Wednesday, 3 August 1988

The SPEAKER (the Hon. C. T. Edmunds) took the chair at 2.4 p.m. and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr MACLELLAN (Berwick)—Is it a fact that, in early November 1987, the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources personally authorised the Victorian Economic Development Corporation to fully sub-underwrite a $25 million float of Wallace International Ltd but later that month changed the authorisation limiting it to half the $25 million float?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—The information provided by the honourable member is incorrect. At no stage was it proposed that the government, through the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, should fully subscribe to the Wallace International Ltd float. The only proposal put forward to me concerned a partial involvement, and that in fact was put into effect.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—I direct a further question to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources and ask whether it is a fact that in November 1987, as the Minister responsible for the Victorian Economic Development Corporation and the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria, he arranged for the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria Superannuation Fund to subscribe more than $5 million to the issue in Wallace International Ltd?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—No. At no stage did I approach the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria Superannuation Fund. The fund, of its own volition, determined to be involved with the float.

Mr HARROWFIELD (Mitcham)—In view of inaccurate claims concerning the relationship between the Victorian Economic Development Corporation and the Victorian Equity Trust, will the Premier advise the House of action being taken by the government to ensure that negative comments of this kind do not adversely affect investment in Victoria?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I thank the honourable member for Mitcham for his question because it gives me an opportunity of explaining a few facts of economic life to members of the Opposition. They seem to have spent the last three months reading the Victorian Equity Trust prospectus—perhaps I should more accurately say "misreading" it—and they came back yesterday, all fired up, rolled the Leader of the Opposition in the morning and then rolled out three falsely based questions in the Chamber in the afternoon.

The Victorian Equity Trust prospectus, which, I might add, sets standards for much clearer details than any other prospectus, sets out clearly the circumstances under which investors can take units in the trust, and then have the option of selling them to the Victorian Economic Development Corporation after four years. The prospectus makes it clear that the Treasurer has not given an undertaking to the corporation that he will guarantee funds to cover the cost of buying units from investors in the trust. That is made very clear and I should have thought honourable members opposite
would have picked it up. Certainly, the honourable member for Kew should have picked it up and should have told her colleagues where they were wrong.

The Opposition has become very excited about some letter, to which reference was made yesterday, written by the Treasurer in April 1988. Opposition members appear wrongly, to have read that letter as being a guarantee which, by implications that they wish to read into it, contradicts the Victorian Equity Trust prospectus.

The letter and the section of the prospectus on page 21 were written with the advice of the same lawyer to ensure that there was no conflict, and which would overcome the very point which I am sure most honourable members will understand. It is a letter of comfort, and I should have thought that even a first-year law student would have understood the difference between a letter of comfort and a guarantee.

It concerns me that on both the first and second days back, the Opposition has it all wrong. I do not know what it is that makes the Opposition want to carp and whinge about the Victorian Equity Trust and debt which is contracted by the State to provide what Victoria needs. If the Opposition does not want the Victorian Equity Trust and borrowings, can it tell me which project—which hospital, which school, which police station—it wants the government to stop building? The Opposition cannot have it both ways.

On the question of debt, it is now in the order of 29 per cent of Victorian non-farm gross domestic product, and it has been around that level for some time. Back in 1971, in the so-called halcyon days—the Bolte days—it was more than 44 per cent. I am not saying that is wrong.

The cost of servicing Victoria’s present debt is about 14 per cent of State revenue. The average person who takes out a mortgage on a house pays, under the rules and requirements of most lending authorities, more than 14 per cent—and 20 or 25 per cent is not regarded as unexceptional.

The Opposition is implying that this generation should do without the things that are provided by debt capital. The point I make is that if that debt capital investment is productive it pays its way.

At the opening of the new Coroner’s Court complex in South Melbourne, I said that there is a quaint view in the community, especially among the Opposition, that all debt is wrong. It is an old tenet of public financing that this generation should not be expected to pay for all the infrastructure of capital works projects that are of benefit to future generations. Future generations should pay some of that capital investment. That concept is not new but, suddenly, the Opposition, which has nothing else to say, is telling the community that a new set of rules apply—the State should not have any debt.

I say again if the Opposition continues to knock the Victorian Equity Trust, which provides resources for the building of capital projects at cheaper cash rates and borrowings, it should tell the community what should not be being built. What projects does the honourable member for Evelyn want stopped in his electorate? Which school does he not want rebuilt? The Opposition is strangely silent. If the Opposition does not want the government to borrow—or to build things—people should know which projects it considers should be stopped.

Mrs WADE (Kew)—I refer to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources his previous answer. Did the Minister, as the Minister responsible for the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, commit the corporation to the sub-underwriting agreement in respect of Wallace International Ltd without the prior knowledge and approval of the board of the corporation?
Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—The approval I gave was at the request of and on the advice of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation.

TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

Mr MICALLEF (Springvale)—I direct to the attention of the Minister for Labour a campaign being orchestrated by the President of the Victorian Liberal Party regarding trade union membership in Victoria. Will the Minister advise the House of his response to these attempts to severely damage industrial relations in Victoria?

Mr CRABB (Minister for Labour)—My attention has been directed, by means of a copy, to a letter from Mr Kroger, the President of the Victorian Liberal Party, addressed to the State Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Vic), an organisation formerly headed by Andrew Hay, and which is still part of his mini empire.

The proposition contained in the correspondence is the establishment of what they call an industrial political strategy. This strategy is aimed at establishing a reverse accord—that is what they call it. The signatories to this accord would agree not to use existing laws such as the preference clauses used by the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. Signatories to the proposed accord would agree not to be part of the proposed closed shop arrangements and would renounce any existing agreements into which they had entered.

The strategy is threefold: first, it is to subvert employer organisations. The letter says that once they have developed the accord they will forward it in turn from the most supportive to the least supportive of the organisations involved in the industrial arena. The letter lists the organisations most supportive. The most supportive are the Australian Chamber of Commerce, where Andrew Hay is now; the Australian Federation of Employers, an organisation of which honourable members may not have heard but which is a splinter group formed by John Leard, one of the right wing loonies who permeates this area; the third organisation is the Australian Small Business Association, another splinter group, headed by Peter Boyle.

The strategy is a development by those shadowy idealogues of the right wing, who meet with the President of the Liberal Party in the back room and who concoct these fantasies of class warfare.

No indication is given that the Leader of the Opposition is involved. He has not been told yet! Having worked out what is being done with the right-wing splinter groups, the letter then states:

... it is unlikely that the CAI—

The Confederation of Australian Industry—

... would want to become a party to the accord ... No doubt its opposition would be based around the fact that the accord would be unworkable ... 

That is not a bad reason for not being part of the accord! Apparently, it is unworkable! The confederation recognises that fact.

The second part of the strategy is to involve the political parties. The President of the Liberal Party then states in the letter:

It would be likely that the Liberal Party of Australia would support the accord.

That is prescient! The letter continues:

The position of the National Party would presumably be similar to that of the Liberal Party but the position of other parties such as the Democratic Labor Party would be less clear.
One would have difficulty finding the DLP, let alone its policies! The Liberal Party has been persuaded to abolish the preference clauses as part of its policies. It achieved that much with a few employer groups and a couple of the loonies in the Liberal Party.

The third leg of the strategy is where it launches into student politics. It is like Looney Tunes. The strategy with the municipal councils is to find "a sympathetic local council who agree to adopt the accord". The council would then:

... send copies of the accord to every employer within its geographical area advising the employers that the council has endorsed the accord and will support any employer... who suffers discrimination as a result of compulsory unionism... The council may also give consideration to financially supporting any aggrieved party.

Therefore, ratepayers’ funds will be used! The real stroke of genius of the strategy group involved is:

The tactic involved here is similar to the one used by the anti-uranium movement in its "nuclear free zone" strategy...

Obviously they want placards on the boundaries of every municipality saying, "This is a union-free zone."

If the accord were not so ludicrous, it would be threatening because it demonstrates that a small group of people of right wing, ideological persuasion, extremists at the far end of political views, is doing everything it can to subvert industrial relations processes in this country. For their own ideological reasons, these people want to plunge this country into industrial chaos—chaos worse than we have seen for 100 years. I am confident that by more sensible people continuing to expose their nonsense, one can draw this accord to the attention of the vast majority of reasonable Australians and remind them that ordinary Australians do not want to return to the industrial chaos that has occurred in the past. They do not want four times as many strikes as we have now; they want rational and intelligent industrial policies carried out by rational and intelligent people.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—I refer to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources his answer to an earlier question. Is it not a fact that the Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board was unaware of the Minister’s commitment to the sub-underwriting agreement for Wallace International Ltd and did not have the agreement brought to its attention until some months later when the board was asked to ratify the Minister’s action retrospectively?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—The sequence of events concerning the involvement with the Wallace International Ltd float was as follows: in early November I was approached by the General Manager of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation indicating that, following the stock-market crash, a decision needed to be made in the next few days on whether the planned Wallace float should proceed. The float had been planned since March of 1987 and had been part of a development of the Wallace group then known principally as Cambden Pharmaceuticals.

It was a successful company developing psorin and other dermatological products here in Victoria. The government has been associated with that initiative through the corporation and in other ways over a number of years.

As part of its economic strategy, the government had identified the importance of the pharmaceutical industry in this State. It identified the need to commercialise some
of the research that had been developed in Victoria but, above all, it recognised the need to have a pharmaceutical industry with Australian roots to it.

In the past, the dominant feature of the pharmaceutical industry has been the fact that it is overseas dominated and controlled, to the great tragedy of an outstanding research base here within Victoria. For that reason, the government publicly committed itself, with widespread community support, to assist in the development of an indigenous Australian pharmaceutical industry, and part of that initiative was certainly through the Wallace International Ltd group.

Over a number of years significant steps have been made progressively by that company with success. Last March the decision was made for the company to be publicly floated as part of its expansion, and the government certainly saw that as a worthy initiative.

The stock market crash of late October last year came quickly, as we all know, and the company received advice from its backers, including Mallesons, Stephen Jaques, a well-known legal firm in Melbourne. A senior partner of the firm is the deputy chairman of the company. Another backer was Ernst and Whinney, the accounting firm, which provided Mr Robert Edge as the chief finance director of Wallace International Ltd, so Wallace’s association with the leading groups within Melbourne was well known and demonstrated at that time.

I received a deputation from representatives of Wallace International Ltd, Bain and Co., who were the underwriters of the planned float—noting that it would be disastrous for the company if the float did not go ahead. All their planning and development had been based on those circumstances and Bain and Co. said that, in the circumstances, it wished the government to be part involved in the flotation and, after considering the matter and receiving advice from the general manager of the corporation—who, I repeat, approached me initially—and then after receiving advice from within the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources, I agreed that the government should be involved as a sub-underwriter for the flotation.

At that time it was my understanding that the board of the corporation had been involved in the discussions leading up to the notion of the corporation continuing to be involved in the Wallace International Ltd activities. I subsequently learnt that a formal resolution of the corporation board had not, in fact, been passed. That was passed later in February before any formal commitments were entered into by the corporation and before the whole matter was put into effect. That was the sequence of events.

The government’s attitude and approach, firstly to the corporation, and, secondly, in supporting the pharmaceutical industry, was one that the government stands by. The corporation, as I know all honourable members agree, as I have received representations from them seeking its support for initiatives—and I welcome their initiative—has been a great contributor to the economic development of Victoria. Some 1600 Victorian companies have been assisted by the corporation, by either loan, equity or leasing assistance. Approximately $580 million has been provided since 1981, and it is estimated that 40 000 new jobs in Melbourne and country Victoria have been created as a result of Victorian Economic Development Corporation initiatives.

At present nearly 800 individual accounts are operating across Victoria, and country members are aware of some of these outstanding success stories. I believe those success stories are generally appreciated by Victorian business.

Mr Ross-Edwards interjected.
Mr FORDHAM—The Leader of the National Party is saying, "To hell with all the success stories; let us look at some of the problems!"

That is the Opposition mentality: yesterday the blunderbuss was pointed at the Victorian Equity Trust and Opposition members shot themselves in the foot. Today the blunderbuss is being pointed at the Victorian Economic Development Corporation. The Opposition is attacking an institution which it formed; the corporation was set up in 1981 under a Liberal government. Here is an act of desperation from an understandably desperate Opposition! It ruined its first day in the spring session and now it is off on a witch-hunt of the worst sort. For goodness sake, it should come up with some creative policies and positive initiatives, rather than knocking an institution in Victoria that has done a power of good for the people of this State!

Mr HANN (Rodney)—Will the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources table in the House a list of all the projects that the Victorian Economic Development Corporation has funded in recent years that have failed financially and provide details of the total losses faced by the corporation through the losses incurred in those projects?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I find it extraordinary that the Deputy Leader of the National Party can ask such a question and put an argument like that; I can only wonder at the attitude of other members of his party. I went to the trouble of reading the Hansard report of the 1981, 1982 and 1985 debates on the Victorian Economic Development Corporation. To their credit, members of the National Party came out every time saying, "Give the corporation more money; keep up the work." The honourable member for Murray Valley, who was spokesman at the time—I can quote him if his colleagues would like—is reported as saying that the corporation should have more resources for venture capital and more risk capital. He is right, to his credit.

What is the Deputy Leader of the National Party saying? Is he saying that, if one is involved in activities such as those in which the corporation is involved, one cannot have any problem accounts? It is extraordinary!

I repeat that some 1600 Victorian companies have been assisted by the corporation, some in a small way and some in a very large way. A significant proportion of those companies were in country Victoria.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr FORDHAM—Here we go again—members of the National Party are not interested in the successes and ask, "Tell us all about the difficulties?"

Once Parliament had determined—under a Liberal government—that there would be an organisation like the Victorian Economic Development Corporation undertaking activities in the area of development finance of the kind that was envisaged and put into practice, it was absolutely inevitable that there would be some problem companies. The record of the corporation is a successful one, when compared with that of banks and similar development companies within the private sector, such as finance companies.

As has been mentioned before, I understand that at the moment around 5 per cent of the companies with which the corporation has been associated have had problems. I repeat that that is inevitable if one is involved in development finance, because there is not always the translation of the good ideas and concepts into proper business management. There will always be a handful of difficulties but, to the credit of the corporation, it has been only a handful.
Obviously the individual accounts are commercially confidential and they cannot be any other way. The Deputy Leader of the National Party must know that. It is ridiculous to expect a government or an organisation involved in development finance to release commercially confidential information. The Leader of the National Party is smart enough and knows enough to understand that it would be wrong to release that information. Given the contracts and the financial arrangements between the Victorian Economic Development Corporation and its clients, I am obviously not in a position—nor is the corporation—to release that information. I refer the Deputy Leader of the National Party to the annual accounts of the corporation, which contain the appropriate information.

Much has been made over recent weeks of the handful of problem accounts. They have received significant publicity in a section of the Melbourne media which has seen fit to publicise some of those accounts. I make the point that was made by the chairman of the corporation at the time: simply because a certain company has been put into receivership does not mean the funds concerned are necessarily lost.

Mr Ross-Edwards interjected.

Mr FORDHAM—The Leader of the National Party uses the word “losses”. Obviously the receiver has a function to advise the corporation, where receiverships are in existence, as to the most appropriate way to handle particular clients. Again, obviously, the desire of the corporation is for the ongoing operation of the body concerned, and Fantasy Farm was an example where I received representations from a number of members of the Liberal Party saying, “For God’s sake, don’t sell it off; keep it going even if it costs you some money”. Those statements were made in the interests of the industry.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr FORDHAM—I shall not mention names. The honourable members concerned know who I am speaking about. They approached me in private and I shall not mention their names. I make the point that the loans to which I refer are, I believe, in most cases secure, and we will find out only when the reports of the receiver on the particular companies referred to are provided and final arrangements are in place.

I regret that the National Party has seen fit to be identified with an attack on an institution that has a long and proud history. It has assisted hundreds and hundreds of companies and almost every electorate, looking ahead, will have had very gratefully received assistance from the corporation. I strongly suggest that members of the Opposition put the issue into proper perspective and get behind the Victorian Economic Development Corporation.

ELECTRICITY AND GAS CHARGES

Mr SIDIROPOULOS (Richmond)—Will the honourable and capable Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources advise the House of the effect government actions in restraining electricity and gas charges, as demonstrated in recent announcements on tariffs, have had in improving Victoria’s competitive advantage over other States?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I thank the honourable member for asking an appropriate question because there is no doubt that this is a matter we can handle with great ease—and properly so—and with great pride. This matter affects the lives of a great number of Victorians.

For many years I have had the privilege of being able to demonstrate that Victoria has the cheapest energy in Australia. This year’s performance, as announced by the Premier, of the Victorian utilities compared with those of other States reveals that the
difference is now even greater because both the State Electricity Commission and the Gas and Fuel Corporation have again kept their increases below the rate of inflation, which is very favourable compared with the position in other States.

It is very easy for the Opposition to talk in hypothetical terms, but the real measure is the score on the board. How does Victoria compare with those States with which it can quite properly be compared? I suppose New South Wales is the obvious basis of comparison, where the Greiner government is demonstrating beyond doubt that it can break its promises and dramatically drive up energy costs.

In Victoria domestic electricity charges increased by 2.7 per cent—less than half the inflation rate. In New South Wales the comparable figure is 9.8 per cent. In Victoria, the Gas and Fuel Corporation increased the price of gas by 3.5 per cent, which is less than half the hefty 10.1 per cent increase in New South Wales.

This is not a new story. For five years the utilities in Victoria have kept their increases at a rate lower than the inflation rate. Over that period Victoria has without doubt had the best record of any State in regard to those charges. The overall impact is that Victoria now has the cheapest tariffs for gas and electricity combined. If one takes as an example a typical household using some 300 kilowatt hours of peak electricity and 300 kilowatt hours of off-peak electricity together with 1200 kilowatt hours of gas each month, the combined bills for the major capitals are as follows: Melbourne, some $73 a month; Sydney, $80 a month; and Brisbane, $92 a month. They are the scores on the board. Years ago Victoria did not have that record and was not able to make that comparison; today, such a comparison can be made.

Energy prices in Melbourne are now 21 per cent cheaper than the average for the other capitals of Australia. This excellent result has been achieved through good management and the policy of the government to restrain prices. Even with the difficulties that the Treasurer, the Premier and the government have had to face, we have succeeded. I know that the average Victorian family appreciates that, understands it and is fully behind the government in its energy policies and performance.

**PETITIONS**

**Firearms restrictions**

To the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

We, the undersigned women of Victoria draw the Parliament's attention to the danger still posed to the women and children of this State by the widespread and easy availability of firearms and respectfully do petition as follows:

1. that legislation be enacted which would place a ban on all semiautomatic weapons as being dangerous out of proportion to their legitimate use;
2. that legislation restrict the ownership of firearms to those who have a legitimate purpose for their use, who would in each case be trained and hold a licence; and
3. that Parliament strengthen the gun legislation in order to reduce the number of guns in households in this State.

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

By Mr Plowman (15 signatures)
Dental services

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the State of Victoria respectfully showeth that:

The current level of public dental services is totally inadequate and therefore we request that the government immediately establish an expanded public dental service at sufficient locations throughout Victoria to ensure access to all Victorians, particularly those on low incomes and other disadvantaged groups.

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

By Mr W. D. McGrath (58 signatures)

Elderly nursing facilities

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

We, the undersigned citizens of the State of Victoria, register an emphatic protest about any reduction in funding which will place the elderly nursing home patients at risk. Staff are working at borderline level now, any reduction in funding would be extremely hazardous to both patients and staff. We fear that patients will no longer have a quality of life, but will merely exist.

Your petitioners pray that the House take action to ensure that funding be maintained according to dependency needs to maintain quality of life.

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

By Miss Callister (2258 signatures)

Electricity supply for Kilmore

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

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

We are concerned at the current reliability of electricity supply in the Shire of Kilmore. We now request the bringing forward of the State Electricity Commission's improvement works plan for 1991 and seek the redirection of electricity supply as necessary to provide greater electricity security and significantly improved supply to the Shire of Kilmore.

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

By Mr McDonald (353 signatures)

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

PAPERS

The following papers, pursuant to the direction of an Act of Parliament, were laid on the table by the Clerk:

Statutory Rule under the following Act:

State Electricity Commission Act 1958—

No. 208 together with copies of the following documents as required by S. 32 of the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984 to accompany the Statutory Rule:

Australian Standards


AS 1026-1973—Impregnated Paper Insulated Cables for Electricity Supply at Working Voltages up to and including 33 kV.
AS 1265-1974—Bushings for Alternating Voltages above 1000 V.
AS 1681-1974—Electrically Heated Ovens in which Flammable Volatiles Occur—Type 1 Ovens.
AS 1076-1977—Selection, Installation and Maintenance of Electrical Apparatus and Associated Equipment for Use in Explosive Atmospheres (other than Mining Applications)
   Part 1—Basic Requirements.
   Part 3—Apparatus with type of Protection “d”—Flameproof Enclosure.
   Part 4—Apparatus with type of Protection “i”—Intrinsically Safe Apparatus and Systems.
   Part 6—Apparatus with type of Protection “e”—Increased Safety.
   Part 7—Apparatus with type of Protection “n”—Non-sparking Apparatus.
   Part 8—Apparatus with type of Protection “s”—Special Protection.
   Part 13—Installation and Maintenance Requirements for Instrumentation.
AS 2052-1977—Metallic Conduits and Fittings.
AS 2005—Fuses with Enclosed Fuse Links (up to and including 1000 V a.c. and 1500 V a.c.)
   Part 3—1980—Fuses for Household and Similar Applications.
AS 1202, 1976—A.C. Motor Starters (up to and including 1000 V)
   Part 2—Star-Delta Starters.
   Part 3—Autotransformer Starters.
   Part 4—Rheostatic Rotor Starters.
AS 1023—Thermal Protection of Electric Motors.
AS 1711-1975—Asbestos Cement Pressure Pipes.
AS 1722-1975—Pipe Threads of Whitworth Form.
   Part 1—Ceiling Pipe Threads.
   Part 2—Fastening Pipe Threads.
AS 2082-1979—Visually Stress-Graded Hardwood for Structural Purposes.
AS 1392-1974—Precast Concrete Pressure Pipes.
AS 2269-1979—Structural Plywood.
AS 1656-1974—Steel Wire Ropes (other than for mining purposes).
AS 1750-1975—Steel Sections and Bars for Boilers and Unfired Pressure Vessels.
AS B226-1972—Hydraulic Hose.
AS CB15—SAA Pipe Welding Code
   Part V—1968—Flash Butt Welding of Steel Pipes and Tubes.
AS 1735-1986—SAA Lift Code
   Part 1—General Requirements.
   Part 2—Passenger and Goods Lifts—Electric (as amended).
   Part 4—Services Lifts—Power Operated.
   Part 5—Escalators.
   Part 6—Moving Walks.
   Part 7—Stairway Lifts.
   Part 8—Inclined Lifts.
   Part 10—Tests.
   Part 11—Fire-Rated Landing Doors.
   Part 12—Facilities for Persons with Disabilities.
   Part 13—Lifts for Persons with Limited Mobility—Manually Powered.
AS 2380.7-1987—Electrical Equipment for Explosive Atmospheres—Part 7—Intrinsic Safety i.
AS 1668—SAA Mechanical Ventilation and Airconditioning Code.
  Part 1—Transformer Type.
  Part 2—Rotary Type.
  Part 1—Fire-Resistant Doorsets (as amended) and Supplement 1—1988—Logbook for the
  Maintenance Fire-Resistant Doorsets.
  Part 2—Fire-Resistant Roller Shutters.
AS 3002-1985—Electrical Installations—Shows and Carnivals.
AS 1136.1-1988, Part 1—Low Voltage Switchgear and Controlgear Assemblies—General
  Requirements.
AS 2067-1984—Switchgear Assemblies and Ancillary Equipment for Alternating Voltages Above 1
  kV.
AS 1939–1986—Classification of Degrees of Protection Provided by Enclosures for Electrical
  Equipment (as amended) and Supplement 1—1988—International Protection (IP) Ratings.
AS 2374–1982—Power Transformers
  Part 1—General Requirements.
  Part 2—Temperature Rise.
  Part 3—Insulation Levels and Dielectrics Tests.
  Part 4—Tappings and Connections.
  Part 5—Ability to Withstand Short-Circuit.
  Part 6—Sound Levels.
AS 2184–1985—Moulded-Case Circuit Breakers for Rated Voltages up to and including 600 V a.c.
  and 250 B d.c.
AS 3008–1984—Part 1—Cables for Alternating Voltages up to and including 0·6/1 kV.
  Commissioning (as amended).
AS 3006–1982—Adequate Electrical Installations in Domestic Premises.
AS 2735–1984—Dry-Type Power Transformers.
AS 1020–1984—The Control of Undesirable Static Electricity.
AS 1023–1985—Low Voltage Switchgear and Controlgear—Part 1—Built-in Thermal Detectors and
  Associated Control Units.
AS 1775–1984—Low Voltage Switchgear and Controlgear—Air-Break Switches, Isolators and Fuse-
  Combination Units.
AS 1824–1985—Insulation Co-ordination
Part 1—Basic Principles, Standard Installation Levels and Test Procedures.
Part 2—Application Guide.

AS 3600-1988—Concrete Structures.
  Part 1—Performance and General Requirements.
  Part 3—Performance and General Requirements for Helical Fittings.
AS 1477-1988—Unplasticized PVC (Pipes) and Fittings for Pressure Applications—Part 1—Pipes.
AS 1538-1974—SAA Cold-formed Steel Structures Code.
AS 1744-1975—Standard Alphabets for Road Signs.
AS 1259-1982—Sound Level Meters.
AS 1403-1985—Design of Rotating Steel Shafts (as amended).
AS 1170—SAA Loading Code
AS 2129-1982—Flanges for Pipes, Valves and Fittings (as amended).
AS 1835-1983— Tubes for Pressure Purposes—Seamless Steel.
AS 1836-1983— Tubes for Pressure Purposes—Welded Steel.
AS 1379-1973—Ready-mixed Concrete.
AS 1250-1981—SAA Steel Structures Code (as amended).
AS 2790-1985—Electricity Generating Sets—Transportable.
AS 2074-1982—Steel Castings.
  Part 1—Welding of Steel Structures (as amended).
Part 2—1980—Arc Stud Welding (Steel Studs to Steel).

AS 1654-1974—Limits and Fits for Engineering.
AS 1288—Parts 1 to 3—1979—SAA Glass Installation Code.
AS 2440-1981—Sawn Douglas Fir (Oregon) and Sawn Western Hemlock (Canada Pine).
    Part 1—General Requirements (as amended).
    Part 2—Serial Hoist and Winches.
    Part 3—Bridge and Gantry Cranes.
    Part 5—Mobile and Vehicle-Loading Cranes.
    Part 7—Builders Hoists and Equipment.
    Part 9—Vehicle Hoists.
    Part 10—Elevating Work Platforms.
AS 1580—Methods of Test for Paints and Related Materials.
AS 3007-1987—Electrical Installations—Surface Mines and Associated Processing Plant.
    Part 1—Scope and Definitions.
    Part 2—General Protection Requirements.
    Part 3—General Requirements for Equipment and Ancillaries.
    Part 4—Additional Requirements for Specific Applications.
    Part 5—Operating Requirements.
AS 3006-1982—Adequate Electrical Installations in Domestic Premises.
AS 3003-1985—Electrical Installations—Patient Treatment Areas of Hospitals and Medical and Dental Practices.
AS 3002-1985—Electrical Installations—Shows and Carnivals.
AS 3001-1985—Electrical Installations—Caravans and Caravan Park Areas (as amended).
AS 1477—Parts 1 to 6—1973—Unplasticized PVC (UPVC) Pipes and Fittings for Pressure Applications.
AS 1125-1986—Conductors in Insulated Electric Cables and Flexible Cords.
  Part 1—Requirements.
  Part 2—Application Guide.
  Part 1—Design and Installation.
  Part 2—Inspection and Maintenance.
AS 2238-1982—Electrical Equipment for Explosive Atmospheres—Non-Sparking Apparatus—Type of Protection "n".
AS 2209-1979—Timber Poles for Overhead Lines.
AS 2106-1980—Determination of the Flashpoint of Flammable Liquids (Closed Cup).
AS 2480-1986—Electrical Equipment for Explosive Atmospheres—Flameproof Enclosure—Type of Protection "d".
AS 2431-1981—Electrical Equipment for Explosive Atmospheres—Encapsulated Apparatus—Type of Protection "m".
AS 2430.2-1986, Part 2—Combustible Dusts.
AS 2430.3-1987, Part 3—Specific Occupancies.
MP 37—1987—List of SAA Certified Explosion-Protected Electrical Equipment.
MP 42—1987—Explosion-Protected Electrical Equipment—Conditions and Procedures for SAA Certification (as amended).
British Standards
BS 690—Asbestos Cement Slates and Sheets.

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Part 5—1975—Lining Sheets and Panels.
Part 6—1976—Fittings for Use with Corrugated Sheets.
BS 46—Part 3—1951—Solid and Split Taper Pins (as amended).
BS 970—Specification for Wrought Steels.
Part 5—1972—Carbon and Alloy Spring Steels for the Manufacture of Hot Formed Springs.
BS 41—1973—Specification for Cast Iron Spigot and Socket Flue or Smoke Pipes and Fittings.
Part 1—Imperial Units.
Part 2—Metric Units.
Part 3—1968—Wrought Carbon and Ferritic Alloy Steel Fittings Metric Units.
Part 4—1968—Wrought and Cast Austenitic Chromium-Nickle Steel Fittings Metric Units.

American Standards
D 2270—86—Standard Practice for Calculating Viscosity Index from Kinematic Viscosity at 40 and 100°C.

International Standard

IEC Standard—Publication 800—Heating Cables with a Rated Voltage of 300/500 V for Comfort Heating and Prevention of Ice Formation.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE

The SPEAKER—Order! I wish to advise the House that Mr John Briton, Acting Public Advocate, this day made an affirmation before me, as required by the Guardianship and Administration Board Act 1986.
Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Crimes (Family Violence) Act 1987.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr LIEBERMAN (Benambra)—I take pleasure today in answering the call to speak against the Constitution (Proportional Representation) Bill. I regard the government's proposals to massively change the system of electing members of the Legislative Council and to massively change the electoral boundaries in Victoria as an outrageous attack on Parliament and on the people of Victoria. It is also an act of arrogance, to say the least.

The government proposes to introduce a form of proportional voting and to reduce by half the terms for which Parliamentarians in the Legislative Council are elected. The most offensive aspect of the Bill is the fact that the Premier and his government, as has been publicly exposed, extending over a number of years, have been involved in a plan to reduce the power of the House of review and, eventually, to remove it from the people of Victoria. It is well known—and my remarks need to be seen in the context of the historical evidence that is available in Victoria about the government's approach to democracy and to the two House system of Parliament—that the Premier has had a longstanding view that the Legislative Council should be abolished.

Last year, or the year before, the Premier proposed to introduce a new system of proportional representation voting; it also proposed removing a number of the powers of the Legislative Council. In many quarters that attempt was seen as the first instalment of the Premier's long-term ambition to eventually abolish the Legislative Council, or, if it had to continue, to reduce it merely to a debating room with no power to provide a real check and balance to protect the people of Victoria against excesses by governments of any political flavour.

At that time the Premier's proposal was an attempt to win the favours of the Australian Democrats in order to gain and secure power as Premier in this State. That was well-publicised; it is on the record and I do not intend to go over all the details.

With that proposed legislation having been thwarted, the Premier and his Ministers have had to think long and hard about how they can pursue their long-term ambition, at the same time securing the support of the Australian Democrats in order to maintain power in this State.

The proposed legislation is not about democracy. It is an assault on democracy. It is about self-interest and the ways in which long-term plans, in some cases covert plans, can be used to achieve a one-House Parliament in Victoria. It is now on public record that the proposed legislation is supported, at least by the executive, by the Australian Democrats, but frankly, I have many doubts about whether it will be supported, once its details are fully ventilated by people who are not members of the executive of the Australian Democrats and who have chosen over the years to vote for the Australian Democrats. There are two separate groups: those comprising the executive of the Australian Democrats and those who do not comprise the executive but who have chosen to vote for that party. Those who have chosen to vote for the
Australian Democrats would not have been involved in the executive's deliberations, and when they fully understand the ramifications of the measure they will not fall for the trap for which the Premier is hoping they will fall, and they will certainly throw into the wastepaper bin any attempt by the executive of the Australian Democrats to direct their voting preferences by how-to-vote cards.

The Australian Democrats proudly proclaim, as they are entitled to do in a democracy, that their party gives its members the right to make up their minds on how to direct preferences. They are proud of that right. I have known and worked with many supporters of the Australian Democrats and I have had much to do with many rank and file supporters of that party. When they realise what the government has been trying to do, in concert with the executive of the Australian Democrats, they will make up their own minds. Incidentally, I understand that the president of the party has ambitions to become a member of the Legislative Council!

An honourable member—What is wrong with that?

Mr LIEBERMAN—Nothing, but if he is trying to realise that ambition by gaining an advantage in the system, he will be judged accordingly and his efforts will be thwarted. Once the supporters of the Australian Democrats understand the implications of the proposal I predict that the government will fall flat on its face and will fail to achieve its ambition of receiving a flow of preferences. I shall be happy to debate this matter fully in the electorate at any time so that it is ventilated in public because I have enough confidence in the people of Victoria, no matter what their voting patterns are, to believe that they will see through this plan.

The Herald editorial of today makes some points that are worthy of consideration. Although it is partly critical of my party as well, it states:

Nobody should delude themselves: Victoria's proportional representation controversy has little to do with the broad principles of democracy, but a lot to do with the narrow self-interest of the three major political groupings.

The editor goes on to discuss the stance of the various parties at the moment. When people understand what is happening, as they undoubtedly will, there will be a massive backlash against the Australian Labor Party and its candidates and against those involved in the Australian Democrats who will be attempting to influence and bully the people who formerly supported the Australian Democrats when they handed out how-to-vote cards. They will fall flat on their faces. They will be particularly concerned that the measure the Premier proposes to pass, which will be defeated, proposes a massive gerrymander in the newly shaped Legislative Council to achieve an ALP government.

Dr Coghill interjected.

Mr LIEBERMAN—I am happy to have that reviewed by an independent person. I am normally inclined to ignore the interjections of the honourable member for Werribee, but I could not ignore that one.

I do not believe any member of Parliament should have the effrontery to go to the people of Victoria suggesting that the new boundaries for the provinces that would be established under the Bill would be fair and equitable and would give everybody a fair go.

A lot of work should have been done but it has not been done. The government should be condemned for its attempt to rush this Bill through Parliament by fostering the blackmail by the Australian Democrats of other political parties in order to dupe the Victorian people into believing that the new boundaries will be fair and equitable.
No evidence is available that those new boundaries would be fair and equitable. This should be a paramount consideration if the Premier is concerned about democracy.

People need time to study and debate the matter. The honourable member for Werribee needs to go to public meetings to talk about this matter, and I should have the opportunity of going to public meetings to talk about this matter. Independent experts and political scientists should have time to offer their views on the effects that the boundaries would have, but there has been no consultation and no proper dialogue. No attempt has been made to allow the community to analyse the effect of the proposed legislation. A scandalous attempt has been made to introduce a massive gerrymander that would benefit the Australian Labor Party and its cohorts.

When one examines the pattern of how the government over the past years has attacked the principles of democracy and has undermined Parliament, one notes that this Bill is part of the mosaic in which the government has shown disdain for the true principles of the Westminster system of accountability.

Yesterday in the Legislative Council a report was tabled by a Parliamentary committee on the Nunawading Province re-election scandal. I shall not go into all the details that honourable members have heard about over the past three years—as I have—but the substance of that report confirmed the substance of reports by the police about the reluctance of the administration and finally of Ministers of the government when the inquiry was at its height.

The report has confirmed that the Australian Labor Party in Victoria, which is the heart and soul of the government, along with certain trade union representatives, still has in the position of secretary, a gentleman by the name of Mr Peter Batchelor, who has already been publicly involved in and convicted of totally unacceptable behaviour in relation to voting in the important Nunawading Province re-election and in relation to an attempt to deceive voters in the Nunawading Province re-election about the true position of the candidates.

Mr Peter Batchelor is still in office; he is still the most senior member of the executive arm of the Australian Labor Party. It is his government and his Premier who is now saying as he goes around Victoria that the Bill will make Parliament a better place; that it will give the public more rights and a stronger voice. That is a link in the chain.

I shall give other examples of the government’s lack of respect for democracy and Parliament. In the last sessional period the government trampled over the rights of Victorians, endeavouring to confiscate firearms. It also endeavoured to introduce a regulation that removed the rights of people, without enabling any debate on the matter.

When the working of Parliament was put in place, the all-party Legal and Constitutional Committee—of which I am a member; the government also has members on that committee—vetted certain regulations dealing with freedom of information and found they were invalid, beyond power and unenforceable. The committee found also that one of the courts, namely, the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, had also found that the regulation was invalid and unenforceable.

The committee recommended to the Governor in Council that the regulation should be suspended as Parliament was not sitting. The regulation affected people’s rights. However, the Premier ignored those matters; he hopped in his car and went to visit the Governor and, as a result, reintroduced the same offensive regulation dealing with firearms through Executive action, bypassing Parliament.
That act will haunt the Premier for many years because such an action had not occurred previously in Australian democracy. The Premier of the day ignored the decision of the court; the government has ignored the advice and judgment of an all-party Parliamentary committee and the rights of individuals.

I shall detail another piece in the mosaic that is a link with this proposed legislation and will give honourable members an idea of the personality and character of the government which now wishes to change the people’s Parliament in this way so that it may gain a short-term advantage in the next election in order to retain power.

Of course the government will not get away with this. It wants this Bill to be a trigger in the election. Good! In a 4, 5, or 7-week campaign, it does not matter when this is explained to the people because the people will make the correct judgment, which will be one of contempt for the government.

Mr Cathie interjected.

Mr LIEBERMAN—I suggest that the Minister sees his boss; the Minister should lend him his car so that he may go to the Governor and ask for a dissolution of Parliament; three years of the Parliamentary term are up and the election can be called. Does the Minister want to have an election on this issue? I say: any time! The government members may be smug, but I am aware of the repercussions that the Bill will have if it is passed. I am also aware that the Australian Labor Party members do not want the Bill to go through. It is part of a conspiracy to deceive the innocent Australian Democrats so that they will believe the Premier will give them the achievement of their long-held ambition to have a voice in the Victorian Parliament.

The government has been the subject of editorials in newspapers. I admit the Herald editorial was also critical of my party, but that is democracy. The Opposition wants debate on this issue, particularly by the Premier. I extend my invitation again to him to go to the Governor to ask him to dissolve Parliament. The Opposition will not back away from what our Leader has said. We could have gained a short-term advantage by taking up the Australian Democrats’ offer not to direct preferences against the Liberal Party. The Labor Party will not be able to deny that, but the Liberal Party did not take up that offer because of the effect of the Bill on Parliament.

I have argued for years that it is an act of arrogance for members of Parliament to propose massive changes to the Constitution without a referendum. This is a living and graphic example of the direction the government and its cohorts are taking. The greatest sin that any Parliament can commit is to conclude, because it happens to be privileged to be elected, that it has the right to make massive changes to the Constitution without a proper research document, without proper consultation, and without the people of Victoria being able to say, “Yes”, or “No” in a referendum. That is the most telling point of all.

Many members on both sides of Parliament believe the question and examination of voting systems is a healthy issue to be raised in a democracy. Members of the Liberal Party do not walk away from it, nor shall they ever walk away because it is a valid subject for people to examine.

The people who propose proportional representation have not yet arrived at an answer to the dilemma that proportional representation brings into a Parliament, namely, a single interest group gaining attention on a single issue that attracts the attention of the community at a particular time, whereby that group can gain control of a Parliament, and the future and resources of a State, in a disproportionate way, and against the interests of the people.
The editorial in today's *Herald* refers to that, when it states:

In arguing for change, the only qualification is the need to guard against single-issue candidates taking the balance of power in the Upper House simply because at the time of an election they were enjoying transitory notoriety.

If electoral change is to occur in Victoria a referendum must be held. Those who propose change have a responsibility to provide the people with enough evidence to enable them to consider whether the question of a disproportionate influence in the affairs of state in Parliament has been resolved.

If one examines the Premier's attempts to do that, one finds that he refers to the quota to gain a seat in his new Parliament. If his Bill is passed—but that will not happen unless he is re-elected with a majority in the Council—I presume he would then say to the Australian Democrats "I did not mean that" and then it will be on for young and old! He will not be re-elected. I am glad he is here to listen because he may be able to answer the question.

The Premier wants to con the people of Victoria by saying that the disproportionate influence of people from small groups will not be in existence where there is a quota of 10 per cent required. There is a distinct vacuum in the argument of the Premier because nowhere has he produced evidence to substantiate that point.

The proportional representation system exists in Israel; in that country one has to obtain only 1 per cent of the total vote plus 1. Victoria does not want a Parliament like that, although that is an extreme illustration of what can happen.

I am aware of a group in Australia today whose members are saying that any Parliamentarian who does not toe the line and who does not say what a particular group in his electorate agrees should be the policy enunciated in Parliament for Victoria, should immediately resign. That group is conducting public meetings throughout Australia; its members are stating that a member of Parliament, when preselected and then elected, should be required to sign an undated letter of resignation addressed to the Speaker or the President of the Parliament in which he is a member. The argument of the group's members is that if the Parliamentarian does not perform according to the wishes of the local electoral council, that council should insert the date, send the letter of resignation to the Speaker or the President, and that is the end of the member.

That group has recently held public meetings in my electorate, in Albury, and in Queensland. I am unsure whether it has held any meetings in the electorate of the honourable member for Rodney, but I am sure he is aware of it. Apparently that group was involved in affairs in the electorate of the former Premier of Queensland—I think the group is called the Berrimah council.

Possibly that group could marshall emotions in a very short time, particularly when one has regard to the general disdain that people in the community at present hold for Parliamentarians. The group could marshall a quota to have its candidates enter Parliament. A person who is elected to Parliament is required to take an oath of office that he will serve the people of Victoria without fear or favor. All honourable members worth their mettle will know that inevitably a member of Parliament, trying to achieve the high ideals and obligations of that oath, will be confronted with issues that do not make people happy at all times, particularly at times in his electorate, but he is required to strike a balance in the interests of the State. Under the Premier's proposal those people could well control this Parliament in future.

A principle exists within the arguments about proportional representation. If the government truly cares about the future of Parliament, about the Westminster system and democracy in Victoria, it ought to be holding a proper inquiry as a prelude to
giving the people of Victoria the opportunity of making a decision. It should not be left to the politicians, to the elected members of Parliament. What absolute arrogance exhibited by the government! The people of Victoria should make the decision. I have more confidence in Victorians than in the present government which is trying to influence Victorians and attempting to con innocent Australian Democrats and others into believing that its proposal is sincere and in the interests of democracy. What absolute nonsense!

To start with, the question is hindered because there is no credibility in the government because of its association with the likes of Peter Bachelor—the Secretary of the Australian Labor Party—a man who has publicly been found to have been involved in certain practices involving the conduct of an election. There is no credibility because the government condones and tolerates these actions, and then attempts to inflict its wishes on the people.

Dr Wells—It is power at any cost.

Mr LIEBERMAN—Yes, it is power at any cost. The Bill is a massive assault on our Constitution. I have been suggesting to my colleagues, to the people I represent, and to those who care about Victoria's future, that the fear I hold is at least relieved at the moment because in the other place, thank God, the government does not have a majority. Had it held a majority there, imagine what the government could have done over the past few years!

Victoria would have had probate and death duties reintroduced, and would have faced massive changes to its social and economic fabric. Victoria would have been confronted with extreme problems and the Premier would have achieved his real ambition; that is, the abolition of the two-House system of Parliament in Victoria. That is the bottom line.

We know what Victorians want—one need only look at the results of the elections in Nunawading Province and Central Highlands Province where the Liberal Party conducted a campaign mainly on the issue of the checks, balance, and safeguards for the people through the Upper House who, in turn, have given the Liberal Party an overwhelming endorsement by electing Liberal Party members in both seats. These honourable members are now serving their electors in a proper manner. They have provided a proper safeguard for the people against a government that is wedded to executive action, wedded to bypassing Parliament and to increasingly making deals with the executive of minority groups. I emphasise “the executive of minority groups”, not the Australian Democrats group, because the question concerns power at any cost.

The principles of those great Australians in the old Australian Labor Party—people such as Chifley and Curtin who made a wonderful contribution to the future of our nation—are no longer evident in the Labor Party.

When one notes some of the very fine people—including yourself, Mr Acting Speaker—who are leaving this Parliament from the government side of politics at the end of this sessional period, one shudders because those Australian Labor Party members, in my view, were and are men of great principle, men who talk and fight for things, and for which I admire them; I may not always agree with them, but in my opinion they are fair dinkum people!

I fear that their replacements will be of the ilk of the members of the Executive government and will make a massive assault on the people in Parliament. The government is not game to have a referendum or a proper preliminary inquiry, but it is dirting its hands for a short-term gain.

If the Minister for the Arts, who is leading this debate, does not have a car to take the Premier to see the Governor, I say again that I shall lend him my car. The Minister
should tell the Premier to see the Governor now. Let us get on with this and have an election on the issue! The Minister may laugh and smile, but the people of Victoria will not be deceived by what is contained in the Bill.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—The issue of proportional representation has been part of the Victorian political scene for a long time. I should have thought that the Labor Party would have learnt a lesson from the results of the action that it took to change the method of election to the Commonwealth Senate.

An article that appeared in the Sunday Press in 1982 states:

In 1948 Arthur Calwell, a Minister in the Chifley Labor government, successfully sponsored legislation for the election of the Australian Senate under this system.

That was the end of a Senate majority for the Labor Party—except for about eighteen months after the 1949 elections when Sir Robert Gordon Menzies called a double dissolution and put Labor out of business. Effectively, the introduction of proportional representation in the Senate was responsible for taking away the Labor Party's majority.

The longer one serves as a member of Parliament the more cynical one becomes about the actions of Premiers and political parties. I was elected as a member of Parliament in 1973. Prior to the 1973 election, the Premier of the day, Mr Hamer, had discussions with the Democratic Labor Party. In those discussions, the Premier led representatives of the Democratic Labor Party to believe he supported proportional representation. Three years later, prior to the 1976 election, the Premier reiterated his support for the concept of proportional representation. That was because he was having some difficulty in retaining the preferences of the Democratic Labor Party, preferences which were vital to the Liberal Party government at that time.

On 2 August 1976, almost twelve years ago to the day, an article was written in the Age about the DLP conference:

The Democratic Labor Party will ask the Australia Party and the Workers' Party to join in a campaign to get proportional representation in State Parliament.

The party's central executive, in a report to the conference, said discussions with Mr Hamer and other Ministers on the issue dated back to before the 1973 State election.

It said Mr Hamer later indicated he was prepared to adopt a proposition to give proportional representation in the Legislative Council, on the basis of three representatives for 10 per cent of the vote.

The central executive's report said that on other occasions Mr Hamer indicated there were no problems about introducing a system for proportional representation.

"The party was kept under that illusion until late in August 1975, when the Premier indicated he would then have to submit the proposition to the joint policy committee of the Liberal Party," it said.

"This was the first indication the DLP had received which in any way led the party to believe the agreement of 1973 was in jeopardy."

The report said Mr Hamer wrote to the DLP last October stating no agreement had been made, but he would be prepared to discuss what might be done in the future.

"It was a great disappointment to the Executive to discover that our dealings had been conducted with a man whose memory was bad or whose word could not be accepted—a man who would make an agreement, accept all the benefits for his party (receiving DLP preferences), and then refuse to carry out his part of such agreement."

Since then we have had a change of government. The current Premier has taken up the cudgels on behalf of proportional representation. He did so prior to the last election; and now he is attempting to honour a similar promise which he has made to the Australian Democrats. The Premier's actions represent another desperate bid on the part of the government to retain power, because the Premier knows that public opinion polls conducted for the Labor Party have shown that the government is.
running approximately 4 per cent behind the Liberal and National parties. Because of that, the Premier is having discussions with the Australian Democrats about proportional representation.

The Bill is a confidence trick. The government knows full well that it does not have a majority in the Upper House, so there is no way that the Bill will be passed by both Houses. The government is well aware of the views of both the Liberal and National parties on the issue of proportional representation, views which have been consistently held during the life of this and previous Parliaments.

I have it on good authority that a senior Minister of the government won a bet as a result of the decision made in the Liberal Party room yesterday, because the Minister was sure that the Liberal Party would not support proportional representation.

The Premier knows full well that there is no way the Bill will be passed through Parliament. It is a charade. I cannot understand how the Australian Democrats have been taken in by the Bill which, if enacted, would supposedly ensure that Mr Sid Spindler, who is the most vocal representative of the Australian Democrats at present, would be elected as a member of the Legislative Council.

One may ask why the system of proportional representation is to apply only to the Legislative Council. The Labor Party has a policy of abolishing that House. If the Premier were serious in his desire to see the Australian Democrats represented in Parliament, one would think that the government would introduce a Bill to introduce the system of proportional representation for both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council; but that is certainly not the case.

Last night, a backbench member of the government espoused his belief that the Australian Democrats have a right to be represented in Parliament. In 1981 the former Leader of the Labor Party, which was then in opposition, proposed that the system of proportional representation should be used to elect members to the House of Representatives. That represented a desperate bid for power by the Labor Party, a bid that the then Leader of the Federal Opposition did not win.

The President of the Labor Party at that time, Mr Bob Hawke, strongly expressed his opposition to proportional representation. An article in the *Age*, which was written by Michelle Grattan on 1 August 1981, states:

Mr Hawke said that proportional representation would increase the difficulties of Labor forming a government in its own right, and could exacerbate factionalism within the ALP.

There is little doubt about that! The Labor Party experiences traumatic problems when selecting its Senate team, because of the various factions that exist within that party. The views on proportional representation held by a former Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Gough Whitlam, were quoted in the article as follows:

Mr Whitlam criticised proposals for multimember electorates, and warned that Labor should think carefully before it advocated them.

Two senior members of the Labor Party, one a present Prime Minister and the other a former Prime Minister, both of whom would be held in high regard within Labor Party circles, expressed opposition to proportional representation and warned against its implementation. I should have thought the Labor Party would have learnt from what happened when Mr Calwell changed the method of electing the Senate in 1948.

Our present system of government is based on the Westminster system. That system is based on representation of constituents by a single member and it has served the Parliament well over the years. A distinct advantage of that system is that all constituents know who their particular members are.
As the honourable member for Melbourne says, two members of Parliament represent each province in the Upper House, and each of those members is elected for double the term of Legislative Assembly members. But those members of Parliament still represent single constituencies; and they are elected in their own right by a majority of people living in those provinces. In the Legislative Assembly, individual members represent single electoral districts.

Victoria has twelve senators who, in theory, represent all the State. However, if one walked the streets of Melbourne and asked people to name Victoria’s twelve senators, how many people would be able to name all of them? Many members of this place would have considerable difficulty in naming all the senators.

At the weekend one of my colleagues was talking to a senior journalist in his constituency. The journalist was promoting the philosophy of proportional representation and was arguing that it had merit. My colleague pointed out the geographical difficulties with the Senate where the majority of Victoria’s twelve senators live in the metropolitan area. My colleague asked the senior journalist to name the twelve Victorian senators. Firstly, he came up with Senator Lewis, who is the local senator in that area. Secondly, he came up with Senator Stone who, of course, is a Queensland senator. The journalist was not able to name any of the other eleven senators.

Mr Sidiropoulos—What has this to do with it?

Mr HANN—It highlights the point made by my colleague from Swan Hill that a person elected under the proportional representation system is supposed to represent everyone in that area but tends to represent no-one except the party political machine that was responsible for the pre-selection process. That is highlighted by the Senate.

Differences exist in the way a senator operates and the way a member of the House of Representatives operates. Part of the difficulty is trying to represent such a large number of people. The Bill proposes splitting the metropolitan area into three electorates and dividing the balance of Victoria into two areas. The members elected to represent large numbers of people in such large areas would face logistical problems. Even now it is extremely difficult, especially in the city, for people to know who is their local member, and it would be absolutely impossible if there were only three provinces for the metropolitan area. If that were the case, people would not be represented because they would not have direct access to their local members. They would not know what were the defined boundaries.

The Bill proposes simultaneous elections for both Houses of Parliament. The present system has protection built into it. Earlier, by interjection, the honourable member for Richmond challenged the honourable member for Benambra about the balance of power in the Upper House being controlled by the opposition parties. Every member of that House has been democratically elected to represent a particular portion of the State. Under the bicameral system, half of the members are elected at any one election. That avoids the situation of all the members of that House being thrown out of office at one election. Under the present system and party structure within Victoria, I admit that that is unlikely, but it is not impossible, and the Victorian Parliament would be left without anyone familiar with the system. That protection was built in by our forebears, and it is important.

If the Labor Party had been able to convince a sufficient number of people at the last State election that it was doing the right thing, it could have increased its number of members in the Legislative Council and could have held the balance of power. However, the electors decided that they preferred a system that provided a watchdog and where the government does not have control of both Houses of Parliament.
It is interesting that Tasmania operates under a proportional representation system known as the Hare-Clarke system. That is slightly different from the model expounded by the Labor Party, but there are similarities. In Tasmania a candidate who lost his deposit at the election because he received only 485 votes was ultimately elected to Parliament because the system did not provide for a by-election. When a sitting member vacated his seat, the votes from the State election were recounted and one of the defeated candidates was elected to Parliament. The Bill allows that to occur in Victoria. If a member dies or must resign from Parliament, the provisions in the Bill for filling casual vacancies allow someone who has received a small proportion of the total vote to be elected to Parliament.

The National Party argues that the present method of electing members for both the Assembly and the Council on the basis of individual constituencies is the ideal way for our democratic system to work most effectively. It is the only way that the people of this State will know who their members of Parliament are and those members will be directly responsive to their needs and wishes. As I said earlier, few people in Victoria could name three or four of their senators. In any one year few people come into contact with their senators or even know where to make contact with them apart from writing to Parliament House in Canberra. Those senators are not as closely in touch with the wishes and needs of their constituents as the member who represents a single electorate. The National Party believes the present system is the most appropriate and effective. The National Party totally rejects the concept of proportional representation.

Another danger in the proposed system is that small minority groups may be elected to Parliament because of single issues. Those groups could hold the balance of power but they would be interested in only one issue. The Nuclear Disarmament Party is an example of that. Representatives of that party have been elected to the Senate on one issue and have found that they must address a wide range of other issues. Members of Parliament are expected to make decisions on many subjects. The danger with proportional representation is that minority, single-issue groups could end up with representatives in Parliament. Those representatives could become frustrated because the issue on which they were elected may seldom be discussed in Parliament, yet they would be expected to make decisions on a broad range of proposed legislation.

The Australian Democrats argue that they cannot get anyone elected to Parliament. If sufficient people in any one electorate support the philosophy of that party, the Australian Democrats can easily have someone elected to Parliament. However, that is not the case. The Australian Democrats have a small percentage of people who support their philosophy, but they do not have significant numbers in electorates across Victoria where more than 50 per cent of the electors are prepared to vote for the party. Perhaps all the Australian Democrats should get together and move to one suburb or district in Victoria! The reality is that if the Australian Democrats build credibility in the policies that they adopt, they will gain that support.

The National Party commenced more than 70 years ago as a small political party representing particularly the interests of rural Victoria. It has extended that influence throughout Victoria and into the metropolitan area with the election of a senator. The National Party has now, and has always had, a significant number of members in both Houses of Parliament, elected by constituents in the electorates that they represent because those constituents support the aspirations and policies of this great party. The National Party is a relatively small party but it has the capacity to have members elected to Parliament. It will be around for a long time into the future. So, if the philosophy and policy is right, the capacity is there for political parties to have members elected to Parliament under the current system.
In 1973 and 1976 the then Premier, now Sir Rupert Hamer, offered this great deal to the Democratic Labor Party because he wanted its preferences. The Cain Labor government is now doing the same thing. It is a confidence trick, a desperate bid by the government to retain power. I do not believe it will work, especially if one examines the history of the Australian Democrats. It is obvious that members of that party are divided. They are divided in their rank and file. The Australian Democrats have always issued dual ticket how-to-vote cards with preferences being directed to the Labor Party on one side and to the Liberal Party on the other side. Rank and file members have never agreed, and I suggest never will agree, to direct preferences to one party. I should be surprised if individual members of the Australian Democrats were bluffeed by the Labor government’s proposal, which is really just a confidence trick.

Long before the Bill was introduced into Parliament the government knew that it would not be passed. This a desperate bid to get the Australian Democrats on side to gain preferences, but I do not believe it will work. The government is so far behind, even looking at its own opinion polls, that it will be thrown out of office at the next election. The sooner that election is held, the better.

Mr REMINGTON (Melbourne)—I strongly support this important and exciting Bill. It could not have been introduced into a better session or at a better time. The activities of the Liberal Opposition in its party room yesterday clearly indicate to the Victorian electorate that that party is as divided today as it was twelve months ago and as it has been throughout its six and a half years in opposition.

One must consider the Liberal Party’s performance in the party room yesterday prior to debate in this House of a very important Bill. Despite the fact that the Bill was introduced into the House several months ago, it was not until 12.35 p.m. yesterday that the Liberal Party reached a consensus on its position. The position of the Leader of the Opposition has been clearly stated in the newspapers. It will be reported in the last edition of today’s Herald, which I have not read, but I can almost foresee the headlines, that the Leader of the Opposition acknowledges that the vote taken by his party yesterday could well cost the Liberal Party the State election.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr REMINGTON—The honourable member for Swan Hill should read the Herald when it comes out in half an hour’s time. I shall not be surprised if the headlines refer to the Leader of the Opposition expressing serious concern at the position taken by his party yesterday. The Leader of the Opposition is a political realist: he wants to win power. There is nothing wrong with that. Next the Liberals will be saying, “Change the Leader”. That was almost foreshadowed in yesterday’s Herald editorial headed “The Kennett Renaissance” which said:

One thing he must know...

This is the Leader of the Opposition—

... this is almost certainly his last chance.

What are honourable members really debating? Is it such a revolutionary thing in 1988 to introduce a change that was first mooted more than 100 years ago? What is wrong with giving to Victorians in their House of review a similar system, to some degree, to that existing in Tasmania? Are the Liberal Party and National Party disfranchised in Tasmania? Are they disfranchised in South Australia? Is there anything wrong with the proportional representation system in South Australia that disadvantages them? Is it not a fair and democratic system operating in Tasmania? Is it not a fair and democratic system operating in New South Wales? I am not opposed to a variety of views being expressed in Parliament. What is wrong with that? I do not
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adhere to the philosophies of the Niles, but the Reverend Fred Nile has been elected under a proportional representation system into the New South Wales Upper House. I see nothing wrong with that. He is putting forward a point of view reflecting the attitudes of some people—certainly members of a right wing group—who are members of the general community. He is reflecting an important attitude. Why should he not be elected to the New South Wales Upper House?

What is wrong with electing Australian Democrats, a party whose members command more votes on a percentage basis in Victoria than does the National Party? What is wrong with the Australian Democrats having seats in the Upper House? What is so terrifyingly wrong? The Australian Democrats have been criticised for their representation in the Senate. Anti-uranium people have been elected to the Senate. What is wrong with people who are gravely concerned about the future use of uranium and nuclear war being elected? Is there something bad about these people being represented in the Senate?

I have no argument about people who take a strong and positive stance against nuclear war being represented. However, the last speaker, the honourable member for Rodney, expressed concern about anti-uranium and anti-nuclear people being elected to the Senate. Their election is good for this country. We do not want everyone to be tightly structured into major political parties. If any group can pick up 10 per cent of the vote, even a small group in the community, it is entitled to have a representative in Parliament. That is what is contained in the objectives of this Bill.

It may well have been better for democracy if the Democratic Labor Party, instead of wagging the tail of the Liberal Party for years, had had a voice in this Parliament. Then it would have blackmailed the then government, as it did for election after election, to gain support for the maintenance of its policies while the Liberal Party was in office. Sir Henry Bolte would never have made history. That man would not have been so well known today had it not been for the activities of the Democratic Labor Party.

It would have been a much healthier democracy if a proportional representation system had operated, because it would have permitted representation of all points of view existing at that time. Those points of view do not exist today. They existed in the 1950s—in the McCarthyist era—because of the many activities that went on in the United States of America, Australia and other parts of the world. I do not see anything unhealthy about people with such points of view being elected to Parliament.

The government is asking this House and the Upper House to introduce a system that already exists in various forms in other States of Australia, with the exception of Queensland, where there is no Upper House, and Western Australia, where there is a blatant gerrymander. When the vote on the referendum is taken in a few weeks' time, one would hope that position will ultimately be corrected. It is not surprising that the Liberal and National parties are opposing this Bill, because they resent change.

There are two things the Liberal and National parties do not like. The first is success: they cannot stand success. That has been evident in debate after debate in this House. The government has introduced, and will continue to do so on behalf of the State, many successful programs. The Liberal Party, in particular, and the National Party, cannot tolerate success.

Secondly, the Liberal Party, because of its conservative base and because it really has its feet embedded in concrete, cannot stand change. Its members are the real reactionaries of society. The Labor Party is not afraid of change. The Cain government has opted for gradual change and not radical change. The Bill is certainly not radical change. A concept that was first introduced in the 1850s can hardly be said to be radical change.
Proportional representation operates in a minority of State Parliaments and the Federal Parliament. The conservative parties are terrified of change, but it does not terrify the Leader of the Liberal Party. Honourable members who read the next edition of the *Herald* will read an article in which the Leader of the Opposition is reported as expressing grave political concern at the attitude taken by the members of his party.

I reiterate, what a disgraceful position it was. The Liberal Party wants to govern Victoria, but it could not make up its mind on how to vote on an important issue such as proportional representation until approximately 90 minutes before the House sat—what a disgraceful political rabble.

The party room meeting did not break up until 1.40 p.m., but it took me almost half an hour to ascertain what happened. I would have voted for the motion moved by the Honourable M. A. Birrell. The honourable member in another place wanted to increase the numbers in the Upper House and argued for that concept, as did the Honourable A. J. Hunt. However, the Honourable A. J. Hunt dropped off quickly when he sniffed the wind because he knew who was in command of that wind.

I wonder whether there will be another Liberal Party meeting to determine a new attitude on proportional representation? The Liberal Party wants to win and the political realists within the party will tell them that they have no hope if the Australian Democrats vote against the Liberal Party representatives, especially in marginal seats.

What is Parliament being asked to do with this "radical" Bill? Why is the National Party so concerned? Members of the National Party are on the horns of dilemma. The Liberal Party proposal, no doubt debated in its party room yesterday, if accepted, would have meant the National Party would lose seats to the Australian Democrats, especially in the Upper House.

An honourable member—Absolute rubbish.

Mr REMINGTON—The Opposition does not stand for one vote, one value.

Honourable members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! Members of the National Party are out of their places and should be quiet.

Mr REMINGTON—The National Party would not lose seats if it accepted the proposals spelt out in the Bill. No wonder the National Party was caught on the horns of dilemma. Should they support the Liberal Party's proposal and lose representation in the Upper House, or should they support the government's proposal and maintain their representation? It will be an interesting debate; one that may yet still occur because honourable members know that 24 hours is a long time in politics.

It is not surprising that the Liberal Party, in particular, and the National Party oppose the Bill because it represents change. The conservative parties are united in opposing the referendum that will occur in September. They are opposed to fair elections. Fancy two allegedly responsible political parties opposing fair elections!

Mr E. R. Smith—that is not what it is about.

Mr REMINGTON—It reflects the Opposition's views on proportional representation and on the referenda. The conservative parties want to maintain the gerrymander in Queensland which has given the Queensland people the most rotten government in contemporary times.

Mr E. R. Smith interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! The honourable member for Glen Waverley should cease interjecting and should wait until he speaks on the Bill.
Mr REMINGTON—The conservative parties oppose the recognition of local government. Fancy voting against that in a referendum! During the last sessional period of Parliament, the opposition parties opposed proportional representation for local government on a three-year fixed term basis. It is absolute nonsense to have a three-year fixed term in local government without proportional representation, but that is the attitude of the opposition parties.

The opposition parties are opposed to one vote, one value. What a disgraceful position for political parties to take in 1988. They are also opposed to trial by jury. What a shambles of an Opposition.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I am not aware that anything in the Bill relates to the referenda and I am at a loss to understand what the honourable member is talking about.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! I assume the honourable member is making a passing reference to those issues.

Mr REMINGTON (Melbourne)—I have almost finished. It is a valid point. It is not surprising that the opposition parties vote against reform of the Upper House because, as I have indicated, they are opposed to fair elections, recognition of local government, trial by jury, and the rights of individuals. They are also opposed to freedom of religion. What a strange Opposition we have!

I have noted that most speeches made by members of the Opposition have been brief. The honourable member for Benambra spoke briefly about the issue.

The purpose of the Bill is to provide for elections to the Legislative Council to be based on proportional representation. That is not novel. It exists for the Senate of the Federal Parliament and for other State Parliaments and many countries around the world. The opposition parties in the Legislative Council rejected a previous Bill that was introduced earlier. The government was encouraged to reintroduce the proposed legislation because indications were given that the Liberal Party may change its position.

Mr Ross-Edwards—Who told you that?

Mr REMINGTON—I have the notes of the interview conducted with the Leader of the Opposition in which he indicated, quite clearly, that there was every chance that the Liberal Party would change its position on the Bill and for that reason the government gave it strong support and introduced the proposed legislation, believing a system of proportional representation may be introduced for the Upper House. That was put to rest yesterday at the Liberal Party meeting.

The Bill will enable the Upper House to perform its functions properly by ensuring that all levels of representation are heeded and that those representatives have the right to vote on the issues before it. The Liberal Party has taken an entrenched stance in the Upper House against Bills introduced and passed in the Legislative Assembly.

If the Australian Democrats had had the balance of power in the Upper House, Victoria would have better gun laws today. If the proportional representation system of voting had been implemented, the Australian Democrats would possibly have been represented in the Upper House and may even have had the balance of power. That does not mean that the government's proposal would have been passed in its entirety but that the reforms would have been more effective. The same applies to the Medical Treatment Bill (No. 2); if the Australian Democrats had been represented or proportional representation introduced, it would not have been necessary to go through the charade played by Mr Hunt, the real Leader of the Opposition in another place.
Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn)—On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, according to Standing Orders no honourable member shall reflect upon members of another place or House. The honourable member for Melbourne is so doing and should be brought back to order.

Mr Micallef—He is stating the facts.

Mr PLOWMAN—The honourable member must also stay within Standing Orders, as must the honourable member for Springvale.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! I uphold the point of order. The honourable member for Melbourne should not reflect on members in another place.

Mr REMINGTON (Melbourne)—Mr Deputy Speaker, I am certainly not reflecting badly on the Honourable Alan Hunt because he is the most intelligent politician in the opposition parties. The stance he took on the Medical Treatment Bill (No. 2) vindicated the comments I have made. If the system of proportional representation for elections had been adopted, much better legislation would have passed through another place.

Mr Simpson—There is no question about that!

Mr REMINGTON—The honourable member for Benambra and the Leader of the Opposition said that the Bill would create gerrymanders in the electorates. It escapes my comprehension how a rational person could have drawn that conclusion. The Bill does not deal with the reconstitution of the Upper House. That matter would be better dealt with by the Electoral Commission. The comments of the honourable member for Benambra, the Leader of the Opposition and others who have spoken about the possibility of gerrymandering reflect badly on an independent Electoral Commission and indicate the desperation of the Opposition in trying to stir up opposition to the proposed legislation.

The Bill does not endorse the load quota as espoused in the policies of the Liberal Party, if they can be called policies! The quota is 10 per cent; any group that achieved 10 per cent support would not be an extreme single-issue minority. If the group represented a single issue, it would have to be substantial to attract more than 10 per cent of the vote in an election. After yesterday’s debacle with the Leader of the Opposition losing support for his position in the party room, the Herald editorial was headed “Kennett Renaissance”. The word “renaissance” which comes from the French word, “renaitre” and means to be born again; means to be under the influence of classical models. How many classical models were there in the Liberal Party meeting room yesterday? However many there were, they certainly had the numbers! I do not know who wrote the editorial but, whoever he or she is, that person would be keeping a low profile today. Obviously the author was well briefed by the office of the Leader of the Opposition. Rather than being born again, the Leader of the Opposition was stillborn or aborted yesterday, if those phrases are acceptable.

The person who wrote the editorial for the Herald was led to believe that the Liberal Party intended to support the position adopted by its Leader. On that briefing the journalist felt encouraged to try to instil in the minds of the Herald readers that there was a new Jeff Kennett. The journalist used the wonderful word “renaissance”.

Mr Simpson—It was a short birth.

Mr REMINGTON—Yes, he died at an early age. Yet the Liberal Party wants to govern Victoria! Can honourable members imagine how the Liberal Party would introduce important Bills if it were in power? No doubt, 10 minutes before the House were due to sit, it would still be drafting the measure. It is a pathetic group of people. It is no wonder in recent times the constituents of Ballarat North swung their support
behind the government in an unprecedented result in a by-election. The government achieved 0.5 per cent swing in its favour; it would have been satisfied with a 4 per cent swing against it. If the latter had occurred, I would still have said that the Labor Party would win the next State election. The shadow Ministers will remain shadow Ministers for a long time.

The Opposition has not seriously grappled with the issue of proportional representation. The Parliamentary Library has produced excellent booklets on this system of voting, which effectively allocates seats in the legislature to groups or individuals in proportion to the number of votes cast for them in the electorate. The Bill provides that one must muster 10 per cent of the vote to achieve that result. The proposed legislation is not revolutionary or dangerous. If it were necessary for the Australian Democrats to have the balance of power, it would be comfortable with that situation. However, they would not support all the government Bills passed in this place.

It would have been more acceptable had the Democratic Labor Party achieved representation in another place rather than the tail wagging the dog as it did for years. The political system would have been healthier and more democratic if that party had been represented. The National and Liberal parties were content to live off the preferences given to them by the DLP. It would have been rejected by the people, as Arthur Calwell said. It would have withered on the vine but, at the time, it reflected the views of many Australians.

I am extremely disappointed by the view adopted yesterday by the Liberal Party. It has placed itself in a bad political situation. Today's Herald editorial was correct in suggesting that the stand taken by the Liberal Party would ensure the re-election of the Cain government. I have never doubted that Victorians will ultimately cast their votes in favour of the Cain government.

I have confidence in the judgment and competence of Victorians in re-electing the Cain government and, after yesterday, the coalition has no hope. Those shadow Ministers are secure in their positions. They will not have to share Ministries with the National Party as there is no question about the direction of the Australian Democrats' preferences.

Mr Wallace—Mr Deputy Speaker, I direct your attention to the state of the House. A quorum was formed.

Mr REMINGTON—I was saying that there is no question of the Cain government not being re-elected. As a matter of fact, with the preferences of the Australian Democrats, the Labor Party will be re-elected with a greater majority. The electorate of Narracan cannot survive; nor can the electorates of Mornington, Gisborne and Bennettswood. The bottom line is that a wrong political decision taken yesterday by the Liberal Party will ensure the re-election of the Cain government with an increased majority.

Mr E. R. SMITH (Glen Waverley)—I am sure no-one in this House is more pleased than the Premier and members of the Labor Party that the Liberal Party took a principled stand yesterday. They must really be feeling relieved, because, if the government passed any Bill allowing it to connive with the Australian Democrats, it would lose its majority and the ability to govern effectively.

No government wants to have its right to govern thwarted by a party holding the balance of power. Most governments, whether they be of a Liberal or socialist persuasion, want to govern in their own right; and I am sure the Premier did not want
a Bill passed that would prevent either of the major political parties ever having the right to govern in its own right.

It is interesting to listen to the honourable member for Melbourne, who certainly indicated that a deal had been done when he said that the Labor Party will be able to obtain the preferences of the Australian Democrats. Those remarks, if nothing else, indicate to me that a deal has been done between the Labor Party and the Australian Democrats. If a party is serious about governing and about having a House of review, there is no way taking on board proportional representation fits into this aim. The government knows that forever and a day it will never have the right to govern in its own right if proportional representation is taken on board. It does not want this change; nor does the Liberal Party.

The Liberal Party has continually said that it is opposed to proportional representation. Yesterday was no variance from our stated political policy of being against a system that the Liberal Party does not believe would work for the people of Victoria.

I am quite sure that members of the Labor Party would also be relieved that the factional brawls that were likely to have occurred in the preselection procedure as a result of the introduction of proportional representation have been avoided. The government has had the opportunity of introducing proportional representation by way of referendum. As everyone knows, a referendum is being held on 3 September by the Commonwealth. If the government were sincere, it would have used that opportunity of discovering the will of the people as an economic means of saving money rather than canvassing the issue now. Of course, I am saying that on the proviso that there is not an election in the offing, because, as the founding fathers said, there should not be a referendum at the time of a general election. So if the government were sincere, it would call a referendum at the same time as the Commonwealth referendum while giving an undertaking that the government would run its full term. The government has until June of next year to call an election but, in any case, this would give the people of Victoria the opportunity of judging which of the two political parties was sincere in its belief that it had the support of the electorate.

The electorate should judge whether the Labor Party is chasing after the Australian Democrats' preferences, as the Labor Party has now admitted, in the words of the honourable member for Melbourne. The people of Victoria will see that the Liberal Party is a sound party which is able to govern sensibly as opposed to the government, which is merely introducing a measure as a means of obtaining cheap electoral support from the Australian Democrats.

All the Labor Party has done with this Bill, is to sell out to small special interest groups. The Australian Democrats comprises many diverse elements, and the people of Victoria would rather see a principled party like the Liberal Party, that wants to preserve the House of review and not destabilise a House which has operated so successfully.

An example of its importance occurred at the time of the Nunawading Province re-election when the sophisticated voters of Nunawading Province were able to determine that they wished to preserve a House of review in the true sense of the word and, although the general election ended in a tie, as everyone is aware, in the re-election which followed, the people of Nunawading Province, on the one issue of keeping stability within the electoral system, voted sensibly to keep the checks and balances provided by the Upper House, by electing a Liberal, thus keeping it as a House of review.

If the government wants to be sincere about introducing the Bill, it should go to the people at the same time as the Federal referendum on the first weekend of September
and see whether they want proportional representation. I am quite sure the people of Victoria will not be hoodwinked by the government's cynical move to introduce something for cheap political gain. Once again, the proviso on the challenge is that the government indicates that it will not be holding an election until this Parliament has run its full course.

As the honourable member for Melbourne said, the referendum raises a number of issues, one of them being fair elections. That is the line that the government is taking at this stage until an examination is made of what is implied. The Bill allows for a continuance of the gerrymander system, not the elimination of it. That word is bandied around the House, but anyone who understands what a gerrymander is about need only look at the way the boundaries are drawn up in the Constitution (Proportional Representation) Bill: they are drawn up to favour the Australian Labor Party. There is nothing more certain than that by drawing up the boundaries in this way the Australian Labor Party, with the assistance of the Australian Democrats, will continue to hold the balance of power in the Upper House for a number of years.

At the moment, the opinion polls indicate that the Liberal Party will win at the next election, but at this stage the boundaries proposed in the Bill will provide the greatest gerrymander that has been seen. Gerrymanders occur where boundaries are drawn for the political advantage of a particular political party. There is nothing more certain than that if the Bill were to be passed by Parliament, with the boundaries drawn in the way that they are, the result would be of such advantage to the Australian Labor Party that it would horrify the people of Victoria. My challenge is that if the government is sincere it should hold a referendum, but not concurrent with the general election which should be held next year.

As I have said, no-one must be more relieved than the members of the Australian Labor Party, and particularly the Premier, that the Liberal Party chose to take the stand it took yesterday in rejecting the proposed legislation, because the people of Victoria look for one test to be passed by a political party. That test is whether the party can produce, whether it has the policies, and whether it will be able to govern effectively and manage the affairs of the State. If the Premier were to call an election at any stage, I am sure that the people of Victoria would not support his government but would take to the policies enunciated by the Liberal and National parties.

The Bill demonstrates again the desire of the government to jeopardise the freedoms of the people of Victoria. Every time a Bill is introduced to effect some constitutional change, it does not add any further freedoms but limits the freedoms of the people of this State. It is well known that it is yet another attempt by the government to limit people's freedoms; it is another assault on the democratic process.

The people of Victoria know instinctively from birth that they live in, if not the freest, one of the five freest countries in the world. Attempts to change the system which has worked well for many years will not be successful. The system does not need changing on the whim of a political party attempting to gain cheap political advantage as the Premier and his government are trying to wring from Victorians. They are attempting this through a cheap, shoddy, and manipulative trick which they are perpetrating on the people of Victoria by introducing a measure that does not have the support of Victorians. The government should go to the people and ask them to express their opinions by way of referendum. I challenge the Premier and the government to test it by way of referendum. Any constitutional change should be effected only by way of a referendum not conducted at the time of a general election.

The Australian Labor Party should not derive very much comfort from the relief that is evident within its ranks at the decision of the Liberal Party, because the publicity so far engendered in respect of the proposed legislation must bring home to
people that the government is nothing but a government that tries to govern by any means available to it. Victorians must realise that the government will try any trick in order to stay in power. The Bill is another means by which the government is making that attempt.

Members of the government have shown by their attempts to ascertain why the Liberal Party chose to adopt the principled stand it did that they did not realise that the Liberal Party was not going to sell its soul for some cheap political gain, which has been publicised in the House by members of the government.

The people of Victoria are slowly beginning to realise, not only through Bills such as this but through the taxes and charges placed on them and by the maladministration in the areas of education, health and transport, that the government has reached the end of the line. It has run out of ideas and policies. When the government stoops to such levels as the proposed legislation takes it, the time has come for it to realise that its time is up and that fresh policies and approaches and a fresh government are needed in this State.

This afternoon I have pleasure in being able to add my support to the firm stand of the Opposition against the proposed legislation. The Bill is the most cynical attempt at constitutional change that I have seen in the three years I have been here. It will not fool the people of Victoria. The time has come for the government to realise this and to call an election as soon as possible. So far as the members of the Liberal Party are concerned, we are ready to go, and we are ready to take over the reins of this State.

Mr KENNEDY (Bendigo West)—I add my support to the Constitution (Proportional Representation) Bill because it is a landmark in the history of constitutional reform in this State. I am dismayed at the negative response of the opposition parties to the important proposed reform.

Members on the government side are intrigued by the manner in which the opposition parties are defending or failing to defend their parties on this issue. Having listened to speeches by Opposition members yesterday and today, one is left with the impression that what happened yesterday was a massive dogfight in the Liberal Party over precisely how it would tackle the question of proportional representation.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member should commence on the Bill, at least.

Mr KENNEDY—I was commenting in passing on statements that have been made by Opposition speakers in the debate. Clearly it is extremely important for the proposed legislation to have the support of the opposition parties to the important proposed reform.

Members on the government side are intrigued by the manner in which the opposition parties are defending or failing to defend their parties on this issue. Having listened to speeches by Opposition members yesterday and today, one is left with the impression that what happened yesterday was a massive dogfight in the Liberal Party over precisely how it would tackle the question of proportional representation.

The government cannot have the proposed legislation passed if it is not able to attract the support of the Liberal Party, in particular. We need to understand that that support is not available and there are strong internal political reasons on the Opposition side as to why that support is not forthcoming.

I consider proportional representation to be a satisfactory and appropriate system for organising arrangements relating to the Legislative Council. Proportional representation is an appropriate system for an institution that is supposedly a House of review. Under the Constitution and as a democratic principle, the Legislative Assembly is the House that represents the democratic wishes of the people. The Upper House has never ever been conceived as, and has never ever been, a part of the democratic process in that it is not a reflection of the will of the people; it is designed and has been designed and is continually designed by the Opposition to be a brake upon the will of the people as reflected in the Lower House and regularly it is a major
element in obstructing the people's will as reflected in the last election through the majority held by the government in the Legislative Assembly.

Proportional representation is a very fair arrangement indeed and, so far as I am concerned, as a person representing part of country Victoria, I believe it would be a great improvement on the current situation. The Bill provides for five provinces, each of which will have nine members of the Legislative Council. It provides that any group that can get a sizeable vote—that is to say 10 per cent—has a chance of getting representation in the Legislative Council.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr KENNEDY—One should ask honourable members opposite why they pushed the 4.3 per cent yesterday. They do not tell us that. I consider 10 per cent to be a reasonable figure because it allows groups of people who have sizeable but not massive support and who are not located in one political geographic region, such as, for example, the National Party, to have representation according to their numbers.

Of those five provinces, two would have a rural focus and three would have a city focus. At present the Constitution, in its arrangements for election to the Legislative Council, discriminates against small groups of people. It especially discriminates against people who do not happen to be concentrated in large numbers in country areas but who may be dispersed throughout the metropolis, but are still in sizeable numbers.

It is remarkable to hear the double standards of people—especially members of the National Party—who say that, as a minority organisation, it is entitled to have representation in excess of its numbers while another group, such as the Australian Democrats, because it does not happen to be concentrated in a few electorates, is not entitled to have an equal representation, which its numbers would justify.

The system discriminates against country people. How unfair it is! I hear that comment regularly from people in country Victoria. If one happens to be a Labor voter in the country, one has to tolerate years and years of representation by the National Party. How unfair it is if one is a Liberal voter in the country to have to put up with years and years of the negative representation of the National Party. How unfair it is if one is a National Party voter, but has to put up with the representation of the Liberal Party. How unfair it is that one can have people in a given area in country Victoria who have no chance of having their vote have any effect.

For example, in Swan Hill, there are Labor voters who would love to have Labor representation, but the system ensures that all they will get is a National or a Liberal. There are people in Mildura who are Labor voters and people in Mildura who are Australian Democrats voters, and they have no chance of having a voice of their own. In the case of the Australian Democrats, this is simply because there are not enough of them on the spot while, on the other hand, there are large concentrations of National Party voters. Let us examine the system.

Mr Ross-Edwards interjected.

Mr KENNEDY—The Leader of the National Party has every reason to rejoice because, in recent days, he has been the Leader of the Opposition; he has been the Leader of the Liberal Party! There has been a vacuum in the leadership of the Liberal Party in the past few days. There has not been any specific single comment by the Leader of the Liberal Party putting himself one way or the other. However, he opened the door. Who slammed it shut? None other than the Leader of the National Party. What happened to the leadership of the Liberal Party? All the comments made in recent days have been comments that have come from the National Party, which has
decided to torpedo the proposed legislation. It proposes to do so as it has done over and again through the Liberal Party, particularly through its rural rump.

The best way of controlling the Victorian Liberal Party is to go to the National Party first, whisper in its ear, and that will give it a policy. The National Party will then take that policy to the rural rump of the Liberal Party and one has a policy for the whole of Australia. In that way one can kill any reform and frustrate any change in this State. All one has to do is go to the National Party and what one wants will be done through their brothers in the rural rump of the Liberal Party.

If one examines North Western Province, one finds it comprises four Legislative Assembly seats and two Legislative Council seats. There are six seats all together. The National Party scores barely over one-third of the votes, yet it scores two-thirds of the seats, does it not? The National Party scores Swan Hill, Mildura and North Western Province twice. That is not bad. The National Party has just over one-third of the vote, but two-thirds of the seats.

What do the lily-livered Liberals on the other side say? They do not want any change that will give their party a better go in the country as a party or give the people it represents in the country a better go. The Liberals in Victoria are as bad as the Liberals in Queensland. The only difference is that the Liberal Party in Victoria remains the majority party. In Queensland the Liberal Party has been devoured by the National Party because it has not had cause to pursue a principle, follow a policy, or espouse any kind of philosophy at all. It is the same in Victoria; the National Party sets the tempo and the pace and the lily-livered Liberals in the country always fall in behind.

The National Party glories in the fact that on so many occasions it controls the Liberal Party. It has done this effectively. Although it is good for the morale of the National Party, it is disastrous for the Liberals because the Liberals cannot just represent one part of the State, they have to be like the Labor Party—a truly Statewide organisation—and they know it is disastrous when major policies are sabotaged by the National Party, as has happened in this case. I come now to Bendigo and North Western Province.

The SPEAKER—Order! I hope the honourable member will come back to the Bill, also!

Mr KENNEDY—Mr Speaker, you will find this is germane to the Bill because I am speaking about proportional representation and injustice.

The SPEAKER—Order! I am endeavouring to find that.

Mr KENNEDY—When one examines why the opposition parties object to reform, one is not surprised. After all, they so openly have control of the Legislative Council. Everything they stand for is a basic denial of the democratic principle; the democratic principle being that the party elected by the majority of people should be able to govern. The policy of the opposition parties is that the government should not govern, the opposition parties should govern. Its view of the Upper House is to make sure that a government that was democratically elected is not able to govern. The party that was rejected by the majority of Victorians at the last election believes it should have the right to govern. It governs in a negative sense; it tells one what one cannot do. For example, one cannot have legislation empowering a Minister to set a maximum price for groceries. It does not suit the National Party and the sectional interests it supports. A few years ago they tried to stop the introduction of WorkCare and a whole range of policies. Had the Labor Party not had the numbers at the time, the legislation would not have been passed.

The Opposition was quite blatant and crude about the way in which it intended to abuse and misuse its numbers. Of course, there has been a classic example recently of
abuse in the Legislative Council, where there has been a continuing frustration by the Opposition to local government reform.

I return now to the National Party, which says it is the great party that stands up for country Victoria, and that it is the great party that sets policies for the good of the whole State. Does it indeed? When a move was made to introduce proposed legislation in the Legislative Council on the last day of the sittings early in May this year, the National Party spokesman on local government was not even there—he absented himself because he thought it was more important for him to attend a debutante ball. So important were the whole area of local government and the interests of Victorians that he could not stay behind to ensure that the anarchic elements of his party were kept under control!

I understand there were constant telephone calls between Wedderburn and Melbourne to ensure that the Bill did not get through. He did all this by telephone, I suppose, from Wedderburn where he was attending the debutante ball. That was the commitment of the National Party to the people it represents. It killed the proposed legislation by attempting to talk it to death. The National Party is completely offside with local government in Victoria and it is not even prepared to support the reforms that the Liberal Party is prepared to support.

It poured out volumes of propaganda to justify its stand. There are few indeed who support the National Party.

I refer now to the background of this toing and froing. There should be a simple piece of proposed legislation passed with the approval of Parliament. I do not expect the National Party to support any significant reform. It never does. It never has any philosophy, principle or policy. Its members' basic concern is to stay in office. We do not expect much from the National Party and we are never disappointed. However, one expects more from the Liberal Party; when one expects certain things, one is disappointed.

The Opposition had a clear stand over a period until fairly recently. It would not have a bar of proportional representation. Suddenly, along came the Kew by-election and the Ballarat North by-election. The Liberal Party thought it had not done as well as it ought to have done in the Ballarat North by-election. It put on its thinking cap and said, "Let us examine the question of support of the Australian Democrats". All the press reported on this issue.

It was reported that the Liberal Party was concerned that the vote did not go as well in the Ballarat North by-election as it should have and perhaps the party had better think again and suddenly there were reports in the press that the Liberal Party was considering some kind of proportional representation. Let us not make any bones about this. It ought not to be necessary to quote, but having listened to speakers from the Opposition, one could think that never occurred, but it did. There were press articles about it day after day and headlines such as "Libs change stance on Upper House Bill". On 28 July a newspaper carried
the headline "'Blackmail' tilt at Democrats". The Leader of the National Party knew exactly what was going on. He made sure he could scuttle out with all the force he could bring to bear. He did a good job; the Liberals must have been a pushover.

The *Sun* of 29 July carried the headline "Libs to meet on vote plan" and the article continued:

Senior Liberals were aggressively promoting an electoral reform option yesterday which would introduce proportional representation into the State Upper House.

Is it not true? Every National Party and Liberal Party member knows it is, yet they all pretend it did not happen.

The *Sun* of 1 August contained the headline "Lib move on Upper House reform hit". It is incredible that all these reports are about what the Liberal Party will do but all the pictures accompanying the articles are of the Leader of the National Party. One would genuinely believe the Liberal Party was being led by the National Party, such is the vacuum in the leadership of the Liberal Party. It does not have a Leader, so all the pictures are of the Leader of the National Party, and they are quite attractive too. Unfortunately, the press included a caption underneath the pictures stating that they were pictures of the Leader of the National Party; he should have been referred to as the Leader of the Liberal Party!

Another article was headed "Nationals fear Liberal support for Bill". They had no doubt what was in store. Another headline was "Libs worry over vote Bill". A report in Saturday's *Age* was headed "Libs risk skirmishing in wrong theatre of war". Barely a word came from the Leader of the Opposition, but he was pushing, promoting and advancing it as actively as he could within his party with the support of influential members.

When it came to the final crunch, yesterday morning there was a big donnybrook in the Liberal Party; the Leader of the Opposition was taken to task and done over. He was thrashed very nicely by the majority—not just by one or two or by a narrow majority, but by an overwhelming majority. All the reports say that the proposal by the Leader of the Liberal Party for Legislative Council elections was overwhelmingly rejected. It was not the proposal that was overwhelmingly rejected; it was the Leader who was overwhelmingly rejected. The press reported yesterday that the Leader of the Opposition had been done over and thrashed by his own party:

Kennett loses on vote reform.

The Parliamentary Liberal Party yesterday rebuffed its Leader, Mr Kennett, by deciding overwhelmingly to oppose the State government's proposed reform of the Upper House.

The National Party must be feeling good to see the discomfort of those with whom it would be in coalition government in Victoria.

Today's Melbourne *Sun* contained another headline on the subject. There is no question in the minds of the press who the real losers are. We know that the real losers are the people of Victoria, who are entitled to a fairer voting system. We know the Australian Democrats are losers. We know those people do not happen to be concentrated in certain parts of the State and, under the system that has been kept in operation by the National Party, with its supporters in the rural rump in the Liberal Party and the remainder of that party, the Australian Democrats will never have a chance of representation.

We know who the real losers are, but one of the greatest losers is the Leader of the Opposition because he has taken a pounding. He has gone out to promote this policy. All sorts of reasons were given and position papers were drawn up in advance by two influential members of the Liberal Party. Their names are not mentioned, but it seems
that one may be associated with the Honourable Alan Hunt in the Upper House because he was one of the people who got nowhere in the party room yesterday.

The article in today’s Sun states:
Kennett floored by party rebuff
State Liberal leader Jeff Kennett was handed a stinging rebuff...

That is not bad, is it?
... yesterday when his party rejected moves to support a Senate-style voting system for the Upper House.

This is all very sad for the people of Victoria. It is not merely bad for us as a party, because the Labor Party knows it is a crucial reform, but it is also important for Victorians.

An honourable member—Crucial for whom?

Mr Kennedy—Members of the National Party are opposed to proportional representation in Victoria, yet they say that the Senate system of representation is excellent and they support it. They have had the opportunity for donkey’s years of restructuring the defunct Legislative Council in Queensland. I believe the building is still there.

When the National Party came to office at any stage the button could have been pressed and—bang! The Legislative Council could have come into operation. When members of the National Party talk about brakes, checks and balances, they mean brakes, checks and balances on Labor governments but not on themselves. They have had that empty building in Queensland for many years, and have never put into practice their own belief that a Senate-style Upper House is a good thing. It is not a good thing if it can get in the way of a National Party government!

Why did the National Party give in? Why did it surrender so tamely? Obviously, it is another reflection on the poor level of leadership of the Liberal Party. Over the past few years we have seen the assassination attempts in the Liberal Party, but they have all failed; the poor bloke limps on to yet another election. The present Leader of the Opposition will not be replaced in the meantime, I gather, because it is too late—it is too close to an election.

Mr Ramsay (Balwyn)—Mr Acting Speaker, on a point of order, I draw to your attention Standing Order No. 99 which states:
No member shall digress from the subject-matter of any question under discussion.

I put it to you, Mr Acting Speaker, that the honourable member for Bendigo West is digressing a long way from the subject of proportional representation in questioning the leadership of any political party in the manner that he is, and I ask you to bring him back to order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Kirkwood)—Order! I take the point of order, but the point was made by the honourable member for Bendigo West in a manner of explaining to the House the situation which he sees in the press, and at this stage the House would be in agreement, provided that he does not continue at length. His particular method of explaining the matter to the House should be terminated quickly.

Mr Kennedy (Bendigo West)—I take the point you make, very soundly indeed, Mr Acting Speaker. When I was talking about poor leadership, it relates to proportional representation because the Liberal Party had floated the idea that one party could obtain a seat on a quota of about 4·3 per cent—that would be about the quota of support the Leader of the Opposition received yesterday. He would have not received
more than 4·3 per cent because all the reports indicate that his proposal was overwhelmingly rejected. There are divisions within the Liberal Party, particularly divisions over leadership.

Of course, we come back again, do we not, to the story of the National Party tail wagging the Liberal Party dog! Such is the influence that the National Party has over the Liberal Party that once the Liberal Party takes a stand and is prepared to lay down the law—generally the Liberal Party is prepared to look at it—and the National Party objects, the Liberal Party caves in. I should like to know where the Liberal Party stands at the moment on the question of coalition. I have seen about four different policies. The National Party is in favour of coalition, but is the Liberal Party in favour?

On the latest reading the Leader of the Opposition has indicated that perhaps the Liberal Party will have a coalition but, who knows, despite the fact that officially the view is that a coalition would be a disaster for Victoria. What does this mean for Victoria? If the Labor government needed the support of the Opposition for a Bill to be passed, it would be vital that the Liberal Party should have some concept of philosophy and policy—but from where does the Liberal Party get its policies?

The House has heard the honourable member for Glen Waverley say how marvellous and how strong the Liberal Party is because it is a party of principle and does not do deals with anybody. However, the top echelon of the party was doing precisely that. The Liberal Party membership did not receive discussion papers and sit around the table with the shadow Cabinet; the top echelon had discussions with the Australian Democrats. What did that have to do with principle? There was not a shred of principle involved. They thought they could pick up a few extra votes by confusing the Australian Democrats hostile attitude towards past Liberal Party policies of obstructing reform, policies along the lines of proportional representation—no principles, no policies; it was purely and solely an act of opportunism.

That situation arises where there is no consistent policy, philosophy, or principle. Therefore, where do they go? The Liberal Party grasps things from time to time and thinks it might be able to catch something here and score a vote, but there is nothing that holds them together. Certainly there is nobody to lead them, because they do not have a Leader. The Leader of the Liberal Party over the past few weeks has effectively been the Leader of the National Party. There is nothing consistent about the Liberal Party to hold them together. They dream up policies every now and again. They have a policy on education, industrial relations, law and order, and so on, and they are all hooked up on the responsibility, but there is nothing consistent. Members of the Liberal Party have a policy one day and they have forgotten it the next day. They do not take it seriously, anyway. We have this lack of principle, lack of consistency and an unstable leadership and, regrettably for the State of Victoria, weak-kneed individual members of the Liberal Party who are not prepared to take a stand in the party room on matters of principle.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr KENNEDY—Compare that with the Labor Party! The government made a decision about the Legislative Council, adopted a certain policy, and stuck by it. It is clear cut; we took a position and people know were the government stands. Over the past six years people have known where the government stands and know it has a policy; they know it is an achieving body of people. Everybody knows where it is going and that it has a Leader. Nobody ever has suggested that somebody else should act as Premier of Victoria, but who could say who will the the Leader of Victoria if there were a coalition government? Perhaps the opposition parties would alternate; they
would have a National Party Premier one day and a Liberal Party Premier the next—one would never know. People are worried about the unstable and unsteady foot-in-mouth leadership in the Liberal Party.

Proportional representation is an important democratic reform and it is tragic to see it being dealt with so flippantly by the Opposition. Members of the Liberal Party, when they came into the Chamber yesterday, had no heart to defend their attitude. Yesterday was a record in the brevity of speeches by the Leader of the Opposition. He spoke for 10 minutes. Sometimes he can go on and on. He paid lip-service and then sat down. The honourable member for Evelyn spoke for a short while, and the Leader of the National Party spoke, but did not have much to say. They did not justify their behaviour over the past couple of days.

I reiterate my support for the Bill and hope there are people in the Opposition who will recognise the significance of its importance to the people of Victoria as a major and long-overdue democratic reform.

Mr RAMSAY (Balwyn)—Surely the contribution of the honourable member for Bendigo West must liken him to a latter-day Hans Christian Andersen. The fairy tales the honourable member for Bendigo West was spinning about events in the Liberal Party meeting room—where he was not present—show that he has a vigorous and lively imagination; but he strayed a very long way from the facts.

The opposition parties have made a democratic decision, after careful consideration, to oppose proposed legislation that has been introduced by the government probably for reasons other than the ones that have been stated, because the concept of proportional representation is not in the best interests of the people of Victoria.

I should like to give the House five good reasons why the Bill must be rejected. First and foremost the assertion that the introduction of proportional representation along the lines of the government's Bill will give Victoria a fairer system for elections than the present method is demonstrably untrue. No form of election can be absolutely fair. There is always room for reform and improvement, and any proposed change should be carefully examined and judged on its merits.

I shall tell the House why the introduction of this Bill will not provide a fairer system in Victoria. Under the present system the Legislative Council is delicately poised between the mainstream political opinions as represented by the Liberal and National parties on the one hand and the ALP on the other hand. Under the present method of election the people, in their wisdom, have elected 22 members of the ALP, 17 members of the Liberal Party and 5 members of the National Party to the Legislative Council, giving 22 members on either side. The result could not be closer. Since the last election two members of the ALP have seen fit, for their own reasons, to resign from the ALP and to continue serving as independent members of that House. In any case, the balance of the House is closely poised.

The result was even closer at the 1985 election because, as honourable members will recall, there was a tied vote in the Nunawading Province, which led to a re-election. The result of that re-election was important to Parliament. The electorate was given the chance to answer the following questions: do you want the government of the day that has the numbers in the Lower House to have the numbers in the Upper House? Would you like the Upper House to stand back some distance from the government of the day to make its own judgments? Do you want the Upper House to act as a safeguard? The people of Nunawading Province gave a resounding “Yes” answer to the last two questions. They saw fit to take away the chance of the government having control of the Upper House.
The result could not have been more finely balanced. One could not have given the people of Victoria a better opportunity of expressing their views than that offered in the Nunawading Province re-election, and the current system of voting members to the Upper House is capable of ensuring that fine balance. Commentators since have said that the government of the day may have achieved a majority in the Upper House if things had been slightly different; for instance, if the Australian Democrats had worked harder. The newspapers suggest that if that were the case proportional representation would already have been introduced. However, that comment was wrong because, had the government of the day achieved a majority in the Upper House, it would not have moved towards proportional representation; it would have been moving towards the abolition of the Upper House, in accordance with what has been the stated policy of the ALP for many years.

The present system of election has given Victoria an Upper House where the balance of political forces is such that it could change at any time, which, from a democratic point of view, is desirable. On any extension of the present voting patterns in Victoria, the proposed change would create a House of 45 members, comprising 22 or 23 ALP members, perhaps 20 or 21 Liberal and National Party members and two or three members representing the Australian Democrats. It would result in a House controlled by a minority party. That minority party is most likely to be the Australian Democrats, but it could be any minority party commanding a small percentage of votes. The Bill provides that a minority party, elected on 10 per cent of the votes, will be in a position to give or withhold support for any legislative measure the government introduces.

Is it desirable for democracy that a minority party or minority parties should hold the balance of power in determining whether a particular measure should go ahead? There are strong arguments when the practical running of a modern democratic State is handicapped when control is vested in the hands of two or three individuals or small parties with minority control. That situation is undesirable. It is far better that the party with the numbers in the Upper House be prepared to take the responsibility for opposing or carrying proposed legislation, and should pay the penalty if it moves against the wishes of the people at the next election, than it is to give control to a small minority group. The government's proposal will not provide a fairer system of election of members to the Upper House than the present form of election.

The second reason is that the proposal in the Bill represents a deliberate built-in bias in favour of the present government party, which gives the lie to the government's claims that it is looking for a fairer system of election. Without going into fine detail it can be seen, that the proposal to have each two country provinces and three city provinces, electing nine members on a quota of 10 per cent can readily give an unbalanced result. One has only to draw the boundaries of one of those provinces around an area of Victoria, be it rural or city, where the government party can generally expect more than 60 per cent of the votes, and one has a built-in safeguard that the government of the day will always have six members elected in that province. If the other provinces are reasonably evenly balanced with 5 government members and 4 Opposition members; 4 government members, 4 Opposition members and 1 minority party member; or 4 government members, 3 Opposition members and 2 minority party members, the government of the day will have secured for itself a head start on any other political party in the State. That is exactly how those three city provinces could be used, given the distribution of party support across the metropolitan area of Melbourne.

The Labor Party could easily be aiming for a province where it receives at least 60 per cent of the vote even at the worst of times and up to 70 per cent at other times. That type of gerrymander—that is all one can call it—and built-in advantage for the
government of the day gives the lie to the genuineness of the claim that the government is supporting proportional representation because of its democratic nature. The Bill does not offer genuine proportional representation. If it did, it would be moving towards a single electorate so that the whole of Victoria would be represented in the Upper House in proportion to the strength of support that any particular political group achieves across the State. That would mean that the quota for electing anyone to the Upper House would be significantly less. However, the government is not interested in that sort of system.

On 5 July the Premier was reported in the press as extolling the virtues of the 10 per cent quota. He said that, by requiring at least 10 per cent of the vote to win a seat, the proposal would exclude the “ratbag fringe”. The Premier was referring to any political group that cannot gain 10 per cent of the vote as a ratbag fringe. What sort of champion of proportional representation is he? It is insulting to any group that may hold its views seriously to be dismissed as the ratbag fringe, simply because of its size. Mr Peter Batchelor, the Secretary of the Australian Labor Party, had a letter published in the Age on 8 July which stated in part:

To be elected, a candidate would require at least 10 per cent of the vote. This would allow minor political parties the chance to obtain representation without allowing small extremist groups with little real support the same opportunity.

Mr Batchelor has said that, in the view of the ALP, anyone who does not receive 10 per cent of the vote represents small extremist groups and does not have support in the community.

The government is putting forward a carefully selected form of proportional representation. It has done this deliberately to allow the Australian Democrats into Parliament and in order to obtain their support for ALP candidates at the next election. The hypocrisy of the government’s position regarding the proposed legislation is clear for all to see.

Thirdly, the Bill should be opposed because any voting system which in practice almost guarantees that a minority party will be able to give or withhold support from a government in a capricious manner is unsound. Victoria will not be governed better if the matter of whether Bills should pass rests with two or three members of a minority party in another place. That will not improve the situation. I do not believe that even the government considers that it will.

This is a move away from the opportunity for the opposition parties to call the agenda so far as the Upper House is concerned; it is a move to weaken the Opposition so that, in the fullness of time, the Upper House can be abolished. The government does not want an Upper House. The government wants a single Chamber of Parliament that has the first and final say. The bicameral system of Parliament is a good system, which has built-in safeguards to enhance democratic government.

The Opposition will not travel down this slippery road of bringing in a false form of proportional representation on the dubious claim that it will somehow safeguard the integrity of the Upper House. For that reason the Opposition is taking a firm stand in this matter, even though it has been under public threat from the Australian Democrats if it does not support the Bill or some form of proportional representation. The Opposition accepts the probability that the Australian Democrats will direct preferences away from it at the next election.

This matter brings me to the fourth reason why the proposed legislation should be rejected as a sham—the manner in which the government has set out to woo the support of the Australian Democrats. It is unprincipled and unworthy of the claim that it has made in the past that the Australian Labor Party is a party of integrity.
the government to bring in a Bill such as this on the eve of the State election has resulted in reports in the press such as that in the *Age* on 5 July which states:

The Democrats have threatened to direct their preferences to the government if the Liberals oppose the Bill. A Democrats' spokesman, Mr Sid Spindler, said the Liberals would lose any chance of winning power if they did not have a share of the Democrats' preferences.

One could not ask for a more blatant example of standover tactics by a political minority party than this particular case. In a sense, the Australian Democrats said to the Australian Labor Party, "If you want our preferences here is your chance to go for it. If the Libs knock it back, we will support you".

While the debate has been adjourned over the recess period the Australian Democrats have publicly stated that they will direct preferences away from the Liberal Party if it opposes the Bill. Any political party that claims to be responsible and fit to govern and bows to that form of blatant blackmail would be guilty of a dereliction of duty. For that reason alone it would be improper for the Opposition to support the proposed legislation.

I suggest the risk the Opposition has taken with the Australian Democrats directing their preferences against it at the next election is a good deal less than some people may imagine. I have no particular brief for the Australian Democrats but I recognise that, within that party, there are a number of idealistic, active hardworking Australians who take their politics seriously. The vast majority of members will not be pushed around by blatant political operators who are out to gain support in the short term. I warn the Australian Democrats that, if they attempt to direct their preferences one way or the other, a number of people within their own ranks may not only ignore that direction but also may decide to leave such a political organisation and join a party that has more integrity. The integrity of the Australian Democrats is on the line in this matter.

Given the nature of Australian politics, those people could be working under the umbrella of a larger political group such as the Australian Labor Party, the Liberal Party or the National Party. The Liberal Party is a diverse political group. Within the party's spectrum are many shades of opinion. There is no reason why the opinions expressed by the Australian Democrats could not be included under that umbrella.

To have that group standing over a major political party in such a blatant way is to undermine the strength and spirit of democracy. We should not have any part in that matter and the fact that the government has seen fit to introduce the Bill in the run-up to the election is a reflection of its political opportunism, which should make government party members hang their heads in shame.

The fifth and final reason why the proposed legislation should not be supported is that there has been no indication from the community that it wants Parliament to consider such a change. In the *Herald* tonight the editorial states:

There has been no public groundswell for change.

Why would one of the most responsible newspapers be making that sort of comment? Because the community is not concerned about the method of election for the Upper House—although perhaps the community should be concerned. A responsibility rests on the government and the Opposition to raise the level of concern in the community about the method of election to Parliament, but that must be the preliminary step before the introduction of any change.

Concern having been raised and a vigorous community debate having occurred about the preferred method of election—recognising that no method of election is perfect—the matter could be put to the people in a referendum. That should be done when the community has been well educated on the matter so that it can weigh the
pros and cons of having a House that is closely balanced between the major political groups, a House that contains some minority groups, of having a House of 44 or 34 members or of not having an Upper House at all. Let the people decide about these major constitutional changes.

Its introduction at this stage without public consultation is wrong, is unfair to Victorians, and is loaded with underlying political opportunism on the part of both the Australian Democrats and the government; the proposition is one with which the Opposition will have nothing to do. The Opposition will do everything possible to have the Bill thrown out—lock, stock and barrel.

Mr W. D. McGrath (Lowan)—The Constitution (Proportional Representation) Bill is interesting from the point of view that it proposes a philosophy of the Australian Labor Party and the government.

An outline of the provisions in the Bill is contained on the front page of the notes on the Bill, and refers to multimember electorates, the quotas to be obtained under preferential voting, the holding of simultaneous elections, the filling of casual vacancies, and the like. While listening to members of the government participate in the debate—the government's contribution to the debate being led by the honourable member for Werribee, supported by the honourable members for Melbourne and Bendigo West, and by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services—I concluded that rather than developing, as did the honourable member for Swan Hill, a philosophy and a position of argument in support of the Bill, all the House heard from the government speakers was ridicule of the Leader of the Opposition.

One should have thought that honourable members would have taken the opportunity in the time available to them of convincing this side of the House of the benefits of proportional representation. Honourable members on the other side have not taken the opportunity during their contributions. They have ridiculed the Leader of the Opposition, stating that he lacks direction and leadership within his party, all on the basis of press reports. If one examines that argument and the situation in 1982 when the Labor Party came to office, at that time the Premier was strongly committed to the abolition of the Upper House. From that time until the policies of the government were announced in 1985 a substantial change occurred. The Australian Labor Party was no longer committed to the abolition of the Upper House; the government saw the role that the Upper House could play for the Labor Party, in that it could provide a degree of comfort for some government ministers and Labor Party members of Parliament. Consequently, there was a change in philosophy of the Labor Party.

In 1982 the Premier wanted to abolish the Upper House but that was changed to an attitude of retaining the Upper House but introducing proportional representation. One could pose the analogy: perhaps the Premier had been rolled by his own party leading to a change in direction and philosophy. Certainly the government now has a different attitude to the Upper House from that expressed in 1982. The policy at that time was to abolish the Upper House—although that is nothing new within Labor Party ranks. To their later regret, the Labor government of the day abolished the Upper House in Queensland. The government in Victoria wants to follow the same principle.

The government has found comfort in the positions adopted by the Labor Party members in the Upper House. That has led to a change in philosophy and the party has retreated from the idea of the Upper House's abolition. No such arguments have been led in the contributions made by government members during this debate.

The only member to have proposed a logical argument on either side has been the honourable member for Swan Hill, who introduced a process of demonstrating to the
House why the National Party opposes proportional representation. He put a very strong argument as to why a person who obtains a 10 per cent quota but is opposed by 90 per cent of voters should not be entitled to become a member of Parliament. His argument was most logical.

He pursued that argument by asking what area would a person represent if he was elected on that open boundary; the National Party suggests that he would not represent anybody. My party takes pride in the performance of its members who have represented electors on a territorial basis within existing structures, always remembering that it was the Australian Labor Party that increased the number of Legislative Assembly seats from 81 to 88; in doing so, it designed a boundary system which provided for one Legislative Council province to four Legislative Assembly electorates. That system now operates with a real understanding within the overall constituency within Victoria. People are aware of their elected Legislative Assembly members, and now understand that within those four Legislative Assembly electorates are two members of the Legislative Council, representing a province which has an overview role in the electorates.

The government wants to change that; one wonders why it should want change at this late hour. As the honourable member for Balwyn has said, the Bill has been introduced at the eleventh hour. Undoubtedly, the government has examined the opinion polls, has conducted a headcount and has seen that, electorally within those opinion polls, it is in serious danger of losing the next election. The government has said, “We should court the opportunity of trying to find preferences from somewhere”. The logical people—being the Australian Democrats—held up their hands, and said, “In return for a number of privileges we may be able to help you out”. That obviously sounded rather attractive to the government.

That scenario has now unfolded. The Australian Democrats have said, “We will be able to provide you with preferences”. However, do not blame the Australian Democrats because undoubtedly that political party is trying to obtain an influence in politics in Victoria. It is attempting to gain that opportunity, wherever possible. The accommodating party in this scenario is the Labor government, and the Australian Labor Party.

One must wonder about the credibility of the Labor Party, in that it could be bluffed into such a scenario by a minority group. Comments have been made about minority groups and how they can be either good or bad; comments along those lines have been made by government members and it depends on which side of the fence one sits, as to whether they are good or bad. In this instance, the government obviously thought the Australian Democrats were offering a good opportunity, perhaps to deliver 2 per cent or 3 per cent of the vote to the government in some marginal electorates in the metropolitan area in Victoria.

They obviously thought, “Here is our opportunity”, but to the credit of the Liberal Party, it has backed away from that position of whether it should give any support to proportional representation. I am unaware of what happens in the Liberal Party meeting room; apparently all members of the Labor Party know what happens.

A biased influence is portrayed through the media, to the detriment of the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal Party. The media has some questions to answer concerning the argument and the position it has adopted.

If the Australian Labor Party was strong enough in its own right it could have picked up additional Legislative Council seats when half of the Legislative Council members faced an election in 1982. In 1985 the same scenario was evident, when the government could have won more Legislative Council seats. However, the government...
was not good enough and Victorians accepted the argument that there needed to be a brake put on the government. The electors opted to have the conservative side of politics retain control in the Upper House. If any stronger demonstration is required, certainly that was evident in the tied Nunawading Province election.

After that election resulted in a tie and the Labor Party suddenly had control of the Upper House, a decision was made to have another election in Nunawading Province. As a result of that election, the conservative parties had an overwhelming win. In the lead-up to the election, many people worked to ensure that the balance of power remained with the conservative parties.

Many groups from outside the province worked to ensure that people who had previously voted for the Labor Party changed their vote so that the opposition parties would retain their influence in the Upper House. That result showed that the people of Victoria wanted to retain the status quo for the election of members to the Legislative Council; and that method of election should remain.

The honourable member for Swan Hill made a very good argument for territorial representation. Honourable members will be aware that the National Party in Victoria is represented in the Senate by Julian McGauran. Senator McGauran is one of the few senators who regularly visit the major provincial centres and country towns of Victoria. Although, as the honourable member for Ballarat South says by interjection, Senator McGauran was elected under the system of proportional representation, he is one of the few senators who travel out to country Victoria to see what is going on in country areas.

As the honourable member for Swan Hill said, as a rule such senators do not represent anyone or any area in particular; rather, they represent a party. Being a member who represents a country electorate, the honourable member for Ballarat South should understand that country constituents rely heavily on local members to represent their interests. If he does not understand that, he is misjudging the constituency members of his electorate.

I am well aware that in the area covered by both the North Western and the Western provinces of the Legislative Council, various local councils and community groups issue invitations to members of both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. The honourable members who represent the provinces and electorates within that area are invited to address local meetings, for instance, on an equal basis.

Many matters are taken up at such meetings. Province members play an equal role in serving the interests of the constituents of the area. The Honourable Roger Hallam, who represents Western Province, has done a great deal of work in the area since he was elected to the Legislative Council. He has represented the interests of people from Colac, Warrnambool, Hamilton, Horsham, Kaniva and throughout the western region of Victoria. The constituents of that province are proud of the representation that they have received; and the Honourable Roger Hallam is proud of the way in which he has provided that representation.

In opposing the Bill, members of the National Party have put forward logical arguments. We have placed on record both sound and commonsense reasons why the Bill should not be passed. There are 26 clauses in the Bill; but the government has not put forward any arguments in support of the Bill, a Bill which it hopes Parliament will pass. If the government intends to convince members of the National Party of the worth of the Bill, it will need to develop arguments to support the 26 clauses in the Bill, rather than basing its arguments on ridiculing what has occurred within Liberal Party ranks.
I look forward to hearing what arguments are put forward by the government in support of the 26 clauses in the Bill. Members of the National Party have logic on their side in opposing the Bill.

Mrs GLEESON (Thomastown)—When honourable members talk about proportional representation, they should be aware that they are talking about representative democracy and not about seeking to further the privilege which conservative parties have enjoyed in Victoria since the 1850s, and which those parties do not intend to get rid of.

Until the 1950s, the Legislative Council was elected on a system of limited franchise, a situation which existed even after 100 years of Parliamentary democracy in Victoria. Progress has been made since then, but the system used to elect members to the Legislative Council still does not truly reflect the democratic wishes of the people.

The wishes of the people were firmly expressed in 1985, at which time the Labor Party was solidly supported and returned to office. At that time the government received a mandate to introduce proportional representation in an attempt to reform the Legislative Council. That attempt at reform was rejected by the Legislative Council, which is why the government has introduced the Bill.

The Bill has three main thrusts, the first of which is the provision for concurrent and simultaneous elections. Such a provision would ensure that the Upper House was accountable to the people of Victoria instead of continuing to be the House of privilege as it has been for the past six or eight years, during which time it has not reflected the democratic wishes of the people.

For example, in 1985, 22 members were elected to the Legislative Council, twelve of whom represented the Labor Party. At that election, a majority of Labor Party members were elected to the Upper House, but that result was not reflected in the total membership of that House. Therefore, the wishes of the people were frustrated.

It is dishonest not to have the members of the Legislative Council, members who have been elected by the people, called to account at a time when the actions of the Opposition members in that place are impinging on people's lives through the proposing of amendments to Bills, amendments that do not reflect the wishes of the people of Victoria. Concurrent and simultaneous elections are, therefore, a very important provision in the Bill.

Proportional representation is an equitable way of providing representation for parties that enjoy significant support within the electorate. Both the National Party and the Australian Democrats enjoy the support of 10 to 13 per cent of the electorate, yet only one of those parties is represented in the Parliament. The National Party has five representatives in the Legislative Council, but the Australian Democrats have none, despite the fact that it enjoys the support of between 10 and 13 per cent of Victorians.

Proportional representation allowing for quotas of 10 per cent to provide representation gives a voice in the Houses of Parliament to the people of Victoria. That reform would be a significant breakthrough. Victoria is the only Parliament in Australia that supports the preferential voting system for the Upper House, which is supposed to be a House of review and not one that frustrates the wishes of the electors.

The third major point is that the Bill allows members to be elected according to location and region. The Bill proposes three metropolitan provinces and two rural provinces. Each province will be represented by nine members, so the coverage will be adequate and similar to that of the current system. The important difference is that the representation will better reflect the views of the electors who express their wishes.
at the ballot-box. The Bill supports true democracy and has been put forward to abolish the privileges and excesses of the Upper House in 1988.

The standard of the debate from Opposition members has been disappointing. Very few speakers have used all the time allowed them. The debate was opened for the Opposition by the honourable member for Evelyn; the Leader of the Opposition did not put himself forward to lead the debate, and the honourable member for Evelyn took only 9 minutes and raised only three points of objection.

The honourable member for Evelyn said the Opposition could not support the Bill because it was a government ploy to win the preferences of the Australian Democrats. At the 1985 State election, the Australian Democrats won 10 to 13 per cent of the vote, but they have been denied representation. They are now saying that they deserve that. Victorians want representative democracy, and they supported that philosophy in 1985. The honourable member for Evelyn cannot win the argument by discrediting the players and not debating the Bill.

The second point the honourable member for Evelyn raised in his 9-minute dissertation was that the Legislative Council is an instrument of responsibility. One must ask how an undemocratically elected Chamber can be an instrument of responsibility. The current Upper House supports the party system to the exclusion of the wishes of the people.

The Labor Party realises that, under proportional representation, it will lose seats, but it acknowledges that it is important to have representation of views from all Victorians who have considered the policies of the parties and who have decided to give the minor but significant parties their support. Proportional representation is in the interests of the Victorian people. The responsibility of the Upper House should not be considered because that Chamber is not responsible to the people. It frustrates the wishes of the electorate and obstructs the legislation the government proposes. The Australian Labor Party is the conscience of true democracy. It knows that it will not maintain the number of seats it currently enjoys if the Bill is passed, but the Bill will give broad representation to voters.

The third point made by the honourable member for Evelyn was that the Legislative Council would become a rubber stamp of the Assembly if proportional representation were introduced. That is hysterically funny. Under the current system, the Opposition in the Upper House is frustrating the will of the people. The Upper House is a rubber stamp of the Liberal Party room, which, in this instance, is a rubber stamp of the National Party room. The honourable member for Evelyn was unable to put forward any argument, and that is probably why he limited his speech to 9 minutes. Honourable members should be grateful we had to listen to him for only a short time.

Honourable members must consider why the Victorian Parliament is the only Parliament to retain the preferential voting system when all other Upper Houses in Australia have some form of proportional representation, be it the list system or the Hare-Clarke system. Victoria remains the last bastion of privilege because of the conservative control of the Legislative Council. However, the government is giving the conservative parties the opportunity of changing that situation. If they choose to exercise their consciences on this matter, the government will be happy to accommodate them.

When considering why the current system has been maintained, one must remember the party interests that are involved. The Upper House is unaccountable to the voters; it remains accountable only to the business community and the bastions of conservatism rather than accommodating the broad views of the community.
It is with pride that the government has put forward this Bill, knowing that it will lose seats because of it. However, the government is not running away from an exercise in pure democracy. The government is following through to bring to the people of Victoria the opportunity of having their views represented in Parliament, which is what Parliaments are created for in 1988.

The Leader of the National Party spoke after the honourable member for Evelyn. He spoke for only 7 minutes; perhaps he thought he would be repeating himself. He said that members should live in the areas that they represent. Surely that will happen under the location and regional provisions of the Bill with each of the five provinces having nine members to represent them. The Leader of the National Party has either thrown in a furphy or has simply demonstrated the incredible lack of intellectual dynamism in the National Party.

It is obvious that the Leader of the National Party wants to maintain the present system. The view of the Leader of the National Party was, "Don't touch anything; everything will be all right. The National Party knows best." It appears that the National Party has no other contribution to make.

With respect to honourable members living in the electorates which they represent, many members of the conservative parties do not practise what they preach. I am not sure whether the opposition parties call themselves a coalition. Perhaps that is something they are still trying to sort out. It will be interesting to discover who will lead this coalition! The combined conservative parties should examine where their members live. For example, the honourable member for Bennettswood lives in South Yarra but represents people in the eastern suburbs. That is a nice, cosy arrangement.

Mr Simpson—The honourable member for Berwick lives in South Yarra, too!

Mrs GLEESON—The honourable member for Niddrie has just informed me that the honourable member for Berwick lives in South Yarra. I suppose one can go right around the Opposition and discover how representative its members are.

I am referring not only to the lack of democracy in representation through the party democratic system but also through geography, in that some honourable members have chosen not to live in the electorates that they serve. They have chosen to live in electorates of privilege such as the suburbs of South Yarra, Toorak and Kew while representing people in the outer suburbs. That is probably why constituents in the outer suburbs do not know their members: they never see them.

I live in an outer suburb. Two weeks ago two members of the Parliamentary Liberal Party came to the Thomastown electorate. They are the first members of the Parliamentary Liberal Party to visit Thomastown in the 30 years that it has existed as a suburb. One must ask the Liberal Party: why does it not like Thomastown?

The next contributor to this debate was the Leader of the Opposition. At least he was the Leader of the Opposition when he made his speech. He spoke for 8 minutes, so he was 1 minute up on the Leader of the National Party and 1 minute down on the honourable member for Evelyn, who led the debate. I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition for being able to speak for 8 minutes. I understand his colleagues stopped him from speaking in his party room yesterday. Indeed, they probably stopped him from speaking today, if question time is any guide. After a tiring day yesterday, members of the opposition parties were drained and had a sleep while question time was on today. Members of the government thought Victoria had no Opposition. They recognised that yesterday was a strenuous day for the opposition parties in their party rooms and were happy to let them relax.
The Leader of the Opposition, in his contribution, said, "Leave it, otherwise it will neuter the powers of the Upper House". They are the words of the Leader of the Opposition not mine. He is saying that any reform will neuter the Liberals, and that they will not be able to use the power that they have in the Upper House. The Upper House is unrepresentative of the electorate because it is controlled by Liberals who voted in it in 1982. It does not reflect the wishes of Victorians in 1988. The Leader of the Opposition refers to the power of his party's representatives, which would be lost if any change occurred. That is what he meant when he said the powers of the Upper House will be neutered. The Opposition would miss out on its numbers. It would no longer be able to use the Upper House to form Select Committees to conduct witch-hunts for political expediency. That is a gross misuse of the powers of the Upper House and it is not the reason for its existence.

When the government first introduced a Bill to reform the Upper House, the Bill provided for the formation of committees of review in that Chamber. The opposition parties rejected that, but ever since they have been busy forming Select Committees. One wonders whether they are disappointed about not having that provision. Perhaps the government should reintroduce it.

The second point made by the Leader of the Opposition was that proportional representation will lead to gerrymandering. That is an extraordinary and pious statement because it implies that the Liberal Party does not gerrymander; only Labor governments do that. If one examines the 1984 electoral boundary changes one recognises that the Labor government did not benefit but was probably disadvantaged to some degree.

The third point made by the Leader of the Opposition was that the Liberal Party would not be compromised. What he really meant was that it has already been compromised but it will not be further compromised. That is another extraordinary statement, and he repeated it on an ABC radio program this morning. The Liberal Party compromised itself when it leapt into bed with the Democratic Labor Party in 1955, 1956 and 1957. The Liberal Party now compromises itself with the National Party. When the Liberal Party decided to closely examine this Bill, the Leader of the National Party said, "Don't look at it or we will not form a coalition with you." The Liberal Party is interested only in musical beds.

Mr Simpson—The tail wags the dog!

Mrs GLEESON—That is correct, and, as the Minister for Labour said yesterday, "And what a mangy dog it is, too!"

Yet the Leader of the Opposition says that the Liberal Party will not be compromised. One must ask: what happened in the party room yesterday? Was the Leader of the Opposition compromised when he did not win the day and had to cave in to the conservative elements of his party and do what he was told by the National Party? If the Leader of the Opposition will not be compromised, what happened with the dying with dignity legislation? It was only the conscience vote of a Liberal Party colleague that allowed that Bill to be passed and implemented in Victoria so that we can provide humane medical practices and offer genuine concern and humanitarian services to the terminally ill.

What happened with the guns legislation? The Leader of the Opposition quickly jumped up and said, "We will support the government; we will ban every sort of gun, even toy guns and water pistols." But when it came to the crunch, the Leader of the Opposition said, "No."

Again the Leader of the Opposition says that the Liberal Party will not be compromised into supporting the Bill, but I hasten to inform him that his party is
compromising Victorians by denying them representative democracy in the Upper House. Why is the Victorian Parliament the only Parliament in Australia, except for Queensland, to have a Chamber without proportional representation elections? The Liberal Party and its predecessors have been running away from that for 153 years. The Liberal Party is continuing to run away because it is frightened of accountability. It does not want its members to put themselves up every four years so that the genuine wishes of the Victorian electorate will be represented in the Upper House. The Liberal Party is afraid of allowing a genuine 10 per cent of the electorate to have its representatives in the Upper House.

The Liberal Party does not understand the Bill. The Bill was introduced in the autumn sessional period, but the Liberal and National parties considered it on Tuesday morning, only a few hours before the second-reading debate. All honourable members have had access to this measure for three months, but members of the opposition parties have been able to contribute for only 5 to 9 minutes, including their Leaders. If the Leaders of the Liberal and National parties cannot properly lead a debate, how can they believe they are capable of leading a political party or a State government?

I acknowledge the valuable contribution made by the honourable member for Mitcham, who has closely studied the Bill in the three months since its introduction. The honourable member has put forward a clear and credible argument on the Bill. I was pleased to listen to his reasoned debate aimed at achieving true democracy for Victorians. The Labor government is talking about democracy, but the conservative parties call it responsibility. Democracy means heeding and presenting the view of the body of electors. Responsibility, as the Opposition uses it, was correctly defined by the Premier in his second-reading speech when he said:

Since the last election the Opposition-controlled Upper House has further shrunk from its responsibilities and apparently embarked upon a strategy of obstruction of legislation introduced on the basis of majority support.

Of course, the Opposition will not talk about democracy when it is so intent on frustrating the democratic process.

The conservative parties say that the Upper House is a House of review and that it should be left the way it is, to get on with the business of review. Is genuine review an achievable objective in a Chamber which operates against a background of preordained political prejudices? As I said earlier, the conservative parties use the Upper House as a means to establish committees of Parliament. Many Upper House committees have been formed, but they have yet to result in realistic findings.

The Bill does not affect the powers of the Upper House to review legislation from the Lower House, but seeks to have equitable representation for all Victorians. It does this by the provision of a 10 per cent quota of the total vote of a province. That provision will restrict the radical or lunatic fringe groups from being elected to the Chamber and will allow significant interest groups that can obtain that proportion of the vote to be elected.

The Bill provides for representative democracy and allows the supporters of small parties to elect individuals or independent candidates to the Upper House if they have significant support. The conservative parties do not recognise or want those political groups to have Parliamentary representation. It is a pity that the Liberal Party has allowed political expediency to rule the day rather than exercising the conscience that Victorians expect it to exercise.

The Upper House does not meet the wishes of the people because its function has been frustrated through political expediency. The current preferential voting system allows membership of the Upper House on the basis of the 1982 elections, as distinct
from the 1985 elections. Without proportional representation, the Upper House, even after the next elections, will still represent the wishes of the voters of 1985. That is a deplorable situation and is not acknowledging the change in attitude that occurs in the community. Community attitudes are in a state of constant flux. Various issues are debated in the community and those views should be represented in the debate on proposed legislation in the Upper House. Debates in the Legislative Council often reflect the views of people who were elected in 1985 and many of those honourable members prefer to protect their position in that House and want to face the voters only once every eight years.

Honourable members are aware that the National Party is most concerned about losing its representation in the Upper House and that is why it has pressured the Liberal Party and has considerable power over that party and the Leader of the Opposition. The hold that the National Party has over the Liberal Party again illustrates that members of the Liberal Party do not reflect the views of the people who elect them.

Dr Wells (Dromana)—The Constitution (Proportional Representation) Bill deals with difficult matters, because those matters relate to the system of election of members of Parliament. More importantly, the Bill deals with matters of political judgment. In the end they cannot be measured in any finite sense and must be decided upon the viewpoint of individual political practitioners eventually voting one way or the other.

It is always my aim not to be destructively critical in comments I make in this place. If I can be constructively critical then I am prepared to say what is necessary and to bear responsibility for those comments. I say with some sensitivity that many of the comments of the honourable member for Thomastown did not dignify the debate. As is often the case with matters of political importance, honourable members use too much political rhetoric, which is not really constructive or helpful.

The Premier, in his second-reading speech, said that the government has a mandate from the people because of the results of the 1985 general election. The government did not gain control of the Upper House at that election and does not have a clear mandate for this measure. Political parties are subject to the combined judgment of both Houses of Parliament.

No basis exists for review of the electoral system of Parliament. The Premier also said that if legislation is to be reviewed constructively by the Upper House, it must be done free from preordained political prejudices. That comment is meaningless and is not helpful to the debate.

The Premier said that the Bill will guarantee a representative and responsive Upper House. The word “responsive” is important. Does the Premier mean responsive to the government of the day? I suspect that the Premier and the government had in mind a responsive Upper House, but that is not the role of the Upper House. The role of an independent Upper House is to review material based on the merits of the case.

Recently the Premier made a seminal statement that was reported in the press that if the Upper House is to be a hung House, he would prefer it to be controlled by minority interests rather than the opposition parties. That statement is important because it is far easier to pick off minority interests than an alternative, larger political party with which the Premier’s party may well be well matched in Parliament.

I shall now deal with three major matters related to the Bill: the first is proportional representation; the second is four-year terms for both Houses of Parliament; and the third is the referendum principle. The thesis behind proportional representation is that each voter should have more chance of electing a representative by increasing the size of the electorate and reducing the percentage of votes required. Both requirements
have enormous implications for democratic political practice and the judgments to be made ultimately by political practitioners when they vote on this proposal. Increasing the number of voters and reducing the percentage of votes required guarantees increased minority interests in the Parliamentary system. It will change a rule that has served this nation's Parliaments and people well for a long period; 50 per cent plus one vote decides the outcome of an election for a seat in the Lower House. I shall point out later that that applies in the other great stable democracies in the Western World. There is no proof that changing the method of election is better.

Administrations and Parliaments that use proportional representation have not produced a higher level of democratic government and more freedom, greater protection and satisfaction for the people whom they seek to serve. The Australian precedent of the Senate establishing proportional representation was based on a different premise—that the Senate was to be a States' House, and that members were to be elected to represent various States. Thereby the system was adopted. There may be an increased case for that system in the Federal sphere of government, but each member must decide whether the case is worthy of support.

When dealing with Federal Parliamentary procedures, it may be of benefit for some honourable members to have more freedom to canvass national matters on a State basis; the same does not necessarily apply to State Parliamentary practice. The government has argued but not established that proportional representation is fairer simply by elevating the importance of each person's vote.

Today's Herald editorial argued that the proportional representation system of voting is fairer and that it gives smaller parties more involvement, yet the editorial warned against single-issue candidates. The government has argued that 10 per cent of the vote will protect against single-issue candidates and flavour-of-the-month politics. That has not been the case in the Australian Senate when occasionally a senator has been elected on a single issue. Even if the most brilliant individuals were elected, they could not do the job or cover all the proposed legislation involved or canvass the issues involved in a modern, democratic society. They would be stretched far beyond their personal limits and the efficiency required for continuing political practice in a democratic Parliament.

The case for proportional representation is that it gives minority political groups or individuals the opportunity of amassing sufficient votes to be elected, even though they may represent only a small percentage of votes. What are the counter costs of such a proposal? The first counter cost strikes at the heart of democratic Parliamentary practice, at the heart of personal representation on which our systems are predicated; that is the thesis that an honourable member will represent a group of people and will be responsible to them. That is the key for continuing efficient democratic representation.

I cast no aspersions on any individual in any Parliament in Australia when I say that it is preferable—in my limited Parliamentary experience—to have a system whereby a member of a Lower House must return to his electorate of 30 000 or more constituents, walk the streets and hear from them, be encouraged, informed and corrected by them, and respond to them than a system in which Parliamentarians are footloose. A senator may work on a national level or he may work in a State, among the 4 million-odd people, but he does not have to account to anyone day by day. So often members of Australian Upper Houses have their offices in the capital cities and do not relate to particular areas; they are not responsive to those areas.

Also of grave importance is consideration of the average Australian voter. Although he may be intelligent and reasonably well informed, he is not always informed day by day on how to relate to and use the Parliamentary system. If he does not have a
member who is responsible to him, he is less likely to approach a member of an Upper House—even if he does know where to find him—for assistance. One of the great, if not the greatest costs of proportional representation would be to create footloose members of Parliament.

As I said, personal representation is a key to this country's Parliamentary practice, but that does not simply mean working on State or national policies of the day. That must be done and may be the more important area because what is decided affects every citizen. At great personal cost, being a member of Parliament involves considerable community work and representation of individual constituents. That is the basis of democracy which gives the individual sovereign rights and values, and provides Parliamentary protection for the individual. One cannot write off the individual or treat him unequally before the law; one cannot deprive him of other rights because the individual is the basis of a democratic society. All these aspects are reduced in importance when members of Parliament are elected for ever increasing areas of representation.

I like a system where a member is responsible to a defined area and a defined group of people. Other problems exist relating to this sort of proposed change in a practical sense. Parliamentary representation today is much more difficult than it was in previous decades because the demands of the community following greater education and instantaneous telecommunications mean that members of Parliament have more to do and they are all short of hours in which to do their work. If we are to turn loose half of a Parliamentary system to float freely and come to earth where it wishes, we will drive the other half of the system—the Lower House—further into the ground.

The time is approaching when every member of Parliament will have to do more to see that the individual in society is protected and represented. Although some may suggest it is rhetorical, I would say that just because other systems have adopted proportional representation, that does not prove that we should or that the other system is more desirable than the one we have.

Indeed, if one examines the situation in some other countries it is not clear that proportional representation has served the people better. It is used in Italy, and Italy has changed its government—at the ballot-box, admittedly—every year, or more frequently, since the second world war.

All honourable members know from experience what a short time three years is, and hence we have gone to a four-year term. Those sorts of systems leading to frequent change are clearly undesirable. Israel has proportional representation and its governments also fall because the multiple number of parties needed to form the government do not maintain agreement throughout the government's period and they often collapse and another election must be called.

Turning to what one could call, with some risk of challenge, the greatest democracies in the world—the United Kingdom because it is the oldest and the United States of America because it perhaps represents the largest number of people in such a system among truly great democracies guaranteeing freedom—in both of those cases the system used is a simple majority—50 per cent plus one vote—to elect members to their Lower Houses and in the case of the United States, to its Upper House.

The concept of 50 per cent plus one is a most valuable instrument. One imagines that the British, with their intense interest in democratic politics, might well have changed the system by now over the many hundreds of years they have functioned, if they found it to be deficient.

Additionally, on any distribution curve of reliability in scientific matters and in social matters, one can see an S curve operating, with the greatest reliability for a
measure being at the 50 per cent mark, and at 10 per cent the reliability is much less. I do not find the thought of 10 per cent of votes permitting the election of a person to be nearly as attractive a figure, in a quiet unemotional sense, as I do the 50 per cent plus one figure.

The Australian system of preferential voting provides, I consider, the fairest and most generous practical method used in the world today to arrive at an election basis of 50 per cent plus one.

The system gives the voter a chance to influence the election of the member finally chosen. It appears on a strictly rational basis to give great opportunity for each vote to have maximum impact while still retaining in the end the principle that the opinion of the majority, the narrowest possible majority—50 per cent plus one—will prevail. We disregard that system at our peril.

I come then to the second cost associated with adopting proportional representation. The reasons hereafter are of a lesser order; nevertheless they are important and worthy of serious consideration. I would choose to be an independent member of Parliament if such a system worked, but the whole history of democratic Parliaments shows that it does not work. Party politics has emerged for one reason and one reason alone—it provides a practical system for covering the immense ground to be covered. It also provides a system that gives the greatest possible scope for obtaining the intellectual services and experience of a large number of people to form a party to work in a democratic Parliament from which they may be rejected or their numbers reduced at the ballot-box on the judgment of the people.

For practical reasons alone, party politics is desirable, necessary, indeed unavoidable and the history of proportional representation in other democracies is that it erodes the overall efficiency, in democratic terms, of the party system because it leads to a proliferation of minor parties which too frequently haggle and fight among themselves.

It may be that when a major party goes off track for a short while the voters decide that the chosen government is less than satisfactory but that is quickly and easily correctable at the next election because the alternate parties have the capacity to highlight the deficiencies of the government of the day and to see that the people are appropriately informed to make their judgment when next at the ballot-box.

I do not like political parties which present a narrow or truncated policy statement for an election. Any political party worth its salt covers all of the major issues when it goes to the people; it does not deal just with half a dozen issues that may appear to be subjects of the day or which are the easier things to deal with. It has to face up to the major issues, and I pay tribute to the major political parties in this nation of ours. The nation enjoys a high level of democracy and a high level of stability in its society for the contributions made.

The Labor, Liberal and National parties may well quarrel with each other over issues of the day but, by and large, they have served their people well. They have the resources to provide a full analysis of subjects from alternate viewpoints and to see that the people are informed; and I am in favour of such a system.

The third counter cost to proportional representation, if there are benefits to be had from it, concerns what I would call the undesirable practice of smaller parties doing deals with the government of the day for political influence of some degree, in return for their vote of support. I like to see issues settled by a party, in the end, on merit based on the strength of that party when voting in Parliament without having the votes of the smaller parties bought off.
I say with some sensitivity that a system of smaller parties would be much more open to abuse in this way. Also, where the government of the day is formed from a multiplicity of parties—as in Israel and Switzerland—it is much more difficult to have legislation passed through Parliament.

The Swiss, with 500 years of democratic experience and a high level of education, handle their multiparty system in probably the best way in the world. However, they, too, are vulnerable to the problems I have mentioned.

In the end, it is necessary to make changes very slowly to constitutions and to the basic systems by which Parliaments are constructed. There is no hurry; ten years is not a long while in the life of a democratic Parliament and the continuing life of a democratic nation.

The issue of proportional representation has not been canvassed adequately in this debate by avoiding political rhetoric and emotion. For example, the voter in the electorate should be asked what his or her wish is and why it is so. Would voters prefer to keep what they have, or do they want a change to proportional representation for reasons that have not been mentioned in this place? Shortly I will come to consideration of how voters should be involved in this issue.

Secondly, I comment briefly on a subject of the Constitution (Proportional Representation) Bill which relates to the proposal to reduce the term of Upper House members to four years. It relates also to the existence of Upper Houses. The evidence in Australia is quite clear that Upper Houses are desirable as Houses of so-called review and, more importantly, as Houses of Parliament which have a longer-term basis of construction and a longer term of re-election. They are not subject to the whims of governments of the day and they do not change so quickly.

At times I might feel that my party's view is not satisfactory in respect of the issues of the moment because we do not have control of the Upper House, for example. That does not matter in the long term. The Upper House provides an alternative method of analysis and is more immune from the political pressures of the day. Slower change is desirable in the election of Upper Houses, and the Victorian and Senate systems have served us well in this regard. I am unhappy about the Queensland system where there is no Upper House; the people in Queensland would be better served if they had retained their Upper House.

There is a simple case for retaining six or eight-year terms in Upper Houses and for having only some of their members elected at each election: the constitutional safeguard. It provides for the membership of the House to evolve slowly. Churchill once said that he thought democratic governments were poor until he looked at all the other systems. Then he decided that democratic government was the best system human beings have, even though it was slow. He saw safety in its slowness, and that is my assessment, too. I see safety in slowness of change in Upper Houses because in the end nearly everything done through a democratic Parliament is determined by political judgments. Change in Upper House membership and in constitutions should be a matter for less than rapid change.

Thirdly, I deal briefly with the relationship between a society's Parliamentary constitution and the construction of its Parliament. All sorts of countries have constitutions, even those with dictatorships. For example, the constitution written by Lenin has not brought the Russian people freedom. There is a relationship between the people's control of their constitution and the level of democracy and freedom which they enjoy.

In the case of proportional representation, the people have not been consulted about the matter and I should be happy to support proportional representation if I knew
from a referendum that it was the wish of the people to introduce it. Victorian Parliamentary practice would be improved if we were to seek authority from the people to change the Constitution so that the question of the construction of Parliaments, the way that members are elected, the size of their electorates, and the percentage of votes they must obtain, were all fixed by the people.

It is the right of people above all other rights to do this because Parliament then functions as a representative Parliament thereafter. Then individual members of parties may settle practical issues. Legislators should not write their own election rules.

In closing, I reject much of the uninformed comment made in the media and by members on the other side of the House on the basis on which members of the Liberal Party vote as a party to reject proportional representation. My own decision was based only on the merits of the case.

*The sitting was suspended at 6.26 p.m. until 8.6 p.m.*

Mr SHEEHAN (Ballarat South)—I am pleased to take part in the debate because of the fundamental importance of the measures contained in the Bill, which gives voice to the notion that members of the Legislative Council should be voted into office by the democratic process of proportional representation.

In approximately 1950 a number of significant changes were made to the way in which members were elected to the Legislative Council. As honourable members would be aware, prior to 1950 the members of the Legislative Council were elected on the basis of property. Members were required to have either a profession or to own property to the value of 25 pounds or more, which was the currency of that time.

Since then the system of election of members to the Legislative Council has remained fairly static. It is significant that we are now examining how the election process can be changed to bring about a House of review, to which reference has been made many times during this debate, elected by proportional representation to take account of the voices of minorities within the community.

The honourable member for Swan Hill said that society has become accustomed to the idea of having 50 per cent plus one as the notion behind which all of our elections take place. That is a rather simplistic approach to the whole issue and one in which I am sure the honourable member for Swan Hill does not totally believe. I regret that the honourable member is not in the Chamber at present. With respect to the Lower House and, certainly, the Upper House, there are a number of methods of electing members and the Senate is a typical example. In Tasmania a different approach again is adopted.

In Queensland, where there is no Upper House, there is a recognition by a great many people within the State—certainly among those outside it and also within the political parties—of the great gerrymander that exists. For a government to be able to be elected by a minority of people is obviously a gerrymander. Therefore, the 50 per cent plus one formula is not necessarily a reality throughout Australia.

Mr Evans—you should talk about Victoria.

Mr SHEEHAN—I was referring to comments made by the honourable member for Swan Hill that the community was used to the idea of governments being elected by a vote of 50 per cent plus one. I then referred to a community that does not apply that principle as the basis on which a government is elected.

I am a member of Parliament who represents a country area, as many National Party members consider themselves to do. The Bill proposes a 40 per cent
representation of country areas in the Legislative Council. The honourable member for Swan Hill and other speakers have referred to the fact that the country population represents approximately 25 per cent of the total population of Victoria. Therefore, I am pleased to inform them and the community that a government that supposedly comprises representatives of metropolitan Melbourne is giving the country areas 40 per cent of the representation in the Legislative Council. If that is not a good deal, I do not know what is.

The honourable member for Gippsland East has been making noises and derogatory remarks when, in fact, he should support the notion of country populations being given greater representation in State Parliament. However, he is denigrating the notion and interjecting instead.

The proposal in the Bill would mean that there would be eighteen members of the Legislative Council who represented the country population. That is a much better proposition than the system that currently exists. The National Party may lose a couple of representatives in the Legislative Council, but if the party is interested in the Legislative Council having more members representing country areas it should be interested in ensuring that that representation is across the board. Representation should not necessarily be of a party-political nature; but judging by what its members have been saying, that is obviously what the National Party would support.

In two elections the notion of reform of the Legislative Council has been put to the electorate and been supported in government policy, yet the opposition parties are thwarting any such reforms and by doing so they are not allowing the country areas of Victoria to be fully represented in the way that they would be under the proposal in the Bill.

If the Legislative Council is to be a proper House of review, it must undertake that review in a constructive way. That is what the Bill proposes, as has been made clear in the second-reading speech by the Premier. The function should be carried out free from pre-ordained political prejudices. I am afraid there has been much political prejudice in the speeches made by the members of the Liberal and National parties in the past day and a half.

In his contribution to the debate last night, the honourable member for Bulleen referred to a cynical system to gain the support of some of the minority parties. Unfortunately that honourable member is not in the Chamber either to hear my comments. If any cynicism exists in this Chamber, it is within the major opposition party, which has adopted about seven or eight different positions on this policy over a period. It has done so in the past on other policies. In about November or December last year, the Opposition changed its stance on the firearms issue.

A whole series of policies emanated from the Liberal Party, particularly from its Leader—who is not present in the Chamber either. One could well ask the question of the Opposition: what was the Liberal Party trying to do in its most recent stance on this issue other than to gain comfort from the National Party? In recent months, during the winter recess, the Opposition has changed its stance on this issue on at least five or six occasions.

The Bill has many strengths. One point has been referred to today by an Opposition spokesman. I refer to the Parliamentary terms of members of the Legislative Council. The Opposition spokesman said that eight-year terms were a very good idea because they provided some sort of overlap. In my view, that is one of the greatest weaknesses because such a long term does not allow the electorate to have its say about who should represent it over a period. That is not responsive. The Opposition spokesman
to whom I refer mentioned the responsiveness of the Legislative Council. An eight-year term is not conducive to responsiveness to the electorate. The Bill proposes four-year terms.

In recent times, the terms of members of the Legislative Assembly have been amended to four years. There is no reason whatsoever to continue with an eight-year period for members of the Upper House. The precedent has been set for proportional representation through the Senate elections.

The Bill proposes nine representatives from each of five provinces, which would mean that the total representation in the Legislative Council would be 45 members. As has been suggested by the honourable member for Bendigo West and other members of the government party, this would enable a spread of representation across the State that does not necessarily exist at present, nor does it have the potential to exist under the current arrangements.

In a little while I shall elaborate on the idea of having nine representatives from five different provinces. Another strength of the Bill is its proposal for the membership of the Lower House to be reduced. At present, this Chamber has 88 representatives. The Bill proposes to reduce the number to 85. Many people in the community and even members of Parliament themselves would argue that there should be a properly planned reduction in the number of members of Parliament within a particular legislature, whether it be State or Federal.

In other words, the proposal presents to the people of Victoria a reduction of a few persons in the government and in Parliament. Proportional representation has a number of strengths. Given the bland definitive way in which it has been approached, the proposed processes are of great strength to the government of Victoria, whatever particular persuasion that might be.

The method of calculation has already been tried in Senate elections. Members of the National Party have put forward the view that people are better represented by members in the Senate who have the ability to move around larger areas than Assembly electorates and that for them to become part of the overall representation of the State, from whichever area of Victoria they come, is a good thing. That argument has been put forward as a strength. It follows from that argument that the strength of proportional representation will provide that same ability to the representatives of each of the five defined provinces.

The other strength of proportional representation is that it provides a greater range of voting choices for groups and individuals who are part of our community. It has been said many times in this debate that the Victorian Parliament is not representative of all groups which have political interests. In other words, there are minority groups of people—not insignificant minorities but significant minorities—who are not represented in Parliament.

A reasonable argument could be put that the Legislative Assembly is very much representative of the people from a party point of view. This Chamber is representative of the people in the strict sense of the word. If there is to be a House of review, as has been suggested by all parties, we should also take note that individual interest groups within our community, which are significant groups, do not have any representation whatsoever in Parliament. Within the proposed proportional representation legislation, those groups would have that opportunity. It is a strength of the Bill that such a notion should be put forward. Through the strengths that I have outlined, we would ensure that the wishes of the people were carried out. It would, in reality, be democracy in action.
The primary purpose of the Bill is the structural reform of what really is an outdated Chamber. In 1950 the property qualification for voting was abolished. The contemporary mood of the electorate was reflected in much of what was said by the then Chief Secretary when he introduced the Reform Bill, as it was called, and was reflected in the proposed legislation.

It is true that the contemporary mood is reflected in this proposed legislation. There should be further reform of the Legislative Council to provide the proposed five provinces, the proposed nine representatives for each of the five provinces, and four-year terms. Of course, the quotas, which are part of proportional representation, would reflect in a democratic way the electorate’s feelings.

The Liberal Party has said that there have been no deals done, yet, taking account of the various matters raised in the media over recent months, the National Party has shown where the real strength lies in the opposition parties. Daily newspaper headlines indicate that there is a move towards some form of coalition—there has been talk of coalition government but at this stage and in the future there is obviously no way that will happen; it will be a coalition Opposition. In this debate, the National Party has been attempting some sort of deal for a coalition.

It has also been said that in coalition on the front benches the Liberal Party would be in a weaker position than it currently is outside a coalition. The stronger lead in many recent issues has come from the National Party, not from the Liberal Party. If there is to be an overall leadership question on proportional representation, then the Leader of the National Party has shown greater strength and resoluteness than has the Leader of the Opposition who has displayed again his variation of opinion and change of position on this issue and others over recent times.

The Liberal Party states that there will be no deals. I do not believe it. A deal is being wound up. The daily newspaper headlines give an interesting picture: they show the strengths and weaknesses of the parties and the Leaders. I shall refer to a number of newspaper headlines. On 5 July 1988 the Sun suggests that the Upper House reform move is on. On 5 July 1988 the Age heading is “Cain pursues changes to voting system”. On 30 July 1988 the Sun headline is “State electoral plan slammed”. The Liberal plan for a 4·3 per cent quota for a Statewide electorate notion was proposed at the time—it had many weaknesses and, subsequently, was not adopted by the Liberal Party.

On 26 July 1988 the Age headline is “Libs change stance on Upper House Bill”. The next headline on 29 July 1988, states “Liberal move to reform voting for Upper House”. Also on 29 July 1988 the Sun headline is “Libs to meet on vote plan”.

The next newspaper headline is significant: on 26 July 1988 the Sun headline states “Libs study backdown on council”. On 1 August 1988 the Herald headline states “Libs, we won’t do any deals—Kennett”. On 2 August 1988 the Herald states, “Libs worry over vote Bill”. A further headline states “Libs rebuff Kennett on Upper House Bill”. That was the last significant headline on the Opposition’s proposals.

There are, of course, newspaper headlines referring to the National Party, such as “Blackmail tilt at Democrats”, which appears in the Sun on 28 July 1988. On 1 August 1988 the Sun states “Libs move on Upper House reform hit”. On 1 August 1988 the Age headline states “Nationals fear Liberal support for Bill”.

Those headlines reflect the attitudes of the parties in this debate. They contrast also—significantly—the leadership of the National Party and the leadership of the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party, after vacillating, finally decided that it had to do something, such as forming a coalition in opposition. The background strength, nevertheless, came from the National Party.
The text of the newspaper articles covers a number of the matters to which I had intended to refer, but given the time, it is not necessary. It is worth indicating that sections of the Liberal Party—according to comments of the Leader of the National Party—would woo Australian Democrats support with a proposal for proportional representation in the Upper House which would do the two conservative parties more harm than good.

Although I do not necessarily agree with the Leader of the National Party in that view, it certainly highlights the point I am making. Is that where the strength was coming from? In that context it is worthwhile referring to an article that appeared in the *Age* of 1 August 1988, which quoted the Leader of the National Party as saying:

"They should have done it over the winter", he said.

In my view, that fact reflects the pathetic approach that has been adopted by the Leader of the Opposition, who has shown himself to be a loser within the Liberal Party. It is not the first time he has lost. Honourable members have become used to the idea of his losing votes within the party room, or of winning them with small majorities, or on a majority of only his own vote. The *Herald* of 1 August 1988 quoted the Leader of the Opposition as saying:

"We will not be threatened by anyone. Anyone who knows me well enough knows that I don't do deals with any party, whether they are Democrats or the National Party."

There are a range of reflections on the issue, which are damning of the leadership of the Liberal Party, particularly in the way in which this issue has been approached.

I shall refer back to 1950 when the precursor to the National Party, the Country Party, proposed that changes ought to be made to the electoral franchise as 800,000 Victorians at the time had no ability to vote for members of the Upper House. They also had no ability to stand for election unless they owned some form of property or had professional qualifications. At that time there was a disfranchisement of the populace to the point where even the then Country Party was prepared to consider reforms to bring about a more democratic system.

As I said at the outset of my remarks, in my view this Bill is a progression of that approach, which would have been started by the Liberal Party or the then Country Party, but it appears from recent announcements that those parties will now not support any further progression.

I refer to page 280 of *Hansard* of 9 August 1950 where Mr Dodgshun, Chief Secretary at the time, is reported as having said:

Because of the general trends throughout the world I feel that we can help to safeguard democracy by giving responsible people the right to elect their representatives in Parliament. In the community there are men and women who saw service with various arms of the fighting forces. They were prepared to lay down their lives to safeguard those at home and preserve the principles for which this nation stands.

That was the basis on which the change was made in 1950, yet members of the same party that sought the changes at that time are now referring to the need to conserve our heritage and those things that are worthy of conservation because there is a way of improving them to the point where they can much better serve the community. The Leader of the Opposition at the time, Mr Hollway, moved a reasoned amendment to that measure in 1950 which stated, inter alia:

That adult suffrage as the basis of election to a second Chamber without some variation of method such as a system directed to proportional representation would render such Chamber merely a reflection of the Lower Chamber, destroy its true constitutional values, render it useless and thus conduce to its abolition,
and ultimately set up a single Chamber legislature exercising uncontrolled power with its attendant evils, and to greater instability in our government system.

Although I do not necessarily agree with all of that, Mr Hollway was referring to the need for proportional representation as far back as 1950. If the Liberals of this era have not progressed from that time there is no doubt they will remain in opposition for many years to come.

In concluding I shall refer to an *Age* editorial of Saturday, 9 July 1988, which claims that the fairness of the electoral system is important and that, given the proposal in the Bill to divide the State into five provinces, quite apart from any balance of political advantage or disadvantage, the reform deserves support because it refers particularly to the need for representation throughout the State.

**Mr EVANS (Gippsland East)**—During the debate I have heard many references to democracy and the nature of government in this country, but sometimes I despair at the appreciation of not only members of the general community but also members of Parliament about the real nature of our system and how it is supposed to function. For example, one hears much talk about the election of people, electing the government of the day and electing the Premier of the State. However, electors do not do any such thing. The people in only one electorate of this State have any vote for the person who happens to be Premier of this State.

I do not think it has happened to a Premier, but a Prime Minister has been voted out of office by the people within his electorate. I sometimes wonder whether our education system is sadly lacking in its ability to educate people to understand that our system of democracy is essentially a method in which people elect members of Parliament who, in turn, determine who the government will be; that is an important factor. That fact does not seem to be conveyed to students in our schools today. I think the system is somewhat deliberately distorted by the news media of the modern times for their own deliberate reasons, because the system of conveying the impression that people are electing the Premier or the government gives the daily press the opportunity of exerting considerably more influence on people voting in elections.

From quite a number of years of experience I think it is true that people in rural areas are more concerned about the individuals who are putting themselves forward for election. In many cases, voters in city areas vote for their candidates basically on their reaction to the Leader of the party concerned, rather than their reaction to the individual candidate. Australia is moving more and more towards a presidential style of government, which is a dangerous trend because this country does not have the in-built protection that is contained in the constitutions of other countries where a presidential style of government operates.

Under our system the Leader of the party who can assure the Queen's representative that he or she can command the majority of votes in this House becomes the Premier and can form the government of the State.

The function of Parliament is to provide some form of restraint upon the excesses of the government, which is of the opinion that its views are paramount and should override others' opinions. The Westminster system has a history of competition between the powers of the Executive as compared with the powers of Parliament. If Parliament does not have power to restrain the powers of government, we have lost the semblance of democracy.

Democracy is like beauty—it is very much in the eye of the beholder. The meaning of democracy when encapsulated in cliché is, “The majority rules”. The majority can rule by mob violence but that does not mean that it is democratic. The definition of democracy is: a situation in which the majority takes into account the views of the
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minority. If we have a system in which the views of the minority are ignored we lose our democracy.

How do we devise a system that takes account of the views of minorities within society? As one who has been elected to represent the electorate of Gippsland East for a considerable period, I have endeavoured to carry out my duties in the interests of all people in east Gippsland regardless of whether they voted for me or not. If any honourable member were approached by a constituent or somebody expressing a view on any subject, it is most unlikely that that constituent would be asked whether he or she had voted for the honourable member's party or indeed for the honourable member. That would be a deplorable situation.

Where do we get the idea that people who vote for losing candidates are not represented in Parliament? On many occasions I have spoken on behalf of small minorities in my electorate. I do not go around the electorate conducting opinion polls to find out whether the majority of people agree with the point of view that I am expressing in Parliament.

The system can work only if the people whom honourable members represent periodically pass judgment on whether they believe their respective representatives are performing their duties in accordance with the wishes of their constituents. Often I am told when I quiz a constituent about an issue, “I voted for you to look after those issues and to put the arguments that I expect to be put in Parliament”. If that person were not satisfied with the job that I have done, his redress would be to not vote for me at the next election. On that basis it would be a foolish member of Parliament indeed who totally ignored the opinions of those people he knew did not vote for him at the previous election.

However, when a government is elected to office it is not prepared to compromise with the views of the minorities. It is evident that the government—it must be said that this has occurred with governments of other political colours as well—takes a position of the winner takes all, rather than Parliament being an institution in which a wide range of views are discussed and taken into account by the government, with the views of the minorities being given some consideration. However, the government says, “This is what we say is going to happen”. It gets its back up if its objectives are frustrated in any shape or form. The only body that can say to the government, “Thus far and no farther”, is the Upper House. The powers of the Governor to prevent the excesses of government have virtually been stripped away, and the only protection society has over a government’s excesses is the Upper House, if it happens to be controlled by a party of a different persuasion from that of the government or is not controlled by the government.

The question of the Constitution or the method of voting for members in the Legislative Council is a significant matter. It is not an academic exercise as to how we should properly interpret ideas of democracy. This is a vital proposal. Certainly if the government obtains control of the Upper House I am sure most rural people will be the poorer for it.

It was interesting to note the comments of the honourable member for Ballarat South who made such play about how the redistribution proposal under the Bill will provide for 40 per cent of the Upper House to be represented by non-metropolitan members of Parliament. I have news for him!

I have prepared a map and have sought permission of the Speaker and representatives of both other parties to have it incorporated in Hansard. I now seek leave for the map to be incorporated.
Mr EVANS—The map illustrates that the only possible way in which non-metropolitan Victoria could be divided under the system is to provide for two provinces which are substantially rural based. On that system the rural portion of Victoria would be divided by a line running slightly west of north from Broadmeadows to the Murray River downstream of Echuca. All of Victoria to the east of that line would be in the other province, apart from the metropolitan area. However, even that would not be sufficient to bring about the one vote, one value proposition that is proposed in the Bill.

Each proposed non-metropolitan province would need to have at least one metropolitan Legislative Assembly electorate included in order to meet the required number of approximately 530,000 voters necessary to make up the numbers in each province. The honourable member for Ballarat South tried to inform the House that it is fair for members in the Council to be representing an area extending from Mallacoota to Cohuna, and probably including Doveton or another of the outer metropolitan electorates. Approximately nine members representing that vast area would supposedly need to fairly distribute their services and responsibilities.

I do not know who would be the unfortunate member to draw all the rural areas because the majority of voters in that extensive province would be located around the fringes of the metropolitan area. The proposed non-metropolitan province would
extend, on the western side, from the South Australian border, and would include Geelong and an electorate such as Werribee, in order to make up the necessary numbers. Why would anyone in his right senses attempt to win votes in scattered remote country communities when he is far more likely to be able to make an impact in the more highly-settled areas close to the fringes of the metropolitan area?

Rural voters would not receive adequate representation under the system proposed in the Bill. One wonders about the motives of the government in making such a proposal. An obvious question to be asked is: instead of having five provinces electing nine members each, why not have nine provinces electing five members each? The House has not heard one word on why that arrangement is not proposed because obviously it would not represent any additional members.

That arrangement would fall completely within the guidelines of what the government claims to be totally democratic principles but it does not inform Parliament why that arrangement is not proposed. I should have thought that the honourable member for Ballarat South, probably being the only rural representative for the Labor Party and the only person on the other side who has had any farming experience, would be seen to have an interest, and to have given the House the benefit of his knowledge. He is content for the constituents of Ballarat South to be encompassed in a province extending from the far north-western tip of Victoria to the far south-western tip, and including the Werribee electorate. Those voters would be completely swamped by the voters in the City of Geelong. I fail to understand how he thinks that would be democratic!

The real reason for the Bill being before the House is that the government has a measure through which it is trying to tell the House that the Legislative Council needs to be democratic in its method of election. The message of the government is that it is on the skids and is trying to obtain the preference votes of the Australian Democrats in an attempt to stay in office. That is the government message, and the reason why the Bill is before the House.

Why would any intelligent political party which has been grizzling about a minority party controlling the Upper House ever since it came to office now introduce a Bill to ensure that a minority party will control the Upper House for ever and a day? One would have thought that because of the implementation of the one vote, one value system in the Upper House the government could foresee the day when it could win a majority and, therefore, control under the current system of electing members in that House.

One would hope that, being a good government, it would aim for that particular outcome. However, the Bill indicates that the government has given up hope of that ever happening. After all, the Bolte government operated for, I think, twelve years without control of the Legislative Council; I do not recall Sir Henry Bolte, when he was Premier during my time in the House, advocating reform of the Upper House only because he did not control it.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr EVANS—He was a successful Premier even though I did not agree with everything he did. I blame him quite substantially for the sad state of the political scene in Victoria today, a scene that has arisen because of his policies of Melbourne unlimited and of promoting excessive growth in the capital City of Melbourne at the expense of the rural areas of Victoria. That was the major policy with which I disagreed.

If passed, the effect of the Bill would provide that rather than having a rural-based minority party holding the balance of power in the Upper House, another city-based party would hold the balance of power in that House. That would be its effect because
it is highly likely that the Australian Democrats would hold the balance of power in the Upper House, presuming the party does not go out of existence before then!

The Premier is putting into effect his well-known dislike of anything rural, particularly farmers. He has an intense distrust and dislike of anything rural, particularly farmers. He has an intense distrust and dislike of the rural community. Through this measure he can kill two birds with the one stone. He can suck in the Australian Democrats to give him the vital preferences that he needs knowing full well that the Bill will not be passed. At the same time, if the Bill were passed he would be able to give the rural section of the community another good kick in the teeth.

Past history has shown that the Labor Party has been able to win rural seats. Until the last election in New South Wales it held a few country seats but suffered a severe drubbing in that State as a result of its policies.

Although it is only hanging on to what might be termed rural seats—but which are really country provincial seats—in Victoria, it is apparent that the Labor Party will go even further backwards so far as rural Victoria is concerned. Obviously that is not one of the eventual outcomes of the proposed legislation which the Premier would be pleased to see occur.

It is important in any Parliamentary democracy that there should be considerable emphasis placed on the question of community interests. There is no shadow of doubt that a high degree of community interest exists in those electorates that are in or close to the Melbourne metropolitan area.

After all, the Victoria Arts Centre, the National Tennis Centre, the museum, the art gallery and all the trimmings that go to make up a modern city are readily at hand. I doubt whether too many people in the metropolitan area were concerned about whether the National Tennis Centre was built at Flinders Park or Yarra Bend because in either case it would have been readily accessible to them.

In rural areas small things can become very important. For example, at one stage I had a very heated argument with councillors of the Shire of Omeo, which is a very small shire in my electorate and one of the least populated shires in Victoria. The argument was about whether the sole secondary school in that area should be above The Gap at Omeo or below The Gap at Benambra. That issue became a hot potato; and it is the sort of issue that people in the metropolitan area would not come up against.

There are many heated debates in various rural areas about issues that people who live in the metropolitan area would not consider to be of any great importance. If one lives in a community which is entirely built up and in which all the roads are made, the bridges are built and schools and housing are available, one is able to concentrate on other issues, issues which are more community oriented. In remote rural areas, issues concerning roads, schools and access to television are very important. They are issues peculiar to people in rural areas.

It is high time that honourable members who represent metropolitan electorates understood that people do not vote entirely for a particular political philosophy. Yet that attitude has been voiced in this debate, particularly by members of the government.

I think it was the lyricist, Gilbert, who said that everybody was either a little Liberal or else "a little Conservative". The government has the attitude that everyone is either a little Labor or a little non-Labor.

The vast majority of people do not take a serious interest in politics. Fewer than 10 per cent of the population is sufficiently interested to join a political party; and less than 1 per cent of those who do have any influence over the decisions made by political
parties. It would be interesting to conduct a study in that area. I am amazed that no-one has made an effort to discover what proportion of the population has any say in the decisions made by political parties.

Many members of the government’s backbench have the attitude that 1 or 2 per cent of Labor Party members, who perhaps represent only 0.1 per cent of the population, are the people who will say what is to be done and what is not to be done in Victoria. Such honourable members disregard the fact that all honourable members are elected under the same system, including those members who are elected to represent rural areas.

In my electorate, the Rural Affairs Subcommittee of Cabinet established a committee which is to have a franchise over an area which is contiguous with my electorate. That committee is to recommend what should be done for the good of the people in that electorate. One wonders where the democracy is in such a decision. If such a decision is made for me, why should it not be made for everybody else?

The government has decided that rural women cannot decide what is good for them, because it has set up a Rural Women’s Network to speak for the rural women of the State. The government could not give a continental about rural women and the way in which they express their views through the democratic system!

Rural women in the State have been extremely well served for many years by the Country Women’s Association. Yet the government has the audacity to set up a rival organisation in an attempt to brainwash them. The government will not succeed in its endeavours to have rural women accept the government’s philosophy and its view of what is good for them.

People in rural areas are sick and tired of the inability of the government to make up its mind because it will not listen to the views of such people. In its blinkered way, the government accepts that, if the Labor movement tells it what to do, that direction must be the correct one. I have heard government members say that what is good for the Labor Party is good for the country!

The Bill will do nothing to enhance the well-being of rural people; and for that reason, I am totally opposed to it.

Mr GAVIN (Coburg)—The Bill concerns one of the most important matters ever to be addressed in the House. Electoral reform is a matter that will be debated for the next five or six years, until such time as the conservative parties come to their senses and support some type of electoral reform for the Upper House.

The issue of electoral reform has been debated in the House many times. It is unfortunate that many attempts were made before Parliament agreed to support the system of one vote, one value. Honourable members will recall that it was only in 1983 that the conservative parties agreed to the system of one vote, one value. In 1983 the government introduced a Bill to change the method of election in the State, a method to which the Liberal Party finally agreed after opposing it for many years.

It is interesting to note that the Liberal Party will support a vote against the system of one vote, one value in the referenda which are to be held on 3 September, even though their colleagues in Queensland will support it because they believe they will benefit considerably if the referendum proposal is agreed to.

The present method of electing members to the Upper House was adopted in 1983, concurrently with the proposal to introduce the system of one vote, one value. It was decided that four members of the Legislative Assembly would be elected for each Legislative Council province. The Liberal Party agreed to that only after a great deal of persuasion; and it was a significant improvement on the previous method of
Constitution Bill

It is unfortunate that the government has not been able to persuade the National Party to agree to such a measure.

The Bill, if passed, will represent another significant improvement on the improvements that were made in 1983. The Bill proposes that a system of proportional representation will be used to elect members to the Legislative Council only. The Bill will not affect the system used to elect members to the Legislative Assembly; and that appears to have been overlooked by the opposition parties.

The Bill does not propose to change the system of electing members to the Legislative Assembly, and, therefore, it will not affect the way in which a government is formed.

If the Bill were to apply to the Legislative Assembly, an argument could be made against that, because it would be difficult to see how a coalition of the National and Liberal parties could govern for very long. Each party represents an extreme point of view; and because of the conflicts which exist between the two parties, a coalition of the Liberal and National parties would be unstable.

Mr Weideman—Why?

Mr GA VIN—Because of the great differences between them, differences which have been obvious in recent months. The Bill does not affect representation in the Legislative Assembly, and, therefore, it will not give rise to instability.

Mr Weideman—Why mention it?

Mr GA VIN—Because some crazy members of the Opposition have said that proportional representation brings about instability. This Bill has nothing to do with the Legislative Assembly. It is important that members of the Opposition understand that it deals only with the Legislative Council.

Currently everyone would agree that the Upper House is seen as an irrelevancy and is not regarded as a genuine House of review. That is why people argue that it should be abolished. The government is not arguing that case; it may have done so in the past, but it is now arguing that the Council should be made a genuine House of review. The Bill is the government's proposal to achieve that. In that case, the Upper House would become less adversarial and more consensual. It would certainly become more democratic than it presently is.

The Bill proposes five provinces for Victoria, with three in the metropolitan area and two in the rural districts. Each province would contain seventeen Legislative Assembly electorates. The voting would be based on one vote, one value, and the boundaries would be equitable. All members of Parliament would be elected at one time, so Parliament would be contemporary. Voters could vote either for parties or for individuals. The Bill provides a greater freedom of choice for all voters.

Each province would include seventeen Legislative Assembly members and would be represented by nine members in the Legislative Council; people would be able to vote for one Legislative Assembly member and nine members of the Legislative Council. That provides a direct relationship between the two Houses as well as a territorial and geographically based system for election of the Upper House. Voters would know who their member of the Legislative Assembly was and it would then be possible for them to know their representatives in the Upper House. All members would be accountable to their local districts.

Honourable members who support the private enterprise system—and I believe all members do in one form or another—should support the Bill because it provides greater competition. Because nine members would be elected for each province, representatives of three different parties would probably be elected. Certainly, members
of the Labor and Liberal parties would be elected. In the rural districts, members of
the National Party would be elected. In the metropolitan provinces, representatives
of the Australian Democrats would more than likely be elected.

The concept of more competition should appeal to the conservative members of
Parliament. Under the proposed system, some members of the National Party may be
elected to represent the western suburbs. I know the party receives only 5 per cent of
the vote across the State, but if its performance improved, it could represent the
western suburbs. I do not find that objectionable and it would be beneficial to the
National Party.

It would be beneficial to people in the rural districts to have members of the Labor
Party representing them in Parliament, and that would also be beneficial to the Labor
Party. Under the proposed system, representatives of the Australian Democrats could
represent outback districts of Victoria. That would be beneficial for the Victorian
people because they would, at long last, have some affinity with the people representing
them.

To suggest that a member of the National Party could be elected to represent the
western suburbs is a long shot, but the Liberal Party could achieve that. That would
be good for the Liberal Party and would possibly be good for the western suburbs.
Under the proposed system, no votes will ever be wasted again. All voters would feel
some affinity with members of the Upper House because their votes would never be
wasted as they are in the Legislative Assembly. That is unfortunate, but it is the
system. All parties could gain representation in those areas where they have weak
support. The Liberal Party could win votes in the western suburbs, and it would be
good for all Victorians to relate to their members of the Legislative Council.

Proportional representation is currently used in all other States except Victoria and
Queensland, which has suffered due to the Joh Bjelke-Petersen government.
Proportional representation is also used in the Senate. Because this country votes far
too often for the Senate, Australians understand the system.

Mr Pescott—Who is your Senate member?

Mr GAVIN—I have ten of them.

Mr Pescott—Name them!

Mr GAVIN—The best known are Senators Evans, Button and Robert Ray.

Mr Weideman—That is three; name the others.

Mr Evans—You have twelve senators!

Mr GAVIN—That is correct. I am sorry, but I have not caught up with the latest
reforms in the Federal sphere.

All Australians understand proportional representation because they use that system
when voting for the Senate. Proportional representation in one form or another is
used throughout the Western World. Therefore, many of the migrants who come to
this country understand the system. One cannot argue that proportional representation
is not understood by Australians.

The Bill is being opposed because of the prejudices of the conservative members of
the Opposition and because members of the National Party were able to persuade
members of the Liberal Party not to go along with what the Leader of the Opposition
wanted to do.
All journalists realise that proportional representation will be introduced some time. It is obvious that the conservative parties cannot win the next election; they have stuffed up this proposal so badly that they cannot win.

Page 3 of tonight’s Herald under the heading “A matter of preference” states:

Mr Spindler translated that . . .

The author is referring to proportional representation—

... into a 2 to 3 per cent margin which would be more than enough to keep Labor in office.

He also said that the Australian Democrats will put candidates in all marginal seats to ensure that Labor will be kept in office.

The Liberal and National parties have opposed this measure because of their prejudices. The Australian Democrats will totally reject the conservative parties at the State election. The voters will also reject them, so they will lose the next election. This issue will stay on the agenda for some time because after the next election the opposition parties will have to recognise that they lost the election because of the decision they made on this Bill. It is like the way they carried on about one vote, one value in 1982. The Labor Party won the election and said that it would implement that policy.

After the conservative parties lose the next election—and most of the frontbench will get sacked because of their dismal performance—they will finally come round to supporting proportional representation. It may even be post-1992 or 1993, depending on when the next election is called, before they recognise that proportional representation should exist in the Upper House. It will be only a matter of time; it will depend on how many elections they wish to lose.

It is clear that the Liberal Party will lose the next election. It will lose the seat of Narracan, which requires only a 0.4 per cent swing. It will lose Bennettswood, which requires only 0.8 per cent.

Mr Harrowfield—No DOGS supporters this time!

Mr GAVIN—No, there will be no DOGS—Defence of Government Schools—supporters. The seat of Syndal, which requires a swing of only 1.3 per cent, will be gone; the seat of Ivanhoe, which requires 1.6 per cent, will be gone; as will Mornington, which requires a 2 per cent swing.

The most marginal seat in Victoria after the next State election will be Dromana, which requires a 2.4 per cent swing to the government. Like Nostradamus, I shall predict that Dromana will be the seat with the smallest majority for the sitting member after the next election because of the silly decision made by the Liberal Party yesterday morning. The seat of Dromana, which requires a 2.4 per cent swing, will be the most marginal seat because the Australian Democrats will direct their preferences to the government at the next election.

Therefore, at the bare minimum, the Labor Party will have 52 seats, the Liberal Party 26 seats—half the number of seats of the government—and the National Party, I presume, will keep its 10 seats because the government will give it its preferences to keep it going as a party. At a bare minimum the government’s majority will be 16.

The only vaguely marginal seat the Liberals may be able to hold onto is the seat of Dromana, but that will depend on the performance of the honourable member for Dromana. If he manages to win, it will be the smallest majority in the election. If he loses, it will be by the smallest majority in favour of the Labor government.

It is clear that the silly decision made by the Liberal Party yesterday morning will cost it dearly in the next election, as Sid Spindler has made clear in tonight’s Herald.
The only way the Liberal Party can get out of this is for the Honourable Alan Hunt to cross the floor.

**Mr Simpson**—Mark Birrell might join him!

**Mr GAVIN**—He might. The Honourable Alan Hunt crossed the floor over the dying with dignity legislation.

**Mr Simpson**—He abstained.

**Mr GAVIN**—Sorry, the Honourable Alan Hunt abstained on that occasion. However, he strongly supports proportional representation. It is believed he is a member of the Proportional Representation Society of Australia. He may use his conscience vote, which he has used in the past, to allow this measure to be passed.

It is unfortunate for the Liberal Party that even if the Honourable Alan Hunt does use his conscience vote to allow the measure to be passed, the Australian Democrats will still give their preferences to the Labor Party. They will be forced to do so because of the appalling decision made yesterday by the Liberal Party, after having been given the belief by the Leader of the Opposition and his staff that the Liberal Party would change its view on this matter. After leading on the Australian Democrats and then rejecting them that party has no option: preferences will be directed to the Labor Party. The Labor Party will then win at least five seats.

**Mr Pescott** interjected.

**Mr GAVIN**—I am afraid the honourable member for Bennettswood is gone—he is history. Five Liberals will lose their seats. Many of the Opposition frontbench will get the sack. That is obvious if the Liberal Party has only 26 members in the Lower House. The government majority at the next State election will be 16. The Labor Party will have 52 seats, the Liberal Party 26 seats and the National Party 10 seats, if it is given Labor Party preferences.

The government applauds the Liberal Party for its incredible decision. I just hope the Honourable Alan Hunt does not use his conscience vote.

**Mr PESCOTT** (Bennettswood)—I rise to speak towards the end of the debate—

Honourable members interjecting.

**Mr PESCOTT**—In listening to the honourable member for Coburg, one quickly believes he must have had something to do with the Victorian Economic Development Corporation and that he has been out at Fantasy Farm. He has been busy trying to lay the golden egg, which the Labor Party expects will be delivered to it by the Australian Democrats.

The honourable member told the House that in 1983 the government introduced a measure for a new system of voting for the Upper House. In 1983 a new system was to be put into place in Victoria, but, according to the honourable member for Coburg, that system had to be changed.

Before proceeding down the debating path on proportional representation, I point out that honourable members have had an admission from the government that what was done in 1983 was not correct because the government wants to change the system. In a few years’ time, if proportional representation were introduced, who is to say that the government will not decide that perhaps it has made another mistake? That is the sort of slipshod government that Victorians have had to put up with in recent years.

I do not propose to go uphill and down dale into all the arguments about proportional representation because they have been eloquently presented by members of the
Mr Remington—You weren’t here.

Mr PESCOTT—I heard the honourable member’s contribution. He should be commended for succinctly presenting the Opposition’s arguments. Let me put into context what proportional representation is all about.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr PESCOTT—The government members who are making some noises have no idea of the fact that proportional representation has been around since the French revolution. It has been around for 200 years. People have been suggesting that form of government for that period.

Now, at the end of that 200 years, the Labor Party is saying that we should have that system operating in Victoria. Why are government members keen on this idea? They have simply looked at the views of commentators who have examined proportional representation around the world. They have discovered that those commentators have said, “No-one who has had proportional representation has ever changed it; therefore, it must be good”. Of course, governments with proportional representation have never changed it. It has not been in their interests to change it.

Dr Coghill—that’s untrue.

Mr PESCOTT—it is perfectly true. It is a common fallacy that proportional representation is a good system just because it has been used for so many years and has never been changed.

The system of proportional representation for Parliaments came into being at a time when the fastest method of communication was the horse. Today we have television and other modern methods of communication. The reason for proportional representation, which is to take small sections of regional interest into account, no longer exists. Products that exist in one part of the country are available all over the country. The community is a much smaller place than it was when proportional representation was first put forward.

In addition, modern societies have larger political parties. Today’s political parties include a broad spectrum of political opinions. Political parties, when in government, can present cohesion and stability for the community. It is not in the interest of this community to introduce a system that will allow fringe groups like the Australian Democrats to control the legislative program of this State.

Former senior Labor people, such as the former Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Mr Gough Whitlam and the current Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, understood this principle. A previous Labor leader, Mr Calwell, made the mistake of introducing a proportional representation system into the Senate of the Federal Parliament. That voting system has not been in the best interests of the country. I do not subscribe to the view that because Australia has proportional representation in the Federal Parliament, therefore, it should be the voting system for all States.

Honourable members should ask the question: why is it that the government has introduced a proportional representation Bill at this time? The government is desperate, nervous and unprincipled. The Premier believes the Australian Labor Party will get members of the Australian Democrats elected to the Upper House if the Bill is passed and, through that process, the Australian Democrats will become a wing of the Australian Labor Party.
The Australian Democrats have said publicly that they intend to give their preferences to the Labor Party at the next election if the Bill is rejected by the opposition parties. Where does that leave the Australian Democrats? It leaves the party in exactly the position they are in now, a party that is as unprincipled as the Labor Party which, together with the Labor Party would control the Upper House of this Parliament.

The ultimate objective of the Premier is to abolish the Upper House. If the Bill were passed by both Houses the Upper House would become unworkable, which would give the Premier the opportunity of saying that because the Upper House does not work satisfactorily and, as proportional representation is the fairest method of election to that Chamber, the Upper House should be abolished. It is a smart idea to put forward at this time, but it is not in the best interests of the people of Victoria. It is a sign of the desperation of the Cain government.

I represent the most marginal seat in the metropolitan area and I say categorically I welcome the contest between the Australian Democrats and the Labor Party, because I will paint them into the corner that they have chosen for themselves by the threats they have made. The Australian Democrats should understand the damage to their party that the proposal does. In any case, the Labor Party has chosen a person to stand against me who is the adviser to the Minister for Labour. As the adviser to the Minister, that person is partly responsible for the fiascos involving the Minister, the redeployment of people in the railways, the BLF fiasco, and so on.

Mr POPE (Monbulk)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I have no idea what the activities of the Minister for Labour have to do with the Bill.

The SPEAKER—Order! I do not intend to uphold the point of order. The debate has come down to the level, through one device or another, of being very broad in its context; occasionally the Bill gets a mention in the half hour allocated to honourable members. Wherever possible I have asked honourable members to come back to the subject matter before the House and I do so now for the benefit of the honourable member for Bennettswood.

Mr PESCOTT (Bennettswood)—I return to proportional representation and the Bill. I note the sensitivity of government members when I talk about the activities of one of their favourite sons, the Minister for Labour. The Bill proposes the introduction of what are called “multimember electorates.” I take the opportunity of directing to the House an article called “Why electoral change? The case for PR examined”, written by Sir Angus Maude and John Szemerey. The article states in part:

Belgium and Italy, which both have PR with regional lists, have since the war been suffering from chronic governmental instability.

Regional lists are exactly what the Cain government proposes for Victoria. The proposal is to divide electorates into little groups and have what are, in effect, regional lists. The commentators who have examined proportional representation state that in the period 1946–1981, Belgium had 28 governments, twelve of them in the last seven years. Italy, between 1945 and 1981 fared even worse; it had 41 governments. Almost all the 69 governments have been coalitions—except for four.

The important thing is that the experts say that the type of proportional representation which is an abomination of the real proportional representation system is the sort that produces the most instability. That is something that the Cain government does not care about. All the Cain government wants is to produce a device so that it gets the support of the fringe party, the Australian Democrats. That party will become so closely dependent on the Labor party that they will become part and parcel of each other.
Simultaneous elections are a joke. Government members do not understand the importance of checks and balances that are required in the Westminster system. Those checks and balances are required to stop autocratic governments doing what they please, whether they are Liberal, Labor or some other party. The Liberal Party is concerned about the future of the legislative system in Victoria and about those checks and balances which have been part of the system and have served Victorians well. It is not time for members of the government to say that in 50 years Victoria will never have an autocrat at the helm who will need the checks and balances that have been provided before.

Victoria has been served well by the present system. It is not time to change it to a system that would produce a group of members who would not be as answerable to the electorate as they are now. The honourable member for Coburg could name only three of the twelve senators who represent the State.

Mr POPE (Monbulk)—The reasons given by the honourable member for Benettswood for not supporting the Bill are unbelievable. He was obviously making one of his last speeches in this place. He is one of the casualties of the appalling decision of the Liberal Party to reject the proposed legislation. Perhaps the honourable member did support that decision yesterday morning in the party room but he changed his position this evening. He has a gall to debate the measure as he did.

I listened to his empty words about accountability to electorates, yet the honourable member for Benettswood lives in South Yarra! Even my young daughter has some idea about geography and knows where South Yarra is; it is many kilometres from the Benettswood electorate. The honourable member spoke about democracy. What democracy is there when the electorate of Bennettswood is not represented by a person who lives in that area?

South Yarra is an interesting area when considering the proposed legislation, because the Bill provides that each province will comprise seventeen Legislative Assembly districts. With the honourable members for Benettswood, Berwick and Prahran living in South Yarra——

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask the honourable member for Monbulk to direct his voice into one of the microphones, two of which appear to be on. This is making it difficult for the record, as is the background chorus of interjections coming from that direction.

Mr POPE—Honourable members have heard much rhetoric during the debate on this Bill. Perhaps I should outline the detail of the Bill as contained in the Premier's second-reading speech. As honourable members have been told, the Bill is not about political opportunism or lack of democracy. The Bill provides that members will be elected for four years concurrently and simultaneously with the Legislative Assembly. The Opposition objects to that provision. This will mean that members of the Upper House will no longer enjoy eight-year terms. The Bill has the general support of all Victorians. The government received a clear mandate for the proposed reform at the 1985 State election.

The Bill also provides that elections will mirror the Commonwealth Senate system of multimember electorates, proportional representation and quota preferential voting. The conservative parties throughout the nation have not condemned the voting system adopted by the Commonwealth Senate or in other State Parliaments, except in Queensland which does not have an Upper House.

The Bill also establishes five provinces, three of which will have a metropolitan focus and two of which will have a non-metropolitan focus. Nine members will be elected to represent each of the two non-metropolitan areas. The National Party has
suggested that its constituents will be denied representation by virtue of the proposed reform. If the National Party really has the support of rural Victoria, one should imagine it would overwhelmingly sweep in those two non-metropolitan electorates and achieve success in numerous seats. No doubt it would be represented in another place by more members than the present five.

On the contrary, the National Party has decided not to support the Bill. It has maintained its conservative stance against any reform. The three metropolitan provinces will also have nine members each. Once again the conservative parties, which claim to have support in the metropolitan area, claim they cannot achieve true representation in those three metropolitan provinces, yet the Liberal Party claims it is the only party that has support throughout Victoria in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. It has every opportunity of achieving satisfactory representation throughout the State.

The Bill provides that, following the transition, each province will comprise seventeen Legislative Assembly districts and, at the general election following the next one, the Assembly will be reduced from 88 to 85, a reduction of three members of Parliament. That is a saving. The reform allows for casual vacancies to be filled in accordance with the intention of the voters; and the method of calculation of quotas will be identical to that used by the Commonwealth. I have not heard any political party decry that system.

The Bill also deals with grouping of candidates and enables voters to have the option of group voting or voting for individual candidates in the same manner as when voting in Senate elections. That device has greatly assisted voters throughout the State and the nation. That is the reform which was defeated in the Liberal Party room yesterday morning and which has been consistently rejected by the National Party; it is not rejected by Victorians.

At the 1985 State election the Labor Party clearly espoused its position; it said it would introduce this reform for electing members to the Upper House. The government received an overwhelming mandate to do so. Victorians indicated that they supported the reform. Last year a similar measure was introduced dealing with the powers of the Upper House. The Opposition was obstructionist in that case. The Labor Party did not waver in its position, which was clearly stated prior to the State election along with its views on proportional representation. The Opposition has started wavering on its stand. It started with staff members of the Leader of the Opposition speaking to members of the press and saying that the Opposition was considering other options. They started wavering, and that wavering culminated in an obvious heated debate in the party room yesterday morning after which a number of people, such as Mr Birrell in another place, were defeated. They tried to put forward a proposition; they tried for further amendments and increasing the numbers but, once again, the conservative wave of the party won through.

Although the Leader of the Opposition, through his staffers, tried extremely hard to ensure that the proposition would win through, it did not and hence a press release came out yesterday from Australian Associated Press stating:

Victorian Liberals today delivered a rebuff to their Leader, Jeff Kennett, overwhelmingly rejecting the State government's Bill for proportional representation (PR) in the Upper House.

The Liberals also decided against proposing any compromise PR legislation of their own.

The decision was made at a meeting of the Parliamentary Liberal Party just hours before debate resumes on the government Bill to reform election to the Upper House.

Today's vote ended a week of wavering by the Liberals, during which influential sections of the party, apparently with Mr Kennett's backing, promoted a compromise PR system.
The reality is that in 1987 they were not wavering. Their position was quite strong with respect to the Upper House. I must say that the National Party has always been consistent in its stance. It has always adopted a conservative stance on the issue and has not looked for reform.

Prior to the 1985 State election—not leading up to it but prior to it—the position of the Labor Party was as it is now. Our position is not one of short-term opportunism, but the reason for the Liberal Party’s wavering in the last week or two is purely because the Leader of the Opposition, his staffers and many of the backbenchers realise that they cannot win the next election without adopting certain reforms which might please another political party within the State. That is why the Leader of the Opposition and his staff were racing around the press gallery and ringing up backbenchers within the Liberal Party to persuade them to change their minds.

That is the reason for the heated debate yesterday in the party room, and that is the reason for the blood spilt upon the second floor in the Liberal Party room. It was because of the opportunism by the Leader of the Opposition in thinking he could have a short-term win on the issue. The Liberal Party is not consistent, as the Labor Party was prior to the last election.

When the Bill was presented last year it was opposed, and obviously it will be opposed again. As the honourable member for Coburg said earlier, government members dearly hope that some members of the Upper House will have consciences. Perhaps Mr Alan Hunt, who obviously was in favour of proportional representation and reform of the Upper House and who was one of the prime movers in obtaining some reform within the Liberal Party, will vote according to his conscience. He was one of the people rolled yesterday morning within the party room, but perhaps his conscience will dictate that he should cross the floor on the issue and, as the honourable member for Coburg said, it will be a day of great reform for Victoria if enough Liberals cross the floor and join the government in ensuring greater accountability and democracy within the electoral system.

It is obviously a situation where another political party not represented in Parliament is keen to be brought in, and that party is the Australian Democrats. They have obviously put pressure on the Liberal Party which almost won through; and why should the Australian Democrats not do that? The reality is that they have outpolled the National Party in this State; and many a minor party in various areas of Victoria outpolled the National Party but they do not have representation in the Upper House, let alone in this House.

Why should the Australian Democrats not look for a possibility of becoming a player within the Parliamentary processes of the State of Victoria when they receive in excess of 1 per cent more votes than the National Party and yet the National Party has 10 or 11 members in this place and 5 members in the Upper House and the Australian Democrats have none?

That is the crucial issue when we are talking about a democratic Parliamentary process which could be reflected in the people who represent the electorate in the Upper House, to make it truly a House of review and not a House controlled purely by the conservative parties, as has been the case throughout history. That is exactly why the National Party will not support the Bill. It wants to maintain that power, even with the small number of electors it represents in the State. It wants people to put their number “1” next to a National Party candidate. That is why the conservatives within the Liberal Party ensured in the party room yesterday that the position was maintained.

The conservatives have controlled the Upper House for many years, and it is their mistaken belief that they will continue to do so for many years to come. That situation
will not continue, even without proportional representation. Conservative dominance in the Upper House will be overturned by the Labor Party in future years, but I hope some form of proportional representation is introduced, if not by this Bill, then by future Bills in other years.

Two issues are at stake with proportional representation: the first is the mandate I mentioned earlier which was received in the 1985 election when the government's position was espoused quite plainly. The second issue is fairness and the representative nature of the system. It has been hailed as the most representative system in the Western World. As the honourable member for Coburg has already mentioned, it operates in most countries and in every State of Australia except Queensland, which does not have an Upper House; and it obviously operates within the Australian Senate.

If one examines the situation that existed when I first came to Parliament in 1982, one can see just how accountable the present system is. During the election of 1982 the Australian Labor Party won twelve of the 22 seats in the Legislative Council. It obviously had the support of the populace of Victoria, measured by the number of seats won; but because of this crazy system of eight-year terms—at that time it was six—and because it is eight years before half of the members of the Legislative Council are re-elected, it is not accountable; it is not democratic to the electors of Victoria in ensuring that they have a Parliament controlled by their own wishes. In 1982 the government won twelve out of 22 seats and obviously would have been looking at 24 seats if all members had come up for re-election at the same time. This would have meant control of that House.

The result of opposition to reform will be that Victoria will be seen as the backward State when it comes to democratic and electoral reform; not because of the way the government has introduced Bill after Bill and tried to negotiate a settlement with the conservative parties to bring about electoral reform, but because of the stupidity that has existed with the conservative parties and the stupidity yesterday morning in respect of the motivation of the Leader of the Opposition.

We all know that the motivation was short-term political opportunism; and it would have been to the advantage of all Victorians if the Liberal Party had made the right decision yesterday morning.

As the honourable member for Coburg said, it would have been to the advantage of the honourable members for Bennettswood, Dromana, and Syndal, because they will not be in this Chamber again by virtue of their opposition to the Constitution (Proportional Representation) Bill, because of their negative stance, and because of their conservative position. The honourable members for Bennettswood, Syndal, Mornington, and Narracan—I could go on, including even the shadow spokesperson who is seated at the table, the honourable member for Evelyn—will not be in the Chamber because of their stupidity yesterday morning.

I am sure that the honourable member for Ivanhoe was in favour of looking for reform. He will not be in the Chamber again, with his small margin. It is a shame for those members that their careers will be so short-lived.

For members of the government it will be a blessing which we did not expect but which we accept with open arms. However, we would prefer to have proportional representation because I have no doubt we will win the election now.

On the motion of Mr COLEMAN (Syndal), the debate was adjourned.

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

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I wish to make a short personal explanation. During question time this morning I was asked by the honourable member for Berwick:

Is it a fact that, in early November 1987, the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources personally authorised the Victorian Economic Development Corporation to fully sub-underwrite a $25 million float of Wallace International Ltd but later that month changed the authorisation limiting it to half the $25 million float?

In my answer, I made the following two statements:

The information provided by the honourable member is incorrect.

The only proposals put forward to me concerned a partial involvement, and that in fact was put into effect.

I stand by those statements.

However, I also included in my answer the following statement:

At no stage was it proposed that the government, through the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, should fully subscribe to the Wallace International Ltd float.

In discussing that statement later today with officials of my department, it was pointed out that in fact it was proposed at one stage to the department that the Victorian Economic Development Corporation should fully underwrite the Wallace International Ltd float but, following further discussions between the parties concerned, the proposal put to me provided for only a partial involvement which I authorised, as stated correctly in my answer earlier today.

LICENSING AUTHORITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

When introducing the Credit (Administration) (Amendment) Bill I foreshadowed the government’s intention to introduce further amendments to rationalise the operation of all of the licensing arrangements within the consumer affairs umbrella.

The earlier Bill in conjunction with this Bill forms a package of amendments which will greatly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the licensing arrangements.

The Credit (Administration) Act 1984, Travel Agents Act 1986 and Motor Car Traders Act 1986 established licensing authorities which regulate the activities of credit providers, travel agents and motor car traders. This Bill amends the powers of the credit licensing authority, travel agents licensing authority, and motor car traders licensing authority so as to ensure that, so far as practicable, the powers of the licensing authorities are consistent with each other. This will assist in a consistent approach to the licensing of credit providers, travel agents, and motor car traders. This consistency will also assist to streamline the administration of the licensing authorities.

The Bill also amends the powers of the licensing authorities to overcome operational difficulties that have become apparent over a period of time.

The amendments to the powers and responsibilities of the licensing authorities include the following:

(i) that there is an express right in each Act ensuring that a party to proceedings before a licensing authority may call evidence and examine, cross-examine, and re-examine witnesses;
(ii) that each licensing authority have the powers to refer a question of law to the Supreme Court for determination;

(iii) that each Act contain a general prohibition against a person making false or misleading statements in relation to a licensing hearing;

(iv) that each licensing authority have an express authority to conduct directions hearings for the purpose of ensuring that licence hearings are able to be conducted as expeditiously and fairly as possible; and

(v) express provisions allowing the licensing authorities to extend time limits, fix the time and place for hearings, to waive fees payable to the licensing authority, and to retain and copy records produced before it.

The amendments made to the licensing Acts by this Bill will ensure that not only is licensing carried out more efficiently but also that parties before the licensing authority are ensured a fair and proper hearing.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr PESCOTT (Bennettswood), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, August 17.

BUSINESS FRANCHISE ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to remedy some technical deficiencies in the business franchise legislation which were identified by a recent High Court decision concerning the importation of tobacco from Queensland by Victorian retailers. In that decision a majority of four out of seven judges found that the Victorian legislation offended against section 92 of the Constitution. In the majority view the legislation discriminated against Victorian retailers who purchased from Queensland wholesalers in the course of interstate trade.

Victorian retailers had to pay the ad valorem tobacco licence fee of 30 per cent if they purchased from interstate wholesalers, whereas if they purchased tobacco from licensed Victorian wholesalers, they did not. However, a retailer who purchased from a licensed Victorian wholesaler had the licence fee passed on to him in the wholesale price. That is, the retailer would pay the 30 per cent either directly or indirectly and should, therefore, not prefer Victorian wholesalers over Queensland wholesalers on the grounds of the fee.

Nevertheless, in view of the High Court decision, it is necessary to amend the legislation to ensure that there is no discriminatory aspect regarding the imposition of licence fees in the form as well as the substance of the legislation.

It is, of course, essential to protect Victoria’s business franchise revenues. Tobacco franchise fees have been levied in Victoria since 1974 and business franchise fees are now levied in all jurisdictions except Queensland, which I believe will also shortly introduce them. In Victoria business franchise fees now produce approximately $350 million annually.

Under the amended legislation it will not be necessary for wholesalers to be licensed. However, if they elect to be licensed they submit to the provisions of the legislation.
and must comply with the various requirements regarding such matters as the keeping of records, production of invoices on sales, and assessment provisions.

Unlike the existing legislation, the amended legislation will apply to all wholesalers inside and outside Victoria who sell tobacco or petroleum products for resale or consumption in this State. The ad valorem fees for tobacco and petroleum licences are unaltered.

To ensure that licensed wholesalers' operations are not unnecessarily disrupted, the amendments provide that the commissioner must not refuse to issue a licence to a wholesaler if the sole point of dispute about the appropriate licence fee centres on whether the wholesaler knew or believed product sold to a retailer was for resale or consumption outside Victoria.

The value of any product resold or consumed outside Victoria may, of course, be excluded from the calculation of licence fees. Also, provision has been made to enable wholesalers to exclude the value of product which a retailer has advised, prior to the relevant licence period, has been resold outside Victoria. The only exception to this is if a retailer makes a false statement and the wholesaler knows it to be false.

Under the amendments a retailer must be licensed to carry on a retailing business and will pay the relevant ad valorem licence fee if purchases are made from unlicensed wholesalers. However, this provision is not discriminatory even in form. The amended legislation will apply to all wholesalers whether within or outside Victoria.

Substantial penalties have been introduced or have replaced existing lesser fines to reflect the government's determination that cheating under the business franchise legislation will not be tolerated. Evasion not only undermines revenue but also it cripples the trade of honest competitors.

The search warrant and seizure provisions of the legislation have been extended to include the searching of and seizure of products from trucks and other vehicles which bring tobacco or petroleum products from another jurisdiction, particularly where a business franchise licence fee does not exist.

To further assist in the enforcement of the legislation the Bill makes appropriate amendments to extend the existing averment provisions of the Act, such as those in section 19E (1), to accommodate the new scheme. The government is determined that, as in the past, there will be vigorous enforcement of the amended legislation and a crackdown on deliberate schemes to avoid or evade business franchise fees by the importation of tobacco from Queensland.

Clauses 27 and 38 ensure that any tobacco or petroleum products purchased from unlicensed wholesalers in the period between the High Court decision on 7 June 1988 and the commencement of the new scheme on 1 November 1988 will attract the relevant ad valorem licence fee. This is in accordance with the government's intention as announced in press releases and as made widely known in the tobacco and petroleum products trades. There is, of course, no new charge involved. The provisions simply make collectable the fee imposed by the then existing legislation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr PESCOTT (Bennettswood), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Wednesday, August 17.
ADJOURNMENT

Alleged misuse of government vehicle—Australian League of Rights views on referendum question—Community Services Victoria offices, Bairnsdale—Payment by municipalities of SEC bills—Accommodation of intellectually disabled—BLF police inquiry—Price of soft drinks at Lalor New World supermarket

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I move:
That the House do now adjourn.

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—The matter I direct to the attention of the Premier concerns the misuse of government property and involves the chauffeured vehicles used by Cabinet Ministers. It concerns the activities that took place yesterday involving a vehicle with the registration No. “VIC 39”.

Yesterday the honourable member for Monbulk was travelling around the municipality of Sherbrooke in that car with a Labor councillor, Peter Downard, promoting a so-called group of independents. They possessed literature produced by the Australian Labor Party's official printer. The material also included such brilliant pieces of information as the fact that under no circumstances would they join a faction.

Where have honourable members heard that sort of language except from government members? The other most interesting activity involves one Mr Phillip Staindl, who is none other than the twice defeated ALP endorsed candidate for Berwick. Therefore, it appears that the honourable member for Monbulk is using a government vehicle to promote one of his mates in a dubious attempt to have a person elected to the municipal council.

No doubt the Premier has a set of guidelines for the use of government vehicles. The House is entitled to be made aware of those guidelines. Did the Premier or one of his advisers authorise the honourable member for Monbulk to use that vehicle for the day to promote a former failed ALP candidate for the council? Will the Premier admit to this? Is the Premier responsible? Perhaps the honourable member for Werribee might have been involved. I do not know.

If the Premier says he represents clean government, he has a responsibility to explain how a government vehicle can be used to promote council candidates who claim to be independent. What does a government vehicle have to do with the Shire of Sherbrooke? What is the honourable member for Monbulk doing?

These people claim to represent a cross-section of the community. Forget about the defeated ALP candidate from Berwick; the pamphlet states that Neil Pope is independent of politics! The pamphlet states:

You will note that our support is not politically biased and transcends all political boundaries.

What he meant is “all factions of the ALP”.

Why has the Premier authorised the honourable member for Monbulk to use a Ministerial vehicle to promote the ALP in Sherbrooke? The Premier or the honourable member for Monbulk should explain why the vehicle was used for that purpose yesterday.

Has the honourable member for Monbulk been promoted to the Ministry? Honourable members opposite have not heard about it. This is an irresponsible action on the part of the Premier who claims to be promoting a government that is under the control of “Mr Clean”. It seems that he wants to misuse government equipment on behalf of some of his friends in Sherbrooke. This is an outrage. I demand that the Premier explain how the honourable member for Monbulk is entitled to use a
government vehicle in this manner. Victorian taxpayers are entitled to be equally as outraged as I am by this misuse of government property.

Dr COGHILL (Werribee)—I direct to the attention of the Minister for Local Government the manner in which the government might be able to show its further support for the question in the referendum on 3 September dealing with the recognition of local government in the Federal Constitution.

There is a strong case there, which has been recognised on both sides of the House, although not on both sides of Federal Parliament, for the “Yes” case in favour of recognition of local government in the Federal Constitution.

I raise the matter in particular because tomorrow in Bendigo there is a meeting to which local government representatives have been invited to discuss this important issue. It is important that local government councillors are well advised and fully informed on this matter. The meeting is described as a special meeting for local government representatives to be held in the Bendigo library theatrette on Thursday, 4 August at 1 p.m.

The background of the meeting is interesting. The letter of introduction that I have is dated 14 July 1988. It is written on the letterhead of the Christian Political Party of Australia, PO Box 926, Bendigo, 3550. The guest of honour who is to address the meeting is one Dr David Mitchell. I have been making some examination of the background to this meeting and of this particular gentleman, and what has emerged is a very clear and undeniable link with the Australian League of Rights. It seems that this is part of the targeting of fundamentalist Christian churches by the Australian League of Rights.

The guest speaker, Dr David Mitchell, is claimed in this document to be well qualified to speak on these issues. Among the qualifications mentioned for this would-be defender of democracy and people’s rights was that he was Attorney-General for two years in the African nation of Lesotho. The interesting fact about Lesotho is that there has been no democracy in that country since 1970, when an opposition party was elected to government but was never allowed to take office, and where there has now been established an absolute monarchy in which the ruling king exercises all executive power.

Another interesting point about Dr David Mitchell which confirms his association and links with the Australian League of Rights is that he claims to have published material in the document *Wake Up Australia*, which is circulated by a body called Council for a Free Australia. That council operates in Victoria from 6 Cecil Street, Frankston.

As I have previously outlined to the House in other contexts, there is a very clear and direct link between *Wake Up Australia* and its publishers with the Australian League of Rights. Indeed, it now appears on the evidence that Dr David Mitchell is the successor to Jeremy Lee as the roving spokesman for the Australian League of Rights. It might add in passing that Dr Jeremy Lee is now associated with the LOGOS Foundation, apparently having given up his executive role in the Australian League of Rights. I am advised that he is still a member of the league, although the LOGOS Foundation has sought to deny that.

Dr Mitchell spoke at a meeting that appears to have been held in Albury on or about 20 May. In speaking in opposition to the referendum question to which I refer, he suggested that its effect would be a “withering of the power, authority and jurisdiction of State governments.” That is absolute nonsense. The Victorian government has thoroughly examined the question and the effects of the referendum. Like the Liberal Party Opposition, the government has agreed that the “Yes” case is the case to be
supported; that it is to the advantage of the people of Victoria and local government that the "Yes" case for the recognition of local government in the Australian Federal Constitution be supported.

I ask the Minister for Local Government to ensure that local government representatives and the people of Victoria are properly informed on this question and are not misled by members of the Australian League of Rights.

Mr EVANS (Gippsland East)—I direct a matter of concern to the attention of the Minister for Community Services. For the past twelve months his department has leased double-fronted shop premises in Bairnsdale for use by the regional branch of the Office of Intellectual Disability Services, which currently occupies small premises and works in cramped conditions in McCulloch Street, Bairnsdale. The department has leased those premises for the past twelve months but they have not been occupied.

Apparently only a minimum amount of work is necessary to make the premises suitable for occupation, such as the erection of a few partitions, the provision of phones and the laying of carpets. It seems to me a very serious waste of money for the government to be leasing offices at some $400 a week for twelve months without occupying them. It is not as though the current premises are adequate for the eight staff members who are endeavouring to perform their duties in cramped conditions.

I ask the Minister to take steps to have the leased offices occupied as soon as possible. I also ask him to give some consideration to the problems that will arise at the new premises in regard to the provision of car parking. It seems there is not adequate public parking space available nearby and it will be necessary to make some provision for car parking facilities in reasonable proximity to the offices. I am sure the Minister will be concerned at this obvious waste of money and I sincerely trust that he will take steps to rectify the matter immediately.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources. I regret that he is not in the Chamber and is, therefore, unable to tell Parliament directly what he is doing about the mounting debts due to the State Electricity Commission for bulk power supplied to some ten municipal electricity undertakings. I understand that payment for power supplied to those ten municipalities since 1 June has not been made.

Some $40 million is already owing to the government of Victoria—that is, the people of Victoria—and it will soon be $100 million if nothing is done about collecting that money. The only council that has paid its bill is the City of Preston, and it so happens that the Mayor of the City of Preston works in the office of the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources. That is rather interesting!

The City of Doncaster and Templestowe is one of the councils that has refused to pay its bill to the State Electricity Commission. It refuses to do so because it seeks the same public authority status as the commission itself has with the government of Victoria. The council claims it should be entitled to a 4 per cent dividend from the $50 million equity in its undertaking. In other words, it claims it should be entitled to place some $2 million a year into its municipal funds to be used primarily for the purpose of financing roadworks.

Another arm of the State government, the Ministry of Transport, has requested that the City of Doncaster and Templestowe provide an additional $2 million to $4 million a year as part of its contribution to unclassified roadworks. This has put the municipality in a serious financial position. It had to increase its rates by 15 per cent last year, which is much higher than the increase in any other metropolitan municipality. The City of Doncaster and Templestowe is now being induced to engage in some joint business ventures with developers and other people which I regard as
very dangerous. It could finish up in the same situation as the City of Sale with millions of dollars of ratepayers' money going down the drain.

It is ironic that one arm of the government is denying the council proper rates of return on its equity and another arm of the government is virtually putting it into an impossible financial situation so that it is being forced to enter into dubious business ventures and to increase its rates, which increase is causing serious unrest in that city.

If the government wants to oppress the municipal undertakings to finance its social justice strategy, it should permit municipalities like the City of Doncaster and Templestowe to use the profits of their undertakings for highly desirable roadworks.

I agree with Councillor Morris Milder, Chairman of the Association of Municipal Electrical Undertakings, that the government of Victoria is ambushing the electric supply authorities. It is acting in an arrogant, dictatorial fashion and using standover tactics which are bringing about the possibility of strike action by those municipal undertakings, many of which are run by Labor-controlled councils, because of the arrogant stance of the State government and the State Electricity Commission. I ask the Minister to report to Parliament on this matter before it adjourns on Thursday evening.

Mrs RAY (Box Hill)—I advise the Minister for Community Services that since 1980 there have been considerable improvements in the quality and the standard of accommodation offered to people in Victoria who have intellectual disabilities. New attitudes have led to the general acceptance of the view that these people should be able to live in the community, like the rest of us.

In 1984 the Victorian Minister for Health led the world in closing an institution that housed the most severely disabled people: 105 people were moved from the old St Nicholas Hospital into new locations in the community with appropriate support.

Recently the program was evaluated and the report was published last month. Last year a review was undertaken of the community residential units which were managed by committees. These committees are responsible for about 100 houses located in each region throughout Victoria. They cover long-term accommodation for adults, children, and short-term respite care.

The committee reviewing the management of these units recommended an increase in both the program and administrative support to these houses. It sought to clarify the roles and functions of the professionals and the committees, and pointed to the need for trained and stable staffing.

I have spoken to people working in similar systems around the world; in North America, in the United Kingdom, and in Sweden. All are working on systems which replace old institutional settings with community living. No doubt in the future we will have a much greater range of more flexible living options for people with intellectual disabilities, but it is important to get this system right in order to build the community's confidence in the alternatives to institutional care.

Will the Minister indicate to the House the way in which he intends to respond to the recommendations of the committee of review?

Mr E. R. SMITH (Glen Waverley)—The matter I raise with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services concerns a police report that received publicity this day. The report on the Builders Labourers Federation was initiated by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. I wish to know the attitude of the Minister and his future intentions about ceasing the inquiry.
As honourable members well know, this report, by Detective Sergeant Eadon, recommended that, because the matter had been proceeded with as far as possible, it should be brought to a conclusion. The Minister has chosen to continue the inquiry for his own personal aggrandisement. The Minister must be aware that so far not only the police report but also the other inquiry conducted into the BLF have cost many hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The continuation of the inquiry into the BLF merely to chase Gallagher's ghost is an attempt to make his own public profile better than that of his rival for the Premiership, the Minister for Transport in another place—that is evident. At this stage of Victoria's history, we do not need to continue an inquiry that Detective Sergeant Eadon has already recommended should cease. Currently, Victoria has a crime rate of 310 545 major crimes a year—over 800 major crimes a day—being committed. To have ceased a police inquiry tying up the Police Force in pursuing something that they say should be completed is, to my way of thinking, a complete outrage. It shows the Minister's double standards.

As honourable members are well aware, the Liberal Party was totally opposed to the BLF and supported its demise. It supported the inquiry into the allegations of illegal actions, but there comes a time when all inquiries must come to an end. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services should accept the recommendations of the report, which indicate that the inquiry has reached its end and that there is nothing to be gained by inquiring further unless some new evidence comes forward.

As the Minister is well aware, nothing will be forthcoming. Scarc public resources should not continue to be wasted on a fruitless search when the Police Force is in need of every available resource in its fight against crime in Victoria. It shows that the Minister must be extremely worried to have to allocate scarce police resources in this way at such a stage. There is little doubt that the police themselves resent having their time wasted by having to pursue the inquiry. They have told the Minister in no uncertain terms that the inquiry should be terminated.

The Minister is using the inquiry to promote his personal ends. I urge the Minister to come clean on the matter, and to cease the wasteful inquiry, which is at this stage producing nothing. Although the Minister can go on television and say that he thinks he has something, the police have told us in no uncertain manner in the report that there is nothing further to be achieved by pursuing this particular line. I should like a full explanation from the Minister as to why he is continuing this fruitless search.

Mrs GLEESON (Thomastown)—The matter on prices which I raise with the Minister for Property and Services concerns a practice being carried out at the New World supermarket in May Road, Lalor. The matter is a small but significant one. It highlights the practices of some of the supermarkets in taking advantage of people who are not necessarily able to shop around or who experience specific disadvantages. It concerns the selling of soft drink from a soft drink fountain within the supermarket. Early last week the soft drinks were available at 20 cents for a small paper cupful but, by the end of the week, the price had increased to 40 cents—a 100 per cent increase.

The manager of the store, when questioned, said that it was only a 50 per cent increase. The customer in her complaint asked for the price to be changed, but the manager said, “No, I cannot do that, these prices are arranged from head office”. The customer was referred to the head office of the New World supermarket chain, where she was told, “No, it is not a central decision, it is a local decision. You will have to go back to the local area”. Customers in these situations have little recourse when they are being shunted around. There is no intention of stopping such practices.

An honourable member interjected.
Mrs GLEESON—An honourable member from the National Party by way of interjection said, "You don't have to buy it". There are items in supermarkets that are mispriced. Certain malpractices take place and some people do not take the opportunity of not purchasing that item and walking out the store. It happens with medical, pharmaceutical and necessity of life items. It is an appalling attitude for the National Party to take when it considers that it is close to the people. It is an absolute disgrace. It is instances such as this and the pricing practices of the local supermarkets in my electorate that have given rise to a new prices peg action group which is run by women in my electorate.

They survey the local supermarkets, and have come across a significant number of dubious practices which will be brought to light, whether it be through this Parliament or through the local organisation.

The New World supermarket in Lalor has a large customer base. It is located in an area that has many families with small children. Many honourable members know what it is like to go shopping with young children, although I suspect that many honourable members have not had that experience.

Mr Wallace interjected.

Mrs GLEESON—The honourable member probably never took his children shopping; he probably left it to his wife to do so.

The price of soft drinks at those supermarkets was recently increased from 20 cents to 40 cents, a significant increase for a family with three or four small children on a tight budget. The calls on the purse are becoming horrendous, given the rejection of the government's prices peg legislation. Workers have been called upon to exercise wage restraint. It is time businesses were called upon to match that restraint and to give customers a fair go.

The Thomstown electorate has three times as many adults who have never been to school as the number of people in the electorate who hold university degrees, and the proportion of young families in the electorate is two-thirds higher than the State average. People who are disadvantaged in this way need to be protected. They may not have the privilege of being able to take consumer rights action. It is the business of government, with the assistance of the Opposition, to come to the party to aid those people so that they receive a fair go.

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General)—The honourable member for Malvern raised an issue for the attention of the Premier concerning the alleged misuses of government property. The response that matter deserves is to point out that it is local government election week, and that is the sort of story one would expect the honourable member for Malvern to raise a few days before council elections.

The honourable member for Doncaster raised for the attention of the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources arrangements between local government and the State Electricity Commission for the payment of power supplied in bulk by the commission to municipalities, and the fact that nine out of ten municipalities have not paid the money due to the commission. I shall refer that matter to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources.

The honourable member for Glen Waverley raised a matter for the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services concerning the current press reference to a report by the Victoria Police on the Builders Labourers Federation. Like many of his colleagues, he appeared to be supporting the BLF. The matter has been dealt with in the press tonight, and I shall refer it to the Minister.
Mr SIMMONDS (Minister for Local Government)—The honourable member for Werribee referred to the attitude of the government to the forthcoming referendum questions. The Victorian government supports the referendum as it relates to local government. I am concerned that the meeting tomorrow that has been advertised in Bendigo, arranged by the League of Rights, probably reflects a minority viewpoint. I hope the honourable member for Mornington, who is interjecting, like other Liberal Party members, supports the government in its attitude to supporting a “Yes” vote directed to local government. As Mr Hunt has already indicated, Victoria was the first State in Australia to recognise local government, which suggests there will be a strong “Yes” vote. I commend the honourable member for Werribee for bringing forward the activities of the League of Rights on that question. Furthermore, I suggest honourable members might read the details in tomorrow's Sun.

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Property and Services)—The honourable member for Thomastown raised for my attention a matter that was drawn to her attention by the women's prices peg action group in her electorate. The honourable member has been active in ensuring that a watch is kept on prices in her electorate. There are many low-income families and families with young children in the electorate, and it is appalling that the prices of drinks at supermarkets have increased by 100 per cent. The honourable member for Hawthorn may laugh; he does not understand the difficulties faced by those people and has the Opposition's careless attitude towards ensuring that families meet their budgets. He may snigger and laugh but the government is most concerned that the prices of those drinks have increased by 100 per cent.

I am pleased to note that the prices action group is active in the area, because experience shows that, in areas where a prices action group is active, the prices of goods in supermarkets in the surrounding areas are kept at a lower level. The matter will be taken up with the local supermarket, the New World supermarket at Lalor, to determine any reason it has for increasing the cost of those drinks. It seems that the buck has been passed between the local manager and the head office. This incident emphasises the need for the reintroduction of the prices peg legislation to ensure that price increases are kept under control.

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Community Services)—The honourable member for Gippsland East drew to my attention a double-fronted shop in Bairnsdale in his electorate, which he said had been rented for many months by Community Services Victoria to provide office space for the Office of Intellectual Disability Services. He said the rent payable for that shop was $400 a week. I say to the honourable member, simply and sincerely, that the predicament of intellectually disabled people is such that no dollar can be wasted that might contribute to their betterment and welfare. I expect any officer of Community Services Victoria to be zealous in ensuring that such waste is avoided. I shall pursue the matter he raised in that light.

The need of intellectually disabled people was also the subject of a contribution tonight by the honourable member for Box Hill, who has taken an outstanding interest in the welfare of community residential units, which have sprung up over the past six years in this State. Approximately 140 of those residential units have been established, providing accommodation for 700 people with intellectual disabilities, who would otherwise be required to be isolated from the community in large institutions. Pursuant to that announced interest by the honourable member for Box Hill in community residential units and the intellectually disabled people who live in them, the honourable member for Box Hill has headed a management review of the community residential unit system. That review has produced a set of nineteen practical and commonsense recommendations, of which seventeen have now been accepted by the government.

The cost of accepting these recommendations on community residential units will be $363 000 in the current year and, of course, twice that amount in a full financial year.
No honourable member would regard these funds as ill spent, given the way in which the availability of community residential units has enriched the lives of intellectually disabled people who live in them and given also the faithful reflection that the move of large institutions into community residential units provides for Victoria's social justice strategy.

The provision of these additional resources for the community residential unit network is part of a huge increase in support of the intellectual disability services which have been appropriated by successive Ministers of the government. Six years ago the sum provided for intellectual disability services in Victoria was $62 million; and it is now $147 million.

Today I was able to announce a comprehensive package of new measures for intellectually disabled people, of which the implementation of the recommendations of the management review committee headed by the honourable member for Box Hill is a part.

The full year value of the package is $11.3 million, and it will have the effect of providing residential accommodation for a large number of residents of institutions where it is not possible for their capacities to be fully developed or, alternatively, for those who are living in difficult circumstances with their families, where in many cases the position cannot be sustained for much longer.

In addition, the new package of measures for the intellectually disabled makes extensive provision for open support of an employment policy, which the government has implemented and which has made it possible for many intellectually disabled persons to receive training and subsequently take their place in the normal work force.

New opportunities will be provided for training and further development of staff who will work in the interests of intellectually disabled persons and for a variety of non-government organisations which pull their weight in the cause of social justice for the physically and intellectually disabled community in this State.

The House and the wider community are deeply indebted to the honourable member for Box Hill for her practical contribution to the welfare of these people, and I am delighted to be able to inform the House of the practical support which the government has made available on the recommendations of her committee.

The motion was agreed to.

*The House adjourned at 10.54 p.m.*
Thursday, 4 August 1988

The SPEAKER (the Hon. C. T. Edmunds) took the chair at 10.34 a.m. and read the prayer.

ABSENCE OF MINISTERS

The SPEAKER—Order! I am advised that the Premier will be absent from questions without notice as he is accompanying the British Prime Minister. I am also advised that the Minister for Water Resources is absent, but will be in the House later today.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr MACLELLAN (Berwick)—I refer the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources, to his answer to my question yesterday and his subsequent personal explanation in the House last night.

In regard to the sub-underwriting agreement entered into concerning Wallace International Ltd and Bain and Co. to float Wallace International Ltd, is it not a fact that the Minister further misled Parliament last night through his personal explanation because the Minister himself and Mr Beattie, general manager of the corporation, exchanged letters on 4 November 1987 whereby the Minister agreed that the corporation should fully underwrite the Wallace International Ltd float for $25 million?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—It is extraordinary that on this the third day of the Parliamentary sessional period, with a range of very significant social issues facing this State, the Opposition should be focusing its attention in Parliament in the way it has been. It is extraordinary and it demonstrates how bereft the Opposition is with respect to being in touch with the community at large.

I stand by comments I made in the House yesterday and as elaborated on in my personal explanation last night. The facts of the matter once again on the issue raised by the honourable member for Berwick are: that following discussions earlier in the day, I received a letter from the general manager of the corporation dated 4 November referring to the proposal for the corporation to be involved in the sub-underwriting concerning the float of Wallace International Ltd.

In my letter also dated 4 November, I indicated my approval for the corporation to be involved in the sub-underwriting. I have checked again with the head of my department who, in fact, drafted the letter, and the later letter I shall refer to dated 6 November, and at no stage was it his intention or mine for the corporation to be seen as fully sub-underwriting that float.

I note with interest that in the question asked yesterday by the honourable member for Berwick he used the words, "fully sub-underwriting". My letter of 4 November does not use the word "fully" at all. It simply states that I am willing to approve the corporation being involved in the sub-underwriting for the float.

In response to my letter of 4 November, there were further discussions with representatives from Bain and Co.—the stockbrokers—and the corporation and, arising
from those discussions, the proposal for what I would describe as approval in principle came into force.

There was a subsequent letter dated 6 November from the general manager of the corporation saying that we had had these discussions and that the corporation was now proposing that those were the details. It sets out those who are to participate in the sub-underwriting and provides for the corporation to be involved to the extent of $12.5 million.

In my letter of 6 November, in response to his letter of 6 November, I approved that detail; that is the $12.5 million. I repeat—and state categorically—that at no stage was it my intention or that of my department or the corporation to fully underwrite the flotation.

It certainly was a proposal brought forward by the stockbrokers and the corporation. Perhaps it would have been prepared to entertain it, but when it was brought to my attention—

Mr Maclellan—Will you make those letters available?

Mr FORDHAM—The letters, as I said yesterday in relation to another question, are commercial, were written in confidence and relate to the issues at hand. I do not think it is appropriate. If the honourable member for Berwick wants to impugn my integrity, that is his prerogative. I hope he knows me well enough and will accept the explanation and the statements I have made on this issue.

I reiterate the comments made yesterday that the intention of the corporation was to assist an industry in accordance with the government's overall economic strategy. It was seen that the pharmaceutical industry was one that was deserving of support within this country and that this particular proposal, in terms of ongoing support for the Wallace International Ltd group, was appropriate in the circumstances at the time.

I am sure honourable members would appreciate that the stock market crash in late October last year caused a significant disruption to the financial markets within this State. The Victorian Economic Development Corporation had to make a decision quickly, and that decision was made.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—I refer the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources to his answer to the question I asked yesterday. I further refer the Minister to the undertaking he gave to assist in the float to Wallace International Ltd to some degree or other. At that time, was it a fact that the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources told officials of Wallace International Ltd that the Minister's office would get up to $7 million of the balance of the money from the Gas and Fuel Corporation Superannuation Fund? I ask the Minister to inform the House who approached the Gas and Fuel Corporation Superannuation Fund to obtain that money?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I am certainly not aware of who approached the Gas and Fuel Corporation Superannuation Fund. Obviously, as part of their job, the stockbrokers would have approached a range of authorities seeking their involvement in the flotation. I am not aware of officers in the Department of Industry, Technology and Resources undertaking that task. If the Leader of the National Party has some details, I will be pleased to follow up that issue in accordance with the standard arrangements.

Mr HARROWFIELD (Mitcham)—Given the recent focus on companies that have been assisted by the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, including the negative comments from the prophets of doom on the Opposition benches, will the
Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources indicate the success of some of the firms that have been assisted as a result of initiatives of the corporation?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—As I mentioned yesterday, since its inception in 1981, the Victorian Economic Development Corporation has provided development finance to some 1600 organisations. Although there has inevitably been a small proportion of problem accounts, in the majority of cases the corporation has played a key role in establishing new or developing existing companies.

As I said earlier, it is estimated that approximately 40,000 jobs have been created in Victoria through the significant finance that has been provided across the State by the corporation. I keep emphasising that much of that has gone to country Victoria, and that is in response to both the legislation and the traditional role of the corporation. Those funds also tend to act as a catalyst for additional funding.

I shall mention some of the individual success stories. Many honourable members would be familiar with them because they have approached me about them.

Mr Hann—You said the figures were confidential and you would not make them available.

Mr FORDHAM—I am not releasing the individual amounts of money—of course I am not referring to them. Machine Dynamics Pty Ltd is one example of a success story. That company makes technically advanced robotic and automated equipment. The Victorian Economic Development Corporation has supported the company on several occasions since 1982 and the company is now producing equipment at the leading edge of robotic technology in the world. Some 60 people operate from the Knoxfield centre.

Another example is Horticultural Holdings, a company becoming increasingly known not only in Victoria but also across Australia. It is a holding company for some 30 companies and is now one of Australia's largest producers and exporters of horticultural products. Since the corporation has been involved, employment in Horticultural Holdings has increased from 50 to 220 employees. The company's operation is now the largest exporter of berry fruit in Australia and is Victoria's main producer of cut flowers. It has a protea plantation at Gembrook comprising 350 acres, which is now the largest in the world.

The honourable member for Benalla would no doubt speak about—

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr FORDHAM—The honourable member is very supportive of Monsbent Pty Ltd, Australia's latest and most modern chipboard factory. It is the largest independent laminator of particle board in Australia and the most cost effective.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr FORDHAM—Finally there is a confession that it is not all bad. Monsbent Pty Ltd employs 90 people in that community and is held in very high regard.

Hickory Fashions Pty Ltd was assisted by the Victorian Economic Development Corporation to make the company 100 per cent Australian owned after many years of United States ownership and control. Some 450 Victorian jobs were saved through assistance to Hickory Fashions Pty Ltd.

I could go through example after example of companies that have been assisted in this way, in terms of country Victoria, in terms of the transfer of new technology and in terms of the development of tourism in this State. The only attitude that the Liberal
Party takes towards these companies relates to its mail-order campaign seeking financial assistance. Any losses that are incurred by the corporation are more than made up for by its outstanding record of assistance to industry in Victoria. It has taken a leadership role in assisting Victoria's economic development.

While the Opposition is attacking the veracity and capacity of the corporation, it is obviously attacking the credibility of those hundreds of companies that have been associated with the corporation through its work. It is obviously the intention of the Opposition to undermine business in Victoria and, as such, it is certainly going down the same road as the Greiner government in New South Wales. As a small warning to the Opposition, I refer to the editorial that appeared in this morning's Australian Financial Review, which refers to political parties that go off the rails and start to undermine business and the financial climate in the area in which they operate. No matter what the Opposition says, the Victorian government and the Victorian Economic Development Corporation are backing Victorian businesses and creating thousands of jobs.

Ironically, the Liberal Party was one of the original supporters of the corporation. The government has been pleased and proud to take up that mantle and to do so successfully. Six years later, the Opposition is in the same position that it was in when it left office: it has no policies and no programs and it only denigrates those who are achieving anything in this State.

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—I refer the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources to his answer to my question yesterday when he said that the formal resolution of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board to the Wallace International Ltd sub-underwriting agreement was approved in February before any final commitments were entered into by the corporation and before the whole matter was put into effect. I ask the Minister: is it not a fact that the sub-underwriting agreement between the corporation and Bain and Co. was signed and sealed by the corporation on 6 November 1987, some three months prior to the board retrospectively approving the sub-underwriting agreement?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—The dates outlined by the honourable member are, in fact, correct. The point I was making yesterday was that the February meeting of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board was on the crucial decision of whether it would agree to proceed with the issue and, as I said yesterday, to put the whole agreement into effect. That decision was made at the February meeting and not, as suggested in the question, some seven months following the flotation.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—I refer the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources to his answer yesterday and to his answer a few moments ago that there was nothing binding on the Victorian Economic Development Corporation before 19 February and that the board on that day gave approval to the Wallace International Ltd sub-underwriting agreement. Is it a fact that, before giving its approval, the board was advised that it was legally bound by the November sub-underwriting agreement?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—It is not my intention to comment on legal advice given or not given to the Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board. I am certainly not familiar with what detailed advice was sought and received. I simply repeat the answer I gave to the honourable member for Brighton; the decision to proceed was made at the February meeting of the corporation's board.
PUBLIC AUTHORITY DIVIDEND

Mrs GLEESON (Thomastown)—Will the Treasurer advise the House whether consideration has been or is being given to the abolition of the public authority dividend imposed on public authorities? If so, what effect will such abolition have on both the State Budget and services provided to Victorians?

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

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I did hear the question, and I thank the honourable member for asking it. It is certainly a very important policy matter.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr JOLLY—Obviously the Opposition is bereft of policies, as has been demonstrated once again today. The public authority dividend policy was introduced by the government in 1983 as a significant move towards commercialising the operation of Victoria's major business authorities. It was introduced in line with two other elements of the government's policy: one was to introduce greater return pricing and the other was to ensure that Victoria had professional management in its major business enterprises.

Since the operation of the public authority dividend payments there has been an improved performance in our business enterprises. This was the first time these enterprises recognised that equity had an opportunity cost. Previously, they assumed that it was zero, and that led to major distortions in decision making within the State. One of the by-products has been that gas and electricity prices in Victoria are lower than those in other States of Australia, and they are also world competitive. That has brought about significant improvements in industry investment for energy-intensive firms. Again, that has brought about more jobs in Victoria, and is one of the reasons why Victoria has the lowest unemployment rate of any State in Australia. That is a remarkable performance.

During the Parliamentary recess, Victoria reached a period of five years as the State with the lowest unemployment rate. That is unprecedented in Victoria's history and in the nation's history. No other State has been able to achieve such a remarkable performance. One of the basic reasons for that result was that the Cain government was prepared to make public sector enterprises efficient and effective. That fact was totally ignored by the previous Liberal government. Since Labor has come to office, Victoria has been involved in a dramatic turnaround.

Another interesting aspect associated with that policy is that the rate of increases in charges has been reduced. There has been a reduction in real terms, in stark contrast to the situation when the Liberal Party was in office, when large real increases in charges were recorded, particularly electricity charges.

Honourable members will be aware that prior to the Cain government being elected to office in 1982 there had been an increase in electricity charges of almost 20 per cent. However, they may not be aware that in 1982 the Liberal Party planned for a 25 per cent increase in electricity charges. I repeat: 25 per cent!

It was not until the government introduced the public authority dividend and the rate of return pricing policy that we were able to turn that around and reduce charges in real terms. That is an outstanding record. The public authority dividend is an important source of revenue to the State Budget.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr JOLLY — It is at least recognised by one member of the Opposition! It is very important for two reasons: firstly, it has been achieved in the context of reducing real
charges of those public authorities and, secondly, because more than $200 million revenue is raised from the public authority dividend, it means lower taxes for Victorians.

Where does the Opposition stand on this matter? They have been like "Flip" and "Flop". They have "Flipper" from Brighton denigrating the public authority dividend payment and, on the other side, the Leader of the Opposition is in nowhere land; he is the flop side of the record. We all know why he is the flop side. "Flip" and "Flop" have been changing their minds continually. Apparently, in an exclusive report—I dare say "Mr Flop" hoped that it was not reported—the Leader of the Opposition supported the public authority dividend payment. Where are they? I should like to hear whether the Opposition does or does not support the public authority dividend, because if not—

Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the House has been tolerant in listening to the Treasurer. He is debating the question and I ask you to bring him back to order under Standing Order No. 127.

The SPEAKER—Order! I uphold two points of order: I ask the Treasurer, firstly, to address honourable members by their formal titles during the course of his remarks and, secondly, to cease debating the matter in his reply to the question.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I am guided by your ruling, Mr Speaker, and I shall refer to the Leader of the Opposition, who has performed a flop act. If the public authority dividend were abolished it would have two major effects on the State of Victoria: firstly, it would remove an important plank of commercialisation of major public sector enterprises and it would lead to less pressure being placed on them to improve the efficiency of their operations. I note that, as a result of improvement in efficiency, productivity in the State Electricity Commission in particular has been remarkable. Secondly, large increases in taxation in Victoria would occur. I totally reject that, and it is about time the Opposition made its position clear.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr MACLELLAN (Berwick)—Will the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources further establish his veracity by making available copies of his letters of 4 and 6 November 1987, relating to the VEDC sub-underwriting agreement for the Wallace International Ltd float so that Parliament may establish that it is signed, sealed and effective as of 6 November 1987, and that the further truth of the matters raised by the Minister in Parliament can be tested by the documents?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—The answer is, "No".

Mr Kennett interjected.

Mr FORDHAM—Big mouth—what are you laughing at? The Leader of the Opposition has finally got upset about something! I wonder why? You had a great week: done in in the party room; two failed days in Parliament, and now you are into a third. This is the party of business!

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER—Order! I am aware that the House is excited and I ask the House to behave itself. The Deputy Premier should cease shouting across the table and respond to the question.
Mr FORDHAM—Mr Speaker, I was provoked by the inane comments of the Leader of the Opposition. The Liberal Party used to pride itself as the party of business. How can it possibly expect a government authority to work with business and ask it to provide confidential information of the sort requested!

The Opposition is on a fishing expedition. It expects an important government corporation and its dealings with the private sector to be paraded across the desks of members of the Opposition and misused in the obvious way that the Opposition has demonstrated in recent weeks.

The actions of the Opposition are an indication of the depths to which it is prepared to go. It is desperate after a disastrous week; the party dumped its Leader in a key vote on Tuesday morning. It is no wonder that the Age poll this morning has shown once again that the government will stay in office.

PRICES PEG

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—Will the Minister for Property and Services, in his responsibility for prices, inform the House what action he proposes to take to keep increases in the cost of household necessities in line with increases in wages that are likely to occur over the next twelve months?

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Property and Services)—I thank the honourable member for his question. He ought to be congratulated for the amount of work on prices that he has done in his electorate.

The provisions of the Grocery Prices Act have proved most successful. Prior to its implementation, Melbourne's grocery prices, year after year, were the highest throughout Australia. As a result of that legislation, Melbourne's grocery prices became among the lowest of Australian capital cities.

Since the defeat of the Grocery Prices (Amendment) Bill during the last sessional period, the government is concerned to learn that Melbourne's grocery prices have again recorded some of the highest increases in comparison with other capital cities. It is clear that the action of the Opposition in opposing the legislation has cost the community approximately $21 million because of additional increases in grocery costs.

The honourable member for Brighton referred to floods in other States of Australia being the cause of significant increases in the cost of fresh vegetables and some other items. I remind honourable members that there are approximately 4000 items in supermarkets and the majority of those increases in prices can hardly be blamed on the floods in New South Wales and northern Tasmania.

Members of the Opposition seem to believe the community is not concerned about increases in grocery prices. They should talk to the consumers outside supermarkets around Melbourne. If they did that they would find strong support for continuing to restrict increases in prices of grocery items.

It is difficult to ascertain what the Liberal Party policy is on the pricing of grocery items. The infamous telephone call between the Leader of the Opposition and Mr Andrew Peacock, the honourable member for Kooyong in the Federal Parliament, during the Central Highlands Province by-election, provided some information on the Opposition's policy, because the Leader of the Opposition admitted that the Liberal Party had damaged its reputation by not supporting the grocery prices legislation.
Members of the Opposition should visit their electorates and talk to the consumers outside supermarkets. They would get a clear indication of the public support for restraint on increases in grocery prices.

Members of the Labor Party do not talk to the Hugh Morgan’s and John Elliott’s of this world. We talk to real people, the people in Niddrie and the mums and dads in the electorate of Mentone; they have told us that grocery prices should be maintained at a reasonable level.

Mr Leigh interjected.

Mr SPYKER—The honourable member for Malvern should visit supermarkets in his electorate and talk to people there. See what answer he gets! The government will be reintroducing the grocery prices measure. It has taken on board some of the comments that have been made. It is hoped the National Party understands how important the proposed legislation is to containing prices in rural Victoria. I am sure it is looking forward to the introduction of the proposed legislation.

Following discussions with retailers and manufacturers, who I am certain are keen to cooperate, the proposed legislation will be introduced to ensure Victorians pay the lowest prices in Australia.

PETITIONS

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

Bus services

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

The humble petition of residents of Mackie Road, East Bentleigh, respectfully requests that the proposal to remove bus route 632, from Oakleigh to Middle Brighton, through Mackie Road, be reconsidered and the existing bus route be retained.

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

By Mr Hockley (1032 signatures)

Firearms restrictions

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

We, the undersigned women of Victoria draw the Parliament’s attention to the danger still posed to the women and children of this State by the widespread and easy availability of firearms and respectfully do petition as follows:

1. that legislation be enacted which would place a ban on semiautomatic weapons as being dangerous and out of proportion to their legitimate use;

2. that legislation restrict the ownership of firearms to those who have a legitimate purpose for their use, who would in each case be trained and hold a licence; and

3. that Parliament strengthen the gun legislation in order to reduce the number of guns in households in this State.

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

By Mrs Ray (134 signatures)
Caging and trapping of birds

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

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Victoria respectfully shows their opposition to the cruel and unnecessary caging of birds and the breeding and trapping of birds for trade. Birds cannot live a natural life confined as ornaments in a cage.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the caging, trapping and selling of birds be made illegal immediately.

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

By Mrs Ray (1017 signatures)

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

PAPERS

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

Law Reform Commission—Report No. 13 on Rape and Allied Offences.

APPROPRIATION MESSAGE

The SPEAKER 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 Licensing Authorities (Amendment) Bill.

WORKS AND SERVICES (ANCILLARY PROVISIONS, 1988–1989, No. 2) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer) moved for leave to bring in a Bill to make further ancillary provisions for certain works and purposes for the financial year 1988–89.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr LEIGH (Malvern)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I wonder whether you have overlooked a personal explanation by the honourable member for Monbulk regarding events that occurred last evening.

The SPEAKER—Order! There is no point of order.

FORWARD FINANCIAL PLANNING

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—I move:

That this House calls on the government to prepare Victoria for a plan to rescue the State from the economic disaster its policies have produced, and in particular to—(a) release forward estimates of expenditure and receipts for 1988–89 and available subsequent years; (b) prepare an effective program for substantial restraint in State government expenditure, taxation and loan raisings; and (c) implement that expenditure restraint program forthwith so as to give Victoria the advantage of reversal of the government's profligate spending and to remove financial mismanagement within State government economic agencies.
Mr ROWE (Essendon)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I direct to your attention Notice Paper No. 74, issued on Tuesday, 2 August 1988, where paragraph (a) of Notices of Motion, General Business, No. 1 calls on the government “to immediately release forward estimates of expenditure and receipts for 1987–88”; and paragraph (c) calls on the government “to implement that expenditure restraint program from June 1987”. This is a stupid motion. I ask you, Mr Speaker, to indicate why the motion has been changed by the honourable member for Brighton from that appearing on Notice Paper No. 74.

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—This is a puerile attempt by the government—

The SPEAKER—Order! The debate may proceed when the point of order has been resolved. I do not intend to hear a debate regarding the subject matter of the motion at this stage, but I am prepared to hear matters on the point of order.

Mr STOCKDALE—I am referring to the point of order, Mr Speaker. This is a pathetic attempt by the honourable member for Essendon, as it is clear that the motion has been on the Notice Paper for a considerable time. The motion was drafted to take account of the circumstances prevailing at the time. It was put on the Notice Paper initially and, in common with most other motions that come before Parliament, it was to raise issues of general significance which are of an abiding nature and which are just as relevant today as they were then.

It would, of course, be futile for Parliament to debate the motion in the form in which it was first drawn with reference to the various times raised. The motion would not have allowed the substantive issues at which it was directed to be raised. Accordingly, I consulted with the Clerks as to how the motion could be put in a form that would ensure that the debate dealt with the substantive issues and not so that the Treasurer would be able to play games with the matter by pointing out that, with the passage of time, the motion was not directed at these issues.

I took the course directed by the Clerks to ensure that the House was not diverted into frivolous issues of no substance by cheap point-scoring. The motion has been put in a form that will not allow that to occur. In addition, I acknowledge the assistance of the Clerks who brought to my attention that I had omitted to discuss the matter with the Treasurer. I had intended to raise it with him but, because of pressure of other matters, I had not done so.

I discussed the motion with the Treasurer and he raised the points raised by the honourable member for Essendon. Obviously there was further consultation to try to score cheap political points on this issue. It is an attack on the standing of the House!

The SPEAKER—Order! I do not intend to entertain debate on this matter by the honourable member for Brighton. The honourable member has made a contribution in respect of the point of order. If he wishes to make a personal explanation or to debate the subject matter of the motion, that is another matter. He may do that when he is called. I am prepared to hear any other points he may have relating to the point of order.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—The honourable member for Brighton placed the motion on the Notice Paper many months ago; so why was it placed on the Notice Paper in the same form as recently as yesterday and then changed today? I accept that it was put on the Notice Paper twelve months ago because I read it, as did every member of Parliament. Why was the motion changed during this 24-hour period?

How can Parliament be taken seriously by the press and by the electorate at large if these sorts of incidents occur in the running of Parliament? On what basis was this
substantial change made between yesterday and today to the motion that has for
twelve months appeared on the Notice Paper?

Mr RAMSAY (Balwyn)—On the same point of order, it is an unreasonable point
of order that is being raised by the government backbenchers. If the House is to have
meaningful debate on items listed as General Business, with a long head start in terms
of time—it was necessary for the honourable member for Brighton to give notice of
the motion many months ago—it is only sensible that the House should agree to the
alteration of the particular terms, which do not change the subject of the debate that
the honourable member for Brighton wishes to bring before the House. It simply
makes it relevant to the precise issues of the day, issues which have not changed in
substance from the time when the honourable member placed the matter on the
Notice Paper, framing it in suitable terms for that time. It is now necessary to frame
the motion so that it is in suitable terms for debate in August 1988. I suggest that there
is no point of order on the issues raised by the honourable member for Essendon.

The SPEAKER—Order! I acknowledge that the honourable member for Benambra
also wishes to contribute to the debate on the point of order, but I do not intend to
continue hearing further responses to the point of order. There is no mystery about
what has occurred in respect of the matter before the House. Standing Order No. 53
states:

After a notice of motion has been given, the terms thereof may be altered by the member on delivering
at the Table an amended notice, at least one day prior to the day for proceeding with such motion.

This Standing Order was complied with by the honourable member for Brighton after
discussion with the Clerk and myself. I understand he has had discussions with the
Treasurer. I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—The motion raises a general issue and a series of
specific issues. The general issue is the abject failure of the Cain government to achieve
even its own objective in bringing the Victorian economy into a position which
enables Victorian industry to compete effectively on more dynamic and more intensely
competitive international markets so vital to the standard of living of ordinary
Victorian people. I shall come back to that matter shortly.

The specific issues raised are related to one technical matter, the lack of availability
of forward estimates of government expenditure; and two other matters in relation to
proposals for expenditure restraint—taxation restraint and loan raising restraint, and
the timing of those measures so as to maximise their benefit to the Victorian economy
and, therefore, to the Victorian people.

Before I go into the major economic matters raised by this issue, I want to deal with
the specific question of published forward estimates. As the motion indicates, the
Victorian Liberal Party has been calling on the government for more than a year to
adopt a policy of publishing forward estimates. The economic debate in this country
has become a great deal more sophisticated than it ever was during the past few years.

The Commonwealth government over many years adopted a policy of publishing
its forward estimates so that debate could be conducted on a logical basis which took
account of the long-term consequences of the actions of government.

Nothing less is now required in the Victorian context. Indeed, the Victorian context
makes out an even stronger case for the publishing of forward estimates of government
expenditure and receipts.

This State suffers from two problems. Firstly, it is suffering from enormous adverse
effects, particularly in the area of long-term liabilities incurred and unfunded liabilities
accumulated as a result of the failed policies of this government, so that in the first
place we have the government consistently over the years of its period in office having adopted short-term policy measures and short-term expedience by introducing new schemes, such as WorkCare, which have had a dramatic impact in the short term, but the long-term effects of which have not been fully apparent to most participants in the public debate and throughout the wider community.

Secondly, we have the government adopting the practice of changing accounting practices in the Budget sector—particularly in the Budget sector, and right across the Victorian public sector—from one year to another and adopting—to put it at its lowest—accounting practices and procedures which have been highly controversial. The Opposition would go so far as to say they are even misleading.

The Opposition does not expect the government to endorse the assertion that it has adopted misleading accounting practices, but it has, at the very least, been controversial. Even the Treasurer could not dispute the fact that a number of accounting practices of the government have aroused controversy in the community about whether they exhibit the true state of public finance.

We need to know not just the claimed effect of policies adopted this year, but the base we are building for future years' policies. To what extent has the government, for example, in increasing payroll tax in the last Budget, in increasing land tax in the last Budget and in increasing stamp duties in the last Budget, laid the ground for substantial increases in State taxation revenue simply by reaping the whirlwind of future inflation? That would have been apparent, had fair dinkum and accurate forward estimates of expenditure and receipts been issued before the last Budget was published or even after the last Budget was released.

There is an urgent need, particularly with the imminent State election, for a properly informed public debate about the state of finances in Victoria. There has been a great deal of attention in the media and in the wider community to the disclosures of the New South Wales Liberal government only this week that, upon assuming office and conducting the audit of the finances of the State, the government discovered many billions of dollars in undisclosed liabilities and the State has debts and liabilities to the tune of $46 billion.

I confidently predict that, when the same task is undertaken upon the return to government of the Liberal Party after the next Victorian State election, the position will be shown to be even worse in this State. The government has adopted and maintained high spending policies. Its programs of expenditure have been marked by profligate expenditure, by new and expensive programs, and by waste and mismanagement of the resources of Victorian taxpayers, each year building a new base for the further effects of accelerated public expenditure in the State in future Budgets.

The Victorian people are simply entitled to know the long and medium-term effects of the policies the government implements on both the expenditure and revenue sides of the Budget. I put it no less high than this: the debate about Victorian public finance cannot be conducted on a proper basis if the government continues to hide the facts about the effect of its policies on future commitments to expenditure and on future patterns of receipts.

What possible basis can the government have for not publishing the forward estimates? What is it hiding? Why is it so sensitive to informed public debate? Why cannot a government that claims to be in the forefront of providing Budget information take the course of making available to people interested in public finance the forward estimates which show the future trends of the decisions that the Treasurer is making this year and inflicting upon the Victorian community?
There is an urgent need for the media, commentators, academics, business, and the people themselves, to have the opportunity of assessing government policies in the light of their trends and effects beyond the first year of implementation. Moreover, the publishing of forward estimates, if it were undertaken honestly, would act as a discipline on the government. Perhaps this is the reason the Treasurer does not want to publish the forward estimates. Last year in the State Budget the Treasurer made projections about the effects of the revenue changes he made that year. Indeed, he predicted that the changes in payroll tax scales he made in the last State Budget would have the effect of increasing payroll tax receipts by about 5 per cent.

We now know, from the Niemeyer statement, to the end of May 1988 that payroll tax receipts are up 9 per cent. The Treasurer claims this is due to increased economic activity. It is no doubt true that there is a boom in the real estate market and, in particular, a boom in industrial and commercial properties. However, that of itself does not explain the enormous increase in payroll tax receipts.

Dr Coghill interjected.

Mr STOCKDALE—I am speaking about payroll tax at present. If the honourable member for Werribee wishes to interject he should listen and I shall deal with stamp duty later. If the honourable member listened instead of interjecting inanely he would understand the point I am making.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! Interjections are disorderly.

Mr STOCKDALE—I shall return to the effect of the real estate boom on stamp duty rates in a minute. However, the effect on payroll tax is not readily apparent. If one examines other indicators, one finds the government’s projections about economic growth, the underlying real growth in the economy, appear to be optimistic in the light of the available information and that demand indicators are not growing as strongly as the government growth projections would have suggested. Indeed, manufacturing production has failed to meet the sort of projections the government published in the Budget last year and, despite the talking-up it has done, exports have not grown as readily as the government projected.

Therefore, payroll tax receipts cannot be regarded as being due to even greater economic growth than the Budget’s optimistic projections suggested. What they reflect is the fact that the great bulk of payroll taxpayers in the 5 per cent bracket now pay 6 per cent.

The Treasurer will reply that he changed the threshold of the payroll tax system and changed some of the other ways in which payroll tax is levied so that, if one assumes payroll size did not change, on a standstill basis, many of these people would not pay increases in payroll tax. Their rate of payroll tax might not increase by the full amount of 5 per cent to the 6 per cent movement.

However, that is not what happens in the real world. What happens in the real world is that employment grows, albeit slowly, wages increase, and the amount upon which payroll tax is levied is increasing. It is not static and reflected in the figures the Treasurer gave in the Budget last year or the figures he used as the basis for accusing me of being a liar when the real world discloses that the figures put the lie to the Treasurer’s own statement.

The Treasurer has attempted to mislead the people of this State. For every additional $1 of payroll that an employer pays this year, he will pay 6 per cent in payroll tax whereas he paid 5 per cent last year. The Treasurer can no more deny that than fly to the moon. That increase in payroll tax is a substantial contributor to the overrun of payroll tax receipts.
The Treasurer forecast that land tax receipts would decrease by 1.6 per cent. In fact, to the end of May, they have increased by 6.1 per cent. Again, that reflects the effect of the restructuring of the land tax scale compounding with increasing values.

In last year's Budget, the Treasurer tried to mislead the people of Victoria. He said the government was indexing the land tax scale to the general movement in property values across Victoria. That loads land tax against the people who pay it. By loading at the bottom of the scale a lot of landholders who do not pay property tax, but counting the changes in their property values to work out the average level of increase, the Treasurer understates the effect at the top of the scale. The restructuring created greater pressure on landholders at the top end of the scale, and that increased land tax receipts. The proof of that is not my say so; it is the published figures that the Treasurer issues in the monthly National Institute of Economic and Industry Research statements, which show, as at May this year, a 6 per cent increase and not the 1.6 per cent reduction forecast by the Treasurer. The Treasurer has cynically manipulated the scales to ensure his tax take increases.

There has been a massive increase in stamp duties way above that which was projected. In round figures, the Treasurer projected a 9 per cent increase in stamp duty receipts, and that projection included all stamp duties and not just real estate stamp duties. There is no dissent from the fact that share market and property transfers are the explanation for the fantastic overrun in stamp duty receipts. Those receipts have increased not by 9 per cent but by 34 per cent. That reflects the fact that Victorians pay more in stamp duty than the people of any other State.

The area where the differential is highest is at the top end of the land tax scale with properties of more than $170,000 in value. Last year, the Treasurer increased stamp duties on those properties. There is a compound of three factors: firstly, a rapid increase in the turnover of properties; secondly, in some segments of the market, there has been rapid price inflation; and, thirdly, on properties valued at more than $170,000, in last year's Budget the Treasurer increased the rates of stamp duty. He did that knowing that it would dramatically increase stamp duty receipts. Many homeowners are paying a lot more in stamp duty this year than they would have paid had they purchased a house last year. Many homeowners are being disadvantaged.

As with so many of the revenue initiatives of this government, the scale has been heavily slanted to impact on business. The biggest impact of the savage increases in last year's Budget is seen in the commercial and industrial areas. People who are struggling to maintain competitiveness in business are being hardest hit by the increases in land tax, stamp duties and payroll tax. That is compounding their problems and undermining their competitiveness, and that is why the Treasurer has no desire to give any more than the misleading figures on revenue projection that are published in the Budget each year. That is why the Treasurer is not prepared to indicate the full pattern of expenditure under the Budget. He does not want people to know because he wants the option of manipulating the figures in the Budget to suit himself and his own political purposes. He wants to hide the true effect of the government's policies on Victorian industry, the economy and, most particularly, on Victorian families and individuals. The Treasurer cannot afford truth and light because he manipulates figures, makes misleading statements, hides the truth and tries to dupe the people. It would be harder for him to do that if he were to publish the forward estimates because he would be locked into his projections years in advance.

I shall turn back to the effects of the glorious socialist revolution! The Treasurer likes to make two claims. Honourable members used to hear fulsome economic reviews from the Treasurer; he used to regale us with all types of statistics. The Treasurer now repeats only two statistics ad nauseam, which he did again this morning during questions without notice. Even with the manipulators and apparatchiki from
the Treasury and with all the Australian Labor Party hacks put on the public payroll to keep the propaganda machine functioning, the Treasurer can establish his case in only two areas: firstly, he claims credit in the employment area. The Treasurer likes to claim that Victoria had had the lowest unemployment rate for 62 consecutive months. The second claim is about new capital investment. The Treasurer likes to boast about the share of new capital investment taking place in Victoria. In round figures, Victoria's share of Australia's population is 26 per cent. The figure for the second last year for which figures were available was 26 per cent and last year it dropped to 25.9 per cent. Because of that, one would expect that Victoria would have a higher share of new fixed capital investment than the average at this time.

The mining industry is currently flat on its back and, far from investing in equipment, across the country industry is reducing its utilisation of assets and demand on markets because it is not increasing enough to maintain investment programs. Victoria, with a lower proportionate share of Australia's mining industry, is now being dragged down by the lack of investment activity in that industry.

Victoria is one of Australia's two great manufacturing centres. It has been claimed by many people that recent economic trends in world markets and in the national economy have given a stimulus to manufacturing investment. If there is a boom in manufacturing investment, one would expect Victoria to gain from it and that its investment figures would be more healthy than those of the other States that do not have such a high proportion of Australia's manufacturing industry.

Victoria's rural industries are relatively efficient on national and international scales. Therefore, with the increase in commodity prices over the past year, one would expect investment opportunities to have risen in other States which perhaps would be under less pressure than Victoria. Again, Victoria would be relatively advantaged rather than disadvantaged in terms of its share of new capital investment. In the private sector, one would expect that Victoria's share of new fixed capital investment would be higher than a strictly pro rata proportion on a population basis. Another factor is that this is a high spending government.

This is a government which over the past three years has borrowed more than any other State government in the country. This is a government with huge and rapidly increasing public sector capital expenditure. One would expect that the contribution to capital investment would also give Victoria a boost and that it would be doing very well. What are the figures? With 26 per cent of the Australian population, in 1986 Victoria's share of new fixed capital investment was 28.3 per cent. Therefore, despite all the advantages Victoria has and despite all the things that one would expect would give Victoria a much better than proportionate performance, in fact, its performance is barely above the proportion of its population.

What happened in 1987? The comparable figure was 25.8 per cent; that is, Victoria had 25.8 per cent of new fixed capital investment in 1987. One would expect the position in 1988 to be even worse for Victoria. The figure for 1987 is particularly important because it shows two things: the first is that Victoria's share of new fixed capital investment in Australia is now below the level of its population share. Therefore, Victoria is doing proportionately badly, even if one does not take account of all the advantages that ought to produce a better performance in Victoria than in the other States. The second is that the figure has fallen. In 1986 it was 28.3 per cent and in 1987 it was 25.8 per cent. Victoria's share of new fixed capital investment is declining.

The glorious socialist revolution is going into decline. The State is actually beginning to pay the price for six years of profligate government spending. In so far as State government policies, expenditure, taxes and loan raisings impact on the performance
of the Victorian State economy, it is going downhill, not uphill, and all this is occurring in a climate where Australia is in deep trouble.

One could use a more popular expression that would not be quite appropriate in this House for the serious situation Victoria is in. We are in deep, deep trouble in terms of the level of capital investment in this country. There has been a period of slack domestic growth and of slow world growth when Australia has been growing more rapidly than many other countries. It faces renewed competition around the world. We face a bleak outlook for commodity prices. There is much doubt about whether the recent upturn in commodity prices will be sustained into 1989.

Over the past few years we had the opportunity of restructuring the Australian economy, redefining the relationship between government and industry, taking the pressure of government off industry and off the people, promoting restructuring of the economy and improving competitiveness, but with its high spending, high taxing and high borrowing policies, the Cain Labor government has thrown away that opportunity. It has destroyed the opportunity for Australian industry and Victorian industry in particular to increase its competitiveness. Therefore, in the very area that the Treasurer has selected for his boast—new capital expenditure—Victoria is not performing well; in fact, it is going downhill. It is falling behind even the rest of Australia, which is performing very badly.

Another great boast by the Treasurer was employment growth. Both issues of the government's so-called economic strategy document targeted employment growth as the other area of top priority. However, in the areas of employment and unemployment Victoria is performing badly. The Treasurer likes to boast about the level of unemployment. The fact is that over many decades Victoria has had one of the lowest unemployment rates in Australia. It was often, although not always, the State with the lowest rate, long before the Cain government's glorious socialist revolution came along. Victoria has often been among the States with the lowest unemployment rates; it has been No. 1 or No. 2 almost invariably and there are good reasons for that, of which the Treasurer is aware.

Those reasons have precious little to do with the performance of the Cain Labor government. They have to do with the basic structure of the Victorian economy and the fact that Victoria is one of Australia's great manufacturing centres. They have to do with the fact that Victoria is a compact State where the demand for infrastructure is lower than in the larger States such as Western Australia, New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland. The reasons also have to do with the fact that Victoria is blessed with relatively efficient rural industries that are even more efficient than the efficient industries in other parts of Australia. For example, it is the home of the finest wool industry in the world, in which a great boom is now occurring. Victoria is the State that has the lowest commitment to the mining industry, which has been in much trouble in the past decade. We have had things going for this State.

If one thinks about it, it is quite ludicrous for the Treasurer to claim that international economic trends are less important than the year-to-year policies of the Cain government over a six-year period. Would it have been possible for the Cain government to turn around an economy that did not have those natural advantages, that did not have the advantage of the huge growth in energy resources and the huge growth in manufacturing industry based on those energy resources? That growth is the result of the Bolte years. The good performance of the Victorian economy, in so far as it has performed well, is a result of the fact that over 27 years of Liberal government the State was given good, sound and responsible government that produced a well diversified and well founded economic base.
Let us examine the Treasurer's claim. What has the government achieved in employment growth and how has the glorious socialist revolution been doing in recent times? I shall refer to figures available since the last election. Between June 1985 and June 1986, 94 000 new jobs were added to the Victorian work force, which reflected the interaction of economic trends with the sound base that had been established over previous decades. Between June 1986 and June 1987 some 67 000 jobs were added, so there was a decline of almost one-third in the number of new jobs created in the Victorian economy between 1985 and 1986.

The latest figures available are for the period June 1987 to June 1988. They show that fewer than 20 000 new jobs were created. The figure is down to some 20 per cent; the figure is down 80 per cent compared with the growth in 1985—20 000 new jobs as compared with more than 90 000 in 1985. The glorious socialist revolution has again gone into a stall in another area that the Treasurer selected as an indicator of his success.

Recently unemployment has been declining throughout Australia and it is pleasing to note that the Victorian unemployment rate is now below the rate that the government inherited in 1982. However, throughout most of the period that the Cain government has been in office the unemployment rate has been higher than the rate left to the Cain government by the Thompson government in 1982. One can count on the fingers of one hand the number of quarters in which Victoria's unemployment rate has been below the rate that existed when the Cain government came to office. Far from the Treasurer's claim being accurate, the rate reflects the national improvement.

Mr Jolly interjected.

Mr STOCKDALE—I am not denying the fact. I am saying that the Treasurer is not entitled to any credit. The decline in the unemployment rate reflects the general national trend in employment. The figures follow the general trend.

In June this year, based on the latest figures available, there were 8200 more Victorians looking for work than when the Liberal Party was last in government. Therefore, the effect of the Cain Labor government's six years in office is that 8200 more Victorians cannot find jobs. There are 118 500 Victorians looking for and unable to find work, and I cannot accept that as satisfactory. I cannot accept—and I am sure the majority of Victorians regard it as an abysmal performance—that, after six years in which we had an opportunity of getting the Australian and Victorian economies back on to their feet, the end result is that 8200 more Victorians are out of work now than when the Cain government came to office.

I now turn to inflation. It has been said recently that Melbourne is becoming the inflation capital of Australia. The reality is that for each of the past three years for which figures are available, Melbourne's consumer price index increase has been above the national average. In 1984–85 Melbourne's increase was 4-5 per cent and the national weighted average for the eight capitals was 4-3 per cent. In 1985–86, Melbourne's increase was 8-5 per cent and the national weighted average was 8-4 per cent. In 1986–87, Melbourne's increase was 9-4 per cent and the national weighted average was 9-3 per cent. One cannot extract Melbourne from the total figure, but it is obvious that Victoria's capital is pushing up the average for the eight Australian capitals. These statistics do not allow one to provide a figure for the remainder of Australia, only for the eight capital cities as a whole. For three years Melbourne has been above the national average.

Moreover, inflation has been steadily increasing through that period. Despite the claims of the Victorian Treasurer, the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer, inflation—Australia's single biggest problem after debt—has been getting worse under
the theory of the glorious socialist revolution. In fact, Australia has an inflation rate that is many times the inflation rate of important trading partners and the countries with which it competes on the international market. Combined with the massive debt that has been accumulated under the Labor government’s failed policies, this inflation rate is eroding the competitiveness of Australian industry. At the very time we ought to be restructuring our economy, diversifying, taking account of and taking up new opportunities, improving our competitiveness and so on, the high taxing, high borrowing, high spending policies of Labor governments are driving this State and country into the mire and eroding the competitiveness of our industries.

The same can be said about last year, although inflation figures for the full year are not available. Last year Melbourne was a bad performer in the inflation stakes. Over that period its inflation rate was 1.8 per cent to 1.5 per cent for the first three quarters against 1.7 per cent to 1.8 per cent for the eight capitals. Unfortunately, it is true that one of the effects of the Cain Labor government’s failed policies is that Melbourne is again the inflation capital of Australia.

What is the Treasurer’s response? Yet again he has tried to delude the Victorian people. He constantly claims that the selected State and local government charges show that the Victorian government is not a high taxing government. That is an abject falsehood; it is not true. That index does not measure State taxation. The Australian Bureau of Statistics is at pains to point out that it is a measure of selected State and local government charges. It does not include any of the direct taxes paid by Victorians. It does reflect a number of State charges but, in the main, reflects only State and local government charges. That index is not a measure of State taxation, and it is dishonest for the Treasurer to claim that it does represent State taxes. What has been demonstrated by the analysis, which has not been disputed by the Treasurer, is that Victorians pay more in State taxation than do the citizens in any other State of Australia. Melbourne is both the highest taxed and highest inflation capital in Australia, and it is obvious that those two facts are related.

One reason why Melbourne is the inflation capital is that Victorians pay more in State taxes than do other Australian citizens. What effect has that had on Victorians? How are people reacting to the failure of the glorious socialist revolution—six years of waste and mismanagement? The simple answer is that they are leaving the State in droves. Victoria has the highest net interstate migration, and it is increasing. In 1982, 8757 more people left Victoria than migrated to this State. I shall refer the House to the period since the last State election. In 1985 10 290 more people left Victoria; in 1986 the net migration was 13 451; and in 1987 the net migration was 14 223. So not only have more than 14 000 people left Victoria than have come to Victoria, but also the figure has increased from 10 000 in 1985 to more than 14 000 in 1987. More and more people are leaving Victoria and our net migration figure is getting worse. So, on all those indicators Victoria is doing badly. People are voting with their feet in order to get away from the failure of the Cain government.

In the past the Treasurer has responded by saying that these people are leaving Victoria to retire in Queensland. The figures demonstrate that that is simply not true. The proportion of people aged between 19 and 55 years leaving Victoria has increased since the government came to office. Therefore, the comparison is even more adverse to the government’s performance because although in the past approximately 65 per cent of the people leaving Victoria were of working age; now 70 per cent of the people leaving Victoria are of working age. Yet again the Cain Labor government has failed.

What has produced this abysmal performance in the State economy? The answer is: a government that has gone mad with bureaucracy; a government that has failed to address the key difficulties facing public finance in Victoria, which are the motor power driving the highest level of State taxation in Australia.
Victoria has experienced an explosion in government expenditure. After six years of Labor government, there has been an average 3 per cent increase in real terms every year in the Budget sector—in excess of 3 per cent a year for six Labor Budgets. In real terms the total State expenditure since 1982 has increased by 11.3 per cent. There has been an explosion in government expenditure under the Cain Labor government, but what else could Victorians have expected? That is how Labor governments have always behaved. That is how the Federal government behaved. In the first two years of both terms of office, the Hawke government increased expenditure by 7 per cent in real terms. Economic circumstances have forced all Labor governments to taper off the growth in expenditure, but it is still a fact that every year the Labor Party has been in office there has been a real increase in State government expenditure, and there has been an increase of 3 per cent on average each year.

What are the causes of this huge growth in expenditure? The first and most obvious cause is the enormous growth in bureaucracy. The government has been marked by increases in sterile bureaucracy and puerile administration.

Dr Coghill—That includes nurses!

Mr STOCKDALE—What a good interjection! Where are the figures demonstrating the huge increase in the number of nurses? The huge growth in State government employment does not include nurses because their rate of employment growth has been low. It is not due to a huge increase in police manpower because the government did not honour its commitment to the Police Force. There has been a low growth in police manpower, far below the figure the government targeted.

It has not been in the railways because, despite its failure, the government has tried to reduce the number of railway employees. There has been an increase, but it is not sufficient to explain the increase in State government employment. It has occurred with teachers. There have been dramatic declines in enrolment and per capita the number of teachers in the State system has increased dramatically, but it is still in the hundreds, not the thousands. It is not explained by increases in manpower in the large service delivery areas—the four major areas of State responsibility. It is explained by administrative manpower increasing dramatically.

When this ramshackle mob first came to government who could forget opening Saturday's Age and seeing dozens of high profile positions advertised in the transport network? There were positions for managers for everything under the sun, including, it seemed to me, the kitchen sink, and they were paid, in 1982–83, $65 000 a position. Today they are paid $80 000 a year plus. There were literally dozens of them recruited into the railways network and the public transport network, and those managers are each building a pyramid under them. There are dozens of highly-paid jobs in the bureaucracy.

When the government stopped publishing the figures some years ago central administration costs in the transport division had risen 700 per cent since the Labor government came to office. It almost beggars belief that there is a 700 per cent increase in manpower in the administrative area.

What did we get for that? Did we get a better public transport system? No. Trains are cancelled because when a driver is sick there is no relief driver to run the train. Resources have been diverted away from the service delivery area to the sterile bureaucracy. One does not need the Opposition's comments about that, one only has to listen to Dr Lois Bryson; no right-wing trendy, no card-carrying member of the Liberal Party or National Party, she is a good left-wing academic with solid Labor values. After a couple of years in the State bureaucracy, she said that administration was an end in itself and that people occupied their time writing reports that nobody
ever read, let alone acted upon, that bureaucracy had become an art form that was achieving nothing. That is my summary of what she said.

I challenge the Treasurer to read her paper. In the *Australian Journal of Public Administration* she attacked the Cain government on its approach to public administration as focusing attention on administration as an end in itself rather than service delivery. That is the big failure. That accounts for the huge growth in public employment in Victoria.

The last time I saw the figures, Victoria’s growth in public employment exceeded the other States and the Commonwealth by three or four to one, depending on which government one looked at. Over the past two years State government sector employment growth has exceeded the average of all other Australian government’s by more than two to one. Since 1983 when the latest series of statistics commenced, the rate of growth has more than doubled compared with the Commonwealth and all other Australian States and government’s. That explains the huge pressure on State taxation because labour costs and labour-related costs represent approximately 65 per cent of State Budget outlays. Because the government has massively increased the commitment in the biggest single cost centre of State government, it has had to push up taxes to keep paying salaries to those people on the public payroll.

The second large area has been debt servicing charges. If one looks at the State Budget sector—not as the Treasurer would have us do, the State revenue as a whole—when the Liberal Party was last in government debt servicing charges consumed 17 per cent of the State revenue from State sources for the Budget sector. High, but by no means was it out of line with the business community at that time.

What has happened since? We have seen an explosion in public debt. The net debt of the State as a whole has doubled. This year we can expect that the projection will be under yet again, but it amounts to a 99 per cent increase in State net debt since the Government came to office in 1982. Compared with 1981–82, the 1987–88 figure involved a 99 per cent increase. In 150 years of its history, Victoria had accumulated a debt of $11,400 million. In six years the Cain government has doubled that debt to $23,700 million.

What is the effect of that? Debt servicing charges have gone from consuming 17 per cent of State resources revenue to consuming 25 per cent of State-owned resources revenue. When Victorian taxpayers pay their taxes to the Cain Labor government, one quarter of every dollar of State taxation goes to meet debt servicing costs for the huge debt the government has accumulated. They are the two areas where the government has built a massive and, I regret to say, enduring problem for Victorian taxpayers. That is why the task of turning around public finance in Victoria will not be a simple one nor a speedy one, but the recipe is there.

The government cannot claim it did not know what to do because the Liberal Party has been spelling out in considerable detail how these measures could be addressed. In 1984 and 1985 the Liberal Party announced and issued its expenditure restraint program for the recurrent side of the Budget. The program targeted employment growth, the greatest area of failure of the Cain Labor government. The Opposition spelled out in sensible but sensitive ways how the level of public sector employment could be reduced in the State by maintaining and improving services but reducing the burden on the Victorian taxpayer predominantly through a commitment to use natural wastage and redeployment to enable the level of public employment to be reduced by half the level of natural wastage each year.

In addition, the Liberal Party raised the possibility of genuine early retirement schemes: not the sort of bogus retirement schemes the government introduced when...
it paid people $90 million to take early retirement and then replaced most of them; therefore, instead of fewer employees, ending up with 1000 more than one started with. The Opposition does not have that scheme; it has a scheme of genuine non-replacement of people leaving the service who can be persuaded that it is in their interests as individuals to take early retirement benefits.

A large number of other benefits have been spelled out of which the Treasurer could take advantage. Over recent years the Opposition has spelled out the method for restraint on the capital side of the Budget. The Treasurer has been forced to reduce the level of borrowings of the State government. Evidence suggests that if the Treasurer had not been restrained by his Federal colleagues the debt would have increased more than it actually has. The Treasurer every year has borrowed right up to the Loan Council limit; taken up every last cent of the approved borrowings. He has also used a number of ingenious devices in an attempt to circumvent Loan Council restrictions, not all of them were successful. His attempt to circumvent the Loan Council restrictions with the Victorian Equity Trust came unstuck when the Federal Treasurer saw through that and insisted that it be brought within the limit.

If the Federal government had not imposed restraint we would have had a debt performance even worse than the disaster the Treasurer has inflicted on Victoria. Victoria's debt would have increased even further and we would have had an even larger debt servicing problem.

The government has been the highest borrowing State government over the past three years. Notwithstanding that Victoria's economy is smaller than the economy of New South Wales, the government has borrowed more than the Labor government in New South Wales was prepared to borrow. This has been a deliberate strategy of the Cain government, known as the Sheehan thesis, articulated in the House yesterday by that other economic innumerate, the Premier.

An honourable member—Cainsism!

Mr STOCKDALE—Yes, spelt C-a-i-n-s-i-m. The theory is to borrow now and spend up big because inflation will pay part of the debt and the real value of the debt will decline.

Dr Sheehan and the Premier forget that in the meantime the interest has to be paid. The second biggest item driving State taxes is the huge growth in the proportion of revenue consumed by debt servicing charges. Those charges have increased from 17 per cent to 25 per cent, notwithstanding the more than doubling of State taxation receipts. In the six years that the government has been in office State taxation receipts have increased 105 per cent. Despite the explosion in State revenue, interest payments are consuming more and more of the taxes that Victorians pay.

The motion calls on the government to come clean; to publish its forward estimates so that the people of Victoria can have a rational and well-rounded debate about the future effects that the government's policies will have on them and as a measure that they can impose on the government, so when it actually comes to those future years Victorians can look back and see just how accurate the bases of the government's planning were.

It is not just the Opposition that has called for the publishing of forward estimates. Responsible organisations such as the Business Council of Australia have urged the Treasurer to publish forward estimates so there can be a well-founded and well-informed debate on the disastrous state of public finances in Victoria.

The Treasurer has had the opportunity of introducing restraints on increases in taxation, expenditure and loan raisings, but he has chosen not to do so. The Treasurer
has continued his profligate spending and, with an election year Budget in train this year, the community can safely predict the same sort of pattern will be continued into the election year.

The Treasurer has an enormous opportunity of reducing the State's net debt. Honourable members can predict that on the Treasurer's favoured measure—the proportion of gross domestic product—the State debt will fall significantly this year. That will not happen as a result of a policy commitment of the government. The government will still borrow up to the limit—it will happen for other reasons. First, from the borrowing restraint imposed by the Australian Loan Council, particularly by the Commonwealth government; secondly, many authorities have gone over the hump of their most recent cycle of investment commitments; thirdly, because the Treasurer has re-structured State taxes and increases in State charges so the State's major authorities and the State Budget sector are awash with cash, taken from the pockets of Victorian taxpayers; finally, the Treasurer has been forced to restrain the rate of growth in expenditure and Public Service recruitment.

During the past eighteen months the government has imposed staff ceilings and has actually reversed its previous policy. That is an admission by the government that its policies were not right. The government has actually introduced measures to restrain staff increases. It is for all those reasons that Victorians can naturally expect that the ratchet effect of the previously profligate spending will not be as great as in past years.

The Treasurer has an enormous opportunity of making significant reductions in debt and of winding back expenditure and State taxes. The government should start giving relief to the long-suffering Victorian taxpayers and consumers of public services. It should provide real benefits in their pockets and stop the effect that Labor governments have of crushing the living standards of ordinary Australians and Victorians. The government is destroying the competitiveness of Victorian industry.

I commend the motion to the House. It is a positive prescription of the things that the government can do to provide relief from the crushing burden of State taxes and charges and to wind back the massive debt that the government has deliberately imposed on the Victorian community. I call on the House to give tripartite support to the motion. The government has no reason for not supporting the motion and can ensure that in 1989 the long-suffering Victorian taxpayers finally get a break from the horrific burden that they have had to bear over the past six years.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I have listened for approximately 1 hour to the honourable member for Brighton who has again presented another of his long-winded speeches that contain no policies.

The Opposition's motion has been on the Notice Paper for approximately two years and a last minute change was made to it only yesterday, but the Liberal Party still has not developed any policies to compare with the Labor government. It is no wonder that the Liberal Party is the whingeing minority. It has great difficulty in accepting anything good about Victoria, even though the economic performance and standing throughout the nation has been greatly boosted since the Cain government was elected in 1982.

The even more amazing proposition is that the motion supposedly presents an economic plan for Victoria, but the honourable member for Brighton did not present a plan, just complaints, whingeing and carping. The honourable member believes that translates into an economic and financial policy for the State.

The honourable member for Brighton did not even acknowledge that Victoria has the only State government that has a long term economic plan. In 1983 the government initiated Victoria's long-term economic strategy with Victoria: The Next Step.
strategy has been modified over time. The government has produced a technology statement, an update of its economic position and policies, and tomorrow that will be further enhanced with a statement on the government's long-term approach to the Victorian economy. These strategies are all based on improving the long-term international competitive position of Victoria; a fact hardly acknowledged by the Opposition. Once again, the Opposition is bereft of understanding and economic policies.

The government had identified nine competitive steps which are the basis of economic growth in Victoria. Victoria's economic growth, over the past five years, has been substantially stronger than the nation as a whole. Victoria has outstripped the rest of Australia in economic growth, but the Opposition does not acknowledge that.

The honourable member for Brighton is known as "flipper" because he is always changing his mind on economic issues and often blunders in presenting economic statements and statistics. I do not blame the honourable member entirely for that because obviously the staff who advise him are incompetent as well.

The honourable member referred to unemployment in Victoria and grudgingly admitted that the State has had the lowest unemployment rate of any State in Australia for more than five years. The honourable member said that this position has always been the case and that generally Victoria has had the lowest unemployment rate and it is not remarkable for Victoria to achieve that performance.

I indicated the facts at question time today. It is unprecedented in the nation's history for any State to have the lowest unemployment rate for more than five years. I remind the House that during the last three years of the former Liberal government—the last years of Liberal government for many years to come—there were only eight occasions out of 36 months in which Victoria recorded the lowest unemployment rate of any State in Australia.

That is the contrast: more than 60 months of the most recent period under the Cain government compared with only eight out of 36 months of the previous Liberal government rule in Victoria. That is a remarkable difference, Victoria is obviously faring well.

The honourable member for Brighton had the hide to suggest that the unemployment level is higher in Victoria under the Cain government than when the previous Liberal government was in office. Obviously, that comment was designed to try to camouflage the extremely poor performances of the Hamer and Thompson governments in the period leading up to the election of the Cain Labor government. The honourable member acknowledged implicitly that that was the case because he tried to explain the outstanding economic performance of Victoria in recent times as a reflection of the previous Bolte Liberal government. He did not mention the former Premiers, Hamer and Thompson. The honourable member for Brighton likes to brush over that period because he knows modern Liberal Party Leaders have been disastrous for the State.

When the Labor Party was elected to govern in 1982, it inherited an economy in decline: not only was employment growth behind that of the rest of Australia, but it was also declining. At that time businesses were leaving Victoria in droves because of the disastrous economic performance of the former Liberal government. The Cain government has turned that situation around. I am amazed that the Liberal Party has taken two years to move this motion.

The Opposition has no economic policies, whereas the Cain government has and it is making a success of those policies. Exports and private investment are growing strongly and the State has recorded the lowest unemployment rate. Victoria now has
much higher economic growth than the rest of Australia. That situation has not
developed purely by accident; it is because the government has created a stable
economic environment which has created incentives for business and improved the
economic and social infrastructure. The joint ventures between the government and
the private sector have been successful. Again, the honourable member for Brighton
did not mention them.

Naturally the Opposition belittled the government when it entered into a joint
venture with Alcoa of Australia Ltd to provide for the establishment of a public trust
and an aluminium smelter. The reason the Opposition did not mention that venture
today was that the smelter has been an outstanding and unequivocal success, both in
terms of its ability to keep construction within budget and in terms of its profits and
benefits to the State. One would think an aluminium smelter that is the most
technologically advanced and one of the biggest in the world, producing approximately
300 000 tonnes of aluminium for export, would have attracted some comment from
the Opposition when aluminium prices have increased over the past twelve to eighteen
months. The Opposition used to talk about the aluminium smelter all the time, but
now that the joint venture is a great success it does not comment.

Mr Williams interjected.

Mr JOLLY—At least the honourable member for Doncaster, unlike his colleagues,
is showing some interest and has some knowledge of economic matters. One of the
most exciting aspects of the aluminium smelter is that it is the biggest single export
unit in Australia. The Opposition did not mention that, either. It is a crying shame.

It has been well known for many years that Melbourne is the home of medical and
scientific research. The centres are of world standing. However, under the succession
of former Liberal governments in this State, that top quality research was not
commercialised and the State's best brains drifted away from the nation; they accepted
positions overseas where pure research was converted into a commercial product. The
Liberal Party did not mention that fact. The government’s approach has been
appropriate.

The government established the organisation known as Amrad Corporation Ltd,
which has all the leading medical institutes participating in its development. Through
this organisation purely high quality research can be commercialised. In a short period
Amrad has performed outstandingly. It has developed export products in a relatively
short period.

One of the outstanding successes of the government's approach is that it has been
able to reverse the nation's brain drain. It attracted back a man who is a world leader
and authority in his field, Mr John Stocker, to become the Chief Executive of Amrad
Corporation Ltd. He lived in Switzerland for twelve years and was the most senior
non-Swiss employee of Hoffman-Laroche, one of the leading pharmaceutical companies
in the world. Mr Stocker was attracted back to Victoria because he saw the long-term
opportunities that will be provided in Victoria for present and future generations.
That is what the government is aiming for. The Opposition has difficulty thinking
beyond 24 hours!

It is ironic that two years after the motion being listed, yesterday a last-minute
change was made to it. What a sad state of affairs when the Opposition is left with
last-minute changes when it could have thought about the issue many moons ago! It
is disturbing that the Liberal Party has no new economic policies; all it can talk about
is doom and gloom. A symptom of the doom and gloom syndrome of the honourable
member for Brighton was that he said that proper information on the State's financial
position should be made available. The honourable member did not acknowledge that
the Cain government was the first to issue a detailed and comprehensive paper on the debt position of the public sector. Neither did the honourable member acknowledge that that information had the imprimatur of the Auditor-General, Mr Dick Humphry. That is the quality of information that is produced in Victoria. The honourable member referred in passing to the New South Wales government. Honourable members know what is happening in New South Wales: like the Liberal Party in Victoria, the Greiner government loves misery and negatives.

The Premier of New South Wales, Mr Nick Greiner, whose intelligence is higher than that of the Opposition in Victoria, almost fell over in recent days while on the hot political trail of trying to denigrate his State when he caused a flurry in the international financial markets. He is a babe in the woods, but he is light-years ahead of the Victorian Opposition. The Victorian Liberal Party was cock-a-hoop about the election of the Greiner Liberal government in New South Wales. Since it has been increasing charges well in excess of the rate of inflation and the State has experienced industrial turmoil, the Victorian Liberal Party has gone off him. I have not heard a word from the Opposition about the Greiner government. I am not sure whether the Opposition still considers it the model government; I shall be interested to hear.

The information put out by the New South Wales government’s so-called Commission of Audit was a collection of information that in one form or another had previously been published in New South Wales. Nothing was new about it! The only new matter was the political agenda of the Liberal Party in New South Wales, which is similar to that of the Liberal Party in Victoria: it wants to cut back on employment and services in the public sector.

The Liberal Party is looking for excuses to cut back in the public sector. It will increase taxes and it now wants the public authority dividend payments. The honourable member for Brighton—affectionately known as “Mr Flip”—put out a statement supporting public authority dividend payments in this State.

I do not know whether that policy has been endorsed in the party room. The Leader of the Opposition was clearly knocked off on proportional representation, and he will probably be knocked off in relation to increases in taxation in Victoria. That is the alternative that the Greiner government has picked up. We totally reject that approach. Leading financial newspapers have recognised that the Greiner government in New South Wales has been on a financial binge.

Mr Ross-Edwards interjected.

Mr JOLLY—Remember the Liberal Party in New South Wales is well ahead of its counterparts in Victoria. That is why the National Party is having difficulty supporting the motion moved by the honourable member for Brighton; that is not a good ground for a coalition. The National Party has been bored to death before by the honourable member for Brighton. The Leader of the National Party has remarked that he has not the stomach to sit and listen to longwinded speeches and that is probably why he was not here when the honourable member for Brighton was speaking.

An editorial in the *Australian Financial Review* said:

Greiner slips on the banana peel.

The fresh-faced NSW Premier, Nick Greiner, should have learned a lesson in politics this week: you always pay for your cheap shots.

The Commission of Audit should not be over-rated. It is not a report of the significance of the Campbell Committee’s review of the Australian financial system. Its main significance is political. Indeed, the ultimate in political documents, it presents Mr Greiner with a carte blanche justification for virtually any act over the remainder of his term in office. It is stacked with sweeping generalisations; and it contains no appendix.
In this State our economy is going well indeed. The government has a good handle on the financial and economic management and, although the Opposition has commented about the State debt, it does not mention its assets. Victoria has a debt because it has invested in assets that are economic and social. I have already mentioned the Portland smelter—no-one is now criticising that investment. I have already mentioned the investment in Amrad Corporation Ltd—no-one is criticising that. The National Tennis Centre is another great asset. The investment made in Loy Yang has not been criticised.

Prior to coming to government the Labor Party did criticise the Liberal government for its ridiculous economic record with the State Electricity Commission and the cost of the production of the earlier units at Loy Yang, which were unnecessarily high. Those costs deserved the criticism because of the problems that they caused for the SEC.

In the period from 1982 until today power restrictions have occurred on only one day. Under the Liberal government Victoria experienced regular disruptions. At one stage Victoria went through a period of approximately six weeks of strikes at the SEC. Not only were costs out of control, but also there was industrial turmoil and Victoria did not receive the essential service it required. That was at a disastrous time because it was mid-winter. Those situations have completely disappeared but the Opposition has not acknowledged the turnaround that has occurred with the SEC and other energy areas. As I indicated earlier, Victoria has lower energy costs than other States in Australia. That again explains why Victoria has the strongest economic performance in Australia.

The honourable member for Brighton indicated that taxation receipts have increased beyond the expectation of the Budget projections. He commented also about payroll tax and stamp duty. Firstly, regarding stamp duty, honourable members will remember the honourable member for Brighton making a big deal out of the share market crash in October 1987; he went out of his way to make the most negative comments possible about the share market crash and its effect on public sector finances and also on the Budget position of the State. It was with glee that the honourable member for Brighton made these comments of doom and gloom in relation to share market transactions.

The honourable member created the impression that the economy in Victoria would fall into a hole as a result of the crash and that the crash would lead to financial disaster. The honourable member for Brighton suggested that stamp duty from share market transactions would, therefore, decrease and be below the Budget projection. However, he now recognises that the Budget receipts for stamp duty are higher than the original estimates. The honourable member for Brighton made these comments of doom and gloom in relation to share market transactions.

Similarly, he would have honourable members believe that the economic situation in Victoria in 1987–88 meant that Victoria would suffer a commercial crash as well. He endeavoured to create the impression that the private sector did not want to invest in this State, and he has done that again today.

As the honourable member for Brighton is now aware, because of the enormous confidence of the private sector in the Victorian economy, stamp duty from property transactions is much higher than projected in the Budget and, in the main—and this is implicitly acknowledged by the honourable member for Brighton—it is because of transactions in the higher-priced areas of operation, particularly commercial properties.

Anyone who has a look around Melbourne today will see the skyline scattered with cranes, all involved in the construction of offices and shops. A boom is going on and it is being sustained for a long period. The outlook is still very good.
I emphasise that when one examines the growth of non-farm gross domestic product in Victoria, one finds that for more than five years Victoria has outstripped the performance of the rest of the nation. It is no wonder that stamp duty receipts are up; it is because of the strong economic performance of the State.

The honourable member for Brighton tried to denigrate the economy of Victoria further by stating that the government had increased payroll tax rates. It is about time the honourable member for Brighton examined the Budget Papers. They clearly show that payroll rates decreased in the last Budget and the cost to revenue was well over $50 million.

The honourable member for Brighton tried to say in today's debate that the marginal payroll tax rates had gone up. For those honourable members who take an interest in these matters and who, if they cannot read, are capable of listening, would recognise that the threshold at which the 6 per cent marginal tax rate came into operation was increased from a payroll level of $1.3 million to a payroll level of $1.43 million. That represents an increase of 10 per cent.

What happened to wages over that period? Wages increased in the order of 6 per cent to 7 per cent. On anyone's calculation that means the marginal tax rate for that group of employers actually fell. I point out again, for the benefit of the honourable member for Brighton, that in 1987 the average payroll tax rate was 4.9 per cent for payroll levels of $1.3 million. In 1988 the figure dropped to 4.6 per cent.

If one examines the payroll level of $1.5 million, one finds that has been decreased from 5.8 per cent in 1987 to an average tax rate in 1988 of 5.1 per cent. For the overwhelming majority of payroll levels not only has the average been reduced, but also so has the marginal tax rate. Therefore, the honourable member for Brighton is wrong again. This information is set out in the Budget Papers and it is about time the Opposition devoted some attention to it.

I turn now to some other economic indicators which are important to the performance of the Victorian economy. I have already highlighted that Victoria has had the lowest unemployment rate for more than five years in a row; that is unprecedented. Victoria has enjoyed strong employment growth and the economic growth in Victoria has been higher than the nation as a whole. An increase in the private investment share has taken place since the Cain government has been in power. In the debate today the Opposition chose to ignore that reality.

When the Labor Party came into power in Victoria the share of business investment was undertaken in the State and the nation as a whole was only about 22 per cent. Now it is in the order of 26 to 28 per cent. Obviously that is a substantial gain in the private investment share.

The honourable member for Brighton, once again trying to downplay the Victorian economy, said a slight drop in the share of private investment took place in Victoria in 1987-88 and said categorically that private investment is on the way down in Victoria. Why not analyse objective figures and examine what the Australian Statistician has to say? The reason the honourable member for Brighton does not do so is that the figures show that private investment in Victoria is expected to increase at a faster rate in the year ahead than the rest of Australia.

I shall place the figures on the record. The Australian Bureau of Statistics, a completely independent organisation, has predicted that private investment in Victoria in 1988-89 will increase by 36 per cent. That is well above the inflation rate. The projection for Australia as a whole is that private investment will increase by only 15 per cent. That is also above the inflation rate.
The facts of life are that Victoria's increase in private investment in the years ahead is expected to be more than twice the increase for Australia as a whole. That hardly represents a decline; it demonstrates a further increase in Victoria's share of private investment in the year ahead. I conclude by commenting on public sector employment. The honourable member for Brighton likes to gloss over the fact that employment is necessary in the public sector to provide the services required in Victoria. He seems to think that somehow one can get rid of people from the public payroll and there will be no reduction in services.

The honourable member for Brighton ignores the fact that the Victorian government was the first State government to introduce the productivity savings concept, a concept that has been followed up by the Commonwealth government as well as being introduced in New South Wales. The Victorian government has been on that path for some time. It has been squeezing the public sector to make sure it improves its efficiency, and the government has expanded services. One cannot go on doing that and certainly one cannot do it in the way suggested by the honourable member for Brighton. Once again he displays his ignorance of financial and economic matters.

The honourable member referred to the increase in Victorian public sector employment and ignored why that has occurred. More importantly, he also ignored the fact that Victorian public sector employment growth has been less than the percentage increase in private sector employment growth. Over the past five years there has been an increase in employment in Victoria of about 280,000. That is a large increase indeed and more than 85 per cent of that has taken place in the private sector. There has been no acknowledgment from the Opposition about that.

Clearly the Opposition does not understand; but it does not want to understand because it is an outstanding performance. Also there is no recognition on the part of the Opposition that, since the Labor Party has been in government, it has revamped the State Bank of Victoria. It has been competing so successfully with the private sector and international banks that it has actually gained market share. That is one of the major reasons for the increase in public sector employment.

The public hospital sector has also experienced an increase in employment. Obviously that is desirable and the end result has been a dramatic increase in the number of patients treated in Victorian public hospitals and a reduction in the waiting list. Relevant figures have been released by my colleague in another place, the Minister for Health.

The Liberal Party does not like the facts. The Opposition ignores the fact that police numbers have increased over the past two years by 300, and that follows increases in previous years. There has also been an increase in the number of teachers. That is closely linked to the government's long-term economic strategy. It is essential to have an educated and skilled work force to ensure that Victoria competes not only nationally but also internationally. That will be good for future employment opportunities, increased living standards and Victoria's international competitive position. The number of teachers in schools has also increased. Not only has there been better quality education but also the government is concentrating on maths and science skills at the secondary level to ensure that future generations of Victorians are able to obtain jobs that will yield greater satisfaction and income in the future.

It is extremely disappointing that the Opposition has once again demonstrated that it has no economic policies. It has demonstrated that it loves misery; it is committed to doom and gloom. Members of the Opposition refuse to acknowledge Victoria's better economic growth performance, and it is clear that they cannot gain the support of the National Party for this motion. The next person to speak in this debate will be a member of the Liberal Party and not the National Party. There is no coalition in
this State; the Liberal and National parties are on a collision course. "Mr Flop", the Leader of the Opposition, is unable not only to get the support of his party on proportional representation but also is unable to get support for any economic policies. The mouth from Malvern is the only man of intellectual quality who can think about economic matters, and he is the only one present in the Chamber to listen to this debate.

Victoria's outstanding economic performance will continue in 1988-89. I expect Victoria to set the economic pace. The government is proud of the fact that Victoria has the lowest unemployment rate of any State in Australia.

Mr PERRIN (Bulleen)—The Treasurer's speech is an indication of how bad the government is—it was full of rhetoric and selective statistics. It was the old story of lies, lies and damn statistics. I support the motion put forward by the honourable member for Brighton. Honourable members need to understand that the economy of this State needs many changes to get it back into line. One has only to consider what happened in New South Wales a few months ago where a tired government was thrown out of office. Approximately one-third of the Cabinet lost their seats in that State election because they were out of touch with the electorate.

Since then, the Greiner Liberal government has produced a Statewide audit. It has come clean with the people of New South Wales and released the true financial position of that State for a clear analysis by the taxpayers. That was not done prior to the election; Mr Unsworth, the former Premier, would not have allowed that to happen. New South Wales has liabilities and debts of approximately $46 billion.

Victoria needs a similar Statewide audit undertaken by a reputable firm of chartered accountants in the private sector. The true liabilities of this State would then be known. Honourable members already know that Victoria's debt has doubled in six years from $11 billion to $23 billion. However, we do not know the other liabilities. The servicing costs on the debt have increased. When the Liberal Party was in government in 1982 approximately 10 cents in every $1 was spent on servicing the debt of this State. That cost has now increased to 14-5 cents in every $1.

I have a report from the Victorian Employers Federation dated 3 June 1988. It is headed "It's time to take the axe to the State Budget debt", and it states:

Mr Jolly should also wield the knife in slashing Victoria's overall public sector debt.

State taxpayers are servicing this debt to the tune of $1158 million a year—a 14-5 per cent increase on 1986-87 debt servicing costs.

It is obvious that other debts exist. In just three years, WorkCare has a deficit of approximately $3000 million. That must be a record loss by any public institution in this State.

The information will become available to the taxpayers before the next State election. I assure the Treasurer that the Liberal Party will have released every policy on all aspects of government before that election. By the time the people walk into the polling booths to vote, they will know every policy of the Opposition, including its tax and economic policies. They will make a clear choice, as is their right, at the ballot-box. I have no doubt that they will do what the voters in New South Wales did—throw out this government and put the Liberal Party into office.

Honourable members know that rolling stock has been sold and that the government must lease it back. Huge leasing costs of approximately $1000 million are involved. The State superannuation schemes have massive deficits. Massive government guarantees are floating around.
The Treasurer did not talk about interest rates. Last week, interest rates on home loans in Victoria increased. The State Bank of Victoria was the last bank to increase the rate, and it has increased it to 14.25 per cent. It is interesting that the increase from the State Bank of Victoria was left until after the Ballarat North by-election. A memorandum from the Treasurer to the State Bank of Victoria would not be required; it would be a nod and a wink from the Treasurer who would indicate that the government did not want interest rates to increase before the by-election. Inflation is driving up interest rates.

In accordance with Sessional Orders, the debate was interrupted.

The SPEAKER—Order! The time has arrived for me to interrupt the debate. The honourable member for Bulleen will have the opportunity of continuing his remarks when the debate is resumed. I shall resume the chair at 2 p.m.

The sitting was suspended at 1 p.m. until 2.5 p.m.

CONSTITUTION (PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION) BILL

The debate (adjourned from the previous day) on the motion of Mr Cain (Premier) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr COLEMAN (Syndal)—The Bill represents an attempt by the government to try to justify a system of proportional representation which, upon examination, neither meets the principles of proportional representation nor addresses the issue that the government tried to address—that is, enabling the Australian Democrats to be represented in this Parliament.

Prior to the 1985 election, in discussions with the Australian Democrats, the Premier told them, "If you work for us we will introduce a Bill into Parliament to enable you to obtain representation at the 1988 elections". I do not believe the Australian Democrats realised what the outcome of that arrangement would be. They certainly did some work during the election campaign prior to the 1985 election. I know that at least one honourable member for Boronia Province, the Honourable Jean McLean, owes her seat to the Australian Democrats.

At that election the Liberal Party won 48.02 per cent of the vote, the Labor Party won 45.57 per cent and the Democrats won 6.41 per cent. Those figures are significant in view of the proposal in the Bill. In Boronia Province the Australian Democrats won 6.41 per cent, and there was a 71 per cent distribution of preferences to the Australian Labor Party, which meant that the Honourable Jean McLean was elected ahead of the Liberal Party candidate.

Therefore, the Australian Democrats candidate for the seat, Siegfried Spindler—who is known as Sid—truly did what the Premier requested and delivered some votes to the Labor Party. The government then took the next step and introduced this Bill. The prospects of the Australian Democrats actually gaining a seat are fairly remote. Boronia Province is, by and large, the electorate in which the Australian Democrats could best expect to gain representation. They won 6.41 per cent of the vote in that province in 1985.

In the most recent Senate elections, in Victoria the Australian Democrats won 8.55 per cent of the vote. Honourable members should bear in mind that during that election campaign there was deemed to be some disaffection with the Labor Party and, in fact, traditional Labor Party voters may have voted for the Australian Democrats and given their preferences back to the Labor Party. Therefore, there was a distortion of the vote. When one examines the results of the House of Representatives vote in the eastern metropolitan area, one notes that in the seat of Aston the Australian
Democrats candidate scored 8.06 per cent of the vote; in the seat of Bruce its candidate won 8.01 per cent; in the seat of Deakin its candidate won 6.32 per cent; in the seat of Chisholm its candidate won 6.6 per cent; and in the seat of Casey the Australian Democrats candidate won 7.84 per cent of the vote.

The Bill proposes dividing the State into five provinces, each of which would be represented by nine members. Under that system a party would need to win 10 per cent of the vote to be elected in one of those provinces. In the Melbourne area, which is deemed to be the area in which the Australian Democrats may hope to win a seat, based on the past voting trends it is improbable that they will win sufficient votes to have a representative elected.

That may well be the ethos behind what the Labor Party has introduced with this Bill. The Labor Party has had a continuing policy to restructure Parliament in such a way that the Upper House will have no effect. One sure way of commencing that process is to introduce a system that does not deliver what the intended reform proposes. Rather than the government saying to the Australian Democrats, "We are not prepared to provide a system that will enable you to be elected", the proposition has been put in such a way that it has become unacceptable to the Opposition.

The proposal is set out in clauses 5 and 24. Clause 5 (2) states:

. . . two provinces shall consist of 17 complete and contiguous districts and three provinces shall consist of 18 complete and contiguous districts.

Clause 24 (4) further elaborates and states:

(a) 17 districts to each of the two provinces comprising areas that are primarily areas outside the metropolitan area; and

(b) 18 districts to each of the provinces comprising areas that are primarily within the metropolitan area.

Honourable members will recognise that the metropolitan area is the same as that provided in the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Act.

Yesterday honourable members had to listen to that intellectual giant from Coburg on one vote, one value. If one examines that proposition, one recognises that this measure is a long way from that aim. The two rural provinces, which will be primarily outside the metropolitan area, cover 34 Lower House seats. Honourable members must presume, because they have not been told, that the five provinces will be of similar sizes. I presume that each of the 34 Lower House seats in the two rural provinces will have approximately 30,000 voters. That means that 1.02 million voters will elect 18 Upper House members. However, some 1.61 million voters will elect 27 Upper House members in the three metropolitan provinces. Therefore, 56,666 votes will be required to elect a member in a rural province and 60,000 votes will be required to elect a member in a metropolitan province.

I presume the Premier is holding out a sop to the Australian Democrats in the metropolitan area. There will be a 5.9 per cent difference in the value of a vote between the two rural provinces and the three metropolitan provinces.

It is hypocrisy for the honourable member for Coburg and other members of the government to say that each vote will have the same value. The proposition contained in the Bill makes it clear that each vote will not have the same value. More importantly, the area in which the Premier is trying to tempt Australian Democrat voters requires a much higher percentage for their candidate to be elected. It requires a further 5.9 per cent of the vote in the metropolitan area compared with the non-metropolitan area.

Honourable members are asked to consider that proposition. Is that really a fair system, as this Bill has been described? It is certainly a long way from a fair system.
Mr Sheehan interjected.

Mr COLEMAN—I suppose what the honourable member for Ballarat South is saying is that a rural elector should have a different value in his vote from an elector in the Ringwood electorate. That should not be the case. This is a corrupt system and is indicative of a corrupt government.

Both the proposal and its potential are wrong in principle. If one considers the facts, one recognises that the proposal is also wrong in that area. This is obviously an attempt by the government to buy Australian Democrat preferences, just as it did before the 1985 State election. However, at the end of the day, the government will have no capacity to provide or deliver a seat to the Australian Democrats.

The principal beneficiary of this system can be found if one examines the Boronia Province election in 1985. The Australian Democrats candidate, Sid Spindler, had been very much involved in the establishment of what was then the outer eastern region. In 1972 the Department of Urban and Regional Development—DURD—eastern region was established by the Honourable Tom Uren, Federal Minister for Urban and Regional Development, and the Australian Assistance Plan was put into place under the Whitlam government. Sid Spindler was the chairman of the region while that scheme was in existence. One of the principal people involved—she could be described as the left hand—in that outer eastern region operation was the Honourable Jean McLean, who is now a member representing Boronia Province in the Upper House.

In the 1985 Boronia Province election the Honourable Jean McLean was the Labor candidate and Sid Spindler was the Australian Democrats candidate. Honourable members can now see the connection: the Australian Democrats supported the successful Labor candidate. The next turn of the wheel is to repay Sid Spindler for being so faithful to the Australian Labor Party in that outer eastern region. However, what the government is offering is virtually unachievable. The Australian Democrats must poll 10 per cent or more of the vote. From figures available from the most recent elections it is clear that that is an almost impossible target.

What then is the arrangement? Will honourable members ever be told what the arrangement is? One can presume from the latest Senate and House of Representatives voting figures that the disaffected Labor vote, which swelled the Australian Democrats vote at that time, will again return to the Labor Party. In fact, the Australian Democrats, primary vote may well be lower than the vote at the last Federal election. If that is the case, the promise of proportional representation offered by the government would not be able to be achieved. Under this proposal the Australian Democrats will not achieve sufficient votes.

I now come to the crunch of the Opposition’s objection to this measure. The Bill is an attempt to have a gerrymander in this State. The gerrymander will provide for a significant difference in the value of votes. It will take account of the physical differences in the make-up of the Victorian political scene, and it will enhance the government’s position. That is the clear reason for the introduction of the Bill.

The proposed legislation is an attempt to offer to one group the potential to have a candidate elected, by providing a means of so doing to achieve more seats for the Labor Party. That can be demonstrated if one considers the 1985 State election. In many electorates the Labor Party provided booth workers for the Australian Democrats to keep up that party’s vote. I presume that under this proposition the same procedure will apply. The Labor Party will in fact supply booth workers to the Australian Democrats, knowing that it will be impossible for them to gain 10 per cent of the vote, and also knowing that about 80 per cent of preferences will flow back to the government.
I believe the 300-odd paid-up members of the Australian Democrats in Victoria are being hoodwinked by what they have been told by this government.

The people who have voted for the Australian Democrats—as opposed to those who are paid-up members—are being used as election fodder by the government. The proposal as it stands says to the average person who votes for the Australian Democrats, for whatever reason, that in fact he or she is providing a vote for the Australian Labor Party. To state that intention specifically in the Bill would allow it to be better understood by the community because the Bill is not understood by people outside the House. The counting of votes is extraordinarily complicated and the average person is not fully conversant with the provisions of the Bill.

I have no difficulty in voting against the proposed legislation. It does nothing to address the issue of proportional representation but to provide additional votes for the government at no expense to the government.

Mrs SETCHES (Ringwood)—This reform is and has been an issue and will continue to be an issue. The government clearly has a mandate for the introduction of proportional representation. The reform of the Legislative Council has occupied the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council many times over the 130 years since the establishment of the Victorian Parliament. The government is determined to bring to fruition the promises it made prior to the 1985 election of a more equitable voting system for the Legislative Council.

The honourable member for Syndal, in his contribution, said that the Australian Democrats were being hoodwinked. He might be feeling a little unsafe today about the distribution of Australian Democrats preferences in Syndal because of the decision that was reached in the Liberal Party room the other day. History has been repeated. Why is it that the conservative parties will always hold the position that will further advantage themselves over a long period?

The Liberal Party, the Labor Party and the National Party have the lion's share of voting equity because other smaller parties that have a high percentage of the vote, such as the Australian Democrats, do not have representation, even though the Australian Democrats significantly outpoll the National Party overall in the State.

One has to see only the self-satisfied look on the face of the Leader of the National Party to understand that, because the history of the Legislative Council since its inception and the laws of franchise and representation have always operated to preserve and further the interests of the wealthy, the property owners and the educated, and to stop any reform that might come from the so-called radical Lower House.

We have seen those same concerns again. The Opposition has stopped significant reform by which one of the Houses of this Parliament could become open to a proportion of people who wish to vote for representation in this Parliament. For three or more years the government has spoken about social justice. It has done so in the areas of social policy and its social justice policy is being extended in the proposed legislation.

The major principle of social justice is access to goods and services and a range of matters. It is also about equity, representation and participation. Those particular principles are enshrined in the Bill. It provides the mechanism for people who are able to poll 10 per cent of the vote to have representation in a House where currently they are denied it. That is a denial of social justice to a significant proportion of people. The government will provide that not only to the Australian Democrats but also to other groups who could poll 10 per cent in their provinces.

The Bill is a significant reform in that members will be elected for four years concurrently and simultaneously with the Legislative Assembly. The Legislative
Council would, for the first time, reflect the views, the policies and the times of the Legislative Assembly and the result of the election that takes place. The elections will mirror the Commonwealth Senate system of multimember electorates, proportional representation, and quota preferential voting.

Nobody has spoken against the voting system in the Senate. All of us enter into that exercise every time there is a Senate election. It does not cause us any pain and we should extend that voting successfully in Victoria. We shall have five provinces, three with a metropolitan focus and two with a non-metropolitan focus. The National Party is objecting because with 5.6 per cent of the vote, as a result of the inequitable system in the Legislative Council, it has the lion’s share of representation.

One has only to look at why pressure was applied so strongly on the Liberal Party by the National Party; it was applied to preserve the vested interests of the conservative parties. That pressure is consistently exercised on the Liberal Party by the National Party and, in this case, the Liberal Party has capitulated. History is full of conservative alliances against any reform of the Legislative Council.

Over the years the Legislative Assembly has had to go to the Legislative Council in an attempt to obtain fair and equitable legislation in the eyes of the people, but it has been an exhaustive and tortuous exercise. One example is women’s suffrage. The Legislative Council over eighteen years eleven times rejected a request from the Legislative Assembly to grant women the right to vote in Victoria. The Legislative Assembly passed the Bill fourteen times and three times it lapsed without going to the Legislative Council. Victoria was the last State to grant women the right to vote. Women received voting rights in Victoria seven years after gaining those rights in the national Parliament.

The Legislative Assembly did not tire of putting its proposed legislation to the Legislative Council. It continued putting it until, after eighteen years, it was adopted. What a scandal that such measures have to be put so many times to the Legislative Council. The Legislative Assembly has endeavoured to get measures through the Legislative Council and has been determined to continue doing that. The Upper House has been a hidebound Chamber. It needs reform in its representation and voting franchise.

A Bill to abolish plural voting—that is, a man could vote more than once; he could vote in any electorate in which he held property—was finally passed by the Legislative Council in 1899, after five similar Bills had been rejected by the Upper House over an eleven-year period. The Legislative Council, time and again, was requested by the Legislative Assembly to pass legislation allowing members of Parliament to be paid. That proposal was to allow people of different backgrounds, persuasions and financial ability to stand for Parliament. It was not until the 1950s that the property qualifications for members of Parliament in the Upper House were removed by legislation. That legislation was finally agreed upon after having been rejected continuously by the Legislative Council.

The government will not be deterred from reforming the Upper House so that it has a fairer and more equitable system. The Upper House is said to be a House of review, but members of that Chamber vote in exactly the same way as do members of the Lower House—along party lines. It is not a House of review because political parties with less support than the main political parties or individuals with no political allegiance cannot be elected to that Chamber. Time and again the coalition of interests in the Upper House combines to ensure that the interests of the conservatives are paramount above all others in the State.

The Liberal Party was forced to adopt a course of action—which meant overthrowing the views of the Leader of the Opposition—because it is controlled by a conservative
group which can be elected without the preferences of the Australian Democrats. One can imagine how the debate over proportional representation developed at the Liberal Party caucus meeting. I note that in 1979, when a member of the Legislative Council the honourable member for Portland said that any power should be used to keep the socialists out of government or to tip them out of government. Obviously the contribution of the honourable member for Portland at his party meeting last Tuesday would have been more strident about maintaining the status quo.

The proposed legislation, if passed, will make a difference to the way people think of the Upper House of Parliament. The Legislative Council is a remote body and each member represents the equivalent number of people represented by four Lower House members. It is difficult for Upper House members to keep in close contact with their constituents and the proposed legislation is more realistic. If the proposed legislation is adopted, members of the Upper House will have distinct responsibilities for reviewing legislation and will not be tied to provincial areas, as is currently the case. It is important that the Bill is debated fully. I trust that honourable members in another place will note the historical nature of the Upper House and change its structure.

The Australian Democrats are a significant group within the Victorian community and attract support ranging from 4 per cent to 17 per cent in various electorates. That party, with other political organisations, should have the benefit of gaining representation in the Upper House if it can gain the necessary quota of votes.

I support the Bill and I hope some members of the Liberal Party will support the Bill in the Upper House.

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—I support the comments made by other members of the National Party. The proposed legislation is a cynical, hypocritical exercise by the Victorian Labor government and the Premier.

The Bill is about getting rid of the Legislative Council in the long term. Other speakers have spoken about this aspect and have produced evidence to support the fact that the Labor government's ulterior motive is to get rid of the Legislative Council in the short or long term. The action taken by the government in introducing a proportional representation Bill for the second time reveals that it now recognises that it cannot abolish the Upper House in the short term but will attempt to do that over a longer period. The government has decided that it will introduce proportional representation for that Chamber and then gradually reduce its powers until it can finally abolish the Upper House.

Mr Evans interjected.

Mr JASPER—As the honourable member for Gippsland East said, it is a typical Fabian approach. This government is attempting to change slowly the attitudes of the people of Victoria and to get its way by default. That is why the Premier and the Labor government have decided to abolish the Legislative Council by degrees.

Mr Micallef interjected.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Springvale should not say anything. If the honourable member persists in his interjections honourable members on this side might call him names that he does not like. The honourable member lost out last time and he will lose again. I am happy to have the honourable member interjecting with his usual inane comments, which you, Mr Deputy Speaker, often cannot hear and which many other honourable members cannot hear.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fogarty)—Order! The honourable member should return to the Bill and the honourable member for Springvale shall cease interjecting.
Mr JASPER—My comments are relative to the Bill, because the actions of the honourable member for Springvale are exactly the sorts of actions taken by many members of the Labor Party, who do not think about what they are doing or what effect the proposed legislation will have on the community. They do not think, full stop. The honourable member for Springvale typifies that action by not thinking; he has not even considered this Bill. It is vital that the proposed legislation be rejected not only in this place but also in another place. It should be put on the backburner where it rightly belongs.

Mr Evans—In the wastepaper basket.

Mr JASPER—Yes, in the wastepaper basket or wherever—just get rid of it! The other reason the Premier has reintroduced the proportional representation measure is to gain the support of the Australian Democrats. The proposed legislation is a double-headed coin for the Premier. I should like him to take me to the races.

Mr Micallef—He is not a gambler.

Mr JASPER—If the Premier were a gambler, I should like to join him at the races because if he had a double-headed coin, no doubt he could pick a winner at the races!

Mr Micallef interjected.

Mr JASPER—I should call the honourable member for Springvale a name. That would really give him something to react to!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Murray Valley should ignore interjections.

Mr JASPER—As I said, the proposed legislation allows the Premier to win both ways; however, the voters will not fall for the three-card trick. The Premier believes, if the proposed legislation is thrown out by the Liberal and National parties, he will win; and, if it is passed, he will win because he will have gained the support of the Australian Democrats, who may then be represented in Parliament. Unfortunately for the Premier, too many voters are thinkers. That was illustrated by the result of the Nunawading Province re-election. The same will happen at the next State election.

The National Party strongly supports the bicameral system of government. It recognises the important role played by the two Houses of Parliament, especially the role played by the Upper House as a House of review.

Mr Micallef interjected.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Springvale keeps interjecting. I will have to call him a name to really stir him up.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Springvale will cease interjecting, and the honourable member for Murray Valley will ignore interjections.

Mr JASPER—Mr Deputy Speaker, the honourable member for Springvale should be out of the Chamber if he is not prepared to listen. As he usually does not contribute to debates, he is of little consequence to Parliament.

Often time is needed to further consider proposed legislation, and this opportunity is provided when a Bill is between here and another place. Important changes are often made to proposed legislation in that time, which provides the opportunity for additional discussions and representations for Victorians. When a Bill is dealt with in another place, logical changes are often made to it as a result of those discussions. When it is returned to the Lower House, it generally receives the support of all honourable members, no matter which party is in government.
That has been the pattern of the Upper House; it has had a steadying influence on proposed legislation that has been hastily prepared and ill conceived. The National Party recognises its importance. However, the Premier is obsessed with changing the voting system for the Upper House with a view to eventually abolishing it. Extreme left-wing members, Fabians and government members of the Labor Party wish to ensure that the Upper House is stripped of its powers and eventually abolished. If that eventuated, many Labor Party members in another place would lose their seats. I am sure that they would secretly not support such a measure because they would vote themselves out of their positions. The Upper House probably provides them with a cosy arrangement and the proposed changes would probably be to their detriment.

Is the Premier secretly relieved that the Bill may not become law? As I said, he believes he is the winner no matter whether the Bill is passed.

Mr Evans—He thinks he is.

Mr JASPER—Yes, he thinks he is, but there are probably more thinkers in the State than he gives credit to. Since coming to power, the Premier has been able to use the Upper House as a safeguard against unpopular measures that are pushed by extremists in the Labor Party and the government. On the one hand, he may suggest that the measure should be given a go and that he will support it but, on the other hand, may secretly be pleased that the Liberal and National parties will combine their votes in another place and reject it.

The Premier knows the Bill would lead to the removal of the Labor Party from office. He has not mentioned that fact. Many twisted arguments have been made about the National Party by members of the government's backbench. They have said that they represent the poorer parts of Victoria while the National Party is privileged to represent country areas. Members of the National Party are privileged to live in the country and to represent country people but if members of the government read the statistics they would soon learn that the poorer electorates are in the country areas and not in metropolitan Melbourne.

Mr Kennedy interjected.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Bendigo West does not know what he is talking about. The honourable member for Thomastown claimed that she represented the poorer people. I ask the honourable members for Thomastown and Bendigo West to look at the statistics produced by the Parliamentary Library. With the assistance of the honourable member for Gippsland East, I analysed the statistics contained in the profile headed, "Comparisons of 1986—Census Characteristics—Victorian Electoral Districts." We do not need many statistics to prove that what the backbench members of the Labor Party said is not true. They cannot back up their arguments with facts and figures.

The document, Electorate Profile, produced by the Library of the Parliament of Victoria sets out at page 70 the percentages of families who earn less than $9000 a year. The profile shows that in 36 Australian Labor Party electorates a lower percentage of families have incomes below $9000 than does any National Party electorate in Victoria. The profile shows that in the electorate of Thomastown, 4.2 per cent of people earn less than $9000. In the Murray Valley electorate 8 per cent earn less than $9000.

Mr Kennedy interjected.

Mr JASPER—Perhaps I should find the figures on Bendigo West to provide a comparison. Usually the comments of the honourable member for Bendigo West are not worth responding to. The honourable member should listen and learn something.
On page 72 of the profile one finds that a greater percentage of those families earning more than $32 000 a year live in 37 Labor Party electorates than in any seat held by the National Party. When the National Party is referred to as representing a privileged few it should be considered that the privilege of National Party members is that they live in country areas. Those in the country are hard workers who are prepared to get in and do something. These statistics prove the situation. The comments made by government backbenchers are not supported by the facts.

Mr Micallef—Prove it!

Mr JASPER—I shall table the document so that the honourable member for Springvale can read the evidence. The honourable member can learn something instead of making inane interjections. The honourable member for Springvale should stand up and tell the House what he believes in, but he rarely does that.

Mr Kennedy interjected.

Mr JASPER—The honourable member for Bendigo West should have a look at the statistics and tell me whether the statistics produced by the Parliamentary Library are wrong.

The Premier in his second-reading speech said that the Victorian government had a mandate to introduce the proposed legislation. That is a load of rubbish! There is no mandate from the people of Victoria to introduce a Bill of this sort. The Premier said that the Legislative Council obstructs the wishes of the Victorian people. That is a load of rubbish, and the Nunawading Province re-election proved that. The people said, “We do not want the Labor Party to have a majority in the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council.” They said, “We want a brake on government; we want a balance between the two Houses so that Bills will have some review.”

The Premier is secretly pleased with the Opposition majority in the Upper House because he can control some of the loony left and the nitwits within his organisation who wish to bring forward proposed legislation that might not be appropriate for Victoria.

The government has brought forward the Bill in the hope that people will be silly enough to fall for the three-card trick; although the Premier has a double-headed coin, I suggest the people do not want the proposed legislation. The Premier in his second-reading speech went on to say that the people want the Upper House to be free from preordained political prejudices. Fancy the Premier having the gall to say that! No-one has more prejudices than he has about wanting to change the operations of the Legislative Council and then to throw it out. He is obsessed about that House. However, he is secretly relieved that he does not have power in the Upper House.

The Premier has said that the Legislative Council should be a House of review and that it must face up to its responsibilities. I suggest that the Council does face up to its responsibilities. It debates proposed legislation, on many occasions amending it in a way that is acceptable not only to the Council but also to the Assembly and to the people of Victoria.

The Premier spoke of having a more democratic system for Victoria, with three metropolitan and two country provinces each electing nine members. But I suggest there are few advantages in that system. Certainly there is not much advantage because more detailed investigation shows that members of Parliament would be more detached from their electorates. They would not provide the personalised representation that country areas now receive with National Party members working hard in Upper House provinces as well as in the Lower House electorates.
The country area would have two seats to represent it. There would be less representation for smaller areas than would occur in the city. The two country provinces would be dominated by people living in provincial cities, such as Ballarat and Bendigo, and in the Latrobe Valley. Rather than better representation across the larger electorates, there would be a falling in with government policies which endeavour to curtail government services by centralising regional offices in the bigger centres.

The opposition parties will oppose the Bill. We support the current system that is operating effectively in Victoria. The so-called one vote, one value system has worked to the extent that we have more even provinces across the State, with two representatives democratically elected from each province.

In my area the two Upper House members are Mr Bill Baxter and Mr David Evans, who represent the North Eastern Province extremely well. They are well known across the province; they provide a service to the people they represent not only in northern Victoria but also in the Legislative Council as well.

The editorial in the Herald yesterday commented about proportional representation for the Senate and in other States—except in Queensland where there is no Upper House operating. It did not say how effectively proportional representation in the Senate and other States is working. I suggest that it is not working as effectively as Victoria's system with 22 provinces and a preferential voting system.

The Senate has twelve senators elected from each State regardless of the size of the State. New South Wales, which has the largest population, has twelve representatives in the Senate and Tasmania, a smaller State, still has twelve representatives in the Senate elected by proportional representation.

However, if one considers one vote, one value, which the government is always crying about, surely it is wrong. Originally when the Federal Constitution was written in 1901 the idea of having proportional representation was to protect State rights. The system serves that purpose, although many of the senators are not known across the length and breadth of the State, unlike many of the members of the Legislative Council in the Victorian Upper House who are well known throughout the provinces they represent so effectively.

The proportional representation system in the Senate provides for the election of twelve senators from each State, regardless of the size of the State. Is that one vote, one person or one vote, one value, call it what one will? One vote, one person is the system that the Bill seeks to put in place but it is not one vote, one value, and that is the issue we should be examining.

Western Australia has a system of proportional representation in its Upper House, but it has different sized regions. If the Western Australian system were adopted in Victoria, the National Party would increase its representation. South Australia has proportional representation with half its Legislative Councillors going to the people at each election but representing the whole of the State. Therefore, one finds that most of the members of the Legislative Council are domiciled in Adelaide and do not know much about the country areas of South Australia. That is not what I call democracy at work; it is not giving the people representation in the Legislative Council.

The Herald states that proportional representation has been adopted by every other State in Australia. Honourable members should analyse that statement. The system does not work. It is not one vote, one value, which the Premier and members of the government party speak about. It really cannot work.

In South Australia the Australian Democrats have had some control in the Upper House and, at one stage, Mr Steele-Hall, who represented the Liberal Movement in
South Australia, held the balance of power on his own. One can foresee the interference in the democratic process of single-issue groups.

New South Wales experiences a similar situation to that of South Australia where minority parties are providing individual and minority representation because of the proportional representation system. The system suggested by the Herald is not working, but the comments made have been grabbed on by the Labor Party, which says that this will be the be all and end all of better representation for the people.

The proposed legislation will not achieve what the government is setting out to do. I suggest that the proposed legislation is contrived. It is a cynical exercise on the part of the government. The people of Victoria do not understand the track the government is following. If they were put to a vote about whether they wanted a system of proportional representation as detailed in the proposed legislation, and it was put to a plebiscite, they would overwhelmingly reject it. The people of Victoria do not want to remove power from the Legislative Council; they want a Legislative Council that will provide a brake on the excesses of government, which one can envisage under the current government.

However, as I said, secretly the Premier thinks it is not a bad idea anyway to get protection against extremists and honourable members should make no mistake about it, there are plenty of extremists in the Labor Party.

Members of the government party speak about whether the National and Liberal parties get together; they speak about factions and so on within the Liberal Party. Those members should have a look at their own party. I suggest that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. The Labor Party has more factions than the conservative parties and the Labor Party is the party that is trying to dictate to the majority of Australians, the majority of Victorians in this case.

If it were put to a vote and people were asked, "Do you want to change the current system of electing members to the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council?" the people would overwhelmingly vote, "No." That is why the National Party totally rejects the proposed legislation.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—The last speaker, the honourable member for Murray Valley, came into this place at the same time I did—20 March 1976. He made the same speech in 1976, 1979, 1981, 1985, and again in 1988.

There are only two differences between the speech he made today and the speeches of earlier years. First, the honourable member admitted that, after nearly thirteen years in this place, the electorate of Murray Valley is extremely disadvantaged. I give him credit for saying that he has failed the people of Murray Valley and admitted to Parliament and them that he has failed. The second difference is that the honourable member said today that the power really remains with the limited few with power in that electorate. That is known to all honourable members, but at least they were able to hear it expressed in clear diction from the honourable member for Murray Valley.

I return to some of the recent history of proportional representation. Before the last election in 1985, the government decided to introduce proportional representation. At that time the conservative Liberal and National parties made it abundantly clear that they would oppose such a proposal. The issue was canvassed throughout the 1985 election campaign. It is common knowledge that the Labor government was returned, and it can say with all honesty and integrity that it has a mandate for the proposal.

The government has now included proportional representation in its program and, in the twilight of this Fiftieth Parliament, it is still secure in the knowledge that it has the mandate to do so which was given to it by the people in 1985. When proportional
representation was first proposed, the Leader of the Opposition adopted his normal stance of being in total opposition to it. It looked as though we were going to have a re-run of the attempts in previous years to introduce proportional representation.

However, the Leader of the Opposition was then seen to change his stance; pressure had obviously been exerted from other sources to make him do so. The Leader of the Opposition wanted to alter the stance he had adopted in previous years but pressure was applied to make him go back to his original stance. The pressure came from the tail that wags the Liberal dog. The dog was described, perhaps too severely, by the Minister for Labour as a shaggy or mangy dog. Whatever the state of the dog, everyone accepts that the National Party tail was really attempting to wag the Liberal Party dog. If honourable members want real evidence of that I take the House through a commentary of the Leader of the National Party on the question of a coalition, which was discussed on Monday 1 August, the day before the Liberal Party was to make its decision in the party room.

As has been pointed out by several other speakers, it is almost comical that, on the day that the Liberal Party was to determine whether to amend or accept the proposed legislation, the decision was changed. All honourable members who have been Ministers—and there are plenty of them on the other side of the Chamber—are aware of the time required for drafting purposes when one is considering amendments or introducing major proposed legislation altering the Constitution.

The Liberal Party made its decision on the day it was to be debated in Parliament. The previous day at 9 a.m. on radio station 3LO the Leader of the National Party said that:

Support by the Victorian Liberals for proportional representation in the Upper House could harm the relationship between the two parties.

What is this all about? A constitutional change to the voting patterns for the Upper House of Parliament is proposed and the matter that concerns the Leader of the junior partnership in the so-called coalition is that it could harm the relationship between the two parties. He did not mention the advantages of a party gaining 10 per cent of the vote being able to get representation in Parliament. The point that was uppermost in the thoughts of the Leader of the National Party was that the proposal could harm the relationship. To hell with all parties that could gain 10 per cent or more of the vote!

The Leader of the National Party was using the media, particularly radio station 3LO, to get the message across. It is obvious that the Leader of the Opposition would have been listening to every word the tail was imparting to the dog. The Leader of the National Party also said that the Liberal Party was being blackmailed by the Australian Democrats. He described as contemptible the Australian Democrats, threat to direct their preferences against any party that failed to support proportional representation and said that he had made that attitude clear to the Leader of the Opposition.

Members of the government can remember the days of the Labor Party split and the formation of the Anti-Communist Labor Party, which was quickly followed by the Democratic Labor Party. However, the Liberal Party did not bleat about preferences in those days. There were no complaints about the nineteen seats that the Democratic Labor Party delivered to the Liberal Party election after election; there was no disaffection with receiving preferences from the Democratic Labor Party. However, it is a real drama for the Leader of the National Party if there is a suggestion that preferences of the Australian Democrats go to a party other than the National or Liberal parties.
The Leader of the National Party went on to say:

Mr Kennett gave an undertaking earlier in the year that the Liberal Party would be rejecting the legislation but in recent times or in recent weeks they have been giving it some consideration—now that appalls me but at the same time I don't expect them in the long run to support it.

Within 24 hours before a decision is made, the tail is telling the dog that it is appalled but that it knows the dog will not support the proposal. Why did the Leader of the National Party know? He knew because the rural rump of the Liberal Party had conveyed to him the fact that the Leader of the Opposition could not get the proposal through the party room. I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition was told by the tail that, under no circumstances, should the Liberal Party consider supporting the Bill.

I remember a party called the Defence of Government Schools—DOGS. It was fascinating to hear the argument put forward by the honourable member for Syndal. While he is devastated about the possibility of the Australian Democrats giving votes to the Labor Party at the forthcoming State election and perhaps winning marginal seats for the government, including his own, the honourable member for Syndal had no problems receiving preferences from the DOGS. The same applies to the honourable member for Bennettswood. What is more amazing is that the Defence of Government Schools party originated because it believed political parties were ignoring the requirements of government schools. The honourable member for Bennettswood was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and went through private education. He represents the electorate of Bennettswood but lives in South Yarra. Despite that, he did not complain about taking preferences from the DOGS.

The honourable member for Syndal had no problems taking preferences from the DOGS to regain his seat and return to Parliament. How hypocritical and cynical for the Opposition to oppose proportional representation and say that it is wrong for the Australian Democrats to allegedly use blackmail by directing preferences to the Labor Party instead of the Liberal Party! So much for the hypocrisy of the honourable members for Bennettswood and Syndal. I am glad that what they feel about preferences is on the record.

On Tuesday, 2 August the Leader of the Opposition got rolled on proportional representation in his own party room. The government Bill was thrown out and even the amendments put forward in the party room by the honourable member for East Yarra Province, Mr Birrell, and the honourable member for South Eastern Province, Mr Hunt, both in the other place, as well as the honourable member for Doncaster, were not supported. Certainly many members of the Opposition would have argued in support of the amendments being proposed by the little team of two with whom I am not acquainted!

What happened on Wednesday? Mr Schildberger asked the Leader of the Opposition to speak with him. I have a transcript of the interview recorded on radio station 3LO. The transcript is provided by Current Affairs Monitoring Pty Ltd and it is an accurate record of what was said. Part of the transcript reads as follows:

Kennett: We go into this election now knowing that Mr Spindler is going to seek his membership to direct preferences against the Liberal Party and to the Labor Party. That could cost us 3 per cent of the vote.

Schildberger: It could cost you the election.

Kennett: It could also cost us the election. There is no doubt whatsoever.

On Tuesday the Leader of the Opposition was rolled in the party room and on Wednesday he admitted that the Liberal Party would lose the next election and its vote would decrease by 3 per cent. That is common knowledge, but in the same week
it was reported in my local paper that the Leader of the Opposition said that the Liberal Party will win the State seats of Niddrie and Keilor at the next election. The Labor Party holds the seat of Keilor with a margin of 11.5 per cent and the seat of Niddrie by 13 per cent.

In the same week that the Leader of the Opposition told Michael Schildberger that the Liberal Party would not win the election and that there would be a 3 per cent swing against it, he said that the Liberal Party would win the seats of Keilor and Niddrie. A lot of people have said to me, "Jeffrey really does not like you," but that puts paid to that lie. That man has the greatest respect for me and the work I do not only in my electorate but also in the adjoining electorate. Through the statement in a local paper circulating in my electorate, the Leader of the Opposition is saying that the personal vote of the honourable member for Niddrie surpasses anything that Tom Evans, the former honourable member for Ballarat North, may have had. It suggests that my personal vote is worth 16 per cent. I am too modest to accept that that could be right.

I understand that the Premier, who interjects, may hold the same view as the Leader of the Opposition, but I am being as realistic as I possibly can. I do not believe my own personal vote is worth as much as that.

Honourable members interjecting

Mr SIMPSON—I hear 20 per cent. Is there any advance on that? Do I hear 21 per cent? In all humility, I cannot really accept that that would be my personal vote, yet that is what the Leader of the Opposition is saying. He said that the Liberal Party cannot possibly win government, that it would lose 3 per cent, but that it would pick up the seats of Keilor and Niddrie. He went even further and said, as reported in the article:

... that the Liberal Party would give their preference votes to the standing member, Mr Jack Culpin, at the next election.

Mr Culpin, formerly aligned with the socialist left faction, was removed from the ALP membership list earlier this year.

Everyone knows that Mr Culpin is finished with the Victorian Branch of the Australian Labor Party—in fact, the ALP altogether. Anyone who listens to radio station 3CR will have heard that Mr Bill Hartley is championing Jack Culpin.

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster)—On a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker, I submit that the honourable member's remarks have nothing to do with the Bill.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Kirkwood)—Order! I uphold the point of order and I direct the honourable member for Niddrie to return to the Bill.

Mr SIMPSON (Niddrie)—Thank you for your guidance, Mr Acting Speaker, but I return to the point that this is a Bill designed to give people—and I do not care whether they are in an organised party, whether they stand as independents or whether they are from other community groups—who can claim 10 per cent of the primary vote or better an entitlement to representation in the Legislative Council.

The ACTING SPEAKER—Order! I am finding it difficult to hear the remarks of the honourable member for Niddrie because of the nattering of the honourable member for Springvale. I ask him to cease.

Mr SIMPSON—I direct to the attention of the House an editorial that has been quoted by other honourable members, but I take a view of it that is different from that
taken by others. I shall read the relevant sections of the editorial that appeared in the *Herald* of Tuesday, 2 August under the headline, “The Kennett Renaissance”:

Is Jeff Kennett electable? A year ago few people seriously regarded him as a viable contender for the Victorian premiership. Now it is a different matter. Mr Kennett’s popularity has improved in the opinion polls, but more importantly he is now a political leader who possesses the one critical ingredient that always seemed to elude him: credibility.

I feel genuinely sorry for the writer of the editorial, whom I happen to know. The writer was in much difficulty. Material gets leaked from certain officers and certain persons about governments and political parties; all honourable members are aware of that.

Material was leaked to the *Herald* suggesting that the Leader of the Opposition would win the day. The editorial stated that he was showing leadership and it would be Tweedledum and Tweedledee as to the decision in caucus. Imagine the poor writer of the editorial, who I understand is now in a state of shock and in a padded cell. The editorial stated that the popularity of the Leader of the Opposition had improved in the opinion polls. We learnt today that his popularity rating is 25 per cent. What was the rate before, if he has improved his position, if his popularity has improved to 25 per cent? I believe even Jack Culpin would do better than 25 per cent and he has only Bill Rartley, who formed the industrial socialist party, to support him.

This poor author of the editorial was absolutely shattered. The editorial said:

One of the decisive factors in the election will be Democratic preferences. The Liberals seem to have accepted the political reality that some form of proportional-representation voting is inevitable for Victoria's Upper House.

This poor feature writer, whom I know, was fed information that there would be proportional representation; he was given the wrong information and was left holding the baby with egg all over his face.

On Tuesday, the Leader of the Opposition got done in his own caucus; on Wednesday he said on the Schildberger radio program that the Liberal Party could not win; and on Thursday, today, the *Age* poll was released, which confirms that he cannot win; also today the wheels literally fell off his chair, particularly when he sat down for question time. The Leader of the Opposition has had a dreadful week; he got done in the caucus on Tuesday, admitted on the radio on Wednesday that he could not win, and on Thursday the *Age* poll confirmed that that is true, that he cannot win, and his popularity is down to 25 per cent. To really make it poignant, the wheels fell off his chair when he sat down for question time, and I am sure the cartoonists will be able to do something with that.

The honourable member for Coburg said he believed the government’s majority at the completion of the next election would be sixteen seats, and I agree. Let us be realistic. Honourable members know what the Leader of the Opposition said on Wednesday. They now know what the *Age* poll says. The seats that are under threat and need only a minimal swing to be lost by the Liberals are: Narracan, 0·4 per cent; Bennettswood, 0·8 per cent; Syndal, 1·3 per cent; Ivanhoe, 1·6 per cent; Mornington, 2 per cent; Dromana, 2·4 per cent; and Evelyn, 2·8 per cent. There would need to be a 3·1 per cent swing for the honourable member for Berwick to lose his seat. That is desperately close; the honourable member lives in South Yarra and represents Berwick. I am sure one will see signs out in the electorate saying: Rob Maclellan—your local candidate doing his best for you. He has been studying how to do his flying act again because he saw the Leader of the Opposition was in trouble. He probably became lonely sitting up there next to the *Hansard* reporters. Of course, he got to know them well, but he now wants to work his way back into the real world and move back to the front bench.
The poll announced in the *Age* is very detailed. Each of the people representing the electorates I have mentioned has made some contribution in his own way, but I look forward to some young, vibrant and progressive people coming into this place. I charge the government with the responsibility, although it seems that it will win by a margin of sixteen seats, not to rest on its laurels. The people of Victoria want to see the economy continue to advance and they will not accept a government that becomes complacent. They will want to see reforms such as that contained in this Bill.

Although I will not be in this place after the next election, when the Labor Party returns to government for yet another term, I hope the government will still be charged with the responsibility to get this sort of measure through Parliament and give those groups that can gain 10 per cent or more of the vote the opportunity of having a voice. No longer will sheep, lizards, fish, trees and grass be voting. That is all gone; that is in the past. We are the last outpost for it here in Victoria and it has come to an end.

It was suggested in some of the commentary that the proposed legislation would mean a gerrymander. I take umbrage at that suggestion because the last redistribution for Victorian electorates was carried out under legislation that is still in place, which requires three independent commissioners to follow through that redistribution. Absolutely no interference occurred at that time and no interference should ever occur.

The opposition parties suggested that an implication of this gerrymander is that certain people could be got at. It is terrible that members of Parliament should make such an allegation. I find it particularly hypocritical for that suggestion to come from the National Party because I remember sitting in my lounge room watching Russ Hinze on television, before the "Joh for PM" campaign, saying, "Why doesn't Joh give me the redistribution? I would sew it up in such a way that we would never bloody lose an election." They are the words used by a man the National Party thought was a great champion. Just imagine the effrontery of a person saying that on television!

Members of the National Party referred to a gerrymander when debating this Bill, but they did not comment on what Russ Hinze said. They were reluctant to comment on how Russ Hinze would personally interfere or become involved in a gerrymander. It is an absolute insult to the three independent electoral commissioners and to this Parliament that some people in Victoria could suggest that.

The other issue concerning me is the recent comment of the Leader of the Opposition on the Schildberger program on 3LO. The Leader of the Opposition said, "I have no doubt that yesterday's decision was morally correct." Yesterday the honourable member for Doncaster made his contribution. I publicly thank him for making his greens available to me when the daily *Hansard* was not available. It is clear that the honourable member, the Honourable Mark Birrell and the Honourable Alan Hunt were at least three members who put forward a point of view that is totally different from what the Leader of the Opposition said is "morally correct".

There is only one inference to be drawn from that: what the honourable members have suggested is presumably immoral. I do not believe the honourable member for Doncaster is immoral. He is a man of integrity, a man with some forward vision. It is a tragedy that a man of his calibre will not be in this Parliament after the next election. I shall say more about the calibre of the honourable member for Doncaster as I get into my twilight. Although his Leader implies he is immoral, I do not, nor do I believe the other two gentlemen, particularly the Honourable Alan Hunt, are immoral: Alan Hunt is a man of conscience. Honourable members will recall his actions concerning another Bill that was recently debated in the other place. I look forward to the man of conscience again considering the people who can command 10 per cent or more of the vote.
There is no doubt that the National Party would have lost seats under this Bill. Everyone acknowledges that. However, under the Liberal Party's proposed legislation they would have lost even more seats. The National Party has been cynical about this measure, so much so that its Leader said, "Don't do it, Jeff." I well recall Patrick White, in a memorable speech, saying, "Don't do it, Bill." Those words clearly ring in my ear when I think about the Leader of the National Party saying, "Don't do it, Jeff," and the dog responded to the tail and said, "No way known."

It is a crying shame that, despite community expectations, democracy in the form of proportional representation will not now be possible for the next election, perhaps a few months away. People have been denied that opportunity because of the actions of the Liberal Party. Is it any wonder that the Liberal Party has earned the scorn of not only the Australian Democrats but also all Victorians, which is clearly reflected in the Saulwick Age poll published today?

Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston South)—I recognise that the time is fast approaching 4 o'clock on a Thursday afternoon, but I shall make a brief contribution. This Bill has been the most cynical political exercise that I have witnessed as a member of Parliament. This week a number of government members have made speeches, some of them almost making their maiden speeches. It is obvious that we are in the shadow of an election. Every little bird outside keeps ringing me up and saying, "26 November, get yourself into gear." The only person who has not been contacted by telephone is the Premier, but certainly every other little bird is tweeting that date.

The House has gone through a week of a cynical exercise so that government members can get up and make contributions to ensure that their names will be recorded in Hansard. Honourable members will be aware that in a number of local branches grassroot members sift through Hansard and count up the number of questions asked by their members. They then decide that he or she has been a wonderful member because there are five entries under that person's name in the Hansard index. That is the exercise that has been embarked upon this week.

The honourable member for Niddrie has probably made one of his last speeches in the House. He must have recognised that because he made an historical recitation of what has happened over many years. One point he raised concerned honourable members not living in the electorates they serve. It is cynical for honourable members to raise that issue because everyone knows that the Premier does not live, and never has lived, in the Bundoora electorate. The honourable member for Niddrie pointed to members on this side of the House who were not residing in their electorates, but that has nothing to do with how well they represent their constituents. I have met hundreds of politicians and I know of many who do not live in their electorates. The honourable member for Niddrie has raised this as a red herring.

Mr Simpson interjected.

Mr WEIDEMAN—The honourable member should ask the Minister for the Arts, who represents the Carrum electorate, how close his residence on the Nepean Highway is to Carrum. This is simply a cynical and political exercise. Honourable members have talked about history while debating this measure, but not one government member spoke about the Labor Party platform entitled "The Abolition of the Upper House." On numerous occasions government members have attacked the Liberal Party, now in opposition, for what it did or did not do before 1982. However, they have not referred to their own policy platform. I have a document that did not fall off the back of a truck: it was sent to me by the former honourable member for Syndal, David Gray. That document states:

Dear Member,
The attached paper “The Abolition of the Victorian Legislative Council—How to do it!” has been prepared with the intention of stimulating discussion on one of the ALP’s important policy planks.

It is dated 29 September 1983, which makes one recognise the cynical exercise that has been followed for the past five or six years. The paper refers to the history of the abolition of the Queensland Upper House, and the problems faced by the Labor Party in that State are obvious to all.

Mr J. F. McGrath—That was introduced by them.

Mr WEIDEMAN—The abolition of the Queensland Upper House was supported by the Labor Party. Prior to the 1985 State election the Australian Democrats, quite rightly, discussed with the Labor Party how its substantial vote could be used to elect its members to Parliament. I believe the Australian Democrats should obtain some representation, but the government has gone through an extremely cynical exercise this week. In 1985 the Premier announced a proposal to restructure the Upper House, and it was later ratified at a party meeting. Some honourable members may wish to talk about the later ratification of an agreement entered into with the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, but a simple position applied in 1985 with the Labor Party. However, not one government member who contributed to this debate said he or she was in favour of the policy to abolish the Upper House. It appears now that they do not believe in its abolition!

In 1983 one person circulated the full document and how to do it. He made it available and he sent it to me—he does not know how he did that, but it was delivered to my office—and I thank him for it. The cynical exercise in 1985 when discussions were held was such that it led the Australian Democrats to believe they would have a Bill introduced in the Legislative Council when the new government was formed—and I should expect that to happen—but it did not happen until last year. The provisions could not be accepted by the Australian Democrats and could not be accepted by the Opposition. The Australian Democrats saw through it and were upset and let everybody know about it. All government members of the House were approached and informed how they felt. The Australian Democrats were disillusioned about what had happened.

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In the twilight of the government, under the pressure of an election in the next ten weeks, another Bill is being presented to the House. This is the most cynical exercise I have seen in my time in politics. If one wishes to buy a Mercedes, one does not go into the Rolls Royce showroom, one goes into the Mercedes showroom. The only parties that could have delivered this type of change in the Legislative Council are the opposition parties because they have control.

We have all heard about the deals being made between the government and the Australian Democrats. If I were one of the Australian Democrats I should feel let down. Why would one wish to be told that one's deal had been presented to the public at large? The Australian Democrats are now being conned into believing they are being supported. The government and the Premier know it is a cynical exercise. After the next election we will see what changes are made to the role and function of the Upper House because many honourable members would like sensible constitutional reform of the Upper House.

The Federal Attorney-General on radio station 3LO this morning said that problems with the proposed referendum question on fixed Parliamentary terms could lead to a “No” vote but the reason for promoting a “Yes” vote was that with four-year terms without provision for a minimum period—which results from the Upper House proportional representation—no guarantee could be given that a three-year term could not be turned into a four-year term. All the 21 or 22 Parliaments which have been
The Victoria branch of the Australian Labor Party has as one of its platform objectives the abolition of the Legislative Council. Traditionally, the Labor Party has opposed the existence of second Chambers, however called, because of their historical origins as nominee or restricted franchise Chambers and the use to which they are put by Labor's conservative opponents.

The document goes on at length about what happened in Queensland.

Based on that document—known as “How to do it”—the honourable member for Coburg informed the House that the government would be returned to office with a majority of sixteen members, and the former honourable member for Syndal, David Gray, thought there would be 24 Labor members in the Legislative Council if the 1982 figures could be attained. That would give the Labor Party the power to get rid of the Legislative Council. Mr Gray spells out how that would be done: by taking the Presidency and no other positions and retaining the numbers in the Legislative Council; and by ensuring constitutionally that no other future government could re-establish an Upper House.

Mr Gray further states that:

The State does have the power to abolish its Upper House provided it complies with the requirements laid down in the Constitution Act 1975. Certain corollary measures mentioned above should form part of an “abolition package” to ensure that the vote for abolition is carried and that a future non-Labor government could not by mere vote in the Assembly restore an Upper House or otherwise amend the Constitution so as to frustrate future Labor administrations.

That is the Labor Party's position. Not one Labor Party member mentioned that. That is where they have stood for 50 years, and I cannot believe party-principle people would give up a plank of their platform at the whim of a Premier. I can only assume that none of them voted at that convention, or that they saw it in different terms.

I am happy to table the document that was sent to me by the former honourable member for Syndal who believes in the abolition of the Upper House and who has the courage to say so. I did not hear one government party member put forward any evidence of that kind on behalf of the Labor Party.

I hope the Premier next week will call an election. Then, let us come back with the next Parliament to look at the situation and set up either a constitutional inquiry or a committee of Parliamentarians to fairly judge the situation. We have a democratic bicameral system—the Westminster system—of Parliament and it is one that has served us well. The problems of overseas Parliaments using the proportional representation system have been highlighted in this debate. We have a system which has served us well and, if it is to be changed, it should be carefully examined first. We do not want a system that will not work. A 6 per cent preference would go to the Labor Party on their figures. If the 44 members were to go out at once, that would get rid of the checks and balances that have served us well. The Opposition opposes the Bill in its present form and does not wish it a speedy passage through the House.
Mr CAIN (Premier)—I thank honourable members for their contributions in what has been a long but constructive debate. It has been an historic debate.

I remind the House that the Legislative Council slowly is being brought to account in keeping with modern times. It is an historic Chamber. It is, of course, the first Legislative Chamber that Victoria had. It was an advisory Chamber to colonial governors and when Victoria was given responsible government it remained a House of review, the so-called second Chamber.

Honourable members have traced its history throughout this debate and it is apparent that the Upper House always has marched to the beat of the conservative drum. That is the nature of the Chamber. As honourable members have said, it has been a Chamber which, until 1950, enjoyed a restricted franchise. It has always had staggered elections; only half its members retiring when members of the Lower House go to the polls. Of course, it had limited franchise, which was changed, as I recall it, in 1951 when the then Country Party was in office and the McDonald government, in response to an agreement—and we have heard a lot about deals today—with the Labor Party said that it would amend the Constitution Act to remove that restricted franchise. That is 37 years ago.

The then Country Party government, led by the late Sir John McDonald, entered into an agreement with the Labor Party in exchange for its support. There is nothing shameful about that. I have seen the terms of the agreement. They were written on a piece of paper by the late George Moss. This was one of them. There were two, but I shall not go into that. That was a deal made by the then Country Party—there was nothing wrong with it—and, I believe, properly so.

That is part of the history of the Chamber—it is a Chamber rich in history. The Legislative Council has been brought, kicking and screaming, into the late twentieth century, but its powers still need some adjustment to contemporary times.

The Federal Parliament, since 1948, and State Parliaments throughout Australia since the late 1970s or early 1980s, have adopted the proportional representation system. It may be a product of the times that voters are less entrenched and more volatile and, therefore, that the allegiance of voters to the traditional parties is not as strict as it was and, consequently, there is more movement across party lines. This has led to the emergence of other interest groups that are properly saying, “If we enjoy significant support we are entitled to representation in the political system.”

I do not advocate that Parliament should embrace the French system, which is noted for its chronic instability, with rapid changes of government resulting from the alliances that occur with the various interest groups. Proportional representation does not achieve that in an Upper House. It does not properly—sometimes improperly—make or break governments.

Although there are those who oppose the Senate system, being the imposition of the American state system on a federation—a corruption, some would say, of the Westminster system—in any event it is there and other States, to some extent, have copied the Senate system. On all the advice that I have—one may quarrel with the quotas—the system works reasonably well in Upper Houses in other States.

On a parochial note, the Labor Party introduced proportional representation for its intra-party elections in the early 1970s, first in Victoria and then right across Australia. The Labor Party is a broadly-based party and I believe the system works just as well in two-party systems of government. A wide range of views is represented in a two or three-party system and the proportional representation system ensures a reflection, within reasonable terms, of all shades of opinion in that party.
The government recognises the historic, philosophical and constitutional background in introducing the proportional representation system for the Upper House. I have listened to most of the debate over the past three days. I missed some of the debate yesterday, but the pleas that I heard from honourable members opposite really come down to this: that the conservative parties have always controlled the Upper House; they provide the checks and balances; it is right and proper that they should go on doing that; and it would be wrong for any other political group to enjoy that privilege. That is explicit in what honourable members of the opposition are saying. If it is right for the conservatives—if I can use the generic term—in coalition or amalgamation, why is it not right for others?

I note that coalition between those parties has been wiped off the agenda. Only one member of the Liberal Party shadow Ministry is present in the Chamber, but the jobs of members of the shadow Ministry are under threat. Will the coalition be 9 Liberal members and 8 National Party members, 9 Liberal members and 7 National Party members or 8 Liberal members and 6 National Party members? I do not know.

Why is it okay to have a conservative majority in the Upper House as a check and balance and not okay to have a majority made up in any other way? The conservatives say that it is wrong to have a check and balance made up of a combination of members of the National Party, the Liberal Party and the Australian Democrats. Would it be wrong to have a check and balance comprising members of the Labor Party, the Australian Democrats and the National Party? The conservatives say it is only all right if the check and balance comprises members of the National Party and Liberal Party. I do not understand that logic.

I do not understand the gymnastics of the Liberal Party on this issue. The Leader of the Opposition has gone through three phases. The first phase was the principle. The Leader of the Opposition was quite vociferous, as was the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. They were strident and arrogant about the suggestion of proportional representation for the Upper House. They expressed a number of principles in the strongest language, as only the Leader of the Opposition can.

The Parliament then witnessed a flirtation with a system of a single-State electorate and proportional representation. That proposal was put strongly. A wide range of discussions took place about it and the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members found electoral, philosophical and other virtues in that system.

On Tuesday, the Leader of the Opposition was rolled in the party room, not by just a small margin but by a prodigious margin. The Leader of the Opposition has been the full circle. He was strongly concerned about the Bill as a matter of principle, then flirted with a Statewide system and then returned to the principle again. The House witnessed a pathetic defence of the Liberal Party position last Tuesday night.

The government believes history and contemporary political attitudes are on its side. The Australian political system has moved to a proportional voting system for its Parliaments, especially for Upper Houses, and for Victoria to lag behind fails to recognise the political realities across Australia.

The government will press on with the proposed legislation in another place. Members of the government in that Chamber will fight strongly for its acceptance. If it is not passed in another place and if there are not second thoughts by those honourable members who seem to have changed their minds during the past three or four days, the government will introduce the Bill some time in the future. I say that without any qualification, because the government believes that is the way the majority of people believe it should proceed.
The Bill will not go away. If the proposed legislation is not passed the government will introduce it during the next sessional period of Parliament. The Bill should be passed this time and if it is passed the next elections—honourable members can guess when they will be—will be fought on the new system. It can be done so members of the Opposition should understand what they are doing. If the conservative parties in another place are determined to reject the proposed legislation, they are saying to the people of Victoria and to other political groups, “We are not going to allow Victoria to have a proportional representation system in the Upper House for the next State election.” I promise Victorians that a proportional representation system for the Upper House will come. The Bill will be reintroduced again and it will be passed, because that is the way political systems are moving.

The functions of the Upper House have changed ever so slowly and it has been catching up with contemporary thinking over a period of 140 years. It is still behind contemporary thinking in the way members of Parliament are elected to it. Every other State Parliament has caught up with the thinking of people, and Victoria will follow.

This has been an important debate. It has shown again that the conservative side of politics still believes it has something special in the Upper House. Conservatives have controlled that Chamber for 140 years, but that is not a good reason why they should continue controlling it.

Proportional representation was not resisted with the same vigour in other States as it has been in Victoria. It is difficult to understand why Victorian conservatives should regard themselves as being so different. My recollection of the history of proportional representation is that in 1948 the Menzies conservatives did not oppose proportional representation.

Mr Hann—They should have!

Mr CAIN—The honourable member for Rodney interjects that they should have done so. The government will ensure that proportional representation is introduced in this place as soon as possible.

The SPEAKER—Order! I am of the opinion that the second reading of this Bill is required to be passed by an absolute majority. The question is:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The House divided on the motion (the Hon. C. T. Edmunds in the chair).

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Majority for the motion 10

AYES
Mr Andrianopoulos
Mr Cain
Miss Callister
Mr Cathie
Dr Coghil
Mr Crabb
Mr Ernst
Mr Fogarty
Mr Fordham
Mr Gavin
Mrs Gleeson
Mr Harrowfield
Mrs Hill
Mr Hill

NOES
Mr Austin
Mr Brown
Mr Coleman
Mr Cooper
Mr Crozier
Mr Delzoppo
Mr Elder
Mr Evans
Mr Gude
Mr Hann
Mr Hayward
Mr Heffernan
Mr Jasper
Mr John
The motion for the second reading of the Bill having been agreed to by an absolute majority of the whole number of the members of the House, the Bill was read a second time and, by leave, the House proceeded to the third reading.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

The SPEAKER—Order! I am of the opinion that the third reading of this Bill is required to be passed by an absolute majority.

Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn)—The Bill has been hatched out of a cynical deal between the Premier and the Australian Democrats. The Premier has heard numerous Opposition members putting their points of view and he has not chosen to deny that a cynical deal was the basis of the Bill. He has not chosen to deny the voting difficulties that the Bill will cause, which were eloquently put by the honourable member for Syndal.

The Premier has not chosen to deny the facts as they were put to him by the Opposition, that this Bill portrays a real risk of handing the control of power in the Upper House to a small unrepresentative group with the accompanying instability that will be brought to this State.

The Premier and his colleagues are tarnished by the Bill and they will be judged accordingly!

The motion for the third reading of the Bill was agreed to by an absolute majority of the whole number of the members of the House.
The motion for the third reading of the Bill having been carried by an absolute majority of the whole number of the members of the House, the Bill was read a third time.

CRIMES (FAMILY VIOLENCE) (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Crimes (Family Violence) Act came into operation on 1 December 1987. That Act is designed to provide ongoing protection to victims of violence in the home. It empowers magistrates to make intervention orders in cases of family violence. To date, approximately 1600 orders have been made, a statistic which highlights the prevalence of family violence in our community.

The intended scope of the Act in addressing family violence has been limited by a recent Supreme Court decision in the case of Fisher v. Fisher. In that case, Mr Justice Nathan ruled that the Act's provisions do not allow police prosecutors to represent civilian complainants in applications for intervention orders. The court also questioned the appropriateness of police prosecutors representing police complainants in such applications. The court argued that it is not appropriate to have a police officer appearing as a partisan advocate in a civil dispute.

The concern identified by Mr Justice Nathan is one that the government recognises. However, it was the government’s intention in introducing the Act to make a special exemption because of the unique circumstances which surround family violence situations. The government regards it as essential that police who attend a family violence incident have every assistance in bringing applications for intervention orders on behalf of victims. That assistance must include access to the services of police prosecutors.

It is unrealistic to expect police complainants, who are sometimes unskilled in courtroom procedures, to personally prosecute a complaint in all cases. The Bill, therefore, makes it clear that police prosecutors have standing to represent a police complainant on an application for an intervention order, on an application for the variation, extension or revocation of such an order, and on any appeal from such applications.

The possibility that police officers acting in intervention order proceedings may be civilly liable for the conduct of those proceedings was raised in the Fisher judgment. To counter any such suggestion, the Bill provides in clause 4 that a police officer acting in good faith and in the normal course of duty in a hearing for an intervention order will not be liable in any civil action arising out of the conduct of the hearing.

In line with the warrant provisions in the Magistrates’ Court Bill, clause 5 of the Bill provides that a member of the Police Force may arrest pursuant to a warrant under the Crimes (Family Violence) Act, even though the warrant is not in the possession of the member at the time the arrest is made.

The final clause of the Bill, clause 6, deals with the question of costs. The general rule concerning costs in civil cases is that the successful litigant is entitled to his or her costs. Such a rule is not appropriate in intervention order proceedings, where a police officer will often be one of the parties. It is not the government’s intention that police should be liable for the other party’s costs if they have acted properly, in good faith and in the normal course of their duty. The Bill provides that each party must bear his or her own costs, unless the court decides that exceptional circumstances warrant
it ordering otherwise. This rule is also in line with that applicable to family law actions under the Family Law Act.

The government is committed to ensuring that the problem of family violence in the Victorian community is speedily and effectively addressed. The intervention order proceedings have become, after little more than eight months’ experience, a vital element in protecting victims—almost always women and children—from further violence. The Supreme Court’s restrictive interpretation of the Act placed at risk the value of the mechanism. The Bill removes the impediment that the interpretation created for police making complaints.

I commend the Bill to the House.

On the motion of Mr JOHN (Bendigo East), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until Thursday, August 18.

CREDIT (ADMINISTRATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL

The debate (adjourned from March 31) on the motion of Mr Roper (Minister for Consumer Affairs) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr PESCOTT (Bennettswood)—The small Bill—or so it seems on the surface—is designed to clarify appeal provisions relating to the Credit Licensing Authority and also, at the same time, establish a separate credit tribunal by restructuring the Small Claims Tribunal.

As I said, on the surface, it seems to be a small Bill; in fact, it seems to be what I would describe as a “Sir Humphrey special”—a Bill designed and produced by people within the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and a brainchild of those who advise the Minister.

The matter I shall deal with first concerns the clarification of the appeal provisions relating to the Credit Licensing Authority. Under section 61 of the Credit (Administration) Act as it stands at present, it is possible for someone who appeals against a decision of the Credit Licensing Authority to have their entire case heard. That might seem an enormous expense for people as they examine the possibility of going through a credit licensing operation twice but, as it happens, the way that this Credit Licensing Authority is constituted differs from that of other credit licensing authorities around Australia.

There has been only one such appeal and that was an appeal in the case of Patersons Credit Pty Ltd and it was during that appeal, which was heard last year, that the judge said that it was possible for people appealing to the Credit Licensing Authority to have their entire case heard. That might seem an enormous expense for people as they examine the possibility of going through a credit licensing operation twice but, as it happens, the way that this Credit Licensing Authority is constituted differs from that of other credit licensing authorities around Australia.

In other credit Act jurisdictions, full licensing appeal rights exist; for example, in New South Wales, one can go to the Supreme Court of New South Wales in exactly the same way as occurs in Victoria at present. In other jurisdictions in Australia, the licensing authorities are commercial tribunals exercising more formal judicial powers than the Victorian authority.

I welcome the Minister for Consumer Affairs into the Chamber. I am sure he would like to hear what is being said!

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr PESCOTT—I understand the Minister has been listening on the intercom; he must have one in his pocket and listening as he is walking along!
That means the commercial tribunals in other States have a much wider jurisdiction than the Credit Licensing Authority in Victoria, and that includes the power to award costs, to adjudicate in civil disputes, and to establish formal rules of practice and procedure. That is something which does not apply in the Bill and makes the Victorian Credit Licensing Authority different from other credit licensing authorities in Australia.

The proposed amendment to section 61 of the current Act will substantially reduce the appeal rights in relation to credit licensing because it will not allow—as the provision has been put forward—the Supreme Court to hear that case again.

The Minister might argue that in 1985, when the Credit Licensing Authority got under way, all people who were involved in the credit industry, and in particular I am speaking of the finance companies and parts of the retail industry concerned with providing credit, were deemed to have licences. Since then the Credit Licensing Authority has begun a process of going through each one of those providers of credit to work out whether they are, in fact, eligible to continue with that licence.

The majority of companies in that category have been heard since that time. However, the majority of companies does not represent all the companies with the largest amount of credit. In other words, some of the largest finance companies in this country still have to be heard in the Credit Licensing Authority. Those companies include the Australian Guarantee Corporation Ltd and others which have, in recent times, been the target of attack from various consumer groups, including the Consumer Credit Legal Service. Without doubt the Consumer Credit Legal Service and other people have found problems in the operation of the large finance companies.

I understand the Consumer Credit Legal Service has sought to have a register made of all of those problems that have occurred with these large companies so that it can mount a proper case in the licensing hearing that will come forward in due course.

A problem with the proposed legislation is that the whole issue of the licence for these credit providers will be heard in a relatively narrow tribunal and there will be no second chance if the proposed legislation of the government were passed.

The Liberal Party is examining this and, because of the previous position of the Liberal Party when it introduced the Act as a government in 1981, on reconsidering the matter has decided to adopt the same position and allow people who wish to appeal against the decisions of the Credit Licensing Authority to continue that operation through the Supreme Court and be able to have their cases heard again. Therefore, the Opposition will be moving an amendment in opposition to what is proposed by the government so that the status quo remains.

A further matter dealt with in the small Bill provides for the establishment of a separate credit tribunal by restructuring the Small Claims Tribunal. The Opposition considers this to be such a small, narrow issue that it will allow it to go through as a measure the government requires for the operation of its consumer credit affairs.

In particular, the new credit tribunal will examine issues that come up under only two sections of the Credit (Administration) Act: section 74 dealing with the relief of hardship provisions and section 85 dealing with applications by credit providers to reduce civil penalties.

These matters really do not seem to be important enough to bring to Parliament. It is a matter for the Sir Humphreys and those people involved in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs who wish to tidy up the operation in this very small area but, in so doing, they are really dealing with an issue that affected only three or four cases in the past few years and has not been a subject of great difficulty for the government. It is really an issue that hardly deserves mention.
On that basis, the Opposition has no objection to what is proposed. The Opposition will be moving an amendment during the Committee stage on the narrowing down of the appeal provisions relating to the Credit Licensing Authority. However, so far as establishing a separate credit tribunal is concerned, the Liberal Party has no opposition to the measure.

On the motion of Mr HANN (Rodney), the debate was adjourned.

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

TRUSTEE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

The debate (adjourned from April 21) on the motion of Mr McCutcheon (Attorney-General) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

Mr JOHN (Bendigo East)—The Bill seeks to amend the Trustee Companies Act 1984. Many changes have occurred in the economy since 1984 in this area of financial activity, and that necessitates legislative change. Approximately eleven authorised trustee companies operate in Victoria. In my electorate of Bendigo East the Sandhurst Trustees Ltd is a prominent financial institution and contributes greatly to the local economy. The company also has offices in Melbourne and at Shepparton in the electorate represented by the Leader of the National Party.

Trustee companies perform extremely valuable roles for people and companies. The trustee companies operate under statutory rules, high ethical standards and with considerable financial expertise and investment knowledge. They provide the community with an important alternative to private trustees, who are often solicitors, in the case of family clients.

In the case of some estates, it is necessary to appoint trustee companies because the estates may have continuity that exceeds the lifetime of a private trustee. Some estates are so complex that they require more professional advice and expertise than is available from a single family member or a particular solicitor. A trustee company will often have expert people readily available. Each type of trustee, be it a company or a private trustee, has an important role to play. It depends on the circumstances in each case as to which type should be appointed.

Trustee companies often play a valuable role and offer a valuable contribution to the economy of Victoria. At the end of last year, more than $1000 million in estate trust funds administered by trustee companies was invested in Victoria. At the end of last year, more than $2500 million was contained in common funds administered by trustee companies. Trustee companies in the State control considerable sums of money. As I said, more than $2500 million was contained in common funds, and that is a big jump from the figure of $300 million over the past four years.

There has been enormous growth in common funds and cash management funds. The Bill seeks to update the laws governing trustee companies. In particular, clause 5 empowers the Attorney-General to authorise and appoint new trustee companies or to allow the continuation of existing companies. The powers are wide and sweeping.

Clause 6 provides that the Attorney-General may suspend or revoke the authorisation of a trustee company. It also alters the commission that may be charged in certain circumstances. Clause 10 provides for additional borrowing powers of trustee companies, and clause 12 amends the provisions relating to reserve funds.

The Opposition supports the Bill so far as it goes. However, it asks yet again for the Attorney-General to release the reports of the failed trustee company, Trustees Executors and Agency Co. Ltd—TEA. That company failed a few years ago and it has
always been of great concern to the finance and trustee company industries in Victoria. I understand that the reports were made to the government by Corporate Affairs Victoria and by the National Companies and Securities Commission. The reports deal with the circumstances and reasons for the collapse of TEA.

Some charges have been made and penalties have been given out by the courts while other charges are still pending. Nevertheless, the Opposition claims that if the release of the reports could prejudice the trials of the people involved, the government should release the expurgated versions of the reports because that would not affect the trials of any accused but would still allow the Opposition to examine the reports.

Many years ago with the collapse of the Reid Murray company, the official reports were released prior to the prosecutions of the individuals involved. The New South Wales Corporate Affairs Commission requires an inspector's report in separate volumes withholding publication of material alleging criminal activity by any parties. In that way, information about breakdowns in corporate control are made public without prejudice to individuals.

It is now approximately five years since the collapse of TEA with huge losses to the public. Now that Parliament is called to debate wide-ranging legislation that increases the Attorney-General's control over trustee companies, it is imperative that Parliament has available to it the reasons for the collapse of that major trustee company. Members of the Opposition need to know what lessons can be learnt from that collapse so the situation is not repeated. Perhaps lessons could be learnt by all trustee companies. Alternatively, the problems of TEA may simply have arisen from incompetence or criminal activity on the part of certain officers of the company. Members of the Opposition need to know the facts so that action can be taken to restore the public's confidence in the legal system regarding that type of financial activity.

It is ridiculous that, some five years after the collapse, the reports should still be secret. I cannot believe that everything contained in the reports would prejudice any accused who still may have to come before the courts. The reports should be released in the public interest without further delay or excuse. I call on the Attorney-General to authorise immediately the release of those reports so that they can be examined by the Opposition and the public before the Bill is debated in the other place.

Another matter of concern to the Opposition is the government's credentials in terms of its support for the State Trust Corporation of Victoria to the possible detriment of private trustee companies. Honourable members will recall the attempt last year by the government to establish the State Trust Corporation of Victoria with sweeping powers that would have enabled it to compete unfairly with private trustee companies. At the time, the Bill was substantially amended at the instigation of the Opposition to restrict the powers of the corporation so that it did not have an unfair advantage in the marketplace over the private enterprise trustee companies that offer such good service.

Private trustee companies have every reason to fear the motives of the government, which would dearly love to get its hands on the vast amounts of investment funds held under the control of private trustee companies. Honourable members should consider the implications. It is consistent with the ideology of the Labor Party to get its hands on the means to control the economy at the expense of the private sector. Clause 5 gives enormous powers of control regarding who can enter the marketplace or who can no longer continue in the marketplace.

This is of concern to the Opposition. It acknowledges that the Bill should pass through the House. As I said, it supports the measure in principle, subject to the production of the reports to which I have referred. I hope the Attorney-General will
reconsider the government’s position regarding the release of those reports while the Bill is between here and another place.

On the motion of Mr W. D. McGrath (Lowan), the debate was adjourned.

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

School crossing supervisors—1996 Olympic Games—Craigieburn shopping mall—Bus services from Melbourne Airport—Dorset Road, Croydon—Casterton SEC office—Smoking in jury pool rooms

Mr McCUTCHEON (Attorney-General)—I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Dr Wells (Dromana)—I direct my comments to the Minister for Community Services, who is the representative in this place of the Minister for Transport. I am forced to raise the matter of school crossing supervisors because I have received no reply to my telegrams and telephone calls to the office of the Minister for Transport. I have received no comment from his Ministry in response to my persistent requests on this most urgent matter.

Three of the primary schools in the electorate I represent—Eastbourne, Sorrento and Tootgarook—were advised recently that, under the terms of the Social Development Committee’s recommendations on the provisions of funding for school crossing supervisors, they did not merit continuation of the State contribution towards the cost of maintaining semi-volunteer supervisors at their school crossings.

Mrs Helen Fairlie, President of the Sorrento Primary School Council, wrote me a letter in which she said:

There are no safe routes to school at Sorrento Primary School, which is enclosed by major roads on three sides, Melbourne Road, Ocean Road and Nepean Highway, and we are poorly served by public transport. Reliant on cars, peak times in Kerferd Avenue are congested and potentially hazardous.

We feel all children should be protected. How were the arbitrary figures of 50 children per hour or 200 cars per hour formulated? Surely children at Sorrento Primary School are not less worthy than... other children.

The salary of one supervisor compared to the costs of an accident on individuals, families and the community is minimal, clearly false economy.

In my opinion, those costs represent only an insurance premium. Mr Newton Yule, the Principal of the Sorrento Primary School, has also made a most urgent representation to me on this matter based on his experience. In Victoria 60 children were killed in road accidents in 1985 and an estimated 2220 children were injured, leading to a cost to the State of some $80 million for that year alone. In comparison, the total State government contribution to the work of the “lollipop” people is approximately $4 million a year. I agree with Mrs Fairlie that it is false economy to try to cut out that contribution. Another important point is that teachers have received legal opinion that, should a child be involved in an accident, both the school and the teachers may find themselves in legal difficulties. The matter requires attention.

In a letter to the Age of 13 July 1986, a Mr O. S. Green of Blackburn, wrote:

As a retired primary school principal who, while in office, made a study of the supervision at school crossings in Australia and overseas, I am appalled to read that the withdrawal of school crossing wardens is even being considered by the Minister for Transport.
The evidence is piling up. Just recently the Victorian government announced a commitment amounting to $66 million to remove car registration costs. It made that commitment in an attempt to win, through pork-barrelling, the Ballarat North by-election. Yet, to save a small amount of money per school; the contribution for the employment of school crossing supervisors will be removed from schools that have had supervisors for years. What is more, new schools will not receive assistance either.

The government is trying to save a small amount of money across Victoria. Compared with the examples of largess in other areas, this is really appalling. The fact that the previous Minister and the present Minister for Transport have persistently refused to respond to appeals and letters from members of the Liberal Party representing their constituents or to offer any opinion indicates the government’s attitude, which is quite unacceptable. This is not the way the State should and must be run.

I hope the Minister for Transport will respond now that I have raised the matter in this House and that he will do the only sensible thing he can do—take the advice of the people responsible for children in the area—when deciding whether schools should have crossing supervisors. I hope future Liberal governments will adopt that attitude.

Mr W. D. McGrath (Lowan)—The matter I raise for the attention of the Minister for Sport and Recreation relates to the possibility of the 1996 Olympic Games being held in Australia. Honourable members would be aware, as is the Minister, that the Melbourne City Council is preparing a submission to try to convince the appropriate authorities and attract the games to Melbourne.

I ask the Minister what initiatives the government has taken in conjunction with the Melbourne City Council to ensure that Melbourne is able to make a bid for the games to be held in Australia ahead of other capital cities, namely, Brisbane and Sydney. The 1956 Olympic Games were a great impetus in many areas, not only in sport but also in the development of the City of Melbourne. That could happen again in 1996, 40 years later, if Melbourne were fortunate enough to attract those games.

Over the past few years, other capital cities have been involved in major events: Perth hosted the America’s Cup challenge; Sydney has been the centre of the bicentenary celebrations; and Brisbane is now hosting World Expo 88 and previously hosted the 1986 Commonwealth Games. Those cities have had the jump on Victoria and Melbourne in attracting major events to Australia.

If Melbourne is to bid for the Olympic Games to come to Australia in 1996, no stone must be left unturned and all the contingencies must be covered so that the most positive submission possible can be made to convince the decision makers to make that bid on behalf of Australia.

I realise that a financial commitment is involved in preparing a top-class submission to convince the authorities that the games should be held in Melbourne, but I believe it can be demonstrated that Melbourne is suitable; it already has excellent sporting facilities, such as the Melbourne Cricket Ground, the National Tennis Centre and others. I suppose the only thing lacking in Victoria is a top-class swimming centre, but 1996 is a fair way away yet, and if Melbourne's bid is successful, much planning can take place for such a facility as well as the construction of an Olympic village and so on.

I hope, when the overall discussion takes place, that consideration will be given to staging some of the minor events in regional centres around Victoria, such as Ballarat and Bendigo.

If Melbourne is to be a prominent city in the world forum, particularly for tourism, there must be a focus on Melbourne in its bid for the Olympic Games in 1996. I ask
the Minister for Sport and Recreation to indicate what initiatives he and the
government are taking, together with the Melbourne City Council, to support the
council in its endeavours to be given the right to bid on behalf of Australia for the
Olympic Games.

Mr McDonald (Whittlesea)—I raise for the attention of the Minister for Property
and Services, in his capacity as Minister responsible for prices, a matter concerning
the Craigieburn shopping mall. Craigieburn is a rapidly expanding satellite city on the
northern outskirts of Melbourne. The Craigieburn mall shopping centre is the only
shopping complex in Craigieburn. It has operated in its present form from 1981 and
was owned by Northrock Investments Pty Ltd.

Mr Michalos Vesalic of Vallyn Investments purchased the centre on 30 June this
year. Prior to the purchase Vallyn Investments notified shop occupiers of a new regime
to take effect from 1 July: firstly, all shops were to be open Friday nights and Saturday
afternoons; secondly, massive increases in rentals were to take place; and, thirdly,
tenants on monthly tenancies should enter into leases or vacate the premises.

There are 33 shops in the shopping centre and the rent increases were massive. For
example, the sports store had its rent increased from $5731 to $10 200 a year. The fish
shop had its rent increased from $14 173 to $33 000 a year. Following an invitation
from the business people, I visited the Craigieburn shopping centre on Wednesday,
20 July, and had discussions with some very concerned and worried shopkeepers.
They told me that their businesses would not be viable under the new rentals being
demanded by Vallyn Investments.

I believe this is an attempted rip-off by Vallyn Investments of responsible small
business people in Craigieburn. The shopkeepers are in a no-win situation. They have
two options: to close down their shops and get out, or to pass the higher rentals on to
the consumers in higher prices. If that were done, consumers would be encouraged to
shop elsewhere, which would destroy business in Craigieburn.

There is another aspect to this rip off. Vallyn Investments has received approval
from the Shire of Bulla for strata titles for the shops. By creating highly inflated rentals
for the shops a false value can be placed on their strata title value when they are put
up for sale. This allows for an inflated profit well above the real market value of the
shops.

I am concerned about the future of the shopkeepers and the disastrous ramifications
their loss would have for the Craigieburn community. The traders have joined together
under the leadership of Mr Hayden Gregson to fight for the right to continue their
businesses in the mall while paying fair and reasonable rents for their shops. Vallyn
Investments has a moral obligation to negotiate meaningfully with the traders to
ensure fair rents for everyone involved.

I ask the Minister what advice can be given to protect the businesses in Craigieburn
for the benefit of the shopkeepers and the Craigieburn community.

Mr Tanner (Caulfield)—I raise for the Minister for Tourism a matter concerning
the quality of public transport available to people wishing to travel from Melbourne
Airport to the city, particularly late at night. I do not wish my comments to be
construed in any way as being critical of the Skybus Coach Service company, which
obviously has to operate within practical and economic limits.

Honourable members will recall that I previously raised a matter with the Minister
for Transport about the need for an improvement in public transport from Melbourne
Airport to the city. On that occasion I raised the possibility of multiple hiring of taxis
being allowed so that several persons could, at a reduced cost, share taxis which are
now prohibitive for single-fare paying passengers. Unfortunately, nothing rose from that request. I have since received further representation from a constituent about the bus transport service that is available to the airport.

On 1 June I wrote to the Minister for Tourism about this matter, pointing out the shortcomings of the bus service late at night. I asked the Minister to direct his attention to the matter and requested his advice on what action could be taken to improve the availability of the service. Unfortunately, the Minister did no more than refer this matter to the Skybus Coach Service and to the manager of the Melbourne Airport.

The Minister should take a more personal interest in resolving the deficiencies in the current system. It is improper for the Minister for Tourism to sit back and allow passengers arriving at Melbourne Airport late at night to discover that there is no bus service available to take them to the city. Instead of the Minister referring my correspondence away from his portfolio, he should take it upon himself to speak with the parties concerned to ascertain what can be done to improve the bus service from Melbourne Airport to the city.

Mrs SETCHES (Ringwood)—I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Community Services, who is the representative in this House of the Minister for Transport. The matter concerns Dorset Road, which is an arterial road in the City of Croydon in the electorate of Ringwood. Dorset Road was referred to in the Metropolitan Arterial Road Access Study as a road that required upgrading as quickly as possible. The road carries 26 000 cars a day and in most places is a two-lane carriageway. Some recent work has been undertaken from the intersection of Mount Dandenong Road to the intersection of Leigh Road, where a dual carriageway on either side has been constructed.

Although Dorset Road has been known to me for some time, earlier this year my attention was drawn to complaints by residents about certain areas that require traffic treatment to make it safer. Many fatal accidents and personal injury accidents have occurred on the road, particularly between Canterbury Road and Leigh Road. There have been 72 personal injury and 110 property damage accidents between 1983 and 1987. The residents are worried about this section of Dorset Road.

The Minister for Transport kindly inspected the Dorset Road area soon after being advised of its dangers. He has directed the Road Traffic Authority, the Road Construction Authority and the local council to consult on what might be appropriate treatment for Dorset Road between the intersections I have mentioned to make it safer for both pedestrians and drivers.

What progress has taken place on this road? While in Ringwood, the Minister for Transport inspected Bayswater Road and Canterbury Road. Bayswater Road has a two-lane carriageway carrying 15 000 cars a day and it requires some attention, particularly around the Central Avenue intersection in the South Croydon–Bayswater North area of the City of Croydon.

The Minister also inspected this area and said that a good deal of treatment could be carried out by the Road Construction Authority and the Road Traffic Authority in conjunction with the council to make it safer.

The Minister also inspected Canterbury Road. It requires duplication from the intersection of Dorset Road and Colchester Road. That work is urgent. It is a major road that carries a good deal of industrial traffic and is one of the major roads to Lilydale, through to the Mount Dandenong tourist area.

Will the Minister provide a progress report on what is taking place between the Road Construction Authority, the Road Traffic Authority and the councils on these
three important roads, and when can we expect the treatment works for those roads to begin?

Mr CROZIER (Portland)—In the absence of the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources, I raise with the Minister for Sport and Recreation a matter of concern to me and a number of my constituents and request that he pass on these concerns to his colleague. My concern relates to a proposal emanating from what is described as a diagnostic review of the State Electricity Commission which was conducted earlier this year, the recommendations of which are now before the Minister. Part of those proposals include downgrading the status of two district offices of the commission in western Victoria to what is described as field service centres. One of them is in my own centre of Casterton. Understandably, there has been concern in the Casterton township and district. Because Casterton is a border area, it has a high proportion of Crown land and a good deal of pine forestation, and it is, like most of western Victoria, prone to bushfires.

The capacity of the commission to conduct fire prevention measures and respond to fire emergencies and other emergencies is of prime concern. It is of concern whenever any government service is withdrawn, because of the economic and social effects it has in that district, and the Minister for Sport and Recreation is one of the few Ministers of the government who would understand what I am talking about. He is assiduous in responding to invitations from the smaller centres in this State, and I commend him for it. Perhaps it is fortuitous that he is at the table, because he understands the problem. Some of his colleagues need a basic geography lesson as soon as they are west of Broadmeadows.

I have made a number of representations on this matter in support of submissions received by me from various community groups, including service clubs, among them the Casterton Lions Club and, as recently as Tuesday evening, the Shire of Glenelg. On Tuesday night of this week a public meeting was held in Casterton by the Shire of Glenelg. That meeting was chaired by the shire president, Cr Kevin Stark. As a consequence of that meeting, these matters were discussed. Despite a senior officer of the commission being present to explain the proposals, no-one denied that there is always a need for and responsibility on governments to weigh the benefits against the costs of the proposed move, and no-one denies—particularly under the present administration—that one has to look at the cost of administration in any form of government.

However, in response to one of my previous representations, in a letter dated 11 May 1988 the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources said:

The SEC welcomes the views of all local communities on the recommendations in the interests of ensuring that customers requirements and expectations are fully considered before any decisions are taken on the review. Mr Crozier and the Lions Club may be assured that no decisions will be taken until the local communities have been properly involved in the consultation process and we would be pleased to provide any further information or discuss the recommendations if desired.

Despite the consultation that has taken place today and as a consequence of this public meeting, the local Parliamentarians have been requested to seek a deputation with the Minister. Will the Minister for Sport and Recreation pass on the request to his colleague with a view to seeking such a meeting as soon as possible?

Mr NORRIS (Dandenong)—I direct my concern to the attention of the Attorney-General and, in his absence, ask the Minister for Sport and Recreation to refer it to him. I refer to a story that was published in last Saturday’s Age headed “Frustrated Jurors Smoked Out of Court”. The concern comes from a Ms McKnight who was eventually denied the right of sitting on a jury in the County Court because she felt so
ill after having been cooped up in a jury pool room all day with 50 other potential jurors, 30 of whom were smokers.

I am concerned because five years ago this month I drew this matter to the attention of the Parliament because my wife had encountered a similar experience. She had also been cooped up all day in a County Court jury pool room full of smokers and she, like Ms McKnight, felt nauseated and suffocated by the tobacco fumes.

Believe it or not, in those days the County Court was a new building, but it had been constructed without air-conditioning in the jury pool room areas. When my wife complained to the attendant and asked how she could get some fresh air—other women were similarly affected and could only seek refuge in the women's toilet—the attendant said, “You should think yourself lucky; this is one of the few jury pool rooms that actually has an air extractor”.

I am concerned that five years down the track Ms McKnight has the courage to come forward and draw this again to our attention. One does not know how many potential jurors have been affected and felt nauseated by the overpowering tobacco fumes in that jury pool room.

In the Supreme Court smoking is banned in jury pool rooms. Since Ms McKnight drew attention to this matter, I believe the authorities are considering banning smoking in the County Court pool rooms, but I am led to believe the decision is up to the judge sitting in the court.

Through the Minister at the table, I urge the Attorney-General to bring whatever pressure he can to bear upon the County Court judges to either ban smoking in the jury pool rooms or at least to see that provision is made for separate facilities for smokers and non-smokers.

I do not wish to come down too hard against the rights of smokers. They may feel they are under siege at the moment, but I believe the rights of smokers must be superseded by the rights of non-smokers. The elementary privilege that everyone must expect is the right to breathe relatively clean air; and if one's air is being fouled by a smoker then the smoker's right should be superseded.

On behalf of the smokers, I point out that they are in a stressful situation. They are sitting in the jury pool room from 9.30 a.m. until late afternoon waiting to be called to serve on a jury or waiting to be selected. They are under considerable stress and strain, and compulsive smokers would find it difficult to sit all day in a room if they were not allowed to have a cigarette.

There are two alternatives; smoking can be banned in the jury pool room of the County Court as has occurred in the Supreme Court, or separate facilities can be provided for smokers and non-smokers. It is a pity that five years have elapsed since it was first raised. It has taken Ms McKnight to come forward and bring this important matter to the attention of the government. I urge the Minister to refer my remarks to the Attorney-General so that pressure can be applied to have something done to overcome the problem.

Mr TREZISE (Minister for Sport and Recreation)—The honourable member for Dromana raised for the attention of the Minister for Transport a matter regarding level crossing supervisors. The honourable member for Caulfield raised for the attention of the Minister for Tourism problems with the transport of tourists from Tullamarine airport to the city. The honourable member for Ringwood raised for the attention of the Minister for Transport the requirements of Croydon Road. The honourable member for Portland directed the attention of the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources to State Electricity Commission problems in the Casterton district.
The honourable member for Dandenong raised for the attention of the Attorney-General the problem of smokers and non-smokers attending the jury pool rooms of Victorian courts. I shall pass on all those matters to the respective Ministers and ask them for early replies.

The honourable member for Lowan raised an issue concerning the proposed counterbid by the Council of the City of Melbourne for the 1996 Olympic Games. No decision has yet been made on that matter. It has been decided to form a panel consisting of representatives of the Melbourne City Council, the government, and community representatives. That panel will appoint subcommittees to decide whether a bid for the Olympic Games will be made.

Many problems have to be overcome before a bid can be made. It has to be determined whether finance will be provided by Federal or State governments, the Melbourne City Council and private enterprise. Matters of security, venues and other important issues have to be considered.

The issue will be examined at the end of this month and the Melbourne City Council will make a decision on whether a bid for the Olympic Games should be made through the Australian Olympic Federation. If a decision is made to proceed with the bid, as may occur with Brisbane, the matter is placed with the Australian Olympic Federation. A bid will not be made for the conduct of the Olympic Games if the Melbourne City Council decides that the games cannot be conducted for a whole range of reasons.

In 1989, the Australian Olympic Federation will select the city that will bid for the Olympic Games, and a final decision will be made by the International Olympic Committee in 1990.

Mr Spyker (Minister for Property and Services)—The honourable member for Whittlesea directed my attention to a problem with the Craigieburn shopping centre. I congratulate the honourable member for taking the initiative with a serious problem in his electorate. The honourable member stated that a public auction took place and the shopping centre was sold to a private company.

Honourable members may not be aware of the location of the Craigieburn shopping centre, but some tenants have been in their businesses for many years trying to develop them in a difficult environment. The honourable member asked me to visit the complex and I went there on 27 July.

Shopkeepers are confronted with a two-edged sword. They can either walk out of their businesses or systematically go broke because of the dramatic increases in rentals that have been demanded by the new owners of the complex. Shopkeepers will have to increase their prices dramatically, in a competitive area, to pay for their increased rental.

Craigieburn is a low to middle-income neighbourhood and there is no way that the community there can afford to pay increased prices for their goods. I am concerned that a company has invested in the complex and decided to rip off as much as it can instead of showing some concern about establishing a viable shopping centre. The rental for the sports store was increased from $5731 a year to $10 200 a year and for the fish shop from $14 173 a year to $33 000. The new owners have not negotiated the increases in rental but have said, "Pay up or else".

The company also extended shop trading hours and wants the traders to be open for those extended hours. That is contrary to the intent of the Shop Trading Act. Traders cannot be forced to open on a Saturday afternoon. I have advised the tenants that the Retail Tenancies Act entitled those tenants with leases to have an appropriate rental determined by an independent valuation conducted by a registered valuer.
are also entitled to have any other dispute with the landlord resolved by an arbitrator appointed under the Act.

The tenants have been advised to seek advice from a commercial lawyer and the honourable member for Whittlesea has advised me that that has been done. I strongly urge the tenants to stick closely together and to stay united because, unfortunately, some do not have written leases and they are in a difficult situation—technically they are not covered by the Act.

This group of small business people have worked their guts out to establish their businesses in a growing area and they provide an excellent service to the Craigieburn area, but they are being taken to the cleaners. That is an appalling situation. I shall give any assistance that I can because they are entitled to a fair go.

The motion was agreed to.

*The House adjourned at 5.17 p.m. until Tuesday, August 9.*
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The following answers to questions on notice were circulated—

"PEACE EDUCATION AND YOUR SCHOOL"

(Question No. 8)

Mr PERRIN (Bulleen) asked the Minister for the Arts, for the Minister for Education:

In relation to a publication titled Peace Education and Your School:

1. Has the Minister’s department distributed copies of the publication to pre-primary and post-secondary educational authorities throughout Victoria? If so—(a) What are the names of each authority; (b) how many copies of the publication were distributed to each group; and (c) what was the cost of producing the publication?

2. Has the Minister or any of her staff made changes to the final text of the publication which necessitated the manual recollation of the publication immediately prior to distribution? If so—(a) what were the changes made; (b) why were the changes made; (c) were the changes ordered by a member of the Minister’s staff; if so—(i) on whose instructions did the staff member order the changes; and (ii) were the changes agreed to by members of the Peace Education Task Force, indicating at which meeting of the Task Force agreement was given?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for the Arts)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

1. No.

2. No. However, changes were proposed by the then acting chief executive of the Ministry of Education following consultation between himself, the then Minister for Education and the Minister’s adviser.

Changes proposed were as follows:

Page 5

The words “and politically literate” were deleted and replaced with “aware”.

The following paragraph was deleted:

Peace education may involve political consciousness raising that could result in heightened and more effective and responsible political action.

Page 10

The following sentence was deleted:

80 per cent did not feel safer having American bases in Australia.

Page 15

The following sentence was deleted:

The student action project in Melbourne’s western suburbs is one example of development in this area.

Page 24

The following part of a sentence was deleted:

... and it is likely that a peace and social justice curriculum committee will be established in 1987.

These changes were proposed to improve the report by removing matter that was either irrelevant to the thrust of the report, poorly expressed or likely to prove misleading.

The proposed changes were accepted by the members of the Peace Education Task Force in the course of a series of telephone conversations conducted by the executive officer.
AIR QUALITY GUIDELINE BREACHES

(Question No. 46)

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster) asked the Minister for Planning and Environment:

On how many occasions since 13 September 1982 were World Health Organisation air quality guidelines breached in the Melbourne metropolitan area and on what dates did such breaches occur?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—The answer is:

World Health Organisation goals as the benchmark for measuring air quality have been superseded in Victoria by more soundly based air quality objectives for the modern urban environment. These objectives were incorporated into the State environment protection policy (SEPP) adopted in 1981 after an extensive review of overseas standards and recommendations of Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council.

The major air quality objectives defined in the policy are as follows:

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<th>8-hour</th>
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<td>(measured as ozone)</td>
<td>0.05 p.p.m.</td>
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<td>Sulphur dioxide</td>
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<td>Visibility—reducing particulates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>1.5 ug./m³ (3 calendar months)</td>
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Air quality is unacceptable if it fails to comply with these objectives on more than three days a year, or one day in the case of the 1-hour ozone objective, and three months in the case of lead.

The number of days of non-compliance with these objectives in the Melbourne region between 13 September 1982 and 29 February 1988 is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>污染物</th>
<th>(1-hour)</th>
<th>(8-hour)</th>
<th>(24-hour)</th>
<th>(1-hour)</th>
<th>(8-hour)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ozone</td>
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<td>179 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sulphur dioxide</td>
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The dates of non-compliance are listed below.

From a health point of view the ozone breaches are the most important. It is therefore pleasing to note that the numbers of breaches of the 1-hour and 8-hour objectives for ozone have shown a steady decline from 1982 to 1988. Perhaps more importantly the peak ozone levels recorded have also shown a steady decline so that the highest level recorded in 1988, a year when the weather particularly favoured smog formation, was 0-16 parts per million compared with 0-28 in 1982. The downward trends are a sign of the considerable success of the government's air pollution control strategy—in particular, the control of emissions from motor vehicles and from industry. The introduction of unleaded petrol has yet to make its full impact, and smog levels are expected to fall further as use of unleaded petrol becomes more widespread.

Days when SEPP objective for visibility was not met during 13 September 1982 to 29 February 1988

(1-hour visibility > 20 km.)

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Total: 476 Days.
### Days when SEPP acceptable level for ozone (1-hour) was exceeded during 13 September 1982 to 29 February 1988

(1-hour $O_3 < 0.12$ p.p.m.)

<table>
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<td>29.11 7.3</td>
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### Days when SEPP acceptable level for ozone (8-hour) was exceeded during 13 September 1982 to 29 February 1988

(8-hour $O_3 < 0.05$ p.p.m.)

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### Questions on Notice

**2 August 1988 ASSEMBLY 243**

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<td>18.3</td>
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<td>17.2</td>
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<td>Total: 179 Days.</td>
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Days when SEPP acceptable level for nitrogen dioxide (1-hour) was exceeded during 13 September 1982 to 29 February 1988

\[
\text{(1-hour NO}_2 < 0.15 \text{ p.p.m.)}
\]

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<thead>
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<th>YEAR—Day/Month</th>
<th>YEAR—Day/Month</th>
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<td>1983 — 3.2</td>
<td>1985 — 28.3</td>
<td>1987 — 2.2</td>
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<td>26.10</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Total: 5 Days.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Days when SEPP acceptable level of nitrogen dioxide (24-hour) was exceeded during 13 September 1982 to 29 February 1988

\[
\text{(24-hour NO}_2 < 0.06 \text{ p.p.m.)}
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR—Day/Month</th>
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<tr>
<td>1984 — 3.2</td>
<td>1985 — 22.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total: 8 Days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Days when SEPP acceptable level of carbon monoxide (8-hour) was exceeded during 13 September 1982 to 29 February 1988

\[
\text{(8-hour CO < 10 \text{ p.p.m.)}}
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR—Day/Month</th>
<th>YEAR—Day/Month</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982 — 4.6</td>
<td>1983 — 19.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>20.6</td>
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<td>Total: 4 Days.</td>
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Periods when SEPP objective for lead was not met during September 1982 to February 1988 (moving three-month averages in excess of 1.5 \text{ug./m}^3)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>YEAR MONTH ENDING</th>
<th>YEAR MONTH ENDING</th>
<th>YEAR MONTH ENDING</th>
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<td>1982—September</td>
<td>1984—June</td>
<td>1985—July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>August</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
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</table>

NOTE: SEPP acceptable level for lead was exceeded at the roadside station near Alexandra Parade during all months of operation from 1982 to 1987. However, these measurements were not representative of ambient levels and have not been included in this table.
State Environment Protection Policy objectives for sulphur dioxide (1-hour and 24-hour) and carbon monoxide (1-hour) were met during the period of 13 September 1982 to 29 February 1988.

**PROPERTIES FORMERLY OWNED BY DEPARTMENT OF PROPERTY AND SERVICES**

(Question No. 116)

Mr PERRIN (Bulleen) asked the Minister for Property and Services:

In respect of each department, authority and agency within his administration, which properties formerly owned by it have been sold since 30 June 1982, stating—(a) the address and nature of the property; (b) the date of sale; (c) the sale price; (d) the reason for the property being sold; and (e) the use to which the proceeds of each sale were put?

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Property and Services)—The answer is:

The subject matter of this question relates to four separate bodies which are or have been under the administration of the Department of Property and Services during the period 30 June 1982 to the present. These bodies are:

- Victorian Public Offices Corporation;
- Government Employee Housing Authority;
- Land Sales Group—1985-86; and
- Asset Sales Group—1986-87 to the present.

The list below provides as much information as it has been possible to retrieve in response to parts (a), (b) and (c) of the question. For each property sold by the four bodies to 30 June 1987, the list provides details of the address of the property, the date of sale, where available, and the sale price.

The following further information is provided for the honourable member’s assistance to amplify the information contained in the list.

**Land Sales Group:** This group, which was responsible for the disposal of surplus Crown land, was transferred to the Department of Property and Services from the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands as a result of machinery of government changes in 1985-86. The response from my department therefore includes only details of sales conducted by the group during that financial year, after which the disposal of surplus Crown land came under the administration of the Asset Sales Group.

**Asset Sales Group:** This branch of the department was formed during 1986 to facilitate the disposal of Crown lands identified as surplus to government requirements. The information provided in respect of this group relates to all properties for which sale commitments were made during the financial year 1986-87. Therefore, the total figure of $91,510,800 contained in the relevant list does not reflect the actual revenue received by my department during the year, as settlements for a number of the properties had not yet occurred as at 30 June 1987. The actual amount received by the department under the asset sales program during 1986-87 was $67,240,631. Some further moneys—some $7.6 million—were paid to the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands and the Ministry for Planning and Environment by way of deposit or settlement for the sale of certain properties on the list. The remainder of the total—making up the figure of $91.5 million—represents revenue from sales which have been or will be settled during 1987-88 or future financial years.

It should be noted that both the Land Sales Group and the Asset Sales Group have been responsible for the disposal of surplus Crown lands. Being part of the Crown estate, such properties were not in fact “owned” by the department or any authority or agency within its administration.

**Government Employee Housing Authority:** It has not been possible, in response to part (b) of the question, to provide the dates of sale for each property sold by the authority during the relevant period. This is because summary records of sales have been maintained only on an aggregate basis for each financial year. In view of the number of sales involved, the time and resources necessary to retrieve sale dates from individual property files in response to this question cannot be justified.

In response to part (d) of the question, the reason for the sale of all properties was that they had been deemed to be surplus to government requirements. In the case of the Government Employee Housing Authority, this includes the disposal of residences in areas which have been deemed “not required to occupy” for the purpose of government employee housing.
In response to part (e) of the question, revenue from the sale of surplus Crown land is paid into the Consolidated Fund to generate finance for investment in capital assets. Proceeds from sales conducted by the Government Employee Housing Authority and the Victorian Public Offices Corporation are used to finance the capital operations of those bodies—for example, in the case of the authority, the purchase of residences in "required to occupy" regions of the State.

## DEPARTMENT OF PROPERTY AND SERVICES—REAL ESTATE ASSET DISPOSALS

### Victorian Public Offices Corporation

**Assets Sales—1982-83—1986-87**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Date of sale</th>
<th>Sale price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>503 Hargreaves Street, Bendigo</td>
<td>27.8.82</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Walker Street, Stawell</td>
<td>2.12.82</td>
<td>$21,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Lafayette Street, Traralgon</td>
<td>8.2.83</td>
<td>$34,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$85,500</strong></td>
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1983–84

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<th>Date of sale</th>
<th>Sale price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 Flinders Lane, Melbourne</td>
<td>15.8.83</td>
<td>$71,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>605 Flinders Street, Melbourne</td>
<td>30.9.83</td>
<td>$74,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Napier Street, Eaglehawk</td>
<td>11.11.83</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 Tanti Avenue, Mornington</td>
<td>26.11.83</td>
<td>$296,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 Tarwin Street, Morwell</td>
<td>2.12.83</td>
<td>$178,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>272 Queen Street, Melbourne</td>
<td>30.11.83</td>
<td>$1,640,000</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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1984–85

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<td>43A Gummow Street, Swan Hill</td>
<td>14.11.84</td>
<td>$23,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crown Allotment 32A, Korweingububora</td>
<td>2.4.85</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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1985–86

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<td>88 Seymour Street, Traralgon</td>
<td>21.3.86</td>
<td>$365,700</td>
</tr>
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<td>2 Clyde Street, St Arnaud</td>
<td>1.8.85</td>
<td>$38,000</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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1986–87

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<td>Cnr Clingin and Crevelli streets, Reservoir</td>
<td>23.7.86</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
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<td>28 Kilpatrick Avenue, Shepparton</td>
<td>11.11.86</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
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<td>7 Neville Street, Morwell</td>
<td>11.4.87</td>
<td>$38,500</td>
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**Government Employee Housing Authority**

**Asset Sales—1982–83**

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<tr>
<td>7 Callaway Street, Timboon</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 Bayne Street, Bendigo</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Campbell Street, Eaglehawk</td>
<td>$22,000</td>
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### Property

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 Eramosa Road, Somerville</td>
<td>$28 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1017 Ligar Street, Ballarat</td>
<td>$21 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSK Residence</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 Victoria Street, Eaglehawk</td>
<td>$27 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 Harper Street, Wangaratta</td>
<td>$22 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Maryvale Crescent, Morwell</td>
<td>$70 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Argyle Street, Belmont</td>
<td>$27 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 Russell Street, Bendigo</td>
<td>$23 500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centre Road, Narre Warren South</td>
<td>$37 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bundalong South</td>
<td>$10 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1237 Howitt Street, Wendouree</td>
<td>$35 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elgin Street, Dunolly</td>
<td>$13 900</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 A'Beckett Street, Leongatha</td>
<td>$29 500</td>
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<td>57 Spring Street, Mortlake</td>
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<td>21 Glenview Road, Mount Evelyn</td>
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<td>94 Landsdowne Street, Sale</td>
<td>$39 500</td>
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<td>2463 Nepean Highway, Rye</td>
<td>$67 000</td>
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<td>Station Street, Little River</td>
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**Questions on Notice**  
2 August 1988  **ASSEMBLY**  

**Government Employee Housing Authority**  
**Asset Sales—1983–84**

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50 Lots  
Total 610 341
### Government Employee Housing Authority

#### Asset sales—1984–85

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43 Lots  Total  $865 652
### Government Employee Housing Authority

#### Asset sales—1985–86

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33 Lots Total $1,070,194

#### Government Employee Housing Authority

#### Asset sales—1986–87

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## Questions on Notice

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<td>31 Karana Drive, Warrnambool</td>
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<td>10 Cyma Street, Warrnambool</td>
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<td>Wantirna South</td>
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<td>Weshburn</td>
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<td>31 Wilson Street, Wondonga</td>
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<td>52 Wentworth Road, Wonthaggi</td>
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### Questions on Notice
2 August 1988 ASSEMBLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Sale price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lot 2, Savages Lane, Woodend</td>
<td>$62 000</td>
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<td>Yannathan South</td>
<td>$30 148</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 Campbell Street, Yarram</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 Rogers Street, Yarram</td>
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<td>46 Dunlop Street, Yarrawonga</td>
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<td>Lot 36, Heyington Place, Yarrawonga</td>
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<td><strong>189 Lots</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total $7 554 511</strong></td>
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**Land Sales Group**

**Asset sales 1985–86**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Date of sale</th>
<th>Sale price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police residence, Calder Highway, Wedderburn</td>
<td>13.7.85</td>
<td>$32 600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police station, 1A Bowen Crescent, South Melbourne</td>
<td>25.7.85</td>
<td>$865 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural land, Murray Valley Highway, Nyah</td>
<td>2.8.85</td>
<td>$15 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Stradbroke Primary School, Seaspray Road, Stradbroke</td>
<td>10.8.85</td>
<td>$10 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential property, Teal Point</td>
<td>13.9.85</td>
<td>$34 750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential lots (4), Creswick</td>
<td>5.10.85</td>
<td>$48 850</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential property, 30 Braidwood Avenue, Rosebud West</td>
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<td>Residential property, 1 Sydney Road, Brunswick</td>
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<td>Residential property, Hume Highway, Kalkallo</td>
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<td>Residential property, Gibbo Street, Benambra</td>
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<td>Residential land, Finley Court, Mount Clear</td>
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<td>Development property, 5 Gloucester Street, Berwick</td>
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<td>Residential land, Fussell and York streets, Ballarat</td>
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<td>Residential land, Estler Street, Bendigo</td>
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<td>Residential land, Wyndham Street, Kerang</td>
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<td>Residential land, Ida Street, Ballarat</td>
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<td>Residential land, William and James streets, Castlemaine</td>
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<td>Residential property, 8 Cyril Grove, Noble Park</td>
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<td>Residential property, 262 Ascot Vale Road, Ascot Vale</td>
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<td>Residential lots (3), Bell Street, Creswick</td>
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**Asset Sales Group**

**Asset sales 1986–87**

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<td>41–43 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi</td>
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<td>312–318 St Kilda Road, South Melbourne</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>Date of sale</td>
<td>Sale price</td>
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<tr>
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**CONSULTANTS EMPLOYED BY MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

(Question No. 131)

Mr COOPER (Mornington) asked the Minister for the Arts, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what is the name of each consultant employed since March 1984, indicating—(a) for what purpose the consultants were employed;
Questions on Notice

(b) what working plan they were given; (c) what was the cost of their services; (d) what was the duration of their contract; and (e) were any additional payments made in excess of the contract price; if so, what were the amounts paid?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for the Arts)—The answer is supplied by the Minister for Education is:

Since 1987 the Ministry has had a policy that consultants must be used only when absolutely necessary and where there is no specific expertise available within the Ministry. Strict guidelines are in place in relation to the procedure for the appointment of consultants.

Because of the size and diversity of the Ministry, and as the information sought is not available in a readily accessible form, I cannot justify the time and manpower required to obtain the requested information over the years concerned.

If the honourable member has any specific matter in mind I will be happy to review the situation.

CONSULTANTS EMPLOYED BY MINISTRY FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

(Question No. 135)

Mr COOPER (Mornington) asked the Minister for Planning and Environment:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what is the name of each consultant employed since March 1984, indicating—(a) for what purpose the consultants were employed; (b) what working plan they were given; (c) what was the cost of their services; (d) what was the duration of their contract; and (e) were any additional payments made in excess of the contract price; if so, what were the amounts paid?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—The answer is:

The information sought is contained in the following summaries.

Name of Consultant: R. Abbott:

(a) To complete documentation of water quality data processing system.
(b) To edit and revise database and develop user manual.
(c) $3300.
(d) March—September 1986.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: ACIL Australia Pty Ltd:

(a) To prepare a report on the development of environmental quality indicators.
(b) To review the relevant literature and liaise with relevant officers and members of the Standing Committee of the Australian Environment Council to produce recommendations on appropriate indicators of environmental quality.
(c) $25 000.
(d) Approximately twelve months.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Ed Adamson:

(a) To prepare a paper on the economic benefits of farm trees.
(b) Written brief.
(c) $10 000 provided from Federal government via Australian Environment Council.
(d) Six months.
(e) None.
Name of Consultant: Judy Arndt and Associates:

(a) To assist the action program team in designing and developing projects, opening avenues for the Eastern Suburbs Action Plan (ESAP), to work with local and regional groups, and provide expert advice for the organisation of the action programs.

(b) The consultant was given a brief outlining key tasks required, including project design, identification of project funding sources, identifying organisational structures for implementation of the ESAP and identification of major reports, as required.

(c) Quoted cost was $3000; actual cost was $2203.

(d) Eight months.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Judy Arndt and Associates:

(a) To prepare a report for Dandenong council and the Dandenong District Centre working group on the prospects of establishing a pedestrian mall in McCrae Street, Dandenong.

(b) The consultant was given a detailed brief, which required preparation of three design options, and a report detailing design and other considerations.

(c) $3000.

(d) November 1985 to January 1986.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Ove Arup and Partners:

(a) Soil testing and site analysis on location of Southbank Promenade, between Queens Bridge and Princes Bridge on south bank of the Yarra River.

(b) Instructions to carry out geotechnical surveys of the site and associated soil analysis as input to design process for Southbank Promenade.

(c) $34 750.

(d) Five weeks.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Ashton Tree Services:

(a) Nubrik workshops Nos 6 and 11.

(b) Written instruction.

   Workshop No. 6 “Trees for Towns”; speaker on “Pruning, Maintenance and Tree Care”.
   Workshop No. 11 “Trees for Towns”; speaker on “Pruning, Maintenance and Tree Care”.

(c) $220.

(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshops.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Bruce Atkinson:

(a) (1) Kilmore—talk to traders on business improvement;
   (2) Nubrik workshops, Nos 1, 8 and 9;
   (3) Castlemaine—public meeting on retail improvement;
   (4) Business improvement.

(b) (1) Written instruction—talk to Kilmore traders on business improvement;
   (2) Written instruction; speaker on “Business improvement and Town Centre Management”;
   (3) Verbal brief; speaker on retail improvement;
   (4) Written brief; preparation of a report entitled “Business Improvement in Traditional Shopping Centres”.

(c) (1) $150;
   (2) $320;
   (3) $200;
   (4) $1500.
(d) Items 1-3—Preparation of material and addressing workshops.
Item 4—4 months.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Australian Mineral Development Laboratories:
(a) To conduct ambient hydrocarbon analysis and assess sampling and analysis techniques.
(b) They were instructed to develop sampling techniques for assessment and verification and train EPA staff in these techniques.
(c) $18,960.
(d) April—June 1986.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: B A C Landscape Consultants:
(a) Conference.
(b) The consultants were briefed on the work of Townscape Advisory Service.
(c) $830.
(d) Three days.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Ms Barrett and Dr K. Bardon:
(a) Investigation of planning information systems in the United Kingdom.
(b) A comprehensive brief was prepared and supplied to Ms Barrett and Dr K. Bardon.
(c) Approved cost $23,400; variation $4,000; total $27,400.
(d) May—August 1986.
(e) Yes—$4,000 due to declining value of Australian dollar.

Name of Consultant: David Bick:
(a) Historic and townscape significance of the Victoria Hotel, Korumburra.
(b) Written instruction to provide an assessment of the historical and townscape significance of the Victoria Hotel, Korumburra.
(c) $300.
(d) One month, nominally.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Kaye Bowman:
(a) (1) To provide a status report on local development initiatives in Victoria and possible role for the Ministry for Planning and Environment;
(2) Editing of report.
(b) A letter of appointment and detailed interview briefing.
(c) (1) $200;
 $250.
(d) (1) One week;
 (2) One day.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: K. Bradford:
(a) To develop documentation for the movement of industrial waste in Australia and develop a national coding system of hazardous waste.
(b) Terms of reference include surveying, assessing and developing a national coding system for hazardous waste.
(c) $8,000.
Name of Consultant: L.L. Brown and Associates:

(a) To conduct stage 2 of the unleaded petrol advertising campaign.

(b) A detailed brief requiring the consultant to develop media advertising—TV and radio—in Victoria to educate the public with regard to unleaded petrol and catalysts.

(c) $80,000.

(d) February—March 1986.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Graeme Butler:

(a) (1) Kilmore veranda designs;
(2) Nubrik workshop No. 4.

(b) (1) Written brief and letter of appointment re—
   (i) preparation of a series of veranda designs for commercial buildings;
   (ii) speaker at workshop concerning shopfronts, signs and infill designs;

(c) (1) $2,000;
(2) $100.

(d) (1) Seven months;
(2) preparation of material and addressing workshop.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Carol Frank Mas and Associates:

(a) Nubrik workshops Nos 6 and 11.

(b) Written instruction;
   workshop No. 6 “Trees for Towns”; speaker on “Trees as a Design Element”;
   workshop No. 11 “Trees for Towns”; speaker on “Trees as a Design Element”.

(c) $220.

(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshops.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Bill Chandler:

(a) Nubrik workshop No. 7.

(b) Written instruction;
   workshop No. 7 “Street Furniture and Urban Art”; speaker on “State Urban Arts Unit”.

(c) $100.

(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshop.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Nita Cherry—Training Needs Analysis:

(a) The purpose of the review was to:
   establish the managerial skills requirements of the Ministry, and;
   analyse the developmental experiences and needs of its current middle management group so that effective and efficient strategies for training and development could be prepared and implementation plans commenced.

(b) Detailed brief.

(c) $10,000.

(d) One month, May 1986.

(e) No.
Name of Consultant: Nita Cherry—Career and Life Planning:

(a) To conduct a training course for the Ministry of Planning and Environment's 60 middle managers to identify and clarify the major issues associated with systematic career and life planning within the work environment.

(b) Detailed brief.

(c) $3000.

(d) 10–14 February 1987 = 2 x 2-day sessions.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Mimi Colligan:

(a) Study of the evolution of Her Majesty's Theatre and its historical significance.

(b) A brief was prepared requiring the consultant to provide an illustrative and documentary report on the history of Her Majesty's Theatre from 1886 to the present.

(c) $1000.

(d) Fifty hours.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Consulting Environmental Engineers:

(a) Identify environmental research and investigation needs for salinity control.

(b) A brief was provided identifying the objectives and scope of the work; specific matters to be addressed were itemised.

(c) $2500.

(d) One month—nominal.

(e) Nil.

Name of Consultant: Corporate Asset Management Pty Ltd:

(a) Research, prepare and write report into Port Melbourne Bayside Project on the financial implications of possible land uses and intensity of development. Possible land use scenarios were provided and the consultant was required to provide financial analysis to determine feasibility. This was necessary to ensure realistic input to development brief.

(b) Brief prepared.

Schedule of work determined by consultant in response to brief. Payments scheduled with components of work program.

(c) $2665.

(d) Two months.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Denton Corker Marshall:

(a) Conceptual and detailed design of Southbank Promenade.

(b) Project parameters were defined in the brief and technical requirements were also referred to. A design process was specified to which the consultants were required to work.

(c) $317 100.

(d) One year.

(e) The initial contractual arrangements were revised and resubmitted to Effectiveness Review Committee due to recognition of need and appropriateness of completing design for entire length of Southbank Promenade, stages 1, 2 and 3. Approval for revised submission given in June 1986.

Name of Consultant: Design Lab:

(a) Nubrik workshop No. 7.

(b) Written instruction.

Workshop No. 7 "Street Furniture and Urban Art";
Speaker on "Seating Design Specifications".
Name of Consultant: Econsult Pty Ltd:

(a) Preparation of structure plan for Oakleigh District Centre.

(b) A detailed consultant brief.

(c) $15 000.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: (1) Russell Field—Theatrical Producer—Co-ordinator; (2) Four’s Company Theatre Group:

(a) To develop awareness about the State conservation strategy and encourage participation in its implementation via extensive performances of a theatre play based on the strategy. The theatre tour covered a wide range of metropolitan and rural secondary schools and community performances, and was seen by more than 12 000 students.

(b) (1) Selection of writers/synopsis/script and music.

(2) Production management—Russell Field.

(3) Rehearsal and production expenses.


(c) $19 000.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Vem Fisher:

(a) To conduct supervision courses for 40 Ministry for Planning and Environment staff supervisors. The objective was to introduce participants to key concepts/knowledge and skills necessary to establish themselves as supervisors.

(b) Detailed brief.

(c) $1500 for each of the two courses.

Total cost $3000.

(d) February 24, 25, 26/1987.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: John Fitzgerald Project Services Pty Ltd:

(a) To examine implementation options and process for implementation of boating facilities in Port Phillip Bay.

(b) Detailed brief requiring the consultant to provide options on streamlining the process for implementing boating facility developments and stimulating involvement of councils and the private sector.

(c) $3000.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Flintefield Pty Ltd:

(a) Metropolitan work force projections.

(b) Study brief given to the consultants August 1986, interdepartmental steering committee throughout the study.

(c) $4950.
(d) October–November 1986.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Maggie Fooke:
(a) Nubrik workshop No. 7.
(b) Written instruction.
   Workshop No. 7 “Street Furniture and Urban Art”.
   Speaker on “Art and Artists in Urban Area”.
(c) $100.
(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshop.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Green, Dale and Wright:
(a) (1) Nubrik workshops Nos 2 and 8.
   (2) Townscape improvement manual.
(b) (1) Written instruction; workshop No. 2 “Townscape Analysis and Design”.
   (2) Written brief.
(c) (1) $240.
   (2) $6850—ongoing total cost $12 000.
(d) (1) Preparation of material and addressing workshops.
   (2) Six months.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: D. T. Grogan and Associates Pty Ltd:
(a) Preparation of a traffic report which considers the impact of the proposed development at Camberwell Junction.
(b) A detailed consultant brief.
(c) $4300.
(d) November 1985–April 1986.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Henshall Hansen Associates:
(a) Melbourne metropolitan economic study.
(b) Study brief issued June 1986; study supervised by interdepartmental steering committee.
(c) $19 980.
(d) October 1986 to April 1987.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: J & T Hatcher and Associates:
(a) Removal of dual planning control in metropolitan area.
(b) Consultant’s brief—to prepare amendments to the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme which effectively incorporates municipal planning controls into this planning scheme.
(c) $5425.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Warwick Hoy:
(a) Nubrik workshop No. 8.
(b) Written instruction;
    speaker at workshop on “Sale Mall”.
Name of Consultant: Irwin Johnson and Partners:

(a) Structural report on condition of former Methodist Church, Toorak Road, South Yarra.
(b) In view of the fact that the building was in an extremely unstable and unsafe condition, the terms of reference were negotiated by members of the Historic Buildings Council on site and included:
   i. the minimum work required to make the building safe; and
   ii. an estimate of costs for stabilisation of the building.
(c) $240.
(d) 
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Jones, Lang and Wootten:

(a) Melbourne suburban office investment study.
(b) Written brief to the study requirements.
(c) $9000.
(e) Yes—$1000 for production and distribution of final report.

Name of Consultant: Laceworks Landscape Collaborative:

(a) As Nubrik design fellow to assist senior Nubrik townscape fellow and townscape advisory service staff.
(b) Written position outline—focus of position to improve the standards of design detailing both through work on specific projects and through involvement in series of townscape workshop series for local government and other landscape practitioners.
(c) Approved total $24,500.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: P. Leahy:

(a) Nubrik workshop No. 3.
(b) Written instruction;
   speaker at workshop on "Car Park Design and Layout".
(c) $100.
(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshop.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Leo Burnett Pty Ltd:

(a) To produce artwork and promotional ideas for a publicly available version of the State Conservation Strategy.
(b) Detailed brief.
(c) $3000.
(d) Two months.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Meredith Liddle:

(a) Graphics consultant, Middle Yarra River Concept Plan, Dights Falls to Burke Road.
(b) Drafts of plans for final presentation graphics.
Name of Consultant: Loder and Bayly:

(a) Preparation of structure plans for Sunshine and Dandenong district centres. Preparation of report entitled "Urban Design in District Centres".

(b) A detailed consultant brief was prepared for each project.

(c) Sunshine—$8831 plus Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works contribution; Dandenong—$10 000; Urban Design—$13 369.


Name of Consultant: Ian Lonie and Associates:

(a) Advise on reconciling the provisions of the Historic Buildings Act with new proposals for the Planning and Environment Act.

(b) Detailed brief.

(c) $3000.

(d) One month.


(a) Heritage advisers servicing designated historic towns as part of Heritage Branch area conservation program.

(b) To liaise with owners of buildings considered to be of historic value with respect to their requirements and the requirements for achieving conservation of the built environment.

(c) Total cost $99 272 for 1985–86 financial year.

(d) Varying daily per week over twelve months.

Name of Consultant: Tom McNeilly:

(a) Nubrik workshops Nos 5 and 10.

(b) Written instruction; workshop No. 5—"Paving for People"; speaker on "Technical Details and Specification". Workshop No. 10—"Paving for People"; speaker on "Technical Details and Specifications".

(c) $220.

(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshops.

(e) No.
Name of Consultant: Bruce Mackenzie:

(a) Senior Nubrik townscape fellow—to provide expert urban landscape advice on townscape advisory service projects.

(b) Written position outline.

(c) $20,266.

(d) 25.11.85—5.9.86.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Mark McWha:

(a) Perspective drawing for display purposes—Lorne townscape improvement display.

(b) Verbal brief—sketch of proposed town entry improvement.

(c) $200.

(d) One week.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant Joint: (1) HM Marketing; (2) Group Presentations; (3) Don H. Parker; and (4) Vynka Pty. Ltd.

(a) To provide expert advice for local traders and local councils and the Ministry for Planning and Environment on ways and means of improving the viability of traditional strip shopping centres in their service to the local community. Five centres were chosen for this joint project as part of the Eastern Suburbs Action Plan.

(b) A detailed project brief was given to each consultant, outlining a range of techniques, model questionnaires, operating procedures, evaluation processes, time lines, budget details and a list of participants.

(c) $70,000.

(d) A twelve-month project which started in February—April 1986.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Maunsell and Partners:

(a) To investigate the establishment of a national waste exchange service.

(b) A brief with terms of reference including surveying, assessing and reporting on the feasibility of the establishment of a national waste exchange service.

(c) $8000.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: R. Morgan Research Centre Pty Ltd:

(a) To conduct a national noise survey on behalf of the Australian Environment Council.

(b) Detailed brief requiring the consultant to obtain reliable data on the extent of noise pollution in Australia and assess community disturbance from such pollution.

(c) $21,876.

(d) November 1985—March 1986.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: R. J. Nairn and Partners:

(a) Camberwell/Hawthorn regional traffic study.

(b) A detailed consultant brief.

(c) $10,000.

(d) August 1986—April 1987.

(e) No.
Name of Consultant: Neilson and Associates Pty Ltd:

(a) To analyse commercial development demand and supply for the inner urban region. The consultant was required to determine appropriate data sources—e.g. councils, estate agents, developers—for information on supply and demand for office, retail, hotel and other commercial uses in the inner urban region. The data were then to be analysed for trend market implications and a monitoring system outlined.

(b) Approved brief issued—through effectiveness review committee; schedule of work determined by consultant in response to brief; payments scheduled with components of work programs.

(c) $33 000.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Neilson and Associates Pty Ltd:

(a) Systems for the co-ordination of MSCS—Management Service Co-ordination System.

(b) The tenderers were forwarded a copy of the study brief; on acceptance of the preferred consultant and prior to signing the contract further refining and discussion took place.

(c) $18 000.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: L. Neilson:

(a) Prepare brief for work on the Metropolitan Services Co-ordination System.

(b) Set guidelines were given along with meetings to discuss issues that eventuated.

(c) $1080.

(d) March–May 1986.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Perrot, Lyon, Mathieson:

(a) Nubrik Workshops Numbers 1 and 9.

(b) Written instruction; speaker at workshop number 1 “Preparing a Townscape Improvement Program”; speaker at Workshop number 9.

(c) $240.

(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshops.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Andrew Phillips:

(a) Preparation of structure plan for Frankston district centre.

(b) A detailed consultant brief.

(c) $15 000 from Ministry for Planning and Environment; and $15 000 from Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Plant Location International:

(a) Dandenong district centre retail study.

(b) A detailed consultant brief.

(c) $25 000 from Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.


(e) Yes—$1509 from Ministry for Planning and Environment.
Name of Consultant: Praxa Pty Ltd:

(a) Study of needs and options for the computerisation of records and systems of the Historic Buildings Council.

(b) A brief was developed giving details of the broad categories of information required such as identification of available software packages, resources and hardware requirements. The consultant was provided with a functional model of the Historic Buildings Council and details of systems, both internal and external, to the council.

(c) $5200.

(d) 80 hours.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Peter Quarry:

(a) To conduct management development courses for Ministry for Planning and Environment's twenty middle managers which give participants an opportunity to develop and practise specific management skills relating to leadership, organising resource management, counselling poor performers.

(b) Detailed brief.

(c) $1800.

(d) 12–16 March 1987.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: J. Rebeschini Advertising:

(a) To conduct stage 1 of unleaded petrol advertising campaign.

(b) Work plans involved the advertising of the introduction of unleaded petrol in Victorian media.

(c) $80 000.

(d) April, May and June 1985.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: J. Rebeschini Advertising:

(a) To upgrade and continue stage 1 of the unleaded petrol advertising campaign.

(b) A detailed brief requiring the consultant to develop media advertising in Victoria—TV, radio and press—for the introduction of unleaded petrol.

(c) $50 000.

(d) June/July 1985.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Dr R. Repetto, World Resources Institute, Washington, DC:

(a) To introduce to governments in Australia the concept of natural resources accounting, and advise on its possible application in Australia.

(b) Consultancy brief was established by a Victorian interdepartmental committee convened to oversee the project, and by consultation through the Australian Environment Council Economics Network (interstate). For full details, see ERC/STB approval No. 2278, 22/5/86.

(c) Total project cost $A12 650; these funds were provided by the Australian Environment Council Trust Fund; a further $A840 provided by the trust fund to cover cost overrun due to changes in the Australian dollar to the US dollar exchange rate during the project; cost of project to Victorian Government—nil.

(d) Intermittent work by the consultant over six months.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Eugene Ring:

(a) Senior Management consultancy for staff development program in the Ministry arising from the merger with the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Planning Branch.

(b) Detailed brief.
Name of Consultant: Alec Sachter:
(a) Nubrik workshop No. 7.
(b) Written instruction; workshop No. 7 “Street Furniture and Urban Art”; speaker on “Lighting Design Specifications”.
(c) $100.
(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshop.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Saulwick Weller and Associates:
(a) To provide expert advice on public consultations, response to submissions and Eastern Suburbs Action Plan publications.
(b) Detailed brief provided. Brief required the consultant to provide occasional advice on (1) shopping centre displays; (2) broadsheets in the local press; (3) categorising issues arising from submissions; and (4) setting the parameters for other consultation procedures.
(c) $15,000 was allocated for the service, for the duration of the action program, subject to funds being available. $4,062.50 was paid in 1984–85, with a further $2,400 in 1985–86—running total is $4,302.50.
(d) The contract was on an ad hoc basis over a two-year time span with the bulk of the work completed in the 1984–85 financial year.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: A. G. Shell and Associates Pty Ltd:
(a) Removal of dual planning control in metropolitan area.
(b) Consultant’s brief: To prepare amendments to the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme which effectively incorporates municipal planning controls into this planning scheme.
(c) $4,300.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: A. G. Shell and Associates Pty Ltd:
(a) Removal of dual planning control in metropolitan area.
(b) Consultant’s brief: To prepare amendments to the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme which effectively incorporates municipal planning controls into this planning scheme.
(c) $6,500.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Shelter Victoria:
(a) Preparation of workshops and seminars prior to the presentation of a paper on shared housing.
(b) Brief developed.
(c) $500.
(d) One month.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: John Taylor and Associates:
(a) To advise on revisions to subdivision legislation in preparation for the new Planning and Environment Act.
(b) Detailed brief.
(c) $3000.
(d) Ten weeks.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: John Taylor and Associates:

(a) Site survey and services identification of Beaconsfield Parade between Kerford Road and Bay Street, Port Melbourne.
(b) Site was specified and a clear brief issued for the technical information required to be submitted to Ministry for Planning and Environment within specified time frame.
(c) $5000.
(d) Two months.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Ed Thexton:

(a) Vegetation survey of the Middle Yarra River from Dights Falls to Burke Road in conjunction with preparation of Middle Yarra concept plan.
(b) Detailed brief and base maps were made available.
(c) $2000.
(d) Six months.
(e) $500.

Name of Consultant: Peter Timmins:

(a) To broaden the participants understanding of corporate government, policy advice and program implementation.
(b) Detailed brief.
(c) $3000.
(d) 2 x 1 day workshops 10 April 1987 and 8 May 1987 and 1 day investigations and interviews.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Trojan Owen and Associates:

(a) Provide site management services on a Community Employment Program employing 30 employees carrying out landscape improvements on Dynon Road.
(b) Consultants were issued with a clear brief detailing site responsibilities and specifying industrial awards/practices to be followed including project control reporting arrangements.
(c) $30,000.
(d) 30 weeks.
(e) No.

Name of Consultant: TTM Consulting Group:

(a) Comments to a planning panel hearing into the Victorian Gardens development, Richmond.

The consultants had previously prepared a report on traffic implications of the Vickers-Ruwolt proposal.

The panel appointed to consider the amendment arising from the proposal requested comments from the consultant; as the responsible authority for the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme, the Ministry paid for the consultant's time at the panel hearing.

(b) No brief required.
(c) $360.
(d) October 1986.
(e) No.
Name of Consultant: Urban Spatial and Economic Consultants Pty Ltd:

(a) Undertake an assessment of boating demand in Port Phillip Bay—joint project with Western Region Commission.

(b) Brief setting out the requirement to identify demand for forms of boating facilities in Port Phillip Bay.

(c) $13 000.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: U. S. E. Consultants:

(a) Urban consolidation study on district centres.

(b) Study brief setting out objectives, scope and tasks to be performed.

(c) $5100.

(d) April–September 1986.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Andrew Ward:

(a) Nubrik workshop No. 4.

(b) Written instruction. Speaker at workshop on “Shopfronts, Signs and Infill Designs”.

(c) $100.

(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshop.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Trevor Westmore:

(a) To document possible shopfront improvements for Sea Lake and Wyndham.

(b) Written brief setting out the parameters of the assignment.

(c) $1500.

(d) Eight Months.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Wilson Sayer Core:

(a) Program for medium density residential development.

(b) A comprehensive study brief was supplied setting out objectives of study, scope, consultant tasks, presentation, timing and submission of report.

(c) $20 000.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Wilson Sayer Core Pty Ltd (Maxinne Cooper & Associates):

(a) To obtain community views on planning and environmental issues, and the social spatial effects of metropolitan growth.

(b) The consultant was given a project brief outlining the scope of the work required; in addition, the consultant prepared a detailed work program as part of the tender arrangements which was adopted as the working plan.

(c) Quoted cost was $7985 to be shared equally by the Ministry for Planning and Environment and Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Wilson Sayer Core:

(a) Preparation of structure plan for Broadmeadows district centre.

(b) A detailed consultant brief.
Questions on Notice 2 August 1988 ASSEMBLY 271

(c) Total contract price $58,000:
   $10,000—Ministry for Planning and Environment; $15,000—Road Traffic Authority; $33,000—
   council.

(d) March 1987—still in progress.

(e) Cost of additional updating of final report, $1,000, divided equally between council and Ministry for
   Planning and Environment. Not yet paid.

Name of Consultant: Wolinski Planners Pty Ltd:

(a) To undertake a feasibility and demand study to identify and analyse opportunities for residential
    development in Southbank; the consultant was required to document current market trends for
    housing in South Melbourne and Port Melbourne and then to apply this market information to
    development costs for residential development on a specific Southbank site to determine residual
    land value.

(b) Approved brief issued through the Effectiveness Review Committee.

Schedule of work determined by consultant in response to brief; payments scheduled with components of
work program.

(c) $18,000.

(d) Three months.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Wolinski Planners:

(a) Southbank residential study.

(b) Study brief setting out requirements for an analysis of the potential for private and public housing
    development within the Southbank area and progressively reporting findings/analysis to Southbank
    task force.

(c) $10,000.

(d) Three months.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Wolinski Planners:

(a) Preparation of structure plans for Cheltenham and Ringwood district centres.

(b) A detailed consultant brief was prepared for each project.

(c) Cheltenham—$20,000; Ringwood—$20,000.


(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Wood Bromley:

(a) Removal of dual planning control in metropolitan area.

(b) Consultant's brief: to prepare amendments to the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme which
    effectively incorporates municipal planning controls into this planning scheme.

(c) $6,500.

(d) November 1986—June 1987—estimated.

(e) No.

Name of Consultant: Alan Wyatt Pty Ltd:

(a) Nubrik workshops Nos 5, 7 and 10.

(b) Workshop No. 5 “Paving for People”; speaker on “Paving as a design element”.
    Workshop No. 7 “Paving for People”; speaker on “Paving as a design element”.
    Workshop No. 10 “Paving for People”; speaker on “Paving as a design element”.

(c) $320.

(d) Preparation of material and addressing workshops.

(e) No.
UNIONISTS APPOINTED TO COMMITTEES OR BOARDS

(Question No. 210)

Mr GUDGE (Hawthorn) asked the Minister for Water Resources:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the names and qualifications of all—(a) union officials; (b) union members or affiliates; and (c) members of the ALP appointed to any committee or board?

Mr WILKES (Minister for Water Resources)—The answer is:

In so far as the question relates to the Department of Water Resources and the Rural Water Commission, this information has already been provided to the honourable member under the Freedom of Information Act.

In so far as the question relates to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, appointments to boards and committees are made on the basis of merit and qualifications considered appropriate for the functions undertaken by the relevant board or committee. Information concerning the union, political or other affiliation of any person appointed to a board or committee within my portfolio is a private matter which, as long as it remains such, is not a matter within my Ministerial responsibility. This does not include those appointments to boards or committees where union affiliation is a prerequisite for appointment either because it is specified in legislation or adopted as a matter of policy. Accordingly, details concerning appointments so specified are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board/Committee</th>
<th>Representative</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Representative of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screen Based Equipment Steering Committee</td>
<td>I. Beckett</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td>APEA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Maloney</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Whelan</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R. Wilson</td>
<td>ADSTE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Occupational Health and Safety Committee</td>
<td>H. Schapper</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K. Rampling</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R. Atwood</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M. Walsh</td>
<td>AWU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Jensen</td>
<td>ADSTE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Corsetti</td>
<td>AMWU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Bauich</td>
<td>APEA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R. Collins</td>
<td>BWIU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Democracy Steering Committee</td>
<td>S. Tregillis</td>
<td>Labour Resources Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Gyslink</td>
<td>THC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Maloney</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Bauich</td>
<td>APEA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Jensen</td>
<td>ADSTE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R. Boness</td>
<td>AWU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Bentley</td>
<td>ASC&amp;J</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Redesign Steering Committee</td>
<td>J. Whelan</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Maloney</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Contract Services Review Committee</td>
<td>M. Walsh</td>
<td>AWU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R. Atwood</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Saddington</td>
<td>BWIU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Larkin</td>
<td>ADSTE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMBW Advisory Committee on Industrial Waste Management, Siting of Facilities</td>
<td>P. Wilson</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G. Rzecsnowiecki</td>
<td>AMWU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Lowerson</td>
<td>AWU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Health Issues Committee, Industrial Waste Treatment Facility</td>
<td>P. Wilson</td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P. Fennell</td>
<td>TWU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Lowerson</td>
<td>AWU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M. Burr</td>
<td>VTHC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Fitten</td>
<td>PGEU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Under the MOA award there is provision to establish personnel appeals, classification and experience assessment committees. Separate committees are established in each case and union representation varies accordingly.

At the workface level consultation and discussions take place in numerous sub-committees and informal work groups that include union representation.

**ACCIDENT COMPENSATION CLAIMS**

(Question No. 258)

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Minister for Ethnic Affairs:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration:

1. How many accidents resulted in workers compensation claims for the twelve months preceding the introduction of WorkCare in 1985, indicating the number of claims each month?

2. How many accidents resulted in WorkCare claims for the twelve months following the introduction of WorkCare, indicating the number of claims each month?

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Ethnic Affairs)—The answer is:

The Treasurer will answer this question on my behalf.
ACCIDENT COMPENSATION PAYMENTS
(Question No. 284)
Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Treasurer:
1. How many individuals were in receipt of WorkCare compensation payments as at 30 June 1987?
2. How many individuals were in receipt of workers' compensation in the month immediately preceding the introduction of WorkCare?
3. In respect of claims involving WorkCare payments for periods in excess of one month, what was the type of injury responsible for such claims current at 30 June 1987?
Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—The answer is:
1. The Accident Compensation Commission's database records payments to claimants but does not record the periods off work to which weekly compensation payments relate. For this reason, it is not possible to obtain an accurate estimate of the numbers of claimants on benefit at any particular date.
   It is planned to begin recording the periods off work to which weekly compensation payments relate within the next six months. When these data are recorded, a reliable count of the numbers of individuals in receipt of WorkCare compensation payments will be available.
2. No information was collected by either a statutory or a non-statutory body giving details of individuals in receipt of workers compensation in the month immediately preceding the introduction of WorkCare.
3. For the reasons given in part 1 of the answer to this question the information is not available for claims current at 30 June 1987. However, tables 1 and 2 pertain to all Accident Compensation Commission claims with duration on weekly compensation benefits greater than 20 days from injury months up to and including June 1987.

Table 1
NATURE OF INJURY
(INVOLVING GREATER THAN 20 DAYS' COMPENSATION)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Injury</th>
<th>Number of claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All fractures</td>
<td>5 230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislocation of vertebrae</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other dislocation</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislocation—unspecified</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All sprains and strains of joint and adjacent muscles</td>
<td>34 699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concussion</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (unspecified) intracranial injury</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intracranial injury—unspecified</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernias ICD</td>
<td>1 632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other injury to internal organs of chest or pelvis</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal injury of chest, pelvis—unspecified</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traumatic amputation, enucleation avulsion</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other laceration, open wound, cut or bite</td>
<td>2 717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open wound—unspecified</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abrasion, friction burn and/or blister</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superficial foreign body (splinter) open wound</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other superficial wound</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superficial injury—unspecified</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contusions and crushings NEC</td>
<td>4 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burns and scalds—contact with objects/substances</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other burns and scalds</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burns and scalds—unspecified</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poisoning</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effects of weather, exposure and related conditions</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specified) asphyxiation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asphyxia—unspecified</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of electric current</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease</td>
<td>Number of Claims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious diseases of internal tract</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuberculosis of respiratory system</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuberculosis of other forms</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other bacterial diseases</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases attributable to viruses</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other typhus and rickettsial disease—malaria</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q fever</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirachael disease, except syphilis</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other infective and parasitic diseases NEC</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin cancer</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other neoplasms NEC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases—anaemia</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases of blood and blood forming organs—anaemia</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental disorders—psychoses, neuroses, retardation</td>
<td>1 822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflammatory diseases of central nervous system</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other diseases of nervous system NEC</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keratitis</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other diseases and conditions of eye—detached retina</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases of eye and mastoid process</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deafness—noise induced</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rheumatic fever</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic rheumatic heart disease</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other hypertensive disease—high blood pressure</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertensive heart disease</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ischaemic heart disease</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other diseases of heart</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerebrovascular disease—haemorrhage/stroke</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases of arteries</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases of veins and circulatory system</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute upper respiratory infections</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharyngitis and nasopharyngitis</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronchitis—chronic</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphysema</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational chest disease</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other diseases of respiratory system NEC</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastroenteritis and colitis (non-infectious)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other diseases of digestive system</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boil and carbuncle—excludes boil and carbuncle of eye</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellulitis—paronychia</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other infections of skin and subcutaneous tissue</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston South) asked the Minister for the Arts, for the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands:

1. Did Mr D. S. Saunders, Director, National Parks and Wildlife Division Victoria, in a letter to Mr Paul Barsdell, Secretary, Senate Select Committee on Animal Welfare, dated 16 March 1987, deny that Pacific Pet Foods Pty Ltd was importing kangaroo meat from New South Wales into Victoria; if so, did Mr Saunders check with the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service before writing to the Senate Select Committee on Animal Welfare?

2. Is the Minister aware of the fact that the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service has issued exporters' licences for the consignment of kangaroo meat from New South Wales to Pacific Pet Foods Pty Ltd of 177-179 Macaulay Road, North Melbourne?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for the Arts)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands is:

1. Yes. Yes.

2. From discussions with New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, it is understood that Pacific Pet Foods Pty Ltd does not import kangaroo meat. I am aware that one New South Wales exporter's licence listed "kangaroo mince" being sent to Pacific Pet Foods Pty Ltd, but my department has been assured that this was minced kangaroo bones.

Mr DICKINSON (South Barwon) asked the Minister for the Arts, for the Minister for Education:

1. Which schools in the Barwon South-Western Region have fire detection equipment?

DENIAL OF IMPORTATION OF KANGAROO MEAT
(Question No. 320)

FIRE DETECTION EQUIPMENT IN SCHOOLS IN GEELONG REGION
(Question No. 323)
Questions on Notice

2. What plans does the Ministry of Education have to ensure fire detection equipment is installed in all schools in the Geelong Region?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for the Arts)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

1. Five schools in the Barwon South-Western Region have fire detection equipment—thermal alarms—fitted. For security reasons, it would not be appropriate for me to name those schools at this stage, but I am prepared to make that information available to the honourable member on a coincidental basis if he so wishes. In addition, a further five schools in the region are fitted with fire booster pumps, those schools being in areas of known low water pressure.

2. The Ministry has no current plans to install fire detection equipment as such in all schools in the Geelong area, particularly as experience across the State has shown that the cost of installing such equipment would far outweigh losses actually suffered. However, as an analysis of school fires has shown arson as the major cause, all schools in the region and indeed the State are progressively being linked to the Ministry’s intruder detection system where the entry of any potential arsonist or other unauthorised person is immediately detected.

So far as any fire which may occur during school hours is concerned, the schools fire code, which has been in operation for many years, imposes on the Ministry quite onerous conditions for the provision of alternative means of escape for pupils and staff in the design of school buildings.

V/LINE PASSENGER SERVICES, MELBOURNE TO MILDURA

(Question No. 327)

Mr WHITING (Mildura) asked the Minister for Community Services, for the Minister for Transport:

1. What are the average total costs per journey of operating the Vinelander and the Daylight trains, respectively, between Mildura and Melbourne?

2. What are the itemised costs of operating passenger trains between Melbourne/Mildura and Mildura/Melbourne, respectively?

3. What is the average income earned for passenger train journeys between Mildura/Melbourne?

4. What is the average ratio of income to costs for each form of V/Line travel between Mildura and Melbourne?

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Community Services)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Transport is:

1. The average total costs per one-way journey of operating trains on the Mildura line is:

   Vinelander—$18 235.

   Sunraysia—$15 084.

2. The cost breakdown of operating passenger trains between Melbourne and Mildura is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Component</th>
<th>Per one-way Trip Vinelander</th>
<th>Per one-way Trip Sunraysia</th>
<th>Per Year Vinelander</th>
<th>Per Year Sunraysia</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Train running</td>
<td>$8 549</td>
<td>$5 568</td>
<td>$2·676</td>
<td>$1·743</td>
<td>$4·419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-variable</td>
<td>3 146</td>
<td>2 976</td>
<td>985</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>1·916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct costs</td>
<td>11 695</td>
<td>8 544</td>
<td>3·661</td>
<td>2·671</td>
<td>6·335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corridor fixed</td>
<td>2 264</td>
<td>2 264</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>1·417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead costs</td>
<td>4 276</td>
<td>4 276</td>
<td>1·339</td>
<td>1·339</td>
<td>2·677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COSTS</td>
<td>18 235</td>
<td>15 084</td>
<td>5·708</td>
<td>4·721</td>
<td>10·429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

(i) All costs are in—1986–87 dollar terms.

(ii) Based on a full year operation of Vinelander/Sunraysia services.
Questions on Notice

(iii) Train running costs include crew, conductor, locomotive operating and maintenance, carriage operating and maintenance and a variable element of track maintenance.

(iv) Semi-variable costs include station staff costs, catering, shunting and train examination costs.

(v) Direct costs equal train running and semi-variable costs.

(iv) Corridor fixed costs include the maintenance of tracks, bridges and signalling and safeworking systems.

(vii) Overhead costs include corporate and business division staff, rents, maintenance of buildings and a provision for depreciation of rolling stock. These costs are allocated to services on a proportional cost basis.

3. The average revenue earned per one-way journey for trains on the Mildura line is:
   
   Vinelander—$5447
   Sunraysia—$3477.

4. The cost recovery for each form of V/Line travel between Melbourne and Mildura is shown below. The table shows cost recovery on total costs per single trip.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Profit/Loss</th>
<th>Cost/recovery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vinelander</td>
<td>18 235</td>
<td>5447</td>
<td>12 788</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunraysia</td>
<td>15 084</td>
<td>3477</td>
<td>11 607</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract coach*</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>127.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Excludes any allocation of V/Line overhead costs.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SHIRE OF LILLYDALE

(Question No. 328)

Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn) asked the Minister for Planning and Environment:

In relation to the “Coles” land in Hereford Road, Mount Evelyn, will the government provide financial assistance to the Shire of Lillydale to enable the purchase of this land by the shire in order that it may remain as public open space?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—The answer is:

The Shire of Lillydale has adopted and submitted to me for approval an amendment which proposes the rezoning of the subject land from commercial to residential M—multi-unit residential development. The land is approximately 2 hectares in area and is undeveloped. It was identified some considerable time ago for a Coles supermarket but has never been developed under the commercial zone. A substantial number of submissions were lodged against the amendment, many of them suggesting that the council should acquire the land for public open space.

Council’s support for the residential zone would indicate that it is not prepared to acquire the land, and no request has been made by the council either to myself or to the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands for financial assistance to purchase the land.

Although I have yet to make a final decision on the submitted amendment, I see the issue of the provision of additional open space in this area as being of local significance only.

PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER FOR ETHNIC AFFAIRS

(Question No. 333)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Minister of Ethnic Affairs:

In respect of each of his Ministerial responsibilities:

1. How many members comprise his personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?
2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Ethnic Affairs)—The answer is:
I refer the honourable member to my answer to question on notice No. 337 which details information requested for staff members of all my Ministerial responsibilities.

PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER FOR WATER RESOURCES
(Question No. 338)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Minister of Water Resources:
In respect of each of his Ministerial responsibilities:
1. How many members comprise his personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?
2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?

Mr WILKES (Minister for Water Resources)—The answer is:
Four persons comprise my personal staff. They assist directly on matters relating to both of my portfolios—water resources and tourism.
1. Ministerial Adviser, Grade 3, salary range $44,327-$47,659;
2. Ministerial Adviser, Grade 1, salary range $34,907-$36,717;
3. Confidential Secretary, Grade 3, salary range $25,422-$26,290; and
4. Clerical Officer, Class 4, salary range $22,089-$23,607.

The salary cost of these staff is provided for under line item 1102 of the water resources and tourism portfolios in the Budget Papers. Each portfolio shares 50 per cent of costs. They are part of the State water planning policy program and the tourism program.

PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION
(Question No. 339)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Minister for Housing and Construction:
In respect of each of his Ministerial responsibilities:
1. How many members comprise his personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?
2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?

Mr WALSH (Minister of Housing and Construction)—The answer is:
1. The Minister's personal staff comprises six members:
   two Ministerial Advisers, Grade 3, salary range $44,527-$47,659;
   one Private Secretary, Grade 3, salary range $29,078-$29,911;
   two Secretaries, Grade 3, salary $25,422-$26,290; and
   one Clerical Officer, CO-4, salary range $22,089-$23,607.
2. (a) Salary costs for one Ministerial Adviser, Grade 3, one Private Secretary, Grade 3, and one Secretary, Grade 3, are provided for in Budget item 644-1102, former Public Works Department. 
   (b) Salary costs for one Ministerial Adviser, Grade 3, one Secretary, Grade 3, and one Clerical Officer, CO-4, are provided for in the budget of the former Ministry of Housing. Given the nature of the appropriation to the former Ministry for Housing, no specific salaries line item can be identified.
PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS
(Question No. 342)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Minister for Consumer Affairs:
In respect of each of his Ministerial responsibilities:
1. How many members comprise his personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?
2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Consumer Affairs)—The answer is:
1. Two, comprising a Ministerial Adviser, Grade 3, $44,527 per annum and a Confidential Secretary, Grade 3 $25,422-$26,290 per annum.
2. Yes. The salary cost of these staff is provided for under line item 1102 of Program 242—Corporate Services—of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs portfolio.

PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER FOR CONSERVATION, FORESTS AND LANDS
(Question No. 343)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Minister for the Arts, for the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands:
In respect of each of her Ministerial responsibilities:
1. How many members comprise the Minister’s personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?
2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for the Arts)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands is:
1. Five:
   two Ministerial Advisers, Grade 3, $44,214;
   one Private Secretary, Grade 3, $29,078-$29,911;
   one Confidential Secretary, Grade 3, $25,422-$26,290;
   one Secretary, Grade 1, $23,260-$23,688.
2. Yes. The costs are provided for in Budget line item 1102 of the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands, as part of Program 202, Corporate Services.

PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS
(Question No. 345)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Treasurer, for the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs:
In respect of each of his Ministerial responsibilities:
1. How many members comprise the Minister’s personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?
2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?
Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs is:

1. Four:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Salary range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial Adviser</td>
<td>Ministerial Adviser, Grade 3</td>
<td>$44 527–50 761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Secretary</td>
<td>Private Secretary, Grade 3</td>
<td>$29 078–29 911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Secretary</td>
<td>Private Secretary, Grade 3</td>
<td>$29 078–29 911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidential Secretary</td>
<td>Secretary Grade 3 (Acting)</td>
<td>$25 422–26 290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The salary cost of these staff is provided for in the Budget Papers under item 1100 of the agriculture and rural affairs portfolio. They are part of the Corporate Services and Management Support program.

PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER FOR TOURISM
(Question No. 347)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Minister for Tourism:

In respect of each of his Ministerial responsibilities:

1. How many members comprise his personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?

2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?

Mr WILKES (Minister for Tourism)—The answer is:

I refer the honourable member to my response to question No. 338.

PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES
(Question No. 349)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Minister for Community Services:

In respect of each of his Ministerial responsibilities:

1. How many members comprise his personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?

2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Community Services)—The answer is:

1. Composition of Ministerial staff:

   Ministerial Adviser, Grade 4, salary $50 761 — This is the salary for the old AI (3) classification;
   Ministerial Adviser, Grade 2, salary range $38 969–$40 759;
   Private Secretary, Grade 3, salary range $29 078–$29 911;
   Secretary, Grade 3, salary range $25 422–$26 290;
   Word Processing Operator, Grade 2, salary $21 326; and
   Secretary, Grade 1, salary range $23 260–$23 688.

2. Budgeting provision for Ministerial staff:

   the salary cost of these staff is provided for under line item 1100 of the Community Services portfolio in the Budget Papers as part of the Policy and Corporate Support Service program.
THE "BRIDGING THE GAP" ORGANISATION
(Question No. 354)

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Minister for Labour:
What grants have been allocated to the organisation known as "Bridging the Gap", indicating details of actual amounts and the dates paid?

Mr CRABB (Minister for Labour)—The answer is:
The organisation known as "Bridging the Gap" was allocated a grant of $60 000. The following payments were made against this grant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 July 1986</td>
<td>$15 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 September 1986</td>
<td>$15 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$30 000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNREGISTERED VEHICLES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR
(Question No. 356)

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Minister for Labour:
1. Will the Minister advise the licence plate numbers of all departmental vehicles left unregistered by his department until they were registered on or about 3 March 1988 indicating—(a) which of these vehicles were involved in motor accidents while unregistered; (b) what steps he has taken to ensure that all the vehicles belonging to his department are fully registered; and (c) what protection was afforded departmental officers in the event that they were involved in an accident while driving unregistered vehicles?
2. In respect of those vehicles which were unregistered and which were involved in motor accidents, did the police confiscate any or all of the number plates? If so, which plates, and on what dates were they confiscated?

Mr CRABB (Minister for Labour)—The answer is:
1. Four vehicles were unregistered on 3 March 1988: MYL 093; MYX 178; MYX 550; and MYX 672. (a) MYL 093 and MYX 178 were both involved in motor accidents while unregistered.
   (b) A reconciliation of departmental records with Road Traffic Authority records was undertaken on 4 March 1988. Once the unregistered vehicles were identified, the outstanding fee was paid on 4 March 1988.
   (c) Any officer driving an unregistered departmental vehicle who was injured in an accident involving that vehicle would be able to claim compensation under the Accident Compensation Act 1985 and/or Part 3 of the Transport Accident Act 1986.
2. The police confiscated the number plates of vehicle registration number MYX 178 on 3 March 1988.

FINANCIAL PRODUCTIVITY SAVING MADE BY DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR
(Question No. 357)

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Minister for Labour:
What was the actual financial productivity saving made by the Department of Labour in each of the past three financial years?
Mr CRABB (Minister for Labour)—The answer is:

As the Department of Labour was not formed until March 1985, I am not able to supply the productivity saving made by the Department of Labour for the financial year 1984–85.

The adjustments made to the Department of Labour's expenditure base for the financial years 1985–86 and 1986–87 to meet the required productivity saving were:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985–86</td>
<td>$306,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986–87</td>
<td>$617,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the department operated within the adjusted expenditure bases these amounts are the actual productivity savings.

REVENUE COLLECTED FROM REGISTRATION OF LIFTS AND CRANES

(Question No. 358)

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Minister for Labour:

Will the Minister advise what revenue his department collected from fees and charges relating to lift and crane registrations for the year ended 30 June 1986–87?

Mr CRABB (Minister for Labour)—The answer is:

The revenue collected by the Department of Labour from fees and charges relating to lift and crane registrations for the year ended 30 June 1986–87 was $1,052,272.

THOMSON DAM IRRIGATION CHARGES

(Question No. 362)

Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn) asked the Minister for Water Resources:

In relation to the price charged for water to irrigators and diverters downstream of the Thomson dam, will he indicate the method of arriving at these charges, indicating—(a) the amounts per kilolitre represented by headworks or capital structure costs; (b) finance and interest costs; and (c) recurrent and maintenance costs, in each case?

Mr WILKES (Minister for Water Resources)—The answer is:

1. Pricing of water from the Thomson dam is based on the annualised current cost of the Thomson dam. The method used in deriving this figure is the indexing of historical expenditure in each year of capital works to a current cost. This amount is then discounted according to the life of the asset 100 years and a 4 per cent real discount rate.

   Recurrent and maintenance costs are already in current cost terms.

2. Based on this method of pricing, the cost of water from the Thomson dam at 30 June 1987 was 10 cents a kilolitre.

   This amount may be divided into the following categories:
   
   (a) Headworks and capital structure costs 8·3 cents/kl.
   (b) Finance and interest costs 1·2 cents/kl.
   (c) Recurrent and maintenance costs 0·5 cents/kl.

   The above price is the amount charged for water to the Rural Water Commission. No charge is made for environmental downstream water releases.
SOUTH MELBOURNE TECHNICAL COLLEGE METALLURGY COURSE
(Question No. 363)

Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn) asked the Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

In relation to the post-apprentice metallurgy course formerly available at the South Melbourne Technical College to fourth year fitting and machining apprentices, or beyond, which was supported by General Motors-Holden's Ltd, Ford Australia, Luxford Engineering and Sutton Tool and Gear Company in the late 1950s:

1. Where is the equipment that was used for this course stored now that the South Melbourne Technical College has closed; and to what use has the equipment been put?

2. Is the equipment still available for the training of current apprentices in this field?

Mr CATHIE (Minister Assisting the Minister for Education)—The answer is:

The post-apprenticeship metallurgy course at South Melbourne Technical School was supported in the late 1950s by General Motors-Holden's Ltd, Ford Australia, Luxford Engineering and Sutton Tool and Gear Company.

1. TAFE programs from South Melbourne Technical School were transferred to RMIT in late 1986. All resources, including equipment, transferred with the programs.

All useful equipment from the post-apprenticeship metallurgy course has been relocated in the Department of Metallurgy at RMIT.

Some equipment was not transferred because it was surplus to requirements, or was considered unsuitable. This equipment remains at South Melbourne Technical School. It includes all but one of the gas-fired furnaces; these could not be installed at RMIT because there are no gas mains or ventilation available. The cyanide furnace was left behind because it is considered too dangerous for a class situation.

Note: Most of the equipment which was left at South Melbourne is past its useful life. It would need repair and maintenance in order to be used.

2. The equipment transferred from South Melbourne Technical School is still available for training of current apprentices in the metallurgy field.

This equipment has been combined with existing heat treatment equipment at RMIT to provide training facilities superior to those previously available at South Melbourne Technical School.

V. S. SPOWART SCHOLARSHIP, SOUTH MELBOURNE TECHNICAL COLLEGE
(Question No. 364)

Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn) asked the Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

1. Will he advise the current situation concerning the V.S. Spowart Scholarship financed by industry in the further training of apprentices in metallurgy following the closure of the South Melbourne Technical College?

2. Is the scholarship still available for the training of apprentices in metallurgy? If so, how many apprentices have been awarded this scholarship since the closure of the South Melbourne Technical College; if not, what has become of the capital funds invested in this scholarship and the accumulated interest thereon?

Mr CATHIE (Minister Assisting the Minister for Education)—The answer is:

The V. S. Spowart Scholarship was financed by industry to provide further training opportunities for metallurgy apprentices from South Melbourne Technical School.

The V. S. Spowart Scholarship was administered by a board of trustees.

Funds and accumulated interest were dispersed in accordance with the decisions of the board of trustees, for the benefit of metallurgy students from South Melbourne Technical School.
The scholarship funds were completely expended by 1986. This occurred prior to the transfer of TAFE programs from South Melbourne Technical School to RMIT.

The V. S. Spowart Scholarship is no longer available.

FLOOD MITIGATION STUDIES
(Question No. 365)

Mr PLOWMAN (Evelyn) asked the Minister for Water Resources:
In relation to flood mitigation studies being undertaken in the Kerang and Gordon shires, will he ensure—
(a) that any flood mitigation actions contemplated by the government or the Rural Water Commission are published prior to such actions being taken; and 
(b) that an opportunity will be given for local comment?

Mr WILKES (Minister for Water Resources)—The answer is:
Flood mitigation studies are currently being carried out by the Rural Water Commission on the Loddon and Avoca river systems and these affect the shires of Kerang and Gordon. These studies were initiated following requests from local municipalities which saw the need to tackle the complex problems on the floodplain on a region-wide basis.

The commission's current practice with rural flood studies includes—
(a) establishing a consultative committee under section 33a of the Water Act 1958. The committee consists of representatives of municipalities involved, river improvement trusts and interested government agencies. The committee meets during the course of the study to provide a focus for local comment on findings and advise on input and dissemination of information relating to the study;
(b) distribution of newsletters to all landholders on the floodplain;
(c) establishing local area groups of ten to twenty landholders under a group coordinator. These groups include all landholders on the floodplain in the study area. Landholders are invited to attend meetings of the group to discuss flood mitigation proposals and comment on them. They also receive copies of reports on the findings and recommendations of the study;
(d) submission of findings and recommendations to municipalities for their agreement to proceed with implementation of flood mitigation proposals; and
(e) advertising and placing the final scheme of flood mitigation proposals on public exhibition (under section 33b of the Water Act 1958). Any objections to the final scheme can be addressed to the Minister for Water Resources and, if necessary, referred to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for hearing and report.

This detailed process of public consultation ensures that flood mitigation proposals are well publicised in the community and that every landholder has abundant opportunities to comment, both during the formulation of schemes, and more formally when proposals are placed on public exhibition. Rural flood mitigation schemes are essentially a cooperative effort and they will in general lapse if substantial community agreement and support is not forthcoming.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY FOR RIGGER
(Question No. 388)

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Minister for Labour:
In relation to the issue of the certificate of competency as a rigger for Don Radford:
1. Who authorised the certificate?
2. When was it authorised?
3. What were the qualifications of the person who authorised the certificate?
Mr CRABB (Minister for Labour)—The answer is:

1. Dr John Higgins, Manager, Equipment Safety Branch, Chief Inspector Lifts and Cranes.
2. Date of authorisation: 11.1.88.
3. Dr. Higgins' qualifications:
   - Diploma in Metallurgy, Manchester College of Science and Technology;
   - Master of Science, University of Manchester;
   - Doctor of Philosophy, University of Manchester; and
   - Member of the Institute of Engineers (Aust.).
The following answers to questions on notice were circulated—

**USE OF VEHICLES BY DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**
(Question No. 86)

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West) asked the Minister for Water Resources:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, as at Monday, 2 February 1987:

1. How many motor vehicles were hired, leased or otherwise in use but not owned by the agency concerned?
2. What was the registered number of each vehicle?
3. Who owned the vehicles in question?
4. How long had the vehicles been used by the organisation concerned?
5. What had been the cost of the vehicles from the date of original supply to date?
6. How many vehicles are owned by each of the bodies?

Mr WILKES (Minister for Water Resources)—The answer is:

A. In so far as the question relates to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works:

1. Hired/leased vehicles—64 (4 per cent of total fleet).
2. See attached sheets.
3. Vehicle ownership:
   (a) The hired vehicles as listed:
   
   - CFM 210—owned by Budget Rent a Car System Pty Ltd.
   - CUL 031—owned by Ranger Truck Rental and Leasing Pty Ltd.
   - CZV 018—owned by Jet Rent a Truck.
   
   The remaining hired vehicles as listed are owned by Rent-a-Landrover Pty Ltd.
   
   (b) All of the leased vehicles as listed are owned by Boston Australia Ltd.
   
   4–5. See attached lists.
   
   
   2–5.

Note:

Vehicles are hired principally to overcome operating difficulties in cases where replacement of damaged vehicles is necessary and in cases of peaks in construction and field operations. Hired vehicles are generally utilities and light commercial types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Number</th>
<th>Period of Hire to 2–2–87 (months)</th>
<th>Monthly Hire Cost $</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRD 507</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1060</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAC 438</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAC 436</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1180</td>
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<tr>
<td>BZE 973</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRO 003</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1060</td>
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</table>
(b) Leased Vehicles:

Note:

The board has 51 leased vehicles (green plate) which are allocated to senior executives. The leasing arrangements provide for a monthly contribution of some $72 from executives for private use.

The cost of leasing is comparable with purchase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Number</th>
<th>Period of Lease to 2-2-87 (months)</th>
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<tr>
<td>CKV 843</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDR 580</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLC 739</td>
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<td>CYH 165</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$259.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>CYH 177</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$259.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYH 164</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$307.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. In so far as the question relates to the Department of Water Resources:
Parts 1-5—Nil;
6—Nine.
It should be noted that ad hoc arrangements between agencies are used.
C. In so far as the question relates to the Rural Water Commission:
Parts 1-5—Nil;
6—1141.

PROPERTIES FORMERLY OWNED BY MINISTRY FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
(Question No. 126)

Mr PERRIN (Bulleen) asked the Minister for Planning and Environment:
In respect of each department, authority and agency within his administration, which properties formerly owned by them have been sold since 30 June 1982, stating—(a) the address and nature of the property; (b) the date of sale; (c) the sale price; (d) the reason for the property being sold; and (e) the use to which the proceeds of each sale were put?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—The answer is:
Four properties have been sold, namely:
1. (a) 119 Riverside Avenue, South Melbourne—redevelopment site;
   (b) 19 February 1986;
   (c) $2 206 748;
   (d) the property was purchased and sold to facilitate the redevelopment of the Southbank area and in doing so to achieve the type of development considered appropriate for this strategically important riverside area;
   (e) the proceeds of the sale went to consolidated revenue;
2. (a) 5 Glenda Street, Wendouree—house;
   (b) 4 May 1985;
   (c) $58 500;
(d) the Environment Protection Authority had no further requirement for this residence after an employee-occupant vacated it in order to purchase his own home in the Ballarat area;

(e) the proceeds of the sale went to consolidated revenue;

3. (a) 38 Waller Street, Benalla—house;

(b) sold by public auction on 7 February 1987;

(c) $69 000;

(d) the last EPA officer to occupy the residence vacated it in order to establish his own home in May 1985. The EPA had no further requirement for it and, by agreement, it was used by the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands to provide temporary accommodation for several of its officers. The last of these vacated it in December 1986 and it was subsequently put up for sale;

(e) due to minor difficulties involving transfer of title, the transaction has not yet been finalised. No moneys have been received by the EPA.

**BUILDERS LABOURERS FEDERATION**  
(Question No. 282)

Mr WILLIAMS (Doncaster) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

1. Whether the transfer of funds from Libya to the Builders Labourers Federation, referred to by the Minister for Labour on 13 October 1987, was associated with the movement of arms into Pacific Basin liberation front movements to promote so called anti-colonialist uprisings?

2. Whether there was any connection between such activities and the activities of pilot Christopher Brading; airline executive Robert Alan Tanfield; and former United States of America Intelligence Officer Edwin Wilson—outlined in the book *The Crimes of Patriots: A True Tale of Dope, Dirty Money and the CIA* by Jonathan Kwitny.

Mr CRABB (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

The investigation of these questions is not a matter within the jurisdiction of the Victoria Police. I have no information on any connection between the alleged activities and the persons named.

**IMPORTATION OF KANGAROO MEAT BY PACIFIC PET FOODS**  
(Question No. 319)

Mr WEIDEMAN (Frankston South) asked the Treasurer, for the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs:

1. Did Dr A. J. Turner, Product Standards Manager, Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, in a memorandum to the Minister dated 11 February 1987, deny that Pacific Pet Foods was importing large quantities of kangaroo meat into Victoria? If so, did Dr Turner check with the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service before preparing this memorandum?

2. Is he aware of the fact that the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service has issued exporters’ licences for the consignment of kangaroo meat from New South Wales to Pacific Pet Foods Pty Ltd of 177-179 Macaulay Road, North Melbourne?

3. What checks are made in Victoria on the importation of kangaroo products from other States and, in particular, what records are kept on the importation of kangaroo products from New South Wales and Queensland?

4. Will he ascertain and inform the House as to the activities of Pacific Pet Foods and the extent of kangaroo imports into Victoria from New South Wales?

5. Will he confirm that Pacific Pet Foods manufactures pet foods under the brand names Treat, Tuckerbox, Chunks ‘N’ Gravy and Coles ‘Generic Brand’ and what assurance can he give that these products being sold in Victoria do not contain kangaroo meat?
Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs is:

1. Dr Turner denied that Pacific Pet Foods was importing large quantities of kangaroo meat into Victoria, but pointed out that the company was importing large quantities of crushed kangaroo bones.

   In framing the reply, the Meat Inspection Service in New South Wales was approached about the nature of materials being transferred to Victoria. The New South Wales Meat Inspection Service produces the documentation associated with sending raw pet food material interstate.

2. The department is and was aware that Pacific Pet Foods was importing crushed kangaroo bones from New South Wales and that the company had approval from the New South Wales authorities to do so. The company has now shifted its entire operations to Shepparton and is not operating at Macaulay Road North Melbourne.

3. Until 2 April 1988 every consignment of kangaroo meat and kangaroo bones was checked into a licensed premises by a departmental meat inspector. Documentation of the approval from interstate was examined and a proportion of the consignment was inspected to see that it complied with the description on the documentation.

   From 3 April 1988 the Department of Primary Industries and Energy assumed responsibility for the integrity of movements of animal meats within and between States, as part of the transfer of the State Meat Inspection Service to the Commonwealth service.

4. My department was aware of and certified acceptance of all consignments of raw materials received at pet food establishments from premises other than abattoirs. I should point out that Pacific Pet Foods voluntarily decided to cease importation of crushed kangaroo bones in January 1987. No consignments have been received by the company since that time.

5. My department does not have the various brand names of pet foods registered, so is unable to comment on whether the brand names listed are manufactured by Pacific Pet Foods. Our records show that Pacific Pet Foods did not receive kangaroo meat from interstate to incorporate into pet foods. The bones received by Pacific Pet Foods up until January 1987 were crushed and mixed with pet food to provide calcium.

PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
(Question No. 336)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

In respect of each of his Ministerial responsibilities and his responsibility for post-secondary education:

1. How many members comprise his personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?

2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?

Mr CATHIE (Minister Assisting the Minister for Education)—The answer is:

All personal staff engaged to assist me in meeting the needs of my arts portfolio as well as my Ministerial responsibilities in respect of post-secondary education are employed by the Ministry of Education.

As requested, details relating to these staff will be provided in due course by the Minister for Education.

PERSONAL STAFF OF MINISTER FOR PROPERTY AND SERVICES
(Question No. 337)

Mr LEIGH (Malvern) asked the Minister for Property and Services:

In respect of each of his Ministerial responsibilities:

1. How many members comprise his personal staff, indicating the position, classification and salary of each?
2. Are their costs provided for in the Budget? If so, under what item? If not, what other organisation or body, partly or wholly, funds their cost?

**Mr SPYKER (Minister for Property and Services)—The answer is:**

1. The relevant details for each of my three Ministerial portfolios are as follows:

   **Portfolio: Property and Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Salary Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial Advisor</td>
<td>Ministerial Advisor Grade 3</td>
<td>$44 527 p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Administrative Officer Class ADM-6 (Exempt)</td>
<td>$34 907-$36 717 p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Secretary</td>
<td>Private Secretary Grade 3</td>
<td>$29 078-$29 911 p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidential Secretary</td>
<td>Confidential Secretary Grade 3</td>
<td>$25 422-$26 290 p.a.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

   **Portfolio: Ethnic Affairs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Salary Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial Advisor</td>
<td>Ministerial Advisor Grade 3</td>
<td>$44 527 p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Secretary</td>
<td>Private Secretary Grade 3</td>
<td>$29 078-$29 911 p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidential Secretary</td>
<td>Confidential Secretary Grade 3</td>
<td>$25 422-$26 290 p.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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   **Portfolio: Youth Affairs**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Salary Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial Advisor</td>
<td>Ministerial Advisor Grade 3</td>
<td>$44 527 p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Secretary</td>
<td>Private Secretary Grade 3</td>
<td>$29 078-$29 911 p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial Liaison Officer</td>
<td>Private Secretary Grade 3</td>
<td>$29 078-$29 911 p.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The salary costs of these staff are provided for under line item 1102 of each portfolio in the Budget papers. They are part of the corporate services program of each agency.

**TRANSPORTATION AND TREATMENT OF CANCER PATIENTS**

(Question No. 360)

**Mr DICKINSON (South Barwon) asked the Minister for Planning and Environment, for the Minister for Health:**

1. Will the Minister provide statistical data on the number of cancer patients across Victoria who have had to be—(a) flown; (b) driven by ambulance; and (c) driven by other transport; to attend Peter MacCallum Hospital in Melbourne for radiotherapy treatment in each of the years 1982 to date?

2. What is the average length of time cancer patients are required to spend at Peter MacCallum for each radiotherapy treatment session?

**Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Health is:**

1. Patients travel to and from the Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute by all manner of means including the fleet of cars operated by the institute and public transport.

The figures provided also assume that the question refers to those patients flown to the institute by the air ambulance service only. No information is available on normal domestic flights.

Patients transported to Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute 1982–88:

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<td><strong>Country:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambulance—air</td>
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<td>341</td>
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<td>16 904</td>
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Questions on Notice

3 August 1988 ASSEMBLY 293

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<td>2,700*</td>
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<td>7,450*</td>
<td>7,550*</td>
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<tr>
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<td>67,800</td>
<td>70,720</td>
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</table>

* estimates
** 1988 figures for the 3 months up to and including March.
† These figures show the impact of country medical oncologists and plastic surgeons, and also skin cancer treatments now being carried out in country areas.

2. The average treatment session is 30 minutes.

OBERON PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS
(Question No. 361)

Mr DICKINSON (South Barwon) asked the Minister for the Arts, for the Minister for Education:

Will the Minister advise when permanent replacement classrooms will be constructed at the Oberon Primary School to replace those which were extensively damaged by fire in January 1988, and when will the temporary portable classrooms be removed?

Mr CATHIE (Minister for the Arts)—The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

General Ministry policy is that replacement of fire damaged facilities will be undertaken in the approximate order in which the facilities were so damaged. With the number of schools being either partly or wholly damaged by fire prior to Oberon Primary School still to receive permanent facilities under the Ministry's fire reinstatement program, I am unable to indicate a precise date when Oberon will be attended to.

However, planning for those replacement facilities has been initiated through the Ministry's Barwon South-Western Regional Office and discussions with the school council have been arranged all with the object of the project being in a position to be tendered as soon as funds are available.

FIREFIGHTERS’ ROSTERS
(Question No. 384)

Mr GUDE (Hawthorn) asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

In relation to firefighters employed by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, will he advise how many firefighters are—(a) rostered on shift duties; and (b) performing day duties?

Mr CRABB (Minister for Police and Emergency Services)—The answer is:

At 12 May 1988, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade has a total of:

(a) 1,286 firefighters rostered to shift duties; and

(b) 11 firefighters rostered to day duties.

HOURS OF OPERATION OF STATE LIBRARY
(Question No. 385)

Mr CROZIER (Portland) asked the Minister for the Arts:

1. What are the daily hours of operation of the State Library?
2. How many days in each week is the library normally open to the public?
3. During the past five years, on how many occasions has the library been closed to the public during normal operating hours?
Mr CATHIE (Minister for the Arts)—The answer is:

1. As from 8 June 1988, the daily hours of operation are:

   | Monday:           | 10.00 a.m.—9.00 p.m. |
   | Tuesday to Thursday: | 10.00 a.m.—9.00 p.m. |
   | Friday to Sunday:  | 10.00 a.m.—6.00 p.m. |
   | Public holidays:   | 10.00 a.m.—6.00 p.m. |

   Closed Christmas Day, Good Friday and Anzac Day.

Prior to 8 June 1988, the daily hours of operation were:

   | Monday to Friday: | 10.00 a.m.—10.00 p.m. |
   | Saturday to Sunday: | 10.00 a.m.—6.00 p.m. |
   | Public holidays:   | 10.00 a.m.—6.00 p.m. |

   Closed Christmas Day, Good Friday and Anzac Day.

2. The State Library opens seven days each week.

3. In the twelve months prior to 1 June 1988, the State Library was closed to the public 21 times during normal operating hours. Records are not available beyond that point.

AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP CERTIFICATES

(Question No. 389)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Ethnic Affairs:

1. Will he ascertain and advise how many Australian citizenship certificates were conferred in each Melbourne metropolitan municipality during 1987?

2. Will he ascertain and advise how many Australian citizenship certificates were conferred in Victoria during 1987?

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Ethnic Affairs)—The answer is:

1. The total number of Australian citizenship certificates that were conferred in each Melbourne metropolitan municipality during 1987 is tabled below.

2. The total number of Australian citizenship certificates that were conferred in Victoria during 1987 was 18,992.

SCHEDULE OF AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP CERTIFICATES CONFERRED IN EACH MELBOURNE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY DURING 1987

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<td>Berwick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box Hill</td>
<td>191</td>
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Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister for Ethnic Affairs:
1. What was the total migrant intake in Victoria during 1986-87, indicating the countries of origin concerned?
2. What was the total migrant intake for each of the past ten years?

Mr SPYKER (Minister for Ethnic Affairs)—The answer is:
1. The total migrant intake for Victoria 1986-87, was 29 007; their countries of origin is tabled below.
2. The total migrant intake in Victoria for each of the past ten years is tabled below.

**SETTLER ARRIVALS BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH—YEAR 1986–87**

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Source: Commonwealth Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.
## Questions on Notice

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Questions on Notice

AFRICA
Kenya 36
Mauritius 752
Nigeria 9
Seychelles 32
South Africa 1068
Tanzania 19
Uganda 14
Zambia 21
Zimbabwe 79
Algeria 4
Africa 5
Angola 4
Botswana 7
Burundi 3
Cameroon Rep. 1
Djibouti 2
Ethiopia 121
Gambia 2
Ghana 8
Ivory Coast 1
Lesotho 3
Libya 9
Madagascar 7
Malawi 8
Morocco 12
Mozambique 6
Niger 1
Reunion Island 1
Sierra Leone 2
Somalia 16
Sudan 11
Swaziland 2
Tunisia 4
Western Sahara 1
Zaire 5

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Burma 28
China, P. Rep. of 663
Hong Kong 765
India 911
Indonesia 365
Japan 72
Kampuchea 506
Korea 124
Laos 109
Malaysia 1232
Pakistan 89
Philippines, The 1507
Singapore 375
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TOTAL 29 007

SOURCE: Commonwealth Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.

SETTLER ARRIVALS (VICTORIA)

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SOURCE: Commonwealth Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.
Tuesday, 9 August 1988

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

TELEVISING OF PROCEEDINGS

The SPEAKER—Order! I advise the House that I have given permission to Channel ABV2 to film and record the Treasurer's delivery of the Budget speech today and also the responses of the Opposition and the National Party on a later date.

I have also given permission for still photographs of the Treasurer to be taken. Under the usual guidelines, no additional lighting or flashlights will be used.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr BROWN (Gippsland West)—I ask the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources whether it is a fact that at the Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board meeting last Friday, 5 August, after considerable discussion and legal advice, it was agreed that the Minister's letter of 4 November 1987 constituted—

Mr Simpson—Whose letter?

Mr BROWN—I shall start again if honourable members cannot hear. Is it a fact that at the Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board meeting last Friday, 5 August, after considerable discussion and legal advice, it was agreed that the Minister's letter of 4 November 1987 constituted agreement to fully sub-underwrite the Wallace International Ltd float?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—To the best of my knowledge that is not the case. That certainly has not been conveyed to me by any representative of the Board of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation.

Mr ROSS-EDWARDS (Leader of the National Party)—I ask the Treasurer: on what day did he recommend that the Governor in Council should approve the sub-underwriting by the Victorian Economic Development Corporation of the float of Wallace International Ltd?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—As I understand it, all matters relating to the Governor in Council are published in the Government Gazette and it is up to the honourable member to check that out for himself.

"VICTORIA TRADING ON ACHIEVEMENT"

Mr SHELL (Geelong)—Will the Premier provide to the House details of the reaction of the business community to the proposals contained in Victoria Trading on Achievement and what effect this response will have on future employment in Victoria?

The SPEAKER—Order! The latter part of the question is hypothetical and will be difficult for the Premier to answer.
Mr CAIN (Premier)—The launch of *Victoria Trading on Achievement* last week was an outstanding success. It was clear that the business people who attended the launch recognised it was a continuation of the government's commitment to long-term social and economic planning. Business people were obviously impressed by what was proposed. They told me so. They acknowledge that the government's economic strategy has been an outstanding success and they accept—as do all organisations—that the government must continue to monitor and finetune the strategy to ensure that it gives the best possible results.

Those in the business community who make investment decisions do not complain like the Liberal Party when the government adopts an interventionist approach. They do not find anything wrong with that approach and they welcome it. That is the difference between the business community and the Liberal Party. I am astonished that the so-called party of business adopts such a Neanderthal attitude to government intervention and involvement.

The business community supports what is proposed because it has seen this approach working and has seen that it and the State benefit from it. Private investment in Victoria has risen by 46 per cent during the past five years compared with 25 per cent for the nation in the same growth period. The gap is considerable and is due, to a large extent, to the climate that has been created. Another important figure is gross non-farm product, which increased by 4.3 per cent in Victoria compared with 3.9 per cent for the rest of the country. Honourable members have heard many times that for 61 consecutive months Victoria has enjoyed by far the lowest unemployment figure.

Those who attended on Friday and others recognise how devoid the Opposition is of any real policies. It has no idea where it is heading; it does not plan for the future. It would not be so bad if the Liberal Party were a vacuum, but it is worse, because its destructive actions and comments mark members of the Liberal Party as economic vandals. They are like corporate raiders who strip all the assets and leave the skeleton behind. That is what the Liberal Party would do and what it is recognised as doing. Its horizon spreads no further than the next press release, headline or election. That is how far ahead it thinks! The Liberal Party does not have a clue about what it will do in the next five or ten years. It has no idea where it is heading, and the business community recognises that fact.

Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I direct to your attention Standing Order No. 127. The Premier is obviously debating the question, and I ask you to bring him back to order.

The SPEAKER—Order! I uphold the point of order. I was attempting to bring the Premier back to order before the honourable member for Narracan raised his point.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—Mr Speaker, the government is recognised as having a vision and a view of and concern about the long-term future of the State. That is accepted by the business community, where the view of the government is in marked contrast to its view of the Liberal Party. One has only to read the 22 July issue of the *Business Review Weekly* to see its views about the Federal Opposition, its Leader and the Liberal Party. It thinks the Liberal Party is hopeless and, so long as it continues its negative carping attitude, that view will remain. The publication considers the performance of the Honourable John Howard as woeful; I cannot start to express what that publication thinks about the State Opposition—it thinks it is worse!

If the Liberal Party were only a vacuum, I would not worry, but it desires to talk down Victoria because it thinks it will be to the Liberal Party's short-term political benefit. It is time the Liberal Party recognised that it has been talking down the State.
Mr DELZOPPO (Narracan)—On a further point of order, Mr Speaker, I again direct to your attention Standing Order No. 127. The Premier has ignored the instruction of the Chair and is still debating the question. I ask you, Sir, to bring him back to order.

The SPEAKER—Order! I uphold the point of order and ask the Premier to cease debating the question and to respond to it.

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I re-emphasise that the government is determined to plan for the future so that those who make business decisions will be aware of where the State is heading and can make their decisions accordingly. Their investment decisions for the city and the State show that they back the government's approach.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr MACLELLAN (Berwick)—I direct a question without notice to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources: given that the sub-underwriting agreement between the Victorian Economic Development Corporation and Bain and Co. for the float of Wallace International Ltd was signed and sealed on 6 November 1987, on what date did the Minister or the Victorian Economic Development Corporation seek a recommendation from the Treasurer for the approval of the Governor in Council to the agreement?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I am not familiar with the dates referred to by the honourable member for Berwick in terms of the Governor in Council. I shall make inquiries and advise him accordingly.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—I ask the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources whether a demand was made on the Victorian Economic Development Corporation to perform under its sub-underwriting agreement with Bain and Co. in respect of the Wallace International Ltd float prior to the Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board meeting on 19 February.

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I am not quite sure what the honourable member for Rodney means, and I doubt that he knows what he means by "a demand". Following the flotation, the Victorian Economic Development Corporation was informed of the result of the flotation and was asked to honour the sub-underwriting agreement.

VICTORIAN ECONOMY

Mrs GLEESON (Thomastown)—Can the Treasurer advise the House whether he has examined the results of the recent survey of the Victorian economy by the Australian Chamber of Manufactures? If so, can he advise the House of the implications of the results of that survey?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I thank the honourable member for Thomastown for her question. She obviously reads the results of the Australian Chamber of Manufactures' surveys and understands what the tables mean, unlike members of the Opposition who have great difficulty in interpreting basic tables, as was highlighted yesterday.

I refer to the figures published by the Australian Chamber of Manufactures because they highlight once again how well the Victorian economy is doing. In its political desperation the Opposition has deliberately distorted the figures because they show a far more significant improvement in the performance of the Victorian economy than the Opposition likes to admit.
The Opposition cannot get even the basics right. I refer to the basic comparison between what has increased and what has decreased. The Opposition has confused an unchanged figure with an increase.

**Mr Roper**—It is hardly a surprise!

**Mr JOLLY**—It is hardly a surprise, given the level of illiteracy and incompetence of members of the Opposition. When one looks at the figures published by the Australian Chamber of Manufactures for the three months to 31 May 1988, one sees that production returns were up 23.9 per cent.

**Mr Brown** interjected.

**Mr JOLLY**—The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should listen because he will learn something. If he read only the Opposition press release, he would get a completely convoluted view of what is going on in this State.

The survey conducted by the Australian Chamber of Manufactures recorded an increase in production returns of 23.9 per cent, compared with those reporting a downward adjustment of 17.1 per cent. The Opposition said that the downward production returns were 41.9 per cent, which was the unchanged figure. Opposition members could not read the table. I thought they were economically illiterate, but now I realise that they do not understand basic tables.

I turn to the second point, which relates to sales. The percentage of firms reporting an increase in sales was 30.7 per cent, and those reporting a downward figure totalled 14.6 per cent. The Opposition said that the percentage of firms reporting downward trends was 37.1 per cent. The Opposition was wrong again.

In respect of exports, Victorian companies reporting increases totalled 12.2 per cent, and companies reporting downward movements totalled 8.3 per cent. The Opposition said that the percentage of firms reporting downward movement was 22.9 per cent, when it was 8.3 per cent. On three out of three occasions, the Opposition was wrong!

The fourth figure to which I refer concerns capital expenditure. This is where the worst distortion on the part of the Opposition occurred, because, as the Premier said today, the Victorian performance is extremely strong. Companies reporting increased capital expenditure in the past three months are up 18 per cent, and companies reporting downward adjustments total 7.3 per cent. What did the Opposition say? It said the downward adjustment was 49.8 per cent compared with the correct figure of 7.3 per cent. The Opposition is completely obliterated by its illiteracy.

The report of the Australian Chamber of Manufactures clearly shows that in production, sales, exports, and capital expenditure more firms are reporting increases than decreases. This clearly shows that Victoria is on a sustained economic growth path.

**VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**Mrs WADE** (Kew)—I direct a question to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources. In relation to the Wallace International Ltd float, on what date did the Governor in Council approve the sub-underwriting agreement between the Victorian Economic Development Corporation and Bain and Co.?

**Mr FORDHAM** (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I understand this question was asked of me earlier by the honourable member for Berwick. I undertook to find the information, and I shall convey it to him. If the detail of the
question is different, I shall still obtain the information required for the honourable member for Kew.

TIMBER INDUSTRY STRATEGY

Mr McDONALD (Whittlesea)—Will the Premier tell the House what recent advice he has received on the impact of the timber industry strategy incentives aimed at encouraging investment in the industry, while ensuring the proper management of Victorian forests?

Mr CAIN (Premier)—I thank the honourable member for his question on this important issue. The timber industry strategy clearly details the government's principles on forest management and the framework within which the timber industry is expected to operate. It is firmly anchored in the conservation and economic strategies of the government, unlike the recently announced forest policy of the Liberal Party, which is anchored to nothing.

Parts of the so-called policy of the Liberal Party are a pale imitation of the strategy that the government has enunciated through the office of the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands. Some of the best parts of that policy were swiped, as one would expect, by the Liberals, but the Liberal Party seems to have great difficulty, after all these years, in putting together any cohesive forest policy.

The timber and conservation communities have welcomed the clarity of the Labor Party strategy and see it as setting out clearly enunciated criteria.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—I know the National Party does not agree with the Liberal Party on the issue, and I shall come back to that point. The timber and conservation communities welcome the criteria laid down. The strategy has principles that the Liberal Party policy does not. Those communities have welcomed the granting of fifteen-year licences to guarantee long-term access to sawlog resources; the provision of legislative agreements for large, long-term allocations of timber; increased supply of softwood timber; the creation of a timber industry council; the encouragement of the use of sawmill residues; the encouragement of the value-added process on all log materials, and so on.

I believe the attraction is that those communities consider the government has found a way of having regard to the need for conservation and the careful husbanding of our resources and, at the same time, recognising that there is a resource to be utilised.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CAIN—I hear the noisy interjections from the honourable members for Murray Valley and Gippsland East. I know that the owners of those noisy voices would figuratively and literally tear up the Liberal Party policy if they could get near it. The Leader of the National Party has made it clear that the National Party in any coalition—about which he now speaks in guarded language—would want the conservation, forests and lands portfolio. That is what the National Party wants—nothing short of that! They made it clear that that is theirs, among a few others.

There is no doubt that this State would have a policy in this area, and it would not be the Liberal Party policy but the National Party policy. This is one example of what we could expect.
The Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands and the Minister for Planning and Environment have enunciated the way in which Victoria is proceeding with the strategy, and that direction is seen by all those interested in the area as being appropriately the middle ground on which to develop.

Mr Evans interjected.

Mr CAIN—The honourable member for Gippsland East scoffs because the National Party policy is entirely different from the government's policy and it is entirely different from that of the Liberal Party. The National Party has a policy which bears no relationship to the policies of the other two parties. That is the reality, and that is what the people of this State ought to know.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr MACLELLAN (Berwick)—When the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources approved the sub-underwriting agreement for the Wallace International Ltd float, was Mr Jack Walker the Acting Chairman of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation; at the time, as a member of the board of the company, was Mr Walker the holder of 30,000 share options in that company? Did the Minister consult with Mr Walker—he being the acting chairman of the corporation—regarding the sub-underwriting agreement which eventually meant that Mr Walker's options were still alive because the float went ahead?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—The date of the approval of the sub-underwriting agreement was 6 November. The Chairman of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation returned to Victoria on 2 November; hence, Mr Walker was not the acting chairman of the corporation at the time concerned.

It is true that all Wallace International Ltd directors at that time had available to them the options referred to. I understand that Mr Walker did not avail himself of that option opportunity.

The government sees through this exercise that the Opposition is undertaking. The Opposition is behaving appallingly on this issue because it is attempting, through invective and half-truths, to attack not just the government—which is fair play at question time—but also the VEDC.

LIQUOR CONTROL ACT

Mr JASPER (Murray Valley)—What action has the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources taken to instruct the Liquor Licensing Commission to provide complete clarification on the operation of the new Liquor Control Act to overcome the confusion and misinformation that has been caused through the interpretation of the new Act?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I do not accept the premise upon which the question was put.

Mr Jasper—Well, you should!
Mr FORDHAM—Again I make the point that I made to honourable members last week. The response I have received from industry leaders about the introduction and implementation of the new liquor licensing laws has been positive.

Discussions with the industry leaders concerned have been comprehensive, not only in regard to the legislation, but also the way in which officers of the authority have gone about what clearly is a difficult task in implementing a new Act. The officers deserve the praise of the House and the industry for the work they have undertaken.

If the honourable member has an individual instance that he wishes to bring to my attention, I assure him that it will be dealt with expeditiously.

CAPITAL WORKS INVESTMENT

Mr CUNNINGHAM (Derrimut)—Has the Minister for Planning and Environment received recent advice concerning non-residential capital works investment in Victoria and, if so, will he provide details of the advice, especially of its employment implications to the House?

Mr ROPER (Minister for Planning and Environment)—I thank the honourable member for his question because of his significant and continuing interest in both planning and employment issues.

I am pleased to inform the House that I have just received the most recent report of the Commonwealth Construction Forecast Committee, which highlights the performance in Victoria of the past year and, more importantly, predicts excellent results for Victoria in the current financial year.

The committee, which advises the Commonwealth government, comprises representatives of the Master Builders Association of Victoria, the Builders Owners Managers Association, the Metal Trades Industry Association of Australia, consulting engineers, the major contractors, and Federal government officers.

The committee’s report suggests that in the coming twelve months, while activity is expected to peak or decline in most States, construction projects in both Victoria and Queensland will increase. This increase is based on an increase in non-residential building expenditure of 20 per cent in the past year, making a total of $2.7 billion. That compares with a national increase of approximately 13 per cent; yet another indicator of the State doing significantly better than the rest of Australia.

Approximately five or six years ago office construction comprised 250,000 square metres a year. That construction work has doubled in the past six years and Melbourne, significantly, has increased its share of national building completions by approximately 20 per cent.

The forecast committee suggests that there will be a further 15 per cent increase in non-residential building construction in Victoria in the next twelve months. When one thinks that the housing and construction industry employs more than 120,000 people, that continued improvement in that industry is particularly important for the State economically. The continued activity in that industry has meant that unemployment in that area is less than 3 per cent. Further work is being undertaken with the assistance of my colleague, the Minister for Labour, to ensure that we can train the additional people required to do the increased work output that Victoria is creating.
VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr MACLELLAN (Berwick)—Is the Treasurer aware that there is no reference of Governor in Council approval in the Government Gazette of the Wallace International Ltd sub-underwriting float? Did the Minister recommend approval of the sub-underwriting agreement as required by the Borrowing and Investment Powers Act, which the Minister introduced in Parliament and which was passed as a result of his introducing it?

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I do not recall all the dates with respect to particular matters. As the honourable member for Berwick will appreciate, a whole range of matters are dealt with by me and the Department of Management and Budget over a long period. I shall examine the matter and advise the honourable member accordingly.

CULTURAL BASE OF THE ARTS

Mrs WILSON (Dandenong North)—Will the Minister for the Arts advise the House what steps the government intends to take to continue to broaden the cultural base of the arts in Victoria?

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CATHIE (Minister for the Arts)—It is wonderful to see the interest displayed by the Opposition in multicultural arts! Perhaps members of the Opposition are like their Federal Leader, John Howard, who does not believe in multiculturalism.

A couple of decades ago when people spoke about the arts they referred to traditional art forms such as the opera, drama, music, fine arts or the ballet. Over the past twenty years community arts have developed and they have become part of the important programs in Victoria. Perhaps one of the fastest growing and most popular form of community arts is multicultural arts. That art form attempts—and does so successfully—to reflect the lives, heritage and interest of the millions of Australians who have settled in this country since the war. The programs have become not only an important part but also a notable and resilient part of the arts programs in the State.

Over a long time multicultural art programs have received substantial government assistance. Anyone who has visited over the past two years the Piccolo Spoleto Festival would know about the vast array of talent that exists among the members of Victoria's ethnic community. The effect is not only to protect the cultural identity and heritage of many ethnic groups in this State but also to introduce all Victorians to an extraordinarily diverse and rich array of talent. Those people like John Howard and others who do not support multiculturalism would end those important programs. That would be a backward step, and I have no doubt that that backward step would be supported by the National Party.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—Since, on the admission of the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources, the Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board did not consider the Wallace International Ltd sub-underwriting agreement until 19 February 1988, does the Minister agree that Mr Beattie acted on the Minister's authority when he signed and sealed the agreement on 6 November 1987?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I have already outlined to the House the circumstances leading to the sub-underwriting agreement.
However, if the honourable member for Brighton is a slow learner I shall go through the situation again in summary form. Despite that, I refer to the honourable member previous answers I have given to the House.

As I indicated, I was approached in the first week of November by Mr Beattie, the then General Manager of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, seeking my approval for the corporation to sub-underwrite the public float to the extent of some $12·5 million. I have outlined the circumstances regarding the crash and why there was a tight time schedule within which the company and the corporation had to make a decision. As I have already said in the House, I responded to that approach and gave my approval for the corporation to proceed. However, the decision was to be that of the corporation; it had to decide whether it would proceed. The Minister is not in a position to sign documents; the decision has to be made by the corporation.

I understand that, with that approval, through its general manager, the Victorian Economic Development Corporation entered into an agreement with the underwriter, Bain and Co., on 6 November.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr FORDHAM—I have already explained that issue in the previous answers. The agreement obligated the corporation to sub-underwrite the Wallace International Ltd share issue up to 12·5 million shares, which amounted to $12·5 million. I have explained that situation three times in the House previously.

In February, following the lack of public subscriptions, the underwriting arrangements were invoked by Wallace International Ltd. The Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board meeting on 19 February 1988 reviewed the arrangement that had been entered into previously by its general manager, confirmed Mr Beattie’s decision, and agreed to proceed with the sub-underwriting of the float.

As I have explained repeatedly in the House, the Victorian Economic Development Corporation Board decision on 19 February gave effect to the agreement and the corporation proceeded to take up the shares. That has been said time and again, and the continual reiterating of the questions by the Opposition will in no way change that circumstance.

The timetable was made clear at the time. Because of the circumstances regarding the October stock market crash, the decision had to be made in that week, as I have already outlined to the House. I have now reiterated the sequence of the events both in November and February.

**MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION RENT COLLECTIONS**

Mr J. F. McGrath (Warrnambool)—Given that the Minister for Housing and Construction is contemplating transferring the collection of Ministry of Housing and Construction rent arrears from estate agents to financial institutions, particularly in country Victoria, will he explain to the House what safeguards he has put in place to prevent an escalation in rent arrears, the level of which was previously monitored by Ministry agents?

Mr Walsh (Minister for Housing and Construction)—A pilot program is already under way in the south-eastern region and has been operating for almost two weeks very successfully. Under the pilot scheme there are more opportunities for people to pay their rents than existed before.
For example, previously in the south-eastern area there were only three offices at which people could pay their rents on Thursdays and Fridays. There are now 104 offices where they can pay their rents over the counter. That provides a better opportunity for the Ministry's clients to make sure their rent is not in arrears by allowing them to pay at any time, five days a week, during the agencies' business hours.

It will be a better way for people to pay their rents. The first report, which I received this morning, suggests an increase in the amount of money collected by the agencies in that area. The scheme will be very successful throughout Victoria. There are now three ways in which Ministry clients can pay their rents: they can pay over the counter at agencies selected by the Ministry as the successful tenderers; they can post a cheque to the Ministry; or they can have the amount directly debited—that is not compulsory, but it affords an opportunity for those people to pay their rents properly.

The scheme will provide a better service for Ministry clients than existed before. We have considered the clients to ensure they have a better opportunity to pay their rents on time. Rent will be collected fairly expeditiously through this scheme and information can be obtained quickly because the successful tenderer will be able to provide the Ministry with cash register tapes within 24 hours of people paying their rents. In that way, the Ministry can check which people are behind in their rent payments and its officers will be able to chase up those people. The scheme provides a better opportunity for the Ministry's clients.

CALOOLA CENTRE, SUNBURY

Mrs RAY (Box Hill)—Has the Minister for Community Services examined reports that he has received recently on the Caloola centre, an institution for people with intellectual disabilities at Sunbury; if so, will he advise the House what action he is taking on the matter?

Mr MATHEWS (Minister for Community Services)—At present, the government has under consideration the future of the Caloola centre for intellectually disabled people at Sunbury. It is giving consideration to the future of the centre in light of a report brought forward by community visitors, who the government has appointed to investigate from time to time matters bearing on the well-being of people with intellectual disabilities, as well as a report from the Public Advocate on violence at Caloola.

The reports give rise to serious concern on behalf of the intellectually disabled people who live at Sunbury, on behalf of the families whose love and support is so important to those intellectually disabled people and, not least, to the professional staff who experience extreme difficulty in delivering to those intellectually disabled people the level of service that the staff desire, under the conditions which prevail.

In those circumstances, I am delighted that the government has accepted my recommendation that a Sunbury task force should be established with responsibility to report by 30 November on three matters: firstly, the task force is asked to report on matters associated with the moving out of residents from the Caloola centre, to other training centres and community-based forms of accommodation for the intellectually disabled; secondly, the task force is asked to report by 30 November on staffing and other issues associated with a closure of the Sunbury centre; and, thirdly, the task force is asked to report by 30 November on a strategy by which closure of the Sunbury centre could be achieved over a three-year period.
In the course of its work the task force will be required to widely consult with the intellectually disabled people resident at Sunbury, with the Caloola parents association, with staff at the Caloola centre, with trade unions and other relevant interest groups.

The model to be adopted by the task force in its work is that which was used so successfully for the decommissioning of the Willsmere Hospital. I emphasise that the government's concern both for the intellectually disabled people at Sunbury and in other institutions, and also for the large number of intellectually disabled people at present living with their families under conditions which in many instances are equally intolerable, is indicated by the fact that expenditure for intellectual disability services over the past six years in Victoria has been increased from $62 million a year to $147 million a year. It was against that background that last week I announced a further $11.3 million package of measures for the accommodation and support of intellectually disabled people; that will enable a further 200 people, either living at Sunbury and in other training centres, or with their families, to be re-housed.

In addition, the $11.3 million package for intellectual disability services will make it possible for service teams to be established; they will provide support for intellectually disabled people irrespective of whether they are being accommodated in facilities with a community basis, in training centres or with their families.

The proper place for a decision to be reached about the future of the Caloola centre is in the context of the report that the task force will bring forward by 30 November and also in the context of the ten-year plan for intellectual disability services redevelopment, which I expect to be put before the government in the near future.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr STOCKDALE (Brighton)—I address a further question to the Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources: is it not a fact that when Mr Beattie signed and sealed the Wallace International Ltd agreement on 6 November 1987, he improperly affixed the Victorian Economic Development Corporation seal without any legal authorisation from the Victorian Economic Development Board, but acted on the Minister's authority alone?

Mr FORDHAM (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources)—I have already outlined, more than once, the sequence of events and the situation relating to the actions by Mr Beattie, myself and the board, and I have nothing else to add.

ILLEGAL GAMING MACHINES

Mr NORRIS (Dandenong)—Will the Minister for Sport and Recreation advise the House of any action he is taking to counter the menace of illegal gaming machines in this State?

Mr TREZISE (Minister for Sport and Recreation)—I am sure all honourable members will be aware of the problem of illegal gaming machines, particularly in recent years. It has now reached the stage where, with the cooperation and consultation of the Licensing, Gaming and Vice Squad, the government has more than once initiated legislation to overcome what appears to be a growing menace in the community.

I am pleased to report that in the past twelve months much progress has been made in combating illegal gaming machines; in fact, 200 illegal gaming machines have been seized in the past twelve months. In addition, 37 prosecution briefs have been listed for court action; of the eleven cases that have come before the courts already, every
case has resulted in the offenders being found guilty, and the penalties have ranged from a $1000 fine to three months' imprisonment. The remaining 26 prosecutions will, in most cases, result in further action being taken to reduce the number of offenders.

I have also been informed by the police that in the past twelve months, since the enactment of the legislation, there appears to have been a reduction in the number of illegal machines operating around Victoria. In other words, at long last Victorians are seeing a pleasing result in this area, and I can assure the House that the government is encouraging the police to continue their efforts to reduce the problem of illegal gaming machines.

PETITION

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

Gas and Fuel Corporation subagency

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

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Victoria:

That a Gas and Fuel Corporation subagency be permitted in North Blackburn Square shopping centre.

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

By Mrs Ray (4850 signatures)

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

PAPERS

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


Planning and Environment Act 1987—Notices of Approval of amendments to the following planning schemes:

- Bairnsdale (Town) Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L2.
- Beechworth Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L3.
- Huntly Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L5.
- Knox Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L4.
- Melton Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L2.
- Minhamite Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L2.
- Narracan Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L5.
- Ripon Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L1.
- Rodney Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L1.
- Shepparton (City) Planning Scheme—Amendment Nos L7, L9.
- Tambo Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L5.
- Traralgon (City) Planning Scheme—Amendment Nos L11, L17.
- Winchelsea Planning Scheme—Amendment No. L1.
The SPEAKER 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 Children and Young Persons Bill (No. 2).

APPROPRIATION (1988–89, No. 1) BILL

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer), pursuant to Standing Order No. 169, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to appropriate certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund for recurrent services and for certain works and purposes for the financial year 1988–89 and to appropriate the supplies granted in this session of Parliament and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

Mr JOLLY (Treasurer)—I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The 1988 Budget focuses on the families of Victoria. The range and quality of services delivered to families in this Budget sets the standard for the nation.

- Education opportunities reach new heights.
- There is a record boost in Community Services.
- The active strength of the police force is increased to an all time high.
- Health agencies provide more and better services than ever before.
- There is a dramatic increase in resources to improve Victoria’s environment.

The level of financial support given to families has never been matched before. All this has been possible only because of the sustained resurgence of the Victorian economy.

The Budget builds on last year’s family initiatives and provides new opportunities to all Victorians.

The tight control over spending and the strength of the Victorian economy mean that this is achieved without any new taxes and without increasing tax rates. In fact there are further tax cuts in this Budget. The cost placed on future generations through...
new borrowing is further reduced, making six consecutive years in which borrowing declines in real terms.

The educational opportunities created in this Budget are an integral part of the Government’s Economic and Social Justice programs. Everyone should be given the chance to participate in education and training.

- At least 2400 additional places in higher education courses will be available in 1989 as a result of funding in this Budget.
- Together with support from industry and the Commonwealth, up to 8000 new places in TAFE will be funded in 1989.
- Grants to government schools will increase by $6 million. There will also be an increase in grants to non-government schools.
- $1.25 million will be provided to extend further education programs in Neighbourhood Houses and Community Learning Centres.
- An extra $2.5 million will be allocated to adult literacy and basic education programs to assist disadvantaged groups in the community.
- Some $1.5 million will be made available to provide additional ancillary staff in schools and to strengthen the integration program.

The major increase in Community Services includes the injection of $10.6 million into the expansion of child protection and care services. This will allow for investigation of all suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. The Budget also provides for the most significant increase in levels of support to children in foster care and residential care in almost 15 years. A major additional commitment of $7.4 million in 1988–89 and $11.3 million in a full year is made for services to the intellectually disabled.

The Cain government’s commitment to personal security is highlighted by the increase in the number of Victoria Police in service throughout the State. The 1988 Budget provides for a further 350 increase in the number of police in this State, as well as additional protective service officers.

Also, the transfer of warrant serving responsibility to the Sheriff’s Office will release police for operational duties, as will the provision of a further 100 public servants.

The combined impact of these measures will be a major increase in the effective police strength of around 600.

Health and related services are again a top priority in the Budget.

- Resources will be allocated to public hospitals to build upon the record of 586,000 patients treated in 1987–88.
- An extra $12 million is allocated to establish new public hospital facilities in Frankston, Maribyrnong, Box Hill and Maroondah.
- The $20 million increase in the Home and Community Care Program will enable more of our senior citizens to remain in their own homes. Victoria’s contribution to the increase will be $7.9 million. An extra $2.5 million is made available for the start of a $17.5 million construction program of new nursing home beds for those unable to live at home.
- Some $13 million will be spent on new initiatives in the health area other than hospitals. This includes an expansion of community based psychiatric services, including a number of projects to take over from the outdated Willismere Hospital which is being closed down. A major expansion of public dental
health programs will particularly benefit older people on low incomes and children in poverty. There is also an expansion of community health services, including 7 new community health centres, and increased funds for women's health services, and services related to alcohol and drug abuse.

Victoria's pre-eminent position on the environment is reinforced by this Budget.

- The Flora and Fauna guarantee is backed by the provision of an additional $1 million on a full year basis.
- Victoria will benefit from new National Parks and World Heritage listing in East Gippsland.
- The new Point Nepean Park will open in 1988.
- The Urban Conservation Program is boosted by $3.8 million in 1988–89.

Mr Speaker, the direct financial support provided to families in the 1987–88 Budget and in this Budget is unprecedented for any State in Australia. It results from a cut in the real level of charges for essential services, from tax reductions and from a large increase in the Education Expense Allowance.

Private motor registration fees are being abolished and public transport fares are frozen.

The single most important family initiative in the Budget is the increased value and coverage of Victoria's unique Education Expense Allowance.

This direct payment to families increases from $60 per child to $100 per child, an increase of 67 per cent.

The Budget also extends the allowance to children aged from 4 years to 16 years, instead of its previous coverage of children aged from 5 years to 15 years.

Families qualifying for the Federal Government's First Home Owners Scheme will be directly assisted in this Budget.

All first home buyers in this group who have dependent children and who purchase a house costing up to $100 000 will benefit in full. They will receive a full exemption from stamp duty on the property transfer and on the associated mortgage duty. The maximum benefit will be about $2500.

This will provide financial support to eligible families at a critical time and assist families to move from rental accommodation to home ownership.

Many other families will be given the opportunity to move from rental accommodation.

Some 4000 new home loans should be provided directly through the Ministry of Housing and Construction and the Home Opportunity Loan Scheme. The loan scheme will provide affordable loans for 3000 low to moderate income families.

In addition, the Government is on target to achieve 12 000 public housing handovers in the four years ended 30 June 1989. The works and services allocation for housing from State funds will increase by over 17 per cent in 1988–89 partly to ensure that this target is met and to assist in the delivery of housing Social Justice Strategy projects.

Mr Speaker, the financial year just completed was one of great strength for Victoria. Strict control over expenditure, coupled with the growth of the Victorian economy, enabled $141 million to be deposited in the Cash Management Account.
Continued control over costs and continued economic growth have made possible the $240 million package of current account budget initiatives in 1988–89.

While part of the sum deposited in the CMA in 1987–88 has helped finance new initiatives in 1988–89, more than half of it, $77·5 million, is being used in 1988–89 to abolish completely the remaining debt of the Victorian Arts Centre. This means that this magnificent Centre will be totally free of any debt.

As a result of this decision and a further reduction in the real level of borrowings, this year will see another substantial fall in the relative levels of public sector borrowing and debt. Over the six years to 1988–89, net borrowings will fall from 4·2 per cent to 1·7 per cent of non farm GDP, while net public sector debt will fall from 29·9 per cent to 27·9 per cent of non farm GDP.

Mr Speaker, Victoria’s strong economic base will expand further in 1988–89.

Our economic growth rate has outstripped the nation as a whole over the past five years and our State has recorded the lowest unemployment rate for 61 months in a row.

The partnership forged by Government, business and employees has enabled Victoria to set the economic pace.

Economic initiatives in this Budget will ensure that the Victorian economy maintains its pace in 1988–89.

The major Government Statement, *Victoria: Trading on Achievement*, outlined 16 initiatives to give further momentum to the dynamic restructuring of the Victorian economy.

These initiatives include the establishment of a Strategic Research Fund to stimulate the expansion of key strategic research, the establishment of a Venture Capital Fund, major new measures to help exporters and important new steps in many areas of education and training.

The economic approach being adopted strengthens the competitive position of our great State and creates new employment opportunities for the next generation of Victorians.

Mr Speaker, the 1988–89 Budget is both generous and responsible. It provides new services and support for families and a sound financial base for the future.

**BUDGET OUTCOME 1987–88**

Mr Speaker, the Consolidated Fund ended the 1987–88 year in balance, after allowing for the deposit in the Cash Management Account. This deposit was not included in the budget estimates. It reflected the greater than expected strength of the Victorian economy which resulted in a surplus of recurrent receipts over recurrent payments.

State sources of recurrent receipts were $263 million higher than budgeted.

Stamp duty on land transfers exceeded budget by $168 million. This reflected strong property market conditions in a buoyant economy. The strength of the economy also resulted in receipts above budget in payroll tax and stamp duty on share transactions.

Recurrent payments were $136 million above the budget estimates before allowing for the deposit in the Cash Management Account.

Payments in respect of service delivery costs exceeded budget estimates for a number of reasons.