—everyone accepts that—and as a result Australia’s exchange rate moves upwards. An upward evaluation of Australia’s exchange rate occurred. What does that mean for the manufacturing industry? It means that imports can now come into Australia at lower prices than before. It means that the manufacturing industry will be subject to more competition from overseas.

In the context of a slow growth economy, and that is the consequence of the reduced inflation first policy, that will be disastrous for employment prospects. Although this matter is of fundamental importance, it has been given no consideration by the Government. That is the first element of interdependence that has not been examined by the Government.

The second point I should like to make in relation to the Alcoa development is the effect on the availability of finance of the minerals boom of what the aluminium industry is part. The Victorian Government, along with the Fraser Government, has supported a policy of economic restraint and has argued that the money supply rate of growth should be cut back to 9 per cent from 10 per cent per annum.

Another link exists between overseas financing and the availability of finance for other investment projects in this State. It is basically a fairly simple mechanism considered in the context of slow growth in the money supply and overseas borrowing. The more Australia borrows overseas, the more the money supply increases because of international components, and in turn the less the Government can rely on domestic factors to increase the money supply. In other words, the slow rate of growth in money supply, considered with intense overseas borrowing, causes a credit squeeze which in turn will lead to an increase in the rate of interest.

All honourable members know that rising interest rates are already a problem in this State and there is considerable speculation that interest rates will rise in the near future because the Federal Government will cut back the money supply growth rate from 13.9 per cent to the target of about 10 per cent per annum. By doing that it will force up interest rates. If the aluminium industry develops in the context of slow economic growth and a low monetary target, interest rates will be forced up and that will be damaging to the building industry in this State and to other important capital works projects.
In a real sense the Alcoa development will be competing for capital works funds in this State. This means that developments like Alcoa will make it more difficult to finance capital works projects in traditional areas. This is already happening in Victoria. A cutback has been made in capital works expenditure in the areas of health and education. That is a matter of much concern. These economic consequences should have been considered and should have been spelt out in detail before any agreement was placed before the House. It is most disappointing that the Government has not been prepared to undertake such an economic evaluation.

In summary, I am most concerned that the Premier of this State, in entering into this huge project which is critical to the future of Victoria, has not even been prepared to allow his economic section to examine the existing tariff structure of the State Electricity Commission to ascertain whether Tariff M option 5 covers the cost of providing electricity. The Government has not been prepared, because of economic incompetence, to examine the Alcoa project in the over-all context of the Victorian economy and has not been prepared to undertake an economic evaluation. These issues are of critical importance, and it is of concern to me and to other members of the Opposition that such an examination did not take place.

Mr McKellar (Portland)—This Bill validates an agreement between the Government of Victoria and Alcoa of Australia Ltd to build an aluminium smelter at Point Danger at Portland in the electorate that I represent.

Mr McKellar (Portland)—The only development larger than the Alcoa Portland project was the Loy Yang State Electricity Commission's development at Traralgon. It should be remembered that the Alcoa project at Portland is an Australian development. When that project reaches its full capacity, it will create 5700 employment opportunities in Australia, 3600 of which will be in Victoria and 2100 at Portland. That demonstrates it is an Australian development and the people of Portland consider themselves fortunate that Portland was the locality chosen to build the Alcoa smelter and to be part of this great Australian development.

Those persons who in the late 1940s and early 1950s had the vision to make representations to the Government to have the port of Portland developed should be given a fair measure of credit for that development. Percy Byrnes and the father of the honourable member for Bundoora, the late John Cain, who was Premier, lent their support to the development of Portland and legislation was passed during the term of the Holloway Government and was implemented by the J. G. B. McDonald Country Party Government. I give credit where credit is due. The people of Portland are extremely thankful to those Governments and those men for passing the legislation making the development of the port of Portland possible. Those persons who had visions can take a certain measure of credit for the development that has occurred.

The Portland Harbor Trust will benefit most from the Alcoa project. I will give an indication of what the project may mean to the Portland Harbor Trust. It is charged with the task of building a special wharf for Alcoa which will be adjacent to the main breakwater and will be situated approximately halfway between the existing K. S. Anderson wharf and the harbour entrance. The wharf will be 200 metres long and 20 metres wide. The estimated cost is $5 million. Alcoa will supply the equipment for unload-
ing the alumina, coke and other ingredients required from the ships on the wharf.

The alumina will be unloaded from the ships by a suction method and placed on a conveyor which will convey the alumina 5 kilometres to the site. During part of the journey the conveyor will be underground in a channel to hide it from view. The conveyor will be completely enclosed and dust proof.

I will give some indications of the requirements for producing alumina. To produce 132 000 tonnes of the finished product of aluminium would require 257 000 tonnes of alumina, 16 000 tonnes of pitch, 4000 tonnes of alumina fluoride and 50 000 tonnes of petroleum coke. Approximately 327 000 tonnes of raw materials are needed to produce 132 000 tonnes of the finished product. That would be equivalent to stage 1 of the development of the smelter at Portland, which will commence production in April 1983 and, if it proceeds to plan, the project will be in full operation in 1988 and will require four times the amount of imports for full production.

Agreement has been reached with Alcoa on wharfage rates for the import and export of its finished product, which is to be exported in ingot form to the northern hemisphere countries of the United States of America, Japan and Europe. The income derived by the Portland Harbor Trust from the import and export of the finished product at stage 1 will amount to $483 000. It is to be noted that at stage 4 the income from the import and export of the finished product could amount to in excess of $1 million, which is a substantial income when considered in terms of the investment by the Portland Harbor Trust of $5 million to construct the facilities for Alcoa at Portland.

The alumina will be imported from Western Australia and the petroleum coke will be imported from California, because that coke has the least amount of impurities, which will enable the process to be carried out in a satisfactory manner. There is no similar material available in Australia which can be used because of the impurities found in coke.

During the last financial year the port of Portland had a record cargo throughput of 1.91 million tonnes. The major part of that throughput was grain, which amounted to 1.4 million tonnes.

When Alcoa becomes fully productive, the port of Portland will handle approximately 2 million tonnes of imported and exported product. When one adds that figure to the present throughput, one arrives at a figure of 4 million tonnes. Considering the other projects being negotiated presently, in the early 1990s approximately 5 million tonnes of cargo will be handled by the port of Portland.

The throughput of Alcoa, coupled with the trade, will make the port of Portland an economic proposition. That has been the goal and ambition of all the persons associated with the port of Portland since its opening to trade in 1960. As well as benefiting the Portland Harbor Trust—the main beneficiary—it will benefit those 1200 additional persons who will be employed when the smelter becomes fully productive at the end of stage 4. There are other developments at Portland which go hand in hand with the Alcoa project. There are certain infrastructures which will have to be built so that the port and the smelter can be utilized fully.

Overpasses must be built at the entrance to the port, and road facilities must be provided to give access to the port as well as the Alcoa site as it is anticipated that most of the material for the building of the smelter could well come by road transport to Portland. It is necessary to construct a satisfactory road to enable this to occur in an efficient manner.

It is also necessary to upgrade the hospital facilities. Planning is in progress and an upgrading of the hospital has been scheduled. The area will be provided with a health care centre which should be in operation by February next year.
The most important aspect of the development in relation to the town is the provision of housing for those people who will come to work at the smelter and also for those who will come to provide services for those people. It is anticipated that by the early 1990s between 1000 and 1200 additional houses will have to be found.

Alcoa has undertaken to build 267 homes for its personnel in the next three years. The first contracts for those houses have been let and it is anticipated that twenty houses will be completed by Christmas. In addition, the Housing Commission has undertaken to build 110 houses in the coming financial year and co-operative housing societies have made available $1.425 million for this year. When one marries those housing projects, one sees that 440 houses will be built within the next three years. It is considered that this will go a long way to providing housing for people in that period.

Alcoa will also build a construction camp adjacent to the site to house unaccompanied workers and a caravan park will be established for those who may bring their families. It is anticipated that with the housing I have mentioned and the development of the construction camp and caravan park we will be able to cope with the influx of people it is expected will begin to arrive in substantial numbers when this measure is passed by the Parliament.

There has been much talk in tonight’s debate about electricity costs. It is extremely interesting to listen to the various opinions which have been given, but, as was stated earlier, we cannot establish what the cost of electricity is in either Queensland or New South Wales to the smelters which are establishing there, but we have reason to believe it is substantially cheaper than the price being paid in Victoria.

Mr Chamberlain who is a member in another place and I visited the Comalco smelter at Bell Bay in Tasmania earlier this year. It can be established that the price Comalco pays to the Tasmanian electricity authority is about 9 cents a kilowatt hour. If members of the Opposition wish to confirm or deny this price they have ready access to information because a member of the Tasmanian Government is a director on the board of Comalco. I am sure that if honourable members contacted their colleagues in Tasmania they would receive confirmation of the price. The price is approximately half of what Alcoa will pay for power in Victoria.

When the construction and establishment of the Alcoa smelter at Portland commences it is anticipated that the cost of the establishment of stage 1 will be $350 million, and when it reaches full development Alcoa will have injected approximately $1 million. I am advised by those at Alcoa that half of those developmental costs will be paid and remain in Portland and another one-third of the developmental costs will remain in Victoria. That is given as an example and indication of the benefit of the development and establishment of this smelter to Victoria and especially Portland.

I am sure I can say with a fair degree of safety that the vast majority of people in south-western Victoria support the development of Alcoa at Portland because they have been waiting for such a development to provide employment opportunities for those people in the Portland area on a comparable basis with developments in other parts of Victoria. It is difficult to predict what will flow from this development but one can anticipate that other complementary industries will come into the area and make a contribution to the economy of south-western Victoria and the development of that portion of the State.

It is not my intention to rake over ground already covered by previous speakers but to conclude my remarks by saying that we in south-eastern Victoria welcome this development and wish Alcoa every success in the production and export of aluminium from its smelter in Portland. The sooner the smelter can be constructed the better for everyone concerned.

Mr SIMMONDS (Reservoir)—The House should be indebted to the honourable member for Portland who has
given an illustration of the extent of the Alcoa project when he described the only large development as being the Loy Yang project. I am sure members of the Opposition agree with that view. What is at issue is whether this development is in the best interests of Victoria on the terms and conditions negotiated by the present Government and whether this Government is competent to administer that agreement in a manner which is beneficial to Victoria.

I am concerned that the Minister for Minerals and Energy apparently does not intend to make a contribution to this debate. In light of his performance earlier this day I can understand why, because the Minister undertook to handle the only larger development than Alcoa, namely the Loy Yang project, in a manner which could only be described as sabotaging that project.

Despite the efforts of people to get that project under way, 600 workers are engaged in a strike and have been locked out for 25 weeks, which is costing this State $1 million a day. In that situation the Minister walked into the Chamber and distorted the position in a manner which could only be described as criminally negligent of his responsibilities in this place. I say that without fear of contradiction. Obviously the Government, the Premier and the Minister are moving in different directions on the issue of projects of this size.

It is obvious there was no consultation with the Premier before the Minister came into this Chamber tonight and, but for the actions of the Leader of the Opposition in drawing attention to the sub judice nature of the debate, the Minister would have destroyed any prospect of a resumption on the only larger development in Victoria—the Loy Yang project. I will leave it at that at this stage and say that what we have is a constrictive directive from Ministers of the Government involved in the agreement.

The debate has illustrated the lack of capacity of most members of the Government to do other than say, "Alcoa is development. Therefore, it is good. Therefore, the Government will support it." The honourable member for Burwood, rather than making an analytical contribution to the debate, attacked the personal assistant of the Leader of the Opposition for his work in providing the resource material that the Leader of the Opposition so adequately placed before the House to enable a constructive debate to take place.

The honourable member for Portland was the only member of the Government party who contributed to the debate who showed an appreciation of the scope and extent of the infrastructure associated with the project. Of course, what the honourable member did not say was that in developing the south-west of Victoria in the interests of the Aluminium Co. of America and in the interests of allowing that company to continue its exploitation of the resources of the State for some 50 years, according to the agreement, the people of Victoria will be called upon to make a significant contribution to the project.

The real question is: What return will the community derive from the development and what is the true cost-benefit analysis of the concept? If the price of the development is the continued movement towards a balance of trade situation in which cheap manufactured goods are to be brought to the State, it will not benefit Victoria. If the words of the honourable member for Portland are to be taken at face value—and I have no reason to doubt them—some 130,000 tonnes of finished product will be distributed from the port during stage 1 and, ultimately, 4000 tonnes of additional material will be going through the port.

One has to ask whether this will lead to the product that leaves the country—the honourable member said that the whole of the product would be available for export—attracting the return of cheap manufactured goods, because the manufacturing industries in Victoria are already under great pressure to maintain their activities and this would place them under even greater pressure. If the Government is
prepared to fund Alcoa to the extent to which it is prepared to do so—bearing in mind the construction of the pipeline and the project's access to 20 per cent of the State's electricity supply for the next 50 years on terms and conditions that must be regarded as extremely favourable to Alcoa with the price of electricity being below the cost of production—why should other industries and other people who are providing a higher level of employment in Victoria not be given equal consideration?

I can give a small illustration. This morning I was asked to attend a factory in the electorate I represent, at which some 90 workers are facing dismissal. The company manufactures garbage collection units and it had orders to indicate that it supplies the needs of 75 per cent of Australia for that type of product. The company is about to go to the wall unless it can obtain a guarantee of $1.5 million to enable it to continue. Why is it going to the wall? It is because manufactured products of the type I have described can be imported more cheaply than they can be made in Victoria. That sort of thing will be more prevalent because of the activities of Alcoa, but there is no tariff protection in this area. There is no tariff on the imported product, but the manufacturer who has to use steel to produce the product is paying 21 per cent tariff on the steel he imports.

No wonder workers in Victoria are facing dismissal and companies are going to the wall, when the Government says to the Aluminium Co. of America, “Come to Victoria. You can have anything you ask for if you help to get us out of our difficulties.” The rest of Victoria will suffer and there will be even more unemployment if that sort of thing continues. The unemployment situation will continue to degenerate. In Victoria in 1977 there were 17,000 unemployed young people and 770 jobs were available. Today, there are 24,000 young people who are unable to get jobs and there are fewer than 770 jobs available for them.

In a situation such as that, surely it is reasonable to examine the Alcoa agreement and say, “What are our priorities?” Will the development be of benefit to the people of Victoria or has the Government simply been caught up in the development of minerals boom that is supposed to be the panacea for the future?” The reality is that a continuation of the adoption of this approach will mean that more and more of the resources of Victoria will be transferred to foreign beneficiaries. In this instance it is the Aluminium Co of America, but in other instances it could well be the enormous multinational combines that dominate Victorian industry.

There is no question about the extent of the foreign control of the Victorian automotive and chemical industries. They are almost totally owned and operated by people who reside outside the country. When will the Victorian Government say that if there is to be development and if our energy resources, such as the brown coal deposits, are to be used and married to the minerals available from other States, the terms and conditions on which that is done should be the subject of analysis by Parliament before the people of Victoria are committed for 50 years? The people who control companies such as the Aluminium Co of America can play representatives of Governments like the Victorian Government on a break.

In my opening remarks I pointed out the division between the Premier and the Minister for Minerals and Energy in managing the largest development project in Victoria.

Mr Thompson—Tell us about Neville Wran’s deal!

Mr Simmonds—the Deputy Premier wants to learn about Neville Wran’s deal. If the honourable gentleman wants to talk about that, I suggest he should talk to Neville Wran. The State of Victoria ought to be able to say that, for once, one of the States of the Commonwealth of Australia will examine the interests of the people who reside in that State, on the basis that the development of the State ought
to be carried out for the benefit of the people. The fact that Neville Wran can make a deal with a section of the aluminium industry in the Hunter Valley and that, in Tasmania, the hydroelectric power system is used to provide the basis for a deal with Comalco, is no reason why the Government should say that it will do a deal to the disadvantage of the people of Victoria.

Mr Thompson—It is a better one.

Mr SIMMONDS—The Deputy Premier claims it is a better deal, but he was not in the Chamber when I indicated that the Minister for Minerals and Energy brought a document into the House that attacked the parties to a construction project in what I can only describe as a criminal manner. It was a criminal attack on people doing their best to resolve the situation, and the Deputy Premier had a lot to do with creating that situation because of the directions he gave to the contractors on the Loy Yang site.

Mr MACKINNON (Box Hill)—I raise two points of order. The honourable member for Reservoir is departing from the matter being debated and is also referring to subjects that may be sub judice.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Skeggs)—There is no point of order on the matter of sub judice. The honourable member for Reservoir will return to the debate.

Mr SIMMONDS (Reservoir)—I endorse the concern of the honourable member for Box Hill at the capacity of Ministers of the Government to bring into this Chamber statements which are likely to be sub judice and which in fact were ruled by the Speaker to be so. I am concerned that the Minister was unaware that his Minister was doing this. If he had any sense of propriety he would also investigate major contracts where contractors were being paid 100 per cent of their overheads to continue a lockout, and continued to be paid 50 per cent of their overheads until last week. Honourable members should ask the Premier why that situation no longer operates and why it ceased last week. If Government supporters want to continue with this debate, I shall be very pleased to do so with the Minister for Minerals and Energy and the honourable member for Box Hill—there are only about two other Government supporters in the Chamber at present.

The current issue is the capacity of the Government to manage the economy of Victoria in the development of Alcoa. If its performance in the management of Alcoa is matched by that in the management of Loy Yang power station, the station will never be built. I assure the Deputy Premier that that is what will happen if the Government continues on its present path. It will be in the position of having committed the State to providing electrical energy to Alcoa at a price which will be ten times the cost of production because it will have had to use scarce natural gas resources to generate electricity to meet the requirements of the contract. That is what has happened with the Government; it has been locked into a position of servicing the Aluminium Company of America to take it up to stage 1 of the project and to providing resources for it to operate until 1 April 1983.

At the same time the Government is demonstrably unable to get the Loy Yang power station built to meet the terms of that contract. The point I am trying to make is that the management of the economy of this State by the Victorian Government is such that the development of Alcoa under any conditions will create a detriment to the people of Victoria. However, the likely result is that common sense will prevail; the Minister for Minerals and Energy may find that the disastrous policies of the development of Loy Yang will be reversed in the near future. If that is the case, there is a chance that development projects in Victoria will continue and that the Loy Yang power station will be built in time for the Government's commitments to Alcoa to be met.

The Opposition's case in respect of Alcoa is based not only on the desirability of the project. What the Leader of the Opposition said is absolutely true; there is a substantial opinion in
the State which contests the philosophy of the Government on the development of Alcoa. It contests the making available of 20 per cent of the State's electricity supplies for 50 years. It contests the giving of rights under this agreement to Alcoa which will be to the detriment of the rest of the people of Victoria.

I wanted to draw the attention of the House to the fact that these agreements were entered into by the Government and brought forward in the schedule to the Bill on the basis that the development would be of considerable advantage in providing employment. I contest the number of jobs which it will provide, which the honourable member for Portland indicated would be 1000 to 1200 by 1990. He went on to state that 110 houses would be built in the coming financial year and that 440 houses would be built in the next three years. If the capacity of the State to build these houses is so great, I point to a number of areas in the metropolitan area where people have been on the waiting list for housing for five years.

Mr Ross-Edwards—They are waiting for Housing Commission homes.

Mr SIMMONDS—The Housing Commission is going to build them. I am sure that some of the houses that have been built by the Housing Commission would be most acceptable to the people whom I have interviewed daily in Victoria. I question why Alcoa should not be asked to build a housing settlement which is required for the development of the Alcoa site. After all, it is not unique; most of the mineral exploiters in Victoria do that as a matter of course. Most of the mining companies in other States have built the housing settlements and developed the communities, and the rentals are much lower than those that may be charged by the Housing Commission. Mr. Howard has had some difficulties over that in the last few months. This is illustrated throughout Australia, where large housing settlements have been built on the proposition that the work force which is needed to be placed at a construction site is entitled to housing. The people who live in the community after that development should expect to have all the community services that go with it.

Where is Alcoa's contribution to all this? It is the people of Victoria that are going to provide the infrastructure for this project. I was surprised, as I am sure you would be, Mr Acting Speaker, and as would the electors of Ivanhoe to find that the munificence of the Aluminium Co. of America was such that it made an offer to the Trades and Labour Council in the Warrnambool area to subsidize a training programme to the extent of $2000 to upgrade the skills of workers in the region so that they would be able to provide a semi-skilled work force for the operations of the Alcoa plant while it was going on stream. Two thousand dollars for a trade training programme as an investment in the potential future work force on a site which has the capacity of delivering some 2 million tonnes of product to the Port of Portland! That is an indication of the esteem in which the Aluminium Co. of America holds this community. It is an indication of its capacity to insult the people of Victoria, and of its contempt for the Victorian Government.

Had there been in power a Government which was prepared to negotiate on a realistic basis, no doubt any agreement made as a result of those negotiations would have been far superior in the ultimate benefit provided to the people of Victoria than the agreement before the House tonight. The agreement ought to be taken back to its perpetrators, and the House ought to reject the Bill in those terms.

Mr WOOD (Assistant Minister for State Development Decentralization and Tourism)—If we can forget all the bump and bogeymen and various propositions put forward by the Opposition and analyse what the Alcoa project is all about in a positive manner, we will see that we have achieved with it a greater gain, not only for Portland and for south-west Victoria, but for the entire State of Victoria and for Australia. Let us look at what it is all about.
At the moment Australia is enjoying the experience of a mineral boom. Huge development has been taking place throughout Australia. Mammoth deposits of bauxite are being discovered; iron, shale and all manner of minerals are being discovered in this country. Oil and gas are being discovered in fairly large quantities, and deposits of coal are being found. These are no doubt looked on with envy by people from overseas countries.

Victoria does not enjoy large deposits of iron, bauxite and shale oil, but it has been very fortunate in having discovered fairly large quantities of oil and gas. I shall just mention the gas aspect. If the suggestion of the Opposition that any mineral or energy resource should be charged at the highest possible figure is accepted, many industrialists in this State, both small and large operators, will be severely handicapped in producing their goods, getting their show on the road and employing people. I recall that when a contract was signed on the gas deposits, much hue and cry took place that our mineral resources had been sold out, yet today the resulting benefits are being enjoyed by many people throughout this State, those in residences, manufacturers and small business people. No purpose can be served by saying that something looks cheap today. These are long-term projects.

I mentioned coal. Unfortunately Victoria does not have the black coal deposits that exist in Queensland and New South Wales but it has huge brown coal deposits. Estimates have been made of some 114,000 million tonnes of coal in this State. What is to be done with it? Not to use it would be like sitting on gold; it would be useless. It cannot be exported and therefore must be used in this State. Electricity can be made from it, but electricity cannot be exported. However, it can be used to process raw materials to maximize the return to this country of resources, instead of exporting them at a cheap price to other countries which will process and return them to us at a higher price. What better way of using brown coal than in the production of electricity to process alumina to aluminium?

There was competition for this project, not only from other States of Australia but also from other countries which made offers of benefits like tax free holidays and cheaper power. I refer to places like Brazil which can provide electricity at a rate cheaper than the rate at which Victoria can produce it. Victoria won this competition and naturally it has had to give some concessions to gain this project for the people of Victoria.

Although the Opposition decries the project, the unions and followers of the Labor Party in Portland have backed the project, the town of Portland has backed it and in the main the people of western Victoria have backed it, because they realize the benefits not only to their areas but also to the State and the nation.

Some two years ago, in November 1978, a Green Triangle report was jointly prepared by the Victorian Department of State Development Decentralization and Tourism and the South Australian Department of Development and Economy. It brought forward important recommendations on electricity supply and the use of port facilities in the Portland area. The two key recommendations were that the possibility of providing for additional electricity supply to meet the requirements of heavy industry wishing to locate in the south-west region should be investigated. It was noted that it was particularly significant to Portland because heavy industry attracted to the port facilities would require a substantial power supply. A further recommendation regarding factors needed to encourage development of the region was that priority should be given to the provision of facilities and promotional schemes to ensure the port-related establishment in the area. This has been fully met by the successful attraction of Alcoa of Australia Ltd to Portland.
It should also be borne in mind that the capacity of the 500 kilowatt transmission line to Portland is well in excess of Alcoa's requirements, and that substantial spare transmission capacity will be available to serve other industries which will no doubt follow. Apart from meeting the standard State Electricity Commission tariff which includes a component to cover the transmission costs, the company will contribute directly 21 per cent of the cost of the new line. One can argue that it is only 21 per cent and the line has been put there for that company, but I point out that the line has been put there for the benefit of the people of western Victoria. It is hoped that it will be part of the national grid which was mentioned earlier and which will be of enormous benefit to that part of the State.

Victoria is the only State which has agreed to supply power to a new aluminium smelter on the basis of a published standard electricity tariff. Why do honourable members not know the New South Wales and Queensland figures? What is there to hide in relation to them? I would bet any amount of money——

Mrs Toner—How much?

Mr WOOD—One thousand dollars. I bet any amount of money that if the Opposition knew the figure at which New South Wales was supplying power to its smelters, and if the figure was lower than that at which Victoria is supplying it to Alcoa, the House would have heard about it. It certainly would have been mentioned in the House tonight if the figure had been lower. However, it is not lower, in fact, I am told that it is higher. What is there to hide? The Victorian Government is an open Government and has nothing to hide. It does not do deals and sneak away, keeping those deals in locked cupboards and behind closed doors. Anybody can learn what Alcoa of Australia Ltd is paying.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned earlier that a Mr Miller looked at prices between 1 cent and 2.5 cents a kilowatt hour. That amazes me, when the State Electricity Commission sells at 1.7 cents a kilowatt hour above the minimum figure of 1 cent that was mentioned. I cannot understand why the Opposition which daily castigates the Federal and State Governments, saying that they are not doing anything about unemployment——

Mrs Toner—I think you owe me $1000.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Skeggs)—Order! The honourable member for Greensborough should not make remarks of that kind.

Mr WOOD—I cannot believe that members of the Opposition would be prepared to knock a project like this that will provide massive employment benefits to the people of this State if they realized that the flow and effect would probably be the provision of about 4500 jobs. Employment in Portland is currently dominated by seasonal rural-related industries—service industries. Few employment opportunities have arisen for young people.

I will enlarge on the employment situation. By late 1981 the target construction work force will exceed 1500 and from 1983 to the late 1980s the ongoing construction work force could be about 800. In 1983, the permanent smelter work force will be 500, rising over two years by about 200 with the construction programme to at least 1100 at the start of stage 4. Commencing in late 1981 the annual wages bill in Alcoa of Australia Ltd for the construction and smelter work force will be $20 million a year. For the 1500 total work force jobs being created there, the approximate wage will be $13,000 per annum. For each new operational job provided in the smelter it is expected, with the multiplier effect, that one other job will be created in Portland—that is a conservative estimate—and a further job will be created elsewhere in Australia. This is in addition to the jobs arising out of the almost continual eight to ten-year construction programme.

By full development of the smelter it is expected that about 4500 jobs will be created in Australia by the multi-
plier effect. What is the value to a person taken from an unemployed situation? What price is put on dignity? What value is placed on the pride of the young person who does not have a job? Those questions are often asked. All sorts of actions are taken to encourage employment. Manufacturers and businessmen are encouraged to employ young persons and the Commonwealth Government can pay anything up to $1500 to try to obtain employment for a young person. For one year on $1500, the project will provide a savings of $7 million to the Commonwealth and provide pride and dignity for those 4500 persons who will be employed.

Alcoa of Australia Ltd will be the catalyst for future development in the region. The Government is working to ensure that the benefits will be maximized and any adverse effects will be minimized.

Earlier speakers have mentioned housing. There is a major project developed by the Housing Commission. Two measures have been proposed for the accommodation of construction personnel by the company. The first is that a major caravan park will be developed on a large park at Portland suitable for medium-term occupancy and many construction workers will go there because they will want to live in caravan parks. The company is playing a responsible role in the provision of a high standard caravan park. The second measure is the development of plans for a construction village capable of accommodating in excess of 1000 construction workers. Plans and models have been provided to the Portland Shire Council. On the planning of the smelter, the Minister for Planning proposes to recommend to the Governor in Council within the next few days that part of the Alcoa land be used for the aluminium smelter.

The plans for the construction village are presently before the Portland Shire Council. On the planning of the smelter, the Minister for Planning proposes to recommend to the Governor in Council within the next few days that part of the Alcoa land be used for the aluminium smelter.

The caravan park facilities are proceeding. The company plans to provide at least one caravan park and developers have moved in with the idea of constructing further caravan parks.

Tenders have been let for 20 houses to be completed by the end of this year or early next year and a further 230 houses will be made available by April 1983. A number of flats will be constructed by Alcoa and that is over and above those houses the Housing Commission will construct during the next few years as the need arises.
The chronological order shows that under stage 1, approximately 20 houses will be completed early next year; stage 2, the company will construct 18 flats which will be completed in February 1981; stage 3, the company will begin construction of 90 houses in December 1981; and stage 4 a further 90 houses will be constructed in December 1982. Under the final development, stage 5, 50 houses will be constructed by February 1983.

Mention was made earlier about companies that provide housing for their employees. A lot of the isolated mining camps provide accommodation because otherwise they would not attract workers. However, in places such as Gladstone in Queensland and in several other areas that are handy to urban areas and towns, companies do very little. If honourable members opposite want to understand the situation they should travel to Gladstone where they would discover that when a smelter is constructed the companies say, "Accommodation is not really our worry. That is up to the Government and the town council. It will sort itself out, do not worry". Alcoa has taken a very responsible attitude to the housing programme.

The Government has been prepared to play its part. The Housing Commission proposes to commence construction of 110 houses in the current financial year and, of these, 80 houses will be funded out of the special housing funds announced by the Premier in July of this year specifically for Portland and the Latrobe Valley.

In the field of health, the Government has made special provisions to meet the increased demands which will be placed on general health services in the Portland area. The Government has allocated a total of more than $1 million for the immediate provision of casualty and outpatient facilities at the Portland and District Hospital. The Health Commission will commence work on a design for a new hospital. That design work is costing $450,000.

The Government has also allocated funds for a major expansion of the ambulance services at Portland and Heywood.

Mrs Toner—Is Alcoa paying for that?

Mr Wood—Does any company pay for hospital services anywhere else in this State? The Government recognizes that in the fields of community welfare and education services there will be additional burdens placed on the existing facilities in the region and planning is well under way to satisfy and cope with those needs.

The suggestion was made by the Opposition that amendment 22 would provide for Alcoa to do anything it likes anywhere in the area. That is a lot of tripe and I suggest the Opposition examines amendment 22 to the planning scheme when it receives Royal assent within the next few weeks. The amendment creates a Portland reserve for industry and provides for a buffer zone around the proposed smelter site. I emphasize that for the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition who suggested that there will be no buffer zone. There will be planning control.

The Portland Shire Council has put its views to the Minister for Planning. There has been a good deal of consultation with the council, which is happy with amendments Nos. 21 and 22. There is no doubt that there will be proper planning control. Amendment No. 21 allows for an area to be used as a workman's camp which Alcoa is willing and anxious to undertake as quickly as possible. No objections against the workman's camp following the exhibition of the amendment were received. It is the intention of the Minister for Planning, following the passage of the Bill, to recommend an amendment to Amendment No. 21 to allow for the construction village to proceed without delay, provided that it is constructed in conformity with the conditions prescribed for the development of camps decided upon by the Portland Shire Council.

I stress that the Government has supported the Alcoa project in Portland from its conception because of the major boost it will give to employment and to the economic base of the south-west corner of the State. Apart from its immediate and direct benefits, it will generate many indirect advan-