

record in the army and in fields of public work away from Parliament has been already referred to. I add nothing to what has been said about that, but I say that in his work as Clerk of the Parliaments and of this Legislative Council he set a wonderful example of efficiency and devotion to duty.

He will be sadly missed by me, and, I am sure by all honourable members and by those who worked with him on the staff. We honour his memory with gratitude and admiration and hope that the example he set will live on as an inspiration to those who come after him. I join in expressing my deepest sympathy to his wife and family.

Members and officers of the House standing in their places,

Motion agreed to.

OFFICERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The PRESIDENT: I have to report to the House that His Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased, on my recommendation, to make the following promotions, as from 5th July, 1971: Mr A. W. B. Saxon to be Clerk of the Legislative Council, *vice* Major-General Stevenson, deceased; Mr L. A. Jeckeln to be Clerk Assistant, *vice* Mr Saxon, promoted; and Mr K. C. McRae to be Usher of the Black Rod, *vice* Mr Jeckeln, promoted.

The Hon. J. B. M. FULLER (Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Vice-President of the executive Council) [5.28]: On behalf of members on both sides of the House I offer congratulations to the officers appointed to new positions. I assure them of our utmost consideration and at the same time say that we shall be looking forward to receiving from them the same sort of assistance as they have given in the past.

The Hon. R. R. DOWNING (Leader of the Opposition) [5.29]: I join with the Minister in congratulating the officers on their appointments. I am sure that they have displayed an ability and devotion to their duty that will suit them well to their new positions.

CLERK OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND USHER OF THE BLACK ROD

The PRESIDENT: I have to report the receipt of the following communication addressed to the Clerk of the Legislative Council:

Government House,
Sydney
30th July, 1971.

Dear Mr Saxon,

I return herewith the Oaths of Allegiance and the Official Oaths, taken by yourself as Clerk of the Legislative Council and by Mr K. C. McRae as Usher of the Black Rod, before His Excellency the Governor at 10.00 a.m. today, at Government House.

Yours sincerely,
L. J. Rose,
Official Secretary.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by the Hon. J. B. M. Fuller) agreed to:

That this House, at its rising today, do adjourn until tomorrow at 4.30 p.m. *sharp*.

House adjourned, on motion by the Hon. J. B. M. Fuller, at 5.31 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 4 August, 1971

Second Session of the Forty-third Parliament—Electoral District of Campbelltown: Order and Judgment of Court of Disputed Returns—Electoral District of Wollongong: Order of Court of Disputed Returns—Opening of Session—Standing Orders—Assent to Bills—Temporary Chairmen of Committees—Presentation of Petitions—Petitions (Increases in Public Transport Charges)—Abortion Laws—Price Control (Urgency)—Questions without Notice—Personal Explanation (Rail Freight and Fares)—Petitions: Procedure—Leave of Absence—Death of Michael William Jack Hough, Esq., a former M.L.A.—Death of Walter Leslie Chapman, Esq., a former M.L.A.—Law of Evidence Bill (*pro forma*) (first reading)—Governor's Speech: Address in Reply (First Day's Debate).

SECOND SESSION OF THE FORTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT

The House met at noon, pursuant to the proclamation of His Excellency the Governor convening Parliament.

Mr SPEAKER (THE HON. SIR KEVIN ELLIS) took the chair.

Mr SPEAKER offered the Prayer.

The Clerk read the proclamation.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF CAMPBELLTOWN: ORDER AND JUDGMENT OF COURT OF DISPUTED RETURNS

Mr SPEAKER reported that the Clerk had received from the Prothonotary a copy of the order and judgment of the Court of Disputed Returns dismissing the petition against the election of a member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Campbelltown.

Ordered to be printed.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF WOLLONGONG: ORDER OF COURT OF DISPUTED RETURNS

Mr SPEAKER reported that the Clerk had received from the Prothonotary a copy of the order of the Court of Disputed Returns granting leave for the petition against the election of a member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Wollongong to be withdrawn.

Ordered to be printed.

OPENING OF SESSION

The Usher of the Black Rod, being admitted, delivered a message from His Excellency the Governor requesting the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the Legislative Council Chamber.

The House went, and honourable members having returned,

[Mr Speaker left the chair at 12.49 p.m. The House resumed at 2.30 p.m.]

STANDING ORDERS

Mr Speaker reported that His Excellency the Governor had approved new standing orders, certain amended standing orders and the rescision of standing orders, adopted by the House on 6th May, 1971.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Royal assent to the following bills reported:

- Costs in Criminal Cases (Amendment) Bill
Crown Lands (Amendment) Bill
Justices (Amendment) Bill
Land Aggregation Tax Bill
Local Government (Elections) Amendment Bill
Public Service and Other Statutory Bodies (Extended Leave) Amendment Bill
Superannuation (Amendment) Bill
Civil Aviation (Carriers' Liability) Amendment Bill
National Fitness Bill
Private Hospitals (Amendment) Bill
Securities Industry (Amendment) Bill
Theatres and Public Halls and Cinematograph Films (Amendment) Bill
J. F. Wilson Will Trusts Variation Bill
Adoption of Children (Amendment) Bill
Local Government (Amendment) Bill
Permanent Building Societies (Amendment) Bill
Builders Licensing Bill
Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Superannuation) Amendment Bill
Land Aggregation Tax Management Bill
Meat Industry (Amendment) Bill
Riverina Insurance Company Limited and Another Insurance Company Bill
Water (Amendment) Bill

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

Mr Speaker nominated the following honourable members to act as Temporary Chairmen of Committees during the present session: Harold George Coates, Esquire; Evelyn Douglas Darby, Esquire; James Caird Bruxner, Esquire; Daniel John Mahoney, Esquire; and James Bernard Southee, Esquire.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the honourable member for Merrylands wish to present a petition?

Mr FERGUSON: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I understand there has been some confusion around the House as to whether petitions may be received

on the opening day of Parliament. In the House of Commons petitions are never received on the first day of a session when the Queen's Speech is delivered. This is referred to in *May* at page 852. In this Parliament it has always been the practice to follow that particular practice of the House of Commons and not to receive petitions on the opening day of Parliament following the Governor's Speech. I understand that, accordingly, the Clerks have very properly advised a number of honourable members to that effect. However, I think that the reason for the House of Commons rule has no application in this Parliament. In the House of Commons there are no questions without notice on the opening day whereas in this Parliament questions without notice have always been allowed. Indeed, we follow all other requirements of Standing Order 74 relating to the routine of business and I am at some loss to understand why the presentation of petitions should be the only exception. I have given close consideration to the matter and have come to the conclusion that we should not be following the House of Commons practice. Accordingly, I propose to allow petitions.

PETITIONS

INCREASES IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT CHARGES

Mr FERGUSON presented a petition from certain citizens of New South Wales representing that the recent fare increases impose a real hardship on the community and praying that the Legislative Assembly revoke them.

Petition received on motion by Mr Ferguson.

Mr QUINN presented a petition on the same subject.

Petition received on motion by Mr Quinn.

Mr SOUTHEE presented a petition on the same subject.

Petition received on motion by Mr Southee.

Mr MAHONEY presented a petition on the same subject.

Petition received on motion by Mr Mahoney.

Mr BARNIER presented a petition on the same subject.

Petition received on motion by Mr Barnier.

ABORTION LAWS

Mr PETERSEN presented a petition from certain citizens of New South Wales praying that action be taken to amend the law to permit legalized abortion on request and the operation of free birth control and sex education centres.

Petition received on motion by Mr Petersen.

PRICE CONTROL

URGENCY

Mr HILLS (Phillip), Leader of the Opposition [2.43]: I move:

That it is a matter of urgent necessity that this House should forthwith consider the following motion, viz.:

That because of the daily mounting inflationary spiral and its devastating effects upon the living standards of the people of this State, the Government be directed by this House to immediately freeze prices and simultaneously establish a price justification tribunal.

The urgency of this motion is self-evident in the daily aggravation of the inflation of prices which is sapping the economic life of this community. The failure of the Government to take any steps to halt the mad spiral of the cost of living makes it imperative that this House take action to safeguard the livelihood of the great mass of the people of this State, particularly after the failure of the Government to mention in His Excellency's speech what steps it proposes to take during the present session. The sharp decline in the value of wages and salaries in the past few months is causing new demands for wage and salary increases, and it highlights the need for urgent government action to control the prices spiral.

Recent figures released by the Commonwealth Statistician of the continuing and accelerating consumer price index disclose that Sydney is now the dearest capital in Australia; and a report by the American Chamber of Commerce in Australia reveals that in Sydney a wage-earner must spend almost as much for food as his counterpart in New York, where wages are at least 50 per cent higher. These cold statistics point up the urgent need for drastic action by the Government.

Mr JACKETT: On a point of order. Later this afternoon and again tomorrow the House will be debating the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. During that debate the Leader of the Opposition will have every opportunity to discuss this matter. I therefore submit that he is out of order in discussing it now.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Burwood may advance a good reason for voting against the motion but it is for the House to decide whether the motion is urgent.

Mr HILLS: The astounding revelation in a survey carried out by a highly qualified and reputable firm of management consultants, W. D. Scott and Company—in fact, the Government has retained the services of this firm—disclosed that 91 per cent of business leaders in the community said that if inflation continued at the present rate they would increase prices, thus reinforcing the need for this House, today and now, to debate the matter and to take effective action to prevent such a course.

The same report showed that when asked what action would be taken to deal with the inflationary spiral, 28 per cent of Sydney companies said that they would retrench staff. It is most urgent that the Parliament should debate this issue now because obviously business undertakings in this State are minded to follow this course if inflation continues at its present rate. Fifty-one per cent indicated that they would cut overall costs. They would reduce operating costs and cut capital expenditure. More important is the fact that 91 per cent said that if the inflationary trend continued they would increase prices.

Unemployment figures are beginning to climb. In rural areas the economic crisis has reached proportions as bad as or perhaps worse than during the great depression, as a result of the cost price squeeze—to which many members representing country electorates refer in this House—added to marketing difficulties, causing thousands of farmers and business people to leave their properties and businesses. Deplorably, unemployment has now spread to the metropolitan area, making it even more necessary for the Government to arrest the price spiral which is such a huge factor in the inflationary madness at present afflicting the nation.

This motion is of the utmost urgency because the Government, not only by its failure to act to halt spiralling prices, but worse still by its most recent actions in increasing fares for public transport to what the Opposition claims are unnecessarily high levels, in imposing a new set of extremely high hospital and medical fees and in setting high land prices for Crown land sold to homeseekers, has contributed to the galloping inflation and the steeply rising cost of living. This House must act, here and now, to curb the Government's participation in the cost-price squeeze. The Opposition considers that the only possible action for the Government to take is to freeze prices immediately in order to prevent the continuation of the inflationary trend and at the same time to establish a price justification tribunal.

Mr ASKIN (Collaroy), Premier and Treasurer [2.50]: As usual, the Opposition relies on carping criticism and nothing else. The only answer of the Leader of the Opposition to all the problems he has enunciated is to freeze prices: that was the only suggestion he made in his tirade.

Mr R. J. KELLY: It is not a bad one.

Mr ASKIN: He gave only part of Labor Party policy. His colleague and friend, Dr Cairns, a leading Labor spokesman, said publicly earlier this year that he called for the appointment of a representative body to control prices and wages. That let the cat out of the bag. It is well known to anyone who studies this problem that prices cannot

be effectively controlled unless wages are controlled also. Dr Cairns was no doubt speaking for the Labor Party when he called for the appointment of a body to control prices and wages: he knows that the only effective way of controlling prices is to control wages as well. I am reminded that the Labour Government in Great Britain controlled wages. Mr Harold Wilson and his colleagues got into a mess, and they were rejected by the electors. When a former Labor government was in office in this State, there was a prices control branch with a staff of several hundred. The Labor Premier then said in this House that he had decided to abolish the prices control branch because it was no longer effective; he added that the system had led to black market activities and under-the-counter deals. That is in *Hansard*.

Mr EINFELD: That was years ago.

Mr ASKIN: It is not so many years since the Labor Council of New South Wales approached successive Labor Premiers after him and asked for reintroduction of price control. Right up to 1965, Labor governments rejected that request.

Mr EINFELD: Tell us about 1971.

Mr ASKIN: I shall come to that. Be patient for a little while. There is an inflationary spiral—of that there is no doubt. Inflation is in evidence not only in every State of Australia but in most parts of the western world. We do not know what goes on behind the Iron Curtain, but we know there is inflation everywhere in Australia. As the honourable member for Waverley has asked me to deal with the situation this year, I shall make a comparison with Adelaide, where there is a Labor government and price control. The Opposition in this State seeks price control, which their Labor colleagues in South Australia already have. On the Commonwealth Statistician's figures for the two completed quarters this year, it is clear that the people of Adelaide are no better off than we are. Though they have price control in South Australia, in the March 1971 quarter retail prices rose exactly the same in Adelaide as in Sydney, by 1 per cent.

Mr JOHNSTONE: Prices are lower in South Australia.

Mr ASKIN: Do not forget that wages in South Australia are lower. In the June 1971 quarter, prices increased by 2 per cent in Sydney, and 2.2 per cent in Adelaide—despite price control. These are the Commonwealth Statistician's figures. When price control is under consideration, the most controversial aspect relates to food prices. According to the Commonwealth Statistician, whose figures must be taken as authentic, food prices in New South Wales increased by 4.64 per cent in the year ended 30th June, 1971. In the last year of office of the Labor Government in this State food prices increased by 5.77 per cent, and Labor did not ask for price control then; as a matter of fact, the Labor Government abolished it.

The members of the Opposition now shed crocodile tears about prices; they make no constructive suggestions but want to embark upon a system of controlling prices and wages. They did not say so, but one of their spokesmen in the federal sphere, Dr Cairns, has called for a freezing of prices and wages.

Mr HILLS: Be honest.

Mr ASKIN: I ask the Leader of the Opposition to be honest and say that he and his party stand for freezing prices and wages and let the work force know that the attitude of the Opposition in this State is the same as that of the former Wilson Labour Government in Great Britain.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to unemployment. The unemployment figures for New South Wales are the lowest of any State in Australia, including two Labor-governed States, and those figures are the official figures of the Commonwealth Statistician. What the honourable gentleman did not say in his remarks—and it may have been through lack of time or as a result of a little discretion—was that the main factor contributing to increases in the cost of living is the wage spiral. Anybody who knows anything about the matter and is free of party bias is aware of that fact. Nobody begrudges people wage increases obtained through proper tribunals,

but when they make incessant claims for wage increases and at the same time press for a reduced working week, as Labor is doing, I can only say that they want more money for less work, which is the principal inflationary ingredient in the economy. If one adds to those two factors the most shocking strike record in the history of New South Wales, one has a grave situation indeed.

[*Interruption*]

MR SPEAKER: Order! I must tell the House that noisy interjections from both sides must discontinue immediately. It would be most unfortunate if early in the session somebody found himself outside the Chamber.

MR ASKIN: The plain fact of the matter is that the Opposition has made no case at all in support of its motion. If there were any easy answer to the problem of the cost spiral, why have not the Labor Premiers of South Australia and Western Australia found it? Those States are suffering from exactly the same problem as we are suffering in New South Wales. The fact is that while we are faced with demands for wage increases and for a shorter working week, we shall continue to have two important factors contributing to the inflationary spiral. However, the public is beginning to wake up to this, and that is why the Labor Party does not have the support that it believes it has.

Question of urgency put. The House divided:

AYES, 44

Mr Bannon	Mr Jensen
Mr Barnier	Mr Johnstone
Mr Bedford	Mr Jones
Mr Cahill	Mr Kearns
Mr Coady	Mr L. B. Kelly
Mr Cox	Mr R. J. Kelly
Mr Crabtree	Mr Mahoney
Mr Day	Mr Mallam
Mr Degen	Mr Mulock
Mr Durick	Mr Neilly
Mr Earl	Mr Nott
Mr Einfeld	Mr O'Connell
Mr Flaherty	Mr Paciullo
Mr Gordon	Mr Petersen
Mr Haigh	Mr Quinn
Mr Hills	Mr Ramsay
Mr M. L. Hunter	Mr Renshaw
Mr Jackson	Mr Sheahan

Mr Sloss
Mr Southee
Mr J. J. T. Stewart
Mr K. J. Stewart
Mr Wade

Mr F. J. Walker

Tellers,
Mr Booth
Mr Ferguson

NOES, 49

Mr Askin
Mr Barraclough
Mr Jack Beale
Mr Brewer
Mr Bruxner
Mr Cameron
Mr Chaffey
Mr Clough
Mr Coates
Mr Cowan
Mr Crawford
Mr Cutler
Mr Darby
Mr Deane
Mr Doyle
Mr Duncan
Mr Fife
Mr Fischer
Mr Fisher
Mr Freudenstein
Mr Griffith
Mr Healey
Mr Hughes
Mr D. B. Hunter
Mr Jackett

Mr Jago
Mr Lawson
Mr Lewis
Mr McCaw
Mr McGinty
Mr Mackie
Mr Maddison
Mr Mauger
Mr Mead
Mr Morris
Mr Morton
Mr Mutton
Mr Osborne
Mr Punch
Mr Ruddock
Mr Singleton
Mr Stephens
Mr Taylor
Mr Viney
Mr Waddy
Mr N. D. Walker
Mr Willis
Tellers,
Mr Coleman
Mr Mason

Question so resolved in the negative.

Motion of urgency negatived.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

RAIL FREIGHTS AND FARES

MR COATES: My question to the Premier refers to the important and contentious recent increases in freights and fares on the New South Wales Government transport system. I ask the Premier whether I have made many written and verbal representations to him and to the Minister for Transport, bitterly complaining about anomalies in the increases in fares as they affect my constituent commuters in the Blue Mountains and Lithgow areas? Did I submit to the Premier a written proposal that would remove these anomalies and did a recent deputation that he received support such a proposal? Did he express interest in the submissions and agree to take them to the Cabinet meeting held yesterday? As this is a matter of grave concern to my constituents in the Blue Mountains electorate, and

indeed to people in other outlying areas, can the Premier report any results of the representations that I have made?

The honourable member for Merrylands interjecting,

MR SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Merrylands to order.

MR ASKIN: It is true that the honourable member for Blue Mountains has made strong written and verbal representations to both the Minister for Transport and myself, complaining about what he sees as anomalies in the increases in fares so far as they affect his constituents who commute from the Blue Mountains and the Lithgow areas. There is no doubt that the honourable member has been very vigorous in his representations, and he has submitted a written proposal to remove what he sees as anomalies. The honourable member for Blue Mountains led a deputation to me last Friday, supported by the honourable member for Nepean and a number of local residents. They argued the matter at considerable length, and the deputation lasted about one and a half hours. It is true that the deputation put forward a strong case and, though they did not submit any argument against a general increase of fares, they felt that their area had been treated in an anomalous fashion. If that argument were conceded, something would have to be done about a number of other districts, including the Gosford district, which is represented by a Labor member.

However, the arguments advanced were sufficiently strong to cause me to take the matter to Cabinet, which discussed yesterday the figures and arguments that had been presented by the honourable member for Blue Mountains, with the support of the other people I have mentioned, including the honourable member for Nepean. The honourable member for Blue Mountains has made particularly strong representations, and we have agreed that the Minister for Transport should investigate the claim that there are anomalies not only in connection with this particular case but also in one or two other instances. The Minister for Transport is at present looking into

those matters, with particular regard to the issues raised by the honourable member for Blue Mountains, and I expect that my colleague will make a recommendation to Cabinet next Tuesday. I assure the honourable member, who has been vigorous in his representations, that I expect that we shall be able to do something to help him in this matter.

NEPEAN RIVER BRIDGE, CAMDEN

MR EINFELD: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Highways.

The honourable member for King interjecting,

MR SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for King to order.

MR EINFELD: I ask the Minister whether he has had a look at the report of the Royal commission into the Melbourne West Gate bridge collapse in which thirty-five men were killed last October. Has the Minister examined the commission's criticism of the London firm Freeman Fox and Partners which designed the bridge and of the co-ordinating authority for the project, John Holland (Constructions) Proprietary Limited? Is it a fact that John Holland (Constructions) Proprietary Limited has a contract for the construction of a similar but smaller steel box-girder bridge over the Nepean River at Camden? Has either of these firms any other contracts from the Government for bridge building in New South Wales? In view of the West Gate bridge collapse, has the Government taken or does it intend to take any special steps to guard against the possibility of a similar disaster in New South Wales?

MR MORTON: The only details I know about the findings of the Royal commission that inquired into the collapse of the bridge in Melbourne are those I have read in newspapers. Frankly, though I generally rely on information I read in the press, I am surprised that the honourable gentleman should do so on a matter of such importance in order to ask a question of this nature reflecting on a contractor who incidentally, as the Leader of the Opposition

knows, has done some good bridge work in New South Wales. I think I am correct in saying that one of the bridges built by this contractor is—

Mr EINFELD: Why are you defending them?

Mr MORTON: I am not defending them, nor am I defaming them.

Mr EINFELD: Neither am I.

Mr MORTON: Not much.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will allow the Minister to reply in silence.

Mr MORTON: It is quite obvious that the spell in the paddock has done the Deputy Leader of the Opposition no good at all. I assure him that the report will be examined closely. It is not my intention at this early stage to defame any contractor who has been the subject of an inquiry.

METROPOLITAN CHILDREN'S COURT

Mr COLEMAN: I direct my question without notice to the Minister of Justice. Has the Minister or his department considered recent criticisms of the physical facilities and welfare services offered at the Metropolitan Children's Court, the so-called Bleak House of Albion Street? In particular has any consideration been given to the absence of qualified social workers capable of advising on problems of deserted wives and mothers and of juvenile offenders? If the Minister has considered these criticisms will he tell the House whether he proposes to take any steps to overcome these shortcomings and, if so, what action is contemplated?

Mr MADDISON: The question raised by the honourable member is of considerable importance in terms of the social welfare of children who are charged with offences and dealt with at the Albion Street Children's Court. That court is old and is the venue for hearings relating not only to offences by juveniles but also to maintenance matters concerning deserted wives and children. The Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare and the Depart-

ment of the Attorney-General and of Justice have joint responsibility in regard to this establishment. Honourable members are aware that the metropolitan boys shelter is attached to this court. The facilities available at the court are completely inadequate and outdated. In fact, the establishment is badly in need of replacement.

In recent weeks officers of the departments concerned have been discussing ways and means to relieve pressure of work at this court. It has been decided in principle that by degrees maintenance matters will be taken away from this venue and dealt with at courts of petty sessions in and around the inner city area. The effect of this decision will be to provide additional accommodation to the court, sitting in its criminal jurisdiction in regard to juveniles. It is hoped that, although this is a matter substantially for my colleague the Minister for Child Welfare and Minister for Social Welfare, attendant counselling facilities and similar services will be provided when these changes are made. I am unable to predict the long-term future for this building. Certainly it has long since outlived its usefulness. It was quite adequate in days when there was heavy concentration of residential buildings in the centre of the city but nowadays it is quite absurd for this establishment to remain in the industrial heart of the city. I am to have further discussions with the Minister for Child Welfare and Minister for Social Welfare to see what proposals and plans can be made jointly by the departments to establish in some other part of the metropolitan area proper accommodation for the courts which deal with juveniles charged with criminal offences.

COST OF LIVING

Mr SHEAHAN: I ask the Premier and Treasurer a question without notice. Is it a fact that during the last election campaign the Premier promised the people of this State that he would appoint a Royal commission to inquire into the rising cost of living? Did the Premier declare also that the person he had in mind to conduct the Royal commission was a member of the

Labor Party? Did the Premier inform the House during the last session that the investigation could not proceed until some negotiations with the federal Government have been disposed of? As more than six months have expired since the original promise was made to the electors and as the inaction or non-co-operation of the Commonwealth Government appears to be as remote as Clutha's takeover of the Moon, will the Premier now take the Parliament and the public into his confidence and identify this hitherto unrevealed, mystic, mysterious personality and so preclude the ordinary intelligent electors from concluding that the gentleman in question was merely the Premier's instant product in moments of electoral fantasy?

Mr ASKIN: When the honourable gentleman talks about a world of fantasy he is referring to somewhere that he fully understands. It is quite true that the Government promised to set up a Royal commission to inquire into cost inflation. This morning I looked at the speech I made during the last elections. I did this in order to refresh my mind and in anticipation that somebody would ask me a question of this nature. If the honourable gentleman would care to refer to that speech he will find that I said the New South Wales Government regarded this problem as one primarily for the federal Government to deal with. I said that for any action taken to be successful it would have to be undertaken on a national basis. I said further that the States could not escape some responsibility and that they should adopt a role complementary to whatever was to be done on the national scene.

On that occasion I said that we had already taken certain action and that it was intended, among other things, considerably to tighten up in regard to consumer protection. The Minister for Labour and Industry is at present working on this, and statements and submissions will be made before very long. I did say, too, that we would set up an inquiry to see what extra we could do, on a State basis. Having made that promise, we are committed and will stand by it and implement it as soon as practicable. It is less than five months since

we were sworn in as the Government. It is not true that we are entering into negotiations with the Commonwealth Government: we have made a number of inquiries from it and yesterday I received a letter telling me that I could expect explicit information as to what the Commonwealth intended to do in this field. We know that the Commonwealth intends to introduce legislation to debar resale price maintenance; and there are other things which, I think, may be pending under the Trade Practices Act. The Ministers for Labour and Industry in all the States, including South Australia and Western Australia, met in Tasmania only a couple of weeks ago and agreed to do certain things which, I think, will help towards attaining the objective at which we are all aiming. Even though we in the States cannot do anything far-reaching, if all the States combine I think we can do something helpful.

We do not wish to embark on an investigation that will cost a fair amount of public money and then, after we draw up terms of reference, find that some of them are undermined by a decision at the national level or a decision by the combined States through their Ministers for Labour and Industry. We have made the undertaking and we will stick to it. Before very long I should be able to make a positive announcement. The honourable gentleman and the House may rest assured that the undertaking will be fulfilled. Whether or not the same gentleman will be conducting it, I am unable to say at this stage; it depends on how far-reaching the investigation is. If the terms of reference are more extensive than we had in mind originally, it may be necessary to get a judge rather than a man interested in industrial arbitration procedures. It will depend on the circumstances. At the moment I want to say three things: we will honour the undertaking; in the past few days I have been in touch with the Commonwealth again and have been promised explicit information as to what it intends to do; as soon as we get the information, we shall draw up the terms of reference and will make them known to the House with minimum delay.

COLLIERY AT CURLEWIS

Mr FISHER: I ask the Minister for Transport whether he is aware that sixty miners at the Curlewis colliery near Gunnedah have received dismissal notices. Is the Minister aware, also, that despite the fact that freights for export coal have not increased, a request has been made for a further rail freight concession of \$2 a ton to enable coal from this colliery to be landed at Newcastle at competitive prices? Will the Minister assure the House that a freight concession will be given to this coal company, if in fact this is the main reason why the colliery is unable to remain in production?

Mr MORRIS: I know something of this matter. The Minister for Mines, who was in Maitland about three weeks ago, met a delegation from the Miners' Federation, and representatives of the Upper Hunter area, which was led by the honourable member for Upper Hunter. I was not present at the meeting, but the delegation requested that consideration be given to reducing the railway freight rate on the transport of coal from Preston Colliery near Gunnedah. This is a serious matter: we ought to lean over backwards to keep in operation any business that is employing seventy people in a town of the size and importance of Gunnedah. This would be the aim of the Government, as it certainly would be of the honourable member for Upper Hunter.

Last week the Minister for Mines was good enough to discuss again the matter concerning Preston colliery and on that occasion the advice that my colleague and I had was that an issue larger than rail freight was involved. We shall do all in our power to devise a way of reducing the freight on this coal, if that is the reason why the men are to be dismissed and if that is the reason why the mine will be closed.

Mr NEILLY: Who owns the mine—Mr Johnstone of the Colliery Proprietors' Association?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MORRIS: I do not know, but I will accept the word of the honourable member for Cessnock.

Mr NEILLY: He has holdings around Muswellbrook.

Mr MORRIS: I accept that the honourable member for Cessnock has knowledge of the mining industry and I think he would know who owns the mine. My concern is that, if it is possible to keep the mine operating and to keep these sixty-nine men in employment, and retain them and their families in the Gunnedah district, we ought to be doing everything we can to maintain their position. Last week the Minister for Mines informed me that if a formula were found to reduce the railway freight, it would not in any way assist the owner of the mine to keep it operative. In view of the question asked by the honourable member for Upper Hunter, I shall have another discussion this afternoon with him and with the Minister for Mines to ensure that this position still obtains. From information that is available from the Joint Coal Board and from the owners of the colliery, I believe issues much deeper than simply reducing the rail freight by \$2 are involved, and even if that reduction were made it would not keep this mine operative.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

RAIL FREIGHTS AND FARES

Mr MULOCK: Mr Speaker, I claim to have been misrepresented by the Premier in an answer he gave to a question asked by the honourable member for Blue Mountains. In answering that question the Premier said that no representations were made by any person present at the deputation, of which I was a member, on the question of excessive fares. I said to the Premier that they were both excessive and discriminatory—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! In substance, the honourable member is only debating what the Premier said.

[*Interruption*]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I take the opportunity to make it clear that throughout this session I will not tolerate interjections while

the Speaker is on his feet. In effect the honourable member for Nepean is doing no more than seeking to debate a statement the Premier made during his reply to a question. On my interpretation of what the Premier said, in no way can the honourable member for Nepean suggest that the Premier said anything reflecting upon the personal or political character of the honourable member. It is not merely a question of whether he was misrepresented or not.

PETITIONS

PROCEDURE

Mr HAIGH: Mr Speaker, could you advise this House on the method that is adopted in dealing with petitions? On previous occasions I have found that petitions go into the limbo of the lost, and that the only way a reply could be obtained was by being persistent and demanding one.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's question might be appropriate—although I doubt it—if addressed to me during question time. However, question time had expired before he spoke.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Motion (by Mr Taylor) agreed to:

That leave of absence for the present session be granted to James Hill Brown, Esquire, member for Raleigh, on account of absence from the State.

DEATH OF MICHAEL WILLIAM JACK HOUGH, ESQUIRE, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr ASKIN (Collaroy), Premier and Treasurer [3.34]: I move:

That this House extends to Mrs Hough and family the deep sympathy of Members of the Legislative Assembly in the loss sustained by the death of Michael William Jack Hough, Esquire, formerly Member for Wollongong.

I regret to inform the House of the death on 19th May last of Michael William Jack Hough, formerly member of the Legislative Assembly for Wollongong, at the age of 54. Mr Hough, who died suddenly at his home in Wollongong, won election to State Par-

liament in 1965 for the seat of Wollongong-Kembla, and he continued to represent that area until his defeat in the general elections earlier this year. Although he was a member of this Assembly for only six years, he distinguished himself by his selfless efforts on behalf of his constituents. He was a loyal and hard-working member of the Government team, a conscientious parliamentarian and a staunch friend.

There are many who will say that Jack Hough literally worked himself into the grave. He suffered a heart attack in Sydney in 1968 and was admitted to hospital, but almost immediately, and against the advice of family and friends, he discharged himself to resume his parliamentary duties. The complaint recurred in the succeeding years and, in fact, he was discharged from hospital only a few days before his death.

Jack Hough was born at Auburn in 1916, the son of an official of the Milk and Ice Carters Union. After schooling at the Parramatta high school he worked for a time in Sydney as a milk carter. But he sought a larger future, and at the age of 20 he went to Wollongong to work in the time office of Australian Iron and Steel Proprietary Limited while studying accountancy at night. In 1939 he became paymaster at John Lysaghts Limited and stayed with that company for twenty years before launching his own business as a public accountant in Wollongong. His years of close association with the steel industry produced in Jack Hough a firm belief in the growth potential of the Wollongong-Port Kembla region, which he often described as the "throbbing heart" of Australian secondary industry. They also awoke in him a desire to see that potential realized.

Mr Hough campaigned ceaselessly—and with some success—for Government aid for the area, particularly in the provision of greater job opportunities for women, improved roads and greater housing finance. As a result of his concern for housing he became secretary of a small building society at Wollongong, a post he held until his death. Jack Hough identified himself closely with the people of Wollongong and was a member of many local clubs, including the Wollongong Club, the Ironworkers

Club, the Master Builders Club, the Wollongong Leagues Club and the Illawarra Leagues Club. He held strong religious convictions and was for many years a Methodist lay preacher in a circuit extending from Albion Park to Corrimal. The community can ill afford to lose such a dedicated servant. On behalf of the Government, and personally, I extend sincere sympathy to his widow, Mrs Betty Hough, to his son Warren, and his daughter, Mrs Suellen Lincoln.

Mr HILLS (Phillip), Leader of the Opposition [3.36]: I wish to associate members of the Opposition with the resolution just moved, expressing condolence to the widow, son and daughter of Michael William Jack Hough. It goes without saying that Mr Hough was one of the members elected in 1965 who was responsible for the Government coming to office. The Government owes him a great deal of gratitude in that he won the seat of Wollongong-Kembla at that time. I am sure that all members have heard of the way Jack Hough moved around, not only in his own electorate of Wollongong but also in neighbouring electorates, constantly attending official functions and not-so-official functions. He was always on the move; at times he must have been a concern to members who represent adjoining electorates, including the Minister for Lands. He drove himself unceasingly in serving his electorate, and this enabled him to gain support in an area where government members would not normally expect it. As the Premier mentioned, Mr Hough was with Australian Iron and Steel Proprietary Limited for a considerable time. His duties there in various capacities, particularly that of paymaster, brought him into constant contact with many people, including workers in the steel industry.

Mr Hough gave his all to his electorate. He was in constant attendance in this Chamber, and I am sure honourable members will recollect the position that he occupied in this House. Although it might have appeared that he was not closely following the words of a debate, if something was said that cut across his views, he would immediately interject, and on occasions his interjections were most helpful

to me. Honourable members will regret the passing of Mr Hough, a man who worked hard for his constituents and who was constantly active to further what he believed in and in support of his party. Members on this side of the House deeply regret his passing.

Mr HEALEY (Davidson) [3.39]: Along with a number of members of this House, it was my privilege to know Jack Hough for a number of years. I had the pleasure of supporting him in many of his activities concerning his own electorate and of campaigning actively on his behalf in two elections. He and I were both products of the same school—Parramatta high school. Honourable members had a high regard for Jack Hough, a man who was uncompromising in his principles and dedicated to his task of serving the interests of his constituents. Jack Hough had what is called the common touch—the ability to get on with the little people, who perhaps have the greatest number of problems. He was untiring in his work in their interests.

Jack Hough was a tiger for work in everything he did. Even when his activities took severe toll of his health, he still attended personally to his electoral duties. Many people in the Wollongong district did not agree with him politically, but everyone respected him. He was earnest, loyal and conscientious, and he brought all these qualities to his parliamentary duties. In this Chamber he exhibited a fighting tenacity which was foreign to his nature outside, where he was a man of peace—a gentle man.

Though Jack Hough's task of representing the Wollongong electorate was not easy, he accepted all the difficulties and made all necessary representations without fear or favour on behalf of people who sought his help. When his parliamentary duties took toll of his physical well-being he faltered only momentarily in his task, and then with new life and spirit carried on as before. I count it a privilege to have known him and to have served with him in this Parliament. Accordingly, I seek to be associated with the motion of sympathy, and I offer my personal condolences to his wife and family.

Mr RAMSAY (Wollongong) [3.42]: I support the condolence motion moved by the Premier. On behalf of the electors of Wollongong I tender their sympathy to Mrs Hough and other members of the family. Mr Hough's death was untimely, coming so soon after the intense election campaign. He was a man of dedication and sincerity; the work he put into his parliamentary duties far exceeded the responsibilities of his office. He will always be remembered in Wollongong as a worthwhile citizen, a sincere Christian, and a man of most charitable disposition. I am proud to have been associated with Jack Hough, having known him for many years. Although he and I had many political differences, I appreciated his untiring efforts on behalf of the people of Wollongong. I personally extend to his widow and other members of the family my deepest sympathy in their sad loss.

Mr JACKETT (Burwood) [3.43]: I, too, want to pay tribute to a very fine parliamentarian. Jack Hough entered Parliament at the same time as I did. At no other time in a man's life is he so overawed by the majesty of the British legislative tradition, and at this time he tends to choose his friends more by instinct than by recourse to reason. I had known Jack Hough for some time before we came here, and we became firm friends as members of this Parliament. I was greatly inspired by the example that he, a man of the highest principles, set as a parliamentarian. Jack Hough worked tirelessly for the district that he represented in this House. I was amazed when, visiting him in Sydney Hospital where he had been taken after suffering a heart attack, I saw him sitting up in bed working on correspondence to his constituents. This showed what kind of man he was: he was indefatigable in his efforts as a parliamentarian. It was a privilege to know him and to serve in this Parliament with him. I join the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and other members in paying tribute to his memory, and I extend my deepest sympathy to his wife and two children.

Mr PETERSEN (Illawarra) [3.45]: It could not be said that Mr Hough, the former member for Wollongong, and I were friends; in fact we clashed on numerous

occasions in this House because we stood for diametrically opposed political principles. However, one must pay tribute to him for the energy and dedication that he brought to his parliamentary duties in defence of a way of life and an economic and social system that he believed to be the best. Although we clashed many times, I do not think a harsh personal word ever passed between us. When I extended commiserations to him on his illness, he was most touched that I should do so. I am glad that I knew Mr Hough. I sometimes wish that some of the people on our side would display as much dedication to their parliamentary duties as Mr Hough did, though I do not say that in any criticism of members on our side. Mr Hough was a hard man to deal with politically, but a good man to deal with personally. I extend to his widow and other members of the family my sympathy in their sad loss.

Mr OSBORNE (Bathurst) [3.47]: I join the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members in paying tribute to Jack Hough, whom I sat beside in this House for four years. Members who sit in this part of the Chamber will always regard the seat beside mine as Jack Hough's seat. Having been so closely associated with him in this corner, I came to appreciate his qualities. I found him to be possibly the most dedicated and sincere member of Parliament that it has been my pleasure to meet. When I first entered this Parliament it became clear to me that Mr Hough had a wide knowledge of the workings of Parliament, and indeed of most things in life. He was a tremendous help to me. He was always willing to be of assistance, to spend his time in explaining things, and to do everything he could do to help another member.

The Premier said that Mr Hough virtually killed himself in the service of his electorate. I agree. Jack Hough, in maintaining the high standard of service that he set for himself—service not only to his electorate but also to this country—hastened his own end. However, he has gone from this Chamber with the greatest accolade that anyone could receive: whether or not we

differed with him on any plane, he left with the respect of all members. I do not think anyone could wish for more than that.

Mr COATES (Blue Mountains) [3.50]: Briefly, but most sincerely, I wish to be associated with the motion of sympathy moved by the Premier and Treasurer and significantly supported by so many members from both sides of the Chamber. Jack Hough became a close friend of mine. He was a good man. He was a Christian man and tremendously kind. I shall never forget my own experience with him when we were both ill at the same time. I offer to Mrs Hough and her family the sincere sympathy of myself and my constituents.

Members and officers of the House standing in their places,

Motion agreed to.

DEATH OF WILLIAM LESLIE CHAPMAN,
ESQUIRE, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr ASKIN (Collaroy), Premier and Treasurer [3.52]: I move:

That this House extends to Mrs Chapman and family the deep sympathy of Members of the Legislative Assembly in the loss sustained by the death of William Leslie Chapman, Esquire, formerly Member for Nepean.

It is my sad duty to inform honourable members of the death on 22nd July last of a former colleague, William Leslie Chapman, at the age of 61. Mr Chapman, who died suddenly at his home in Penrith, ably represented the electorate of Nepean in this Assembly from March, 1956, until February, 1962. He will be remembered for his depth of knowledge on transport matters and local-government affairs.

Bill Chapman was a man of little formal education—his schooling ended at primary level—but he possessed great drive and acquired vast experience in commerce and in community service. He was born at Singleton in February, 1910, the son of a police officer. Because of a childhood asthmatic condition he was sent to live with his grandparents in the Penrith district. He

began his working life as a station assistant with the New South Wales Government Railways, a job he held for eight years.

In 1934, at the age of 24, Bill Chapman invested his savings in a single truck and launched a carrying business in the Nepean district. That small investment has since become a flourishing family concern operating a fleet of twenty-four vehicles, and its growth was a matter of understandable pride for Bill Chapman. His outstanding services to the community extended over more than a generation. He was an alderman of Penrith City Council for twenty-one years, and Mayor of Penrith for a total of fourteen and a half years. He was first elected to the council in December, 1948, and remained an alderman until December, 1969. From 1950 to 1956 he was elected mayor by the council. Three years later he was again elected Mayor of Penrith, this time by popular vote, and continued in that responsible office until December, 1968. He remained an alderman until his death last month.

Bill Chapman was a delegate to the Cumberland County Council from 1954 to 1957, and a member of the Local Government Association executive in 1956—both honorary tasks in the service of the community. Mr Chapman was presented with the Local Government Long Service Certificate in 1962. Throughout his life Bill Chapman maintained an active interest in sport. In his later years he was president of the Penrith Bowling Club and figured often in the club's championships. In his youth he played grade tennis and cricket in the Penrith area. He was also a patron of the Penrith Leagues Club and a member of the Penrith Golf Club and the Nepean Rowing Club. His untimely death was a sad shock to all who knew him, and particularly to the people of Penrith whose development he had helped to guide for so many years. I am certain that he will long be remembered in that area. On behalf of the Government, and personally, I offer sincere sympathy to his widow, Mrs Veronica Chapman, to his daughters, Mrs Elaine Marshall and Miss Robyn Chapman, and to his son, Gregory, on their sad loss.

Mr HILLS (Phillip), Leader of the Opposition [3.55]: All members of the Opposition join with the Premier and Treasurer in supporting the motion of condolence to Mrs Chapman and her son and two daughters. As the Premier said, Bill Chapman served in this Parliament in the years between 1956 and 1962. He had a commendable career in local government having served as an alderman for twenty-one years and mayor for a little over fourteen years. Therefore, as the Premier has said, Bill Chapman served in an honorary capacity the community in the Nepean area for a considerable number of years. I think Bill Chapman could truly be said to have been a man who played an integral part in the development of Penrith. Because of his capacity as an alderman and local-government administrator and mayor he played a most important part in laying the foundations for the development of this rapidly growing area in the great metropolis of Sydney.

The Premier and Treasurer referred to Mr Chapman's business interests. I had the opportunity on one occasion when visiting Penrith to go with Bill Chapman to his garage and look at some trucks he had purchased. I could see how proud he was of the fleet of trucks that were operating from that garage. Bill Chapman was also tremendously proud of his association with the Penrith Leagues Club which has been able to develop to a stage where the Penrith team is playing in the top league competition—in fact last weekend defeating South Sydney.

I join with the Premier in conveying to Mrs Chapman and the members of her family our deep sympathy and sorrow at the death of Bill Chapman at 61 years of age. Naturally he would have expected to have a considerable number of years ahead of him but unfortunately his death was untimely. All members of the House wish to convey to the family our deepest sympathy in their sad loss.

Mr RUDDOCK (The Hills) [3.57]: I first met Bill Chapman in the late 1930's when I went to Penrith to my first job. I lived and worked in Penrith for a number of years and as could be expected, I came

to know most of the residents of Penrith, including Bill Chapman, quite well. At that time he was starting his trucking and carrying business and was showing the business acumen and determination that stood him in good stead for most of his life. He was also beginning to show his interest in community and public affairs with which he was closely associated.

I should like, if I may, briefly to divide his life into three sections. This has already been referred to by the Premier and Treasurer and by the Leader of the Opposition. The first section covers his life as a member of Parliament. I think Bill Chapman became a member of Parliament as a follow-up of his activities in Penrith. Therefore he was a good local member. There was a similarity between Jack Hough—to whose family we have just extended our sympathy—and Bill Chapman. Both were extremely good local members; their interests lay in the problems of the people whom they represented. Both represented to a great extent what we call swing electorates, and this probably accounted for their interest in the people they represented rather than their looking further afield. Also, of course, both worked so hard that they died untimely deaths. I came into the House as Bill Chapman left it, but I knew of his work in an adjoining area.

The second aspect of his career was concerned with local government. The Leader of the Opposition put his finger on the truth when he said that the Penrith and Nepean areas owed a great debt of gratitude to Bill Chapman. They certainly do, for scarcely nothing happened in that district that Bill Chapman was not connected with, either as a member of parliament or as alderman and mayor. Everywhere that Mrs Chapman and her family look in Penrith they will see monuments in one form or another to Bill's work.

Third, there was Bill Chapman the sportsman. He was in every activity of a sporting nature, particularly when I first went to Penrith. In later years he became possibly the best bowler that Penrith ever had. It was most regrettable from the viewpoint of the Parliamentary Bowling Association that Bill Chapman lost his seat in 1962, for I

am sure that he would have been one of the best parliamentary bowlers ever. He not only played sport, but also understood sport and was a sportsman who played fair in everything.

I convey my sympathy to Mrs Chapman and her family, whom I know personally, and believe that the people of the district share that sentiment. I was at Luddenham a few days after Bill Chapman's death. I was there with the present member for Nepean. His Excellency the Governor was in attendance, as were other persons. We were in St James's Church and everywhere the people present were saying that Bill Chapman's death was sudden, and what a good man he was. I feel, therefore, that most residents of the district would wish to extend their sympathy to Mrs Chapman and her family. In extending my own condolences, I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr MULOCK (Nepean) [4.3]: I support the motion of sympathy. I do so as a person who followed in the footsteps of Bill Chapman as mayor of the city of Penrith. He set a high standard indeed for his successors. Bill Chapman could well and truly be described as a man of the people. He was a family man as well. This was one matter upon which he dwelt; his was a close-knit family unit notwithstanding Bill's activities in public life. The family participated in his business, and it was this that made the greatest impact on the Penrith area which is in the electorate of Nepean.

For a person to give more than one third of his life in public service speaks highly of the man and of his willingness to serve others in the community and to bring his own abilities to bear on their problems. The Premier referred to Bill Chapman's lack of formal education, but as so often happens in Australia, a lack of formal education itself does not preclude a person from developing himself or from contributing in full measure to the development of his fellow man. As Bill Chapman gave a third of his life to public service, his family shared a great part of him with the community, by which he was respected. This sharing was exemplified at his funeral, at which there was a large turn-out of resi-

dents of Penrith and the surrounding districts, and of persons from other parts of the State.

I had a long relationship with Bill Chapman, extending right up to the time of his death. It was ironic that within a few days of his decease he was expecting to move with his family into a lovely new home. Bill was not able to share that pleasure with his wife Veronica, but it is pleasing to note that she has taken a step forward and has moved into that house. I am sure that this in itself will be a great comfort to her, knowing that that was something for which Bill had worked. He was deprived of it by a higher power. When relatives are prepared by a long suffering, we have the greatest sympathy for those who see that suffering. If death comes suddenly, we feel some relief that the person concerned was spared such suffering, but we share quite deeply the shock of the surviving members of the family in that sudden passing.

For the people of Penrith the name of Bill Chapman is synonymous with the growth of the district. He played an important part in it; his growth coincided with the growth of Penrith, and that is significant. His business is one of which anyone could be proud. The fact that he has trained his family to carry on that business will, I am sure, make it a lasting monument to his name. I am pleased to have the opportunity to support this motion of sympathy and to convey to Bill Chapman's wife Veronica, to his daughters Ellen and Robin and to his son Greg, my personal sympathy and that of the constituents of Nepean, by whom he was respected.

Mr CLOUGH (Eastwood) [4.8]: I support the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members in their tribute to the late Mr Chapman. During part of his membership of this Assembly I was as member for Parramatta associated with Mr Chapman. His civic and public service has been suitably recounted by previous speakers and will henceforth be permanently recorded for posterity. He was essentially a man of the people: his own experience in the university of life as a hard-working, self-made man, inculcated in him a spirit of tolerance and

understanding that earned for him the respect and appreciation of those persons with whom he came in contact. It was these same qualities that enabled him to establish himself successfully in an agency and carrying business, which was well regarded for its efficiency and reliability.

Bill Chapman supported his own district in all spheres and segments. He desired and envisaged its progress and prosperity. No doubt it was this perspective that took him into local government and into parliament to further those aims and objects. His life was relatively short; nevertheless he lived to see his objectives materialize, for today the Nepean electorate is a thriving and prosperous community. He was fond of life and people and was a good family man. He was, too, a keen sportsman and I gather that he was never happier than when playing a game of bowls.

Mr Chapman would have been the last person to lay claim to high flights of oratory or erudition, but he was a practical and intelligent person with an uncanny perception in assessing a situation or proposition. I recollect him as a quiet, unassuming, pleasant companion, and I join my colleagues in extending to his wife and family my deepest sympathy in their sad bereavement.

Mr COATES (Blue Mountains) [4.10]: I sincerely wish to be associated with the motion of sympathy that has been moved by the Premier and supported by the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members following the recent sad passing of Bill Chapman. I was associated with Bill Chapman for the whole period of his service in local government; I worked with him in various spheres of local government and on the executive of the Local Government Association of New South Wales. Undoubtedly he made a wonderful and worthwhile contribution towards the furtherance of the objectives of local government generally and, so far as the Nepean area in particular was concerned, he was a most interested and ardent worker.

I convey my own personal sympathy to Mrs Chapman and her family for the loss of a good man and a friend whose association I shall always remember.

Members and officers of the House standing in their places,

Motion agreed to.

LAW OF EVIDENCE BILL (*pro formâ*)

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion by Mr Askin, read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS IN REPLY

FIRST DAY'S DEBATE

Mr SPEAKER: I have to report that the House this day attended the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber, when His Excellency was pleased to deliver an Opening Speech to both Houses of Parliament. For greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy, which I now lay upon the table of the House. I direct that the Speech be recorded in *Votes and Proceedings*.

Mr VINEY (Wakehurst) [4.12]: I move:

That the following Address in Reply to the Speech which His Excellency the Governor has addressed to both Houses of Parliament on opening this Session of the Parliament of New South Wales be now adopted by this House—

To His Excellency Sir ARTHUR RODEN CUTLER, upon whom has been conferred the decoration of the Victoria Cross, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Knight of the Most Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem, Governor of the State of New South Wales and its Dependencies, in the Commonwealth of Australia.

May it please Your Excellency—

WE, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, in Parliament assembled, desire to express our thanks for Your Excellency's Speech, and to assure you of our unfeigned attachment to Her Most Gracious Majesty's Throne and Person.

2. We beg to assure Your Excellency that our earnest consideration will be given to the measures to be submitted to us, and that the necessary provision for the Public Services will be made in due course.

3. We join Your Excellency in the hope that, under the guidance of Divine Providence, our labours may be so directed as to advance the best interests of all sections of the community.

I feel deeply honoured to have the opportunity of moving the adoption of the Address in Reply. Just over a year ago I found myself the successful candidate for my party's endorsement to contest the seat of Wakehurst. Many thoughts went through my mind as I heard the result of the pre-selection ballot, but I must honestly say I did not dream that just over a year later I should be standing here, privileged to respond to His Excellency's Address. I thank the Premier and Deputy Premier for giving me this honour.

To those who selected me as the Liberal candidate, those who worked to achieve my election and those electors of Wakehurst who had sufficient confidence in me to elect me as their representative to this Parliament, I say humbly, "Thank you for your help, advice and encouragement." Also, I take this opportunity to thank sincerely those of my fellow members who have gone out of their way to assist a newcomer to feel at home. Further I ask Mr Speaker and the staff of this House to accept my deep and heartfelt thanks for their courtesy, understanding and tactfully proffered information which have been of immense value. In addition, I congratulate the staff on their most capable *ad hoc* rescue organization that comes to life when a member finds himself locked in the library.

His Excellency said that, following its return to office after the February elections, the Government is in the process of implementing its programme. It is a programme that will stretch the State's financial and human resources to the limit in ensuring the continued growth and increased well-being of the State and its people. Throughout His Excellency's Address there were many references to new goals and new targets for achievement.

The beneficial work of the Law Reform Commission will continue unabated, with modernization of the criminal law; cumbersome and antiquated procedures will be brought up to date.

His Excellency referred to recent New South Wales trade missions that have found new markets for the products of the State and have stimulated investment; this will lead to the establishment of new industries. Other subjects dealt with in the Address were port developments, increased electricity generation, extensions of reticulated water and sewerage, improved transport and intensified research into our off-shore fishing resources. These, also, will contribute to the growth of New South Wales.

If events elsewhere in the world can be taken as criteria—and there is no reason why they should not—the introduction of reticulated natural gas to this State should mean a dramatic boost to the State's productivity. In the past there has been a tendency to regard natural gas and electricity as enemies, and those responsible for their reticulation as in deadly competition. This is a wrong and destructive attitude. Natural gas and electricity are sources of energy that can be and should be supplementary.

The Government, in implementing its policies, is mindful of the need to provide a better, healthier environment through effective control of pollutants, and setting aside of more and more areas for national parks. Also, the Government is acutely aware of the need to expand and improve the education system. The committee of inquiry into methods of teacher selection, teacher training and attitudes towards teaching will provide valuable guidelines. I sincerely hope that once the committee's findings have been evaluated, all people in the community will work together to see that the New South Wales education system makes a great leap forward.

It is obvious from His Excellency's remarks that the Government is also fully conscious of the plight of the rural community, and of its responsibilities to assist farmers who are in need of debt reconstruction or additional land to enable them to become more efficient, economically

sound, primary producers. It is aware that the long-term solution to the problems of people living outside the Greater Sydney-Wollongong-Newcastle conurbation can be met only by a better balance in the overall development of this State. It has been no mean achievement to reach a conclusion about what should be the common regions of the State, to facilitate a comprehensive re-organization and decentralization of the public administration. Now that this necessary foundation has been established, the way is clear for an accelerated programme of developing new growth centres. The speed of this programme will, I believe, be given great impetus if the Commonwealth Government accepts, in the area of telecommunication, the vital need for the equivalent of a 6 cent postage stamp. This, of course, is only one area in which the Commonwealth Government can assist every State to achieve a better balance of its population distribution.

If we are to avoid an empty but fertile inland, which will be coveted by one or more of the densely populated nations in search of living room, there is little time left for all Australians to accept the challenge and provide solutions. It can be done and it must be done.

His Excellency has clearly indicated that the Askin Government is continuing its policy of providing the best possible economic environment and social climate in which the people of New South Wales can establish their own goals for growth and a well-rewarded life.

Having referred in a broad way to matters contained in His Excellency's address, I should now like to bring to the attention of members some aspects of the Wakehurst electorate. I trust they will be found to be of more than passing interest. My electorate was first represented in this House by my colleague the honourable member for Davidson. In his maiden speech he outlined the origin of the name Wakehurst and its historical associations with a former governor of this State. I shall not retrace that ground as I wish to devote some of my time to talking about the people of Wakehurst. The whole of the electorate falls within the local-government

Mr Viney]

area known as the Warringah shire. So, for that matter, do the electorate of Collaroy and a part of the electorate of Manly. The Warringah shire contains vast areas of bushland and the greatest concentration of ocean beaches within the Sydney metropolitan area.

Large groups of people within the shire are actively concerned with the protection of their great national assets. Perhaps it is these special responsibilities that cause the people of the area to become innovators and, in some ways, pioneers. Probably few members of this House would be aware that in the early 1950's it was the Warringah bushfire committee that pioneered the concept that motorized tankers should be added to the list of approved equipment provided through the central and eastern bushfire fund. As a corollary they pioneered also the procedure that a council could obtain approval of expenditure in excess of its current allocation from the central and eastern fund. Unlike bread, half a tanker is not better than no tanker at all. The same committee also sponsored many new items of approved equipment—not the least being the issue of safety helmets. Today the bushfire brigades of the Warringah shire are equipped with a large fleet of tankers and ancillary vehicles as well as thousands of dollars' worth of specialized equipment.

Just as the people of the Warringah shire have accepted the responsibility of protecting thousands of acres of valuable bushland and national parks, so too have they accepted the responsibility of preserving the beaches of the area and of protecting those who surf at them. Naturally not all residents are members of the surf clubs functioning in the area, but as ratepayers they contribute to the protection and preservation of the beaches and the surfers, through the very substantial council funds that are spent each year on this vital work. I should like to pay my tribute to the way this work is carried out.

Honourable members may find the figures I am about to quote of some interest. Within the shire there are seventeen beaches and it is estimated that last year 12,000 tons of rubbish were removed from them. The cost of cleaning the beaches for the year

was \$137,000. The cost of maintaining surf buildings and dressing sheds was \$20,000. The amount allocated to beach improvement totalled \$70,000 and subsidies to surf life-saving clubs for boats, reels, rates and wages of beach inspectors accounted for \$35,470. Also \$35,972 was spent on surf club buildings. The total outlay came to just under \$200,000. The council received in net revenue from visitor parking at 50 cents a car just on \$50,000 and the balance of \$150,000 was met out of shire funds. This is a type of financial burden that only a few councils in the metropolitan area have to bear.

Earlier in my speech I mentioned that an outstanding characteristic of the people of Warringah was their capacity for innovation and pioneering. The surf clubs in the area are developing new rescue techniques involving special surfboards, torpedo buoys and high-powered rescue boats. Already seven power boats are in use in the Manly-Warringah area, and more are planned. In addition to their use in surf rescue work these boats are incorporated into the police rescue organization. This very modern surf life saving equipment is costly to buy and costly to maintain. These boats must be kept in first-class order: it would not do to have an engine failure. Naturally the surf life saving clubs look to the council for substantial financial assistance. With plans to employ extra beach inspectors who can man the boats at times when volunteers are not readily available the council's expenditure on beaches and the protection of surfers will continue to grow.

The solving of this problem can be divided into two parts. The development of beach services and the maintenance of car parks and beachside buildings can be assisted, as in the past with special grants from the State Government. The cost of providing equipment for the saving of lives is a distinctly separate issue. Earlier I referred to bushfire brigade equipment being provided from the central and eastern fund. Most members are aware that one quarter of the finance of this fund comes from the relevant councils, one quarter from the State Government and the remainder from the fire insurance companies that operate in New South Wales.

I imagine that the fire insurance companies accept the fact that bushfire brigades save insured properties and therefore reduce to a minimum the insurance payouts for loss and damage due to bushfires. Bushfire brigades save property and surf lifesavers save lives. No doubt most of those lives are covered by insurance policies.

I am certain that many members would be amazed to learn how many rescues are carried out each year by lifesavers in the Manly-Warringah branch of the Surf Life-saving Association of Australia. The figures for the past five years are: 1966-67, 1,195; 1967-68, 1,300; 1968-69, 1,197; 1969-70, 1,145; and 1970-71, 1,672. Not included in these figures, 120 rescues were made in 1970-71 by the power boats. Therefore rescues in the Manly-Warringah area for 1970-71 total 1,792. Last year Manly-Warringah rescues accounted for one third of the State's total. Sydney branch clubs were responsible for another third. I am claiming each rescue as a life saved, and no one would dispute that assumption. The payout saved for the life insurance offices and pension funds could run into millions of dollars a year.

I hope that with the foregoing statistics I have laid sound foundations for the establishment of a special fund to provide surf lifesaving clubs with approved rescue equipment. I suggest that this fund should be financed from contributions by the relevant shire and municipal councils, the State Government and life insurance companies. The concept of such a fund is not breaking new ground. The great success of the central and eastern bushfire fund shows what can be done.

I should now like to move to another area related to the saving of lives where my suggestions as to how the equipment can be financed may be breaking new ground, at least so far as the Loan Council is concerned. In the Wakehurst electorate several schools are urgently in need of pedestrian controlled traffic lights to afford greater safety to children crossing the road. We neither have, nor can the State afford, enough police to man all similar crossings throughout the State. From inquiries I have made it would seem that about 100

sets of pedestrian operated lights are needed within the northern, central, western and St George area directorates of the Department of Education. Throughout the State probably 250 to 300 sets of these lights are needed.

Let me make it clear—I am referring only to lights to control school crossings, not to traffic lights that are primarily installed to regulate traffic and pedestrians at intersections. I am fully conscious that the relevant departmental officers are conscious of this need and that they are doing all they can to provide this service within the priorities dictated by available money. However, if it is agreed that a particular school needs pedestrian signals, each year that goes by without them increases the probability that some children will be killed or seriously injured.

I believe from inquiries I have made that private enterprise would be willing to install all the necessary lights and maintain them on a lease or rental basis. Unfortunately the current practice is that the Loan Council counts the capital value of leased installations as part of the State's available loan funds. Therefore, if the Government did decide to have the lights installed on a lease basis, there would be no benefit to the State's overall financial situation. Perhaps the Loan Council might agree to look at individual leasing projects and to evaluate whether the capital cost should be subtracted from a State total. If the experts agree that the particular leasing project would not place undue demands on labour or resources, the benefit could be introduced and the only debit would be the year's rental.

If in the near future the State could provide all the necessary school pedestrian lights we should not only benefit in increased safety for our schoolchildren, but also save the thousands of man hours that are now consumed by departmental officers investigating and replying to repeated requests from parent organizations for these traffic control lights.

Another activity that is being planned by the Warringah shire is distinctly innovative and could well confer great community

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benefit. The council is negotiating with the northern area directorate of the Department of Education for the shire to accept responsibility for maintaining all school ovals within the shire. In return they want the ovals to be made available for organized junior sport on weekends. Many details have still to be worked out to ensure that there will be no vandalism or destruction of school property. I have no doubt that satisfactory solutions can and will be found for any problems that arise. If this project is successful I foresee other plans to forge closer links between communities and their schools. If much wider use is made of schools the community will get much better value from the enormous capital expenditure that is involved in the provision of school buildings in this State.

These things are happening in other parts of the world. There is every reason to believe they can and should happen here. We must strive in every way to bring about a much closer involvement by parents and the community generally in our education system. To those electors of Wakehurst who might have expected me to raise in my maiden speech other issues that are of great concern to them I point out that any speech in this House must be of limited duration and there are traditional limitations on what a maiden speaker, who is heard in silence, may say with propriety. My constituents may be assured that I shall use every opportunity to represent their views vigorously at the appropriate times.

I thank honourable members for their courtesy and interest in what I have had to say.

Mr FISCHER (Sturt) [4.31]: I second the motion moved by the honourable member for Wakehurst for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the speech by His Excellency the Governor of New South Wales. At the outset I congratulate the mover of the motion for his initial contribution to the proceedings of this House. In particular I commend his thoughts and words in relation to decentralization. In taking the call, Mr Speaker, and delivering my initial general contribution to the proceedings of the House I am acutely mindful of the many traditions—written

and unwritten—that exist in this Chamber. I shall strive to abide by them. I say this as my generation, sometimes called the rising generation, has a reputation for being professional dissenters. It is this question of dissent to which I shall turn upon completion of my remarks appertaining to the electorate of Sturt and the New South Wales Government's policy proposals.

As members recall, though I represent the new electorate of Sturt I am by no means the first member for Sturt in this Chamber. The first member for Sturt in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly was Mr Wyman Brown, who served here for two years three months and twenty-one days. I am hopeful that I shall have the humble privilege of representing the new Sturt for a longer period but I am a little daunted as both Mr Wyman Brown and I were elected on a common day in February, namely the 13th day of February—he in 1889 and I in 1971. I do, however, record my sincere appreciation to the electors for the confidence they have placed in me. They are assured that I will spare no effort on their behalf. The most recent member for Sturt and my immediate predecessor was Mr William Ernest Wattison who was held in high regard by members on both sides of the House. Though he was the member for Sturt he represented an area geographically far to the west of my electorate.

The new electorate of Sturt consists of six subdivisions—Ardlethan, Coolamon, Corowa, including the former sub-division of Urana, Culcairn, Lockhart and Narrandera. Although it consists mainly of highly productive farm and grazing lands serviced by colourful and comfortable towns, Sturt has a host of diversification projects, including the development of pea and lupin growing, the development of the Ardlethan tin mines and the Corrugan irrigation project as well as many tourist schemes. Occupying a large section of the Riverine plain as it does, the area of Sturt was explored initially by Charles Sturt who, in 1829, set out on his expedition to determine the

course of the unexplored Murrumbidgee River. Most of the exploration was conducted from a whale boat floating down the Murrumbidgee River to the Murray River and thence onward to reach Lake Alexandria on the 9th February, 1830. The return journey was against the current and on 11th April, 1830, after considerable rowing part of the expedition left the river near the site of Narrandera. I welcome the Governor's reference to Narrandera, the largest town in the electorate of Sturt. His Excellency announced a proposal to create warm-water species breeding facilities at the Inland Fisheries Station in that town.

Sturt's expedition was rapidly followed by an increasing influx of people opening up the good farm and grazing lands. This resulted in the development of townships to service the area. It must be understood that the natural outlet for much of the area in the electorate of Sturt then, and even now, is to the south, to the ports of Melbourne and Geelong. However, towards the end of last century massive development of the New South Wales standard gauge railway succeeded in averting this trend and the area became more orientated to the State to which it belongs—New South Wales. Specifically, the railway was opened from Sydney through to Narrandera on 28th February, 1881, two months ahead of schedule, and the main line through The Rock and Henty and the eastern areas of Sturt to Albury was opened shortly afterwards. The linking of the two systems, in Victoria and New South Wales, took place on 14th June, 1883. There then followed a period of development of branch lines, the most significant being to Corowa, opened on 3rd October, 1892. The building of branch lines continued on into the early part of the twentieth century.

The railway development brought back to New South Wales much of the trade that was previously being sent south, a movement facilitated by the rapid development of the Victorian railways to the Murray and beyond. I make the point very strongly that

the continued viability and existence of many of the towns and farmers in Sturt, and indeed New South Wales, will depend to a considerable extent on the maintenance of an efficient service by the railways. Railways are particularly important in the spheres of decentralization and wheat growing, not to mention their advantages and continuing use to de-strangulate urban areas.

I congratulate the Minister for Decentralisation and Development on the breakthrough in decentralization in this State in the last six years. However, continued successful decentralization will depend on the railways providing an efficient effective service to country industries. It can be argued that road transport is capable of effectively servicing increased decentralization and this is partly so, but it is my belief that there will be increased scope and need for the railways. Such strike action as is being taken this week throughout most of Australia can only threaten the very existence of our rail system. Many wheat farmers in Sturt are seeing one wheat crop in four going to the railways in the form of wheat freight rates. These freight rates make up approximately 25 per cent of the first payment for a bushel of wheat and growers were tremendously relieved by the exemption of wheat freight rates from the recent general increases. The railways are the victim of a virtual financial straitjacket. It is my understanding that the debt owed by the New South Wales railways is in excess of \$600,000,000 and that the interest cost of servicing that debt is in excess of \$40,000,000 annually.

I support the call of the Minister for Transport for the federal Government to enter this field and to relieve the railways of their capital debt and the servicing of that debt. This, coupled with increased expenditure on new rolling stock and upgrading permanent ways, will allow the New South Wales Government Railways to move with the times, swing with the seventies, and meet the demanding challenges of our times. I welcome the Minister for Transport's recent announcement that the new Riverina daylight express will reduce travelling time and add to the frequency of air-conditioned services to that

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area. This is a small but significant step forward in the continuing programme of improving the railway service that has been going on for the last six years.

I was proud to be a candidate associated with the impressive policy proposals of the New South Wales coalition Government at the last State election, which were endorsed by the electorate. In the last six years this Government has uplifted New South Wales from its state of decline and has provided effective, balanced administration. It would be too long a process to detail all the achievements of the Government over this period. They include the doubling of wheat storage space, tremendous improvements in the State superannuation scheme, the breakthrough in decentralization and the implementation and creation for the first time anywhere in Australia of the Local Government Assistance Fund. These are some of the measures which I fully support. But no Government can afford to rest on its achievements, and I welcome the details of continuing endeavour contained in His Excellency's address.

Of the policy matters not yet implemented, one to which I attach tremendous importance and urgency is the proposal to reduce probate by one-third on rural family estates within the next three years. I understand that this proposal is to be part of a general programme of further alleviation of the payment of probate by all people in the community. I support this because I believe that death duties are a most unjust form of taxation. Probate is forcing many young families to leave economic-size holdings and join the movement to the metropolitan area. I do not for one moment support the policy of "get big or get out". This has never been the policy of the Country Party, which is a specialist party, designed to represent all country people regardless of their walk of life. I reiterate my urging that probate be reduced on rural family estates as soon as possible.

I support the measures that have been introduced by the Government, particularly those that alleviate rural problems, some of which were mentioned in His Excellency's address. The trouble is that some of these rural problems do not come within the

sphere of the State Government or, to a large extent, any other government. However, the Government has taken such action as the almost total abolition of land tax on primary production land. I choose the word "almost" carefully, because land tax is still levied on lands that are physically in New South Wales but incorporated in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. It has been announced that this tax will be abolished by 1st November, 1974, and I cannot urge too strongly that this be done. It is creating tremendous hardship. I believe there has existed in the past a misapprehension about the motives of people concerned with the incorporation of this type of land outside New South Wales. In many instances their motives and their circumstances have made it almost impossible for this land to be incorporated in any other way.

I wish now to deal with a number of specific projects in relation to policy which I fully support and in respect of which I have made representations to various Ministers. First, I refer to the Lake Mejum scheme which, when built, will provide much needed insurance against the ever-possible ravages of drought. Lake Mejum is so situated as to act as an off-river, gravity-fed storage, allowing additional savings and storage of water for irrigation use farther to the west and, at the same time, by virtue of the diversion weir at Mundowie, allowing irrigation for diversification purposes on many dry land farms, both north and south of the river. It is essential that, despite the difficult rural times, we do not lose sight of the tremendous need for continued water conservation works, and I strongly urge favourable consideration of this project. In this time of depressed rural conditions one should not lose sight of the tremendous need for continued works, particularly in regard to water conservation. I commend the Minister for Mines and Minister for Conservation for his recent statement at the opening of Conservation Week, when he drew attention to this matter. There is a continuing requirement in this dry continent

for water conservation works. I shall continue to look forward to announcements by the Minister in regard to Lake Mejum.

The next specific project to which I wish to refer is the Riverina university. To the present time the policy has been to establish and stabilize the Riverina College of Advanced Education before any move is made to establish the Riverina university. I have supported this policy as being a necessary expedient. However, I declare myself in support of the establishment of a Riverina university. There are a number of alternative ways in which this could be implemented. There has been some discussion in regard to the concept of a twin State university with Victoria. I understand this matter has been raised, not so much in government circles but by many of the proponents of the Riverina university. Another alternative that has been proposed is that the Riverina College of Advanced Education be raised to university level. A third alternative has been advanced, of creating a Riverina university that would be separate from the Riverina College of Advanced Education, with New South Wales going it alone. It is my belief that, when created, the Riverina university should be separate from the Riverina College of Advanced Education, whether it be twin State in concept or not. There is a need in our community and our society for colleges of advanced education and universities.

The third specific project to which I wish to refer is the Lockhart police station. I was privileged to be associated with representations in respect of this project which is now being constructed. This new police station will fulfil a tremendous and long-standing need.

The final specific project to which I shall refer is the augmentation of a water supply to Barellan. It would appear that the stage is being reached where there is a deadlock between the respective bodies concerned, particularly the Northern Riverina County Council and the Department of Public Works. I serve notice that I will strive to do everything possible to effect liaison to

break that deadlock, as there is a most important and urgent need for an increased water supply to Barellan.

In all these specific projects and the hundreds of matters I have raised with government departments since my election, I am mindful that there will be delays, difficulties and some rejections. The old saying that Rome was not built in a day comes to mind. However, the electors of Sturt can be assured of my maximum efforts on their behalf, particularly in relation to the problems of country centres. In seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the speech by His Excellency the Governor, I am mindful and appreciative of the privilege that has been extended to me by the Government. This is no personal tribute; rather, it is a tribute to the electors of Sturt. I appreciate also the co-operation and assistance I have received from members and staff, including amanuenses, in the short time that I have been privileged to be a member. I realize that I have much to learn of the proceedings of this House and of this calling, but I am willing to learn, and I hope to be learning, throughout my political career. In this fast moving world, I believe that the moment one ceases to learn, one ceases to be of use to anybody.

I turn to the question of dissent and the role of the rising generation today. This is an important question. For the purposes of my discussion, I define the rising generation as those Australians in their teens and twenties who at 30th June this year were estimated at the significant number of 4,241,700, which represents over a third of the Australian population. In recent times we have had tremendous criticism of the rising generation. They have been described as drug takers, alcoholics and demonstrators, and it has been said that they will not work and accept their responsibilities in society. I reject these comments as a gross exaggeration of the true position. I strongly defend the rising generation of today as one that is collectively

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no worse than previous generations, and probably better. I strongly defend the rising generation not because I am 25 years of age, but because I believe that a small group of professional dissenters has been accepted as a true sample of the entire generation. This, I submit, is entirely wrong. The total number of arrests leading to conviction would have to exceed 42,417 in any one year to represent even 1 per cent of the rising generation.

Perhaps I should point out that I am not opposed to lawful demonstrations. I fully support the basic democratic freedoms, particularly freedom of the press and freedom of movement, but I strongly reject unlawful and violent demonstrations that cause massive inconvenience to the public, whether in New South Wales or other parts of Australia. I oppose direct action when the strike weapon is used purely for political reasons. I congratulate the New South Wales police force on the truly professional manner in which its members handled demonstrations this winter. The thousands upon thousands of young men and women who make up a large proportion of the New South Wales police force, the army, navy and air force, and organizations such as Australian Volunteers Abroad, which is the Australian equivalent of the Peace Corps, indeed the large number of young, law-abiding men and women who make up a big proportion of the Australian work force, are truly representative of the rising generation. Certainly the rising generation has its drop-outs, but no generation has ever been perfect. There are problems at all levels of the community. Young Australians are willing to work in their own way for the alleviation and solution of these problems. Indeed, it is to the specific goal of an improved New South Wales that I dedicate myself as the member for Sturt. I commend the motion to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Booth.

House adjourned, on motion
by Mr Cutler, at 4.57 p.m.