

CORONATION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II: ADDRESS OF CONGRATULATION.

The PRESIDENT reported the receipt of the following communication from His Excellency the Governor:

Government House, Sydney,
13th August, 1953.

Sir,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of the Address of Congratulation to Her Majesty The Queen on Her Majesty's Coronation, passed by the Legislative Council of New South Wales.

The Address was forwarded this day by Air Mail to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations for transmission to Her Majesty.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. NORTHCOTT,
Governor.

The Honourable the President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales.

DEATH OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN MARY: ADDRESS OF CONDOLENCE TO HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II.

The PRESIDENT reported the receipt of the following communication from His Excellency the Governor:

Government House, Sydney,
13th August, 1953.

Sir,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of the Address of Condolence to Her Majesty The Queen on the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Mary, passed by the Legislative Council of New South Wales.

The Address was forwarded this day by Air Mail to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations for transmission to Her Majesty.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. NORTHCOTT,
Governor.

The Honourable the President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales.

THE GREAT SYNAGOGUE, SYDNEY, (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Motion (by the Hon. L. S. Snider) agreed to:

(1.) That The Great Synagogue, Sydney, (Amendment) Bill be referred to a Select Committee for consideration and report, with leave to sit during any adjournment of the House.

(2.) That such Committee consist of the following Members, viz.:—Mr. Downing, Mr.

Bridges, Mr. Budd, Colonel Clayton, Mr. Latimer, Mr. Mahony, Mr. Pagden, Mr. Savage, Mr. Stewart, and the Mover.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

Motion (by the Hon. R. R. Downing) agreed to:

That this House, at its rising to-day, do adjourn until Thursday, 3rd September, 1953, at 10.55 o'clock a.m. sharp, unless the President, or if the President be unable to act on account of illness or other cause, the Chairman of Committees, shall, prior to that date, by communication addressed to each member of the House, fix an earlier day and/or hour of meeting.

House adjourned at 5.29 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 19 August, 1953.

Questions without Notice—Governor's Speech: Address-in-Reply (Fourth Day's Debate)—Royal Commission: The Hon. Joshua George Arthur, M.L.A. (Tabling of Report)—Member Resigned—Adjournment.

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at 2.30 p.m.

The opening Prayer was read.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

QUESTIONS: DEFERRED REPLIES.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Might I ask, Mr. Speaker, whether you intend that deferred replies to questions should be given when Ministers are laying papers on the table?

Mr. SPEAKER: Ministers may give deferred replies to questions at any time during question time, and not necessarily while papers are being laid on the table of the House.

ZEBRA CROSSINGS: LEICHHARDT.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I ask the Minister for Transport whether his department has established zebra crossings at various intersections and, if so, whether they are proving a success? If the answer is in the affirmative, will he give consideration to having them placed at the corners of Catherine-street and Parramatta-road, and Foster-street and Marion-street, Leichhardt?

Mr. MARTIN: The zebra crossings have up to the present been a great success. Personally, I think that they should be called tiger crossings. They are rather

different from the zebra crossings that exist in England. The experience of these crossings abroad has been favourable, and the department is finding that they are effecting their purpose. I am hopeful that both the motorists and the public will observe them closely and carefully, and believe that they will contribute greatly to reducing the hazards that now exist on the roads. I will examine the hon. member's suggestion regarding the intersections to which he has referred.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT.

Mr. H. E. JACKSON: I ask the Minister for Transport whether the Railways Department, which has suffered tremendous losses in recent years, is seeking extra freight orders so as to balance its budget? Is it a fact that the department has refused freight of up to 2,000 tons for consignment from Gosford to Petersham because the distance is less than 50 miles? Is it a fact, also, that the department will accept freight for consignment to Cook's River, because the distance is more than 50 miles? If these are facts, will the Minister investigate this apparent anomaly so as to reduce the operating losses of the railways?

Mr. MARTIN: It is true that there have been losses, but this year they have been reduced to as little as £1,400,000. That is a remarkable achievement in view of the fact that not a wheel can be turned, or a whistle blown, till £10,000,000 has been paid to meet overseas indebtedness and payroll tax. The financial position of the railways has been the subject of a great deal of misrepresentation. The Liberal State of South Australia this year lost more than £5,000,000 on its railways, though its system is very small compared with ours. I appreciate the point that has been raised by the hon. member, even if I do not appreciate the preliminary part of his question, and I shall certainly examine the matter.

SWIMMING POOL: CANOWINDRA.

Mr. CUTLER: I ask the Minister for Local Government whether a modern swimming pool is in the course of construction at Canowindra, and whether the local

people have contributed £4,000—quite a large proportion of the finance needed? Will the Minister encourage community effort of this type by giving every consideration to the application of the Boree Shire Council for a subsidy for this work?

Mr. RENSCHAW: It is true that the town of Canowindra has contributed approximately £4,000 towards the cost of constructing a swimming pool in that area. Indeed, contributions of £12,000, £14,000 and even £16,000 have been made by local residents in various areas of the State for a similar purpose. The Government is anxious to provide amenities for country people, and will do everything possible to help provide swimming pools in areas such as Canowindra, which are west of the Great Dividing Range and a long way from the sea. The department is seeking information from all councils which have initiated swimming pool programmes as to the stage that has been reached, the extent of local contribution, and the prospect of their being completed in this financial year. I hope that within a few weeks that information will be before me. I shall treat all applicants equitably in distributing the funds available.

IRON COVE BRIDGE.

Mr. R. S. JACKSON: I ask the Minister for Transport whether the completion of the new Iron Cove bridge between Rozelle and Drummoyne is many years overdue? If it is, will the Minister inform hon. members whether there is a clause in the contract providing a penalty for failure to complete the contract on time? If so, has that penalty clause been applied, and if completion of the bridge is as far away as it seems to be, will he consider issuing instructions for the repair of the dilapidated road surface on the old bridge?

Mr. MARTIN: The bridge referred to by the hon. member is indeed one of the important ones in the metropolitan area. The state of disrepair of bridges in both the city and country is the result of the parsimonious attitude of the Menzies-Fadden Government which clearly prevents us from carrying out essential work on

them. The public will soon realise the damage that the Federal Government has done to the economy of New South Wales, serious and grievous damage, and perhaps, to defence projects and to food production by preventing bridges in the country and metropolitan areas from being repaired or built. I make that comment in the national interest. The bridge referred to by the hon. member has been under construction for some time. I do not know the exact terms of the contracts but I think that they are similar to those that he has suggested. I shall have inquiries made and give him full details. His suggestion regarding the roadway on the old bridge is a sensible one. I have travelled over it recently and must agree that it is not in a good condition. I shall take up the matter with the department and see what can be done.

ST. GEORGE SPASTIC SCHOOL: FREE MILK.

Mr. CRABTREE: Will the Minister for Social Welfare say whether it is true that under the Commonwealth free milk scheme school children under 13 years of age are supplied with one-third of a pint of milk a day? Is it a fact that I have made representations for an increase to two-thirds of a pint for students attending the St. George Spastic School? Bearing in mind the special circumstances, will the Minister consider supplementing the supply of milk to the St. George Spastic School?

Mr. LANDA: It is true that one-third of a pint of milk a day is allowed to ordinary school children and everyone will agree that spastic children are entitled to additional consideration. I will ask my department to look into the request made by the hon. member and see whether it can be acceded to.

ALLOCATION OF QUESTION TIME.

Lt.-Colonel ROBSON: Will you, Mr. Speaker, say whether it is a fact that yesterday, arising out of a leading article in the *Daily Telegraph* of the 14th August, you said that you expected the editor of the paper to apologise to the Chair and through the Chair to Parliament. Is it further a fact that a substantial minority of hon.

members in this Chamber regard the decision you have taken to allocate questions in the proportion of six Government to four members of the combined Opposition in the same light as does the *Daily Telegraph*? If these are facts will you, on further consideration, now say that the article in the *Daily Telegraph* was a fair comment on the procedure you have laid down and that you withdraw your demand upon the editor for an apology?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have nothing to add to what I have already said as to my reason for allocating questions on the basis that I determined and emphasised at the time was a trial only. As to the latter part of the hon. member's question, my answer is "Absolutely no." I do not agree with the comments made by the editor of the *Daily Telegraph* and I am quite satisfied that the editor has taken cognisance of what I said yesterday and has now made a full explanation from which the public can decide whether my attitude was fair and reasonable or otherwise.

STATE MINES CONTROL AUTHORITY: CHAIRMANSHIP.

Mr. PELLY: I ask the Acting Premier, representing the Acting Minister for Mines, whether the chairmanship of the State Mines Control Authority recently became vacant by the death of the late Mr. Baddeley? Is it a fact that there is considerable anxiety in the public mind as to who may be appointed to fill the vacancy? If these are facts, will the Minister say whether the Government intends to appoint either a sitting or an ex-Labour member of Parliament to the position?

Mr. HEFFRON: It is a fact that the position of chairman of the State Mines Control Authority became vacant upon the death of Mr. Baddeley, and the matter of appointing a successor is under consideration. Whether the Government will appoint a sitting or a defeated Labour member of Parliament I am not in a position to say. Obviously the purpose of the question is not to seek information but to promote some kind of anti-Labour propaganda. The Government is proud of the

appointments it has made because in every case the appointees have demonstrated not only ability to do their work but also their outstanding distinction. If it were necessary to find someone with considerable coal-mining and managerial and administrative experience, there are plenty such persons on the Government side from whom to choose. If I looked for someone with similar qualifications on the Opposition side, I do not know who I should find for the job.

Mr. H. E. JACKSON: Is it a fact that the State Mines Control Authority is redundant? If this is so, will the Government consider its abolition?

Mr. HEFFRON: The State Mines Control Authority generally as well as its chairmanship is under consideration and when the Government reaches a decision I shall inform the House.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS: LORNE AVENUE AND ANZAC PARADE, KENSINGTON.

Mr. GOLLAN: I ask the Minister for Transport whether, in reply to many representations by myself to his predecessor, a promise was made to install traffic lights at the corner of Lorne-avenue and Anzac-parade, Kensington? Is it a fact that this is a dangerous crossing and many accidents, including some to school children, have occurred there? If these are facts, will the Minister discuss the matter with the traffic authorities and have the lights erected as soon as possible?

Mr. MARTIN: The traffic lights that have been introduced are having a very good effect on the flow of traffic and the reduction of accident hazards. I am limited by lack of funds, but already 108 have been installed and an extensive programme of further installations has been prepared. I do not know whether a promise was made to the hon. member but I shall consult the Attorney-General to ascertain whether such is the case. I know the crossing in question and agree that it needs some attention. I shall have it surveyed by the traffic facilities engineers and let the hon. member and the House have a more detailed answer.

LIVERPOOL BRIDGE.

Mr. MANNIX: I ask the Minister for Transport whether he is aware of the serious congestion at the one-way traffic bridge over the George's River at Liverpool railway station? Is it a fact that some considerable time ago a contract was let for the construction of a new bridge at this point? Is the Minister in a position to inform the House, and not only my constituents but also motorists generally, when the building of this bridge will begin and when the work will be completed?

Mr. MARTIN: I would that someone had the capacity to strike with a magic wand and pour gold into my pocket, as Minister. There is no doubt that the bridge in question is a point of congestion. A contract has been let to an English company. Just when it will be possible to begin work I am unable to say, but I will have inquiries made as to the probable date of commencement and let the hon. member and the House have a more detailed answer later.

ROYAL VISIT: YARALLA HOSPITAL.

Mr. HUNTER: I ask the Acting Premier whether it is a fact that a visit to Yaralla Hospital is included in the royal tour programme next year? Is it a fact, also, that if the royal party were to go to Yaralla by way of the Hume Highway and Burwood-road, no appreciable difference in time would be involved, but such a route would pass through an area in close proximity to nine public schools, a number of hospitals and through the important shopping centres of Ashfield and Burwood? If these are facts, will the Acting Premier ascertain whether that route may be followed?

Mr. HEFFRON: It is a fact that Her Majesty will visit Yaralla Hospital but I am not quite certain about details of the route to be followed. However, I will look into the matter and find out just what is the position. Of course, if it is possible to meet the hon. member's wishes—and that is a matter for the persons handling the tour—I shall be happy to recommend his suggestion favourably.

In any case I will let the hon. member know later whether the route that he suggests can be taken.

Mr. MURPHY: I ask the Acting Premier whether, in connection with the visit of Her Majesty the Queen to the Repatriation General Hospital at Yaralla, local organisations, including the municipal council and returned servicemen's groups, have requested that special provision be made for a stop on the way to the hospital? If this is so, will the Acting Premier give consideration to acceding to their request?

Mr. HEFFRON: I am not quite sure of the various requests that have been made in connection with stops along the different lines of route and I am unable to give the hon. member an immediate answer. First, I shall have to make inquiries and if it is possible to complete those by question time to-morrow morning I will be pleased to let the hon. member know the result.

COOMEALLA IRRIGATION AREA: BURONGA COMMON.

Mr. WATTISON: I ask the Minister for Conservation whether the first 100 farms for soldier settlement in the Coomealla area have almost been completed? Is it a fact that there is a great demand for these types of farms in and around Buronga? Is it a fact, also, that a request has been made for a portion of the Buronga Common to be resumed and added to the Coomealla Irrigation Area for future settlement? If these are facts will the Minister discuss the question with the Minister for Lands, with a view to having this land made available as soon as possible for ex-servicemen and open competition?

Mr. ENTICKNAP: When I visited Coomealla and Curlwaa recently the hon. member and I inspected the Buronga common, which is a fine area of land that could be made available for irrigation farms for intensive agriculture. A request has already been made to the Minister for Lands that

the common be devoted to irrigation settlement. Applications have been called and a ballot has been conducted for the remaining twenty-six irrigation blocks in the area, the first which the hon. member has mentioned. There is no question that another 100 blocks can be thrown open for irrigation settlement if the money is available. I say emphatically that there is no better and quicker means of increasing this country's national wealth and production than by establishing additional irrigation farms. If only the Federal Government, through the allocation of loan funds, would provide the necessary money the job could be put in hand tomorrow. This administration will begin the work the moment it has sufficient funds.

TAREE-TUNCURRY ROAD.

Mr. FITZGERALD: Can the Minister for Transport say whether it is a fact that some years ago metal screenings were deposited beside the main road between Taree and Tuncurry for use in the tarring of the road surface? Is it a fact, also, that the road is in very bad condition and that the Department of Main Roads is unable to finance its share of the cost of the work? If these are facts, will the Minister inform the House when the Department of Main Roads will be given funds for the completion of important works such as this?

Mr. MARTIN: I do not know anything about the road in question, and I would not pretend to know it in detail. I can well imagine that material has been deposited beside it for application to its surface and that the work has not proceeded. That might be said of a good many, not only of the State's highways, but also of its proclaimed roads. This state of affairs is regrettable and is one of the most serious problems with which the Government is confronted at the present time. Roads throughout New South Wales are being torn to pieces and blown away in dust and we have not the means of repairing the havoc. The hon. member asked when the road will be repaired. Then work will be done when his colleagues in the Federal Government give this State enough money.

CONTRACTS FOR SALE OF LAND:
TOWN PLANNING.

Mr. CONNOR: I ask the Minister for Local Government whether many intending home-builders, upon completion of purchase of land under a terms-purchase contract, find upon making requisitions on title that the land is adversely affected by the town planning provisions of the Local Government Act, and that preliminary improvement work is thereby retarded? If these are facts, will the Minister consider the introduction of legislation to make it mandatory upon vendors, their agents or representatives, to insert in contracts of sale details of the effect, if any, of town planning upon the land involved?

Mr. RENSHAW: There is considerable trading in land because of the many prospective home-builders who are seeking building sites, and it is true, as the hon. member has suggested, that in a contract of sale of land it is not mandatory for vendors or agents to indicate the effect of town planning legislation. The only information that must be supplied by either party is that common to all transfers of land title, which is available through ordinary searches at the Registrar-General's office. However, with alterations from time to time in town planning schemes and the consequent effect upon the user of land, I see considerable merit in the hon. member's suggestion. In any land transaction, of course, the onus is on the purchaser to see that he is getting a clear title, and by inquiries from the Department of Main Roads or any other resuming or constructing authority, either State or Federal, he could ascertain whether his land might be affected by any proposed plan. I will examine the proposal raised by the hon. member more carefully and give him a more considered reply at a later stage.

NEW SOUTH WALES COMMUNITY
HOSPITAL: NURSES' QUARTERS.

Mr. SHANNON: Is it a fact that the New South Wales Community Hospital has no nurses' quarters and must pay a boarding-out allowance to its staff? Is great difficulty experienced in obtaining

suitable staff accommodation close to the hospital? Is it also a fact that the hospital authorities own adjacent vacant land suitable as a site for a nurses' home, and that over the past two or three years they have asked the Hospitals Commission to begin this work? If these are facts, will the Minister say whether any allocation of funds for this purpose has been made during the present financial year? If not, will he arrange for an early and urgent priority for this work in next year's allocation?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It is true, unfortunately, that this fine hospital does not possess its own nurses' quarters—which must be a source of worry not only to the Hospitals Commission but also to the board of the hospital, of which the hon. member is the chairman. I know the quarters that are now rented for use by the nurses of the New South Wales Community Hospital, and that in wet weather they have no shelter when going to and from their work. It is true, as the hon. member has suggested, that the hospital board owns vacant land which would be a suitable location for nurses' quarters.

I do not want to make any promise that I will not be able to keep. There is no financial provision this year for any new hospital building, and however worthy this proposal might be, it will have to wait for some little time. I hope that next year the department will be able to allocate funds for this important work.

LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT.

Mr. BRAIN: I ask the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Justice, whether the Minister will amend the Landlord and Tenant Act to provide for the Rent Controller to add to his determinations of rentals the $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. allowance due to increased interest costs, together with authority to add the usual management costs on the increased rentals as are now allowed by magistrates at the Fair Rents Board? Is it a fact that cost and inconvenience will be saved to landlord and tenant alike if this is done?

Mr. SHEAHAN: It is not the province of a Minister to amend the law. Parliament amends the law on measures submitted by the Government. I will bring the hon. member's submissions to the notice of my colleague, the Minister of Justice, who, no doubt, will give them every consideration.

4 DENTAL PLATES: PENSIONERS.

Mr. JAMES CAHILL: I ask the Minister for Health whether many old age and invalid pensioners are obliged to wait a considerable time for dental plates through the Social Services Department? If this is so, can the Minister give any reason for the delay, and will he take action to speed up the whole procedure so that aged and invalid persons can obtain quick assistance.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It is true that not only a number of aged and invalid pensioners, but also other persons have found it difficult to obtain dentures. This State has in Sydney one of the best dental hospitals in the Commonwealth, and my department endeavours to satisfy everybody who seeks attention. However, in the country the position is entirely different, and the sum of money that the Hospitals Commission has for allocation to the various country hospitals for dentures is limited. My colleague, the Minister for Labour and Industry, is interested in the health of aged and invalid pensioners, and if they cannot be given at their local hospital the attention that they need, they are provided with a railway pass to and from Sydney. In addition, in some instances accommodation is found for them in Sydney while they are attending hospital. However, everybody does not want to come to Sydney. It is not an easy matter, because the money is not available. I will approach the matter from the point of view raised by the hon. member and will make inquiries to ascertain if it is possible to overcome the difficulty referred to by the hon. member. If an aged or invalid pensioner produces a doctor's certificate that failure to obtain dentures or to have extractions made is causing his ill-health, his case is treated as urgent.

TEACHER'S RESIDENCE: TALLIMBA.

Mr. DICKSON: I ask the Acting Minister for Education whether there is no teacher's residence at Tallimba, in the West Wyalong subdivision of my electorate, and whether the department is finding difficulty in appointing a suitable teacher because of the lack of accommodation. Is it a fact that the present teacher is compelled by circumstances to board at the local hotel, known as the "Tallimba Inn"? Will the Minister have the matter investigated and ascertain whether it is possible to obtain the use of a residence at Tallimba, or direct his department to construct a residence there.

Mr. McGRATH: I do not know whether the facts are as stated by the hon. member. However, I accept his statement that they are, and will have inquiries made to ascertain whether suitable accommodation can be found for the teacher. I am afraid that I cannot make any promise that a teacher's residence will be constructed. I will let the hon. member have a further reply within a few days.

BUS SERVICES: MERRYLANDS WEST.

Mr. FREEMAN: I ask the Minister for Transport whether the public and press expect the Government to provide reasonable bus services irrespective of whether they are payable? Is it a fact that some privately-owned bus services—for example, those operated between Parramatta and Smithfield—give only a poor service at night and none at all during week-ends and on public holidays? If these are facts, will the Minister have inquiries made to ascertain whether it is possible to provide a better service for residents of the Merrylands West area.

Mr. MARTIN: It is true that the people expect the Government to operate the buses and trams even at a grievous loss. In this regard, I was amazed that a protest meeting was held in my own electorate regarding the reduction of bus services to Dover Heights, which are operating at a most uneconomic and ludicrous figure which no private business would even contemplate. The hon. member for Vacluse is leading a deputation to me on this subject, and I shall

make some similar observations to the deputation, but at greater length. The efforts to economise on these services cannot and should not be stopped merely at the wish of people who hope to have the values of their residential properties maintained by having empty buses running past them. It is true that some of the privately-operated omnibus services are not all that may be desired. I have inspectors constantly on the task endeavouring to ensure that adequate services are maintained. I shall have inquiries made regarding the bus service referred to by the hon. member for Blacktown and let him have a further reply later.

KEMPSEY HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. GAMACK: I ask the Deputy Premier whether repeated representations have been made for the addition of a new wing to the Kempsey High School? If so, can the Minister inform the House what action has been taken to this end?

Mr. HEFFRON: Although I have been away from the Education Department for a few months, I know that it intends to construct a new wing at that school. Because of the limited amount of finance available this year I cannot say at the moment when that will be proceeded with but I shall discuss it with my colleague, the Acting Minister for Education, and should be able to give the hon. member an answer to-morrow morning.

KIAMA HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. FOWLES: I ask the Acting Minister for Education whether a high school is in the course of construction at Kiama? Is it a fact that portion of the buildings completed is already in use? Is it a fact, also, that this very important school caters for a large number of students from areas that extend for many miles both north and south of Kiama? Is it further a fact that if this school is not soon completed congestion will occur in 1954? If these are facts, will the Minister ensure that the school is completed this year?

Mr. McGRATH: The facts are as stated by the hon. member. I think it will be possible to go ahead with the work this year and that he need have no worry on

that score. The Department is well aware of the serious accommodation position and will do everything that it can to complete outstanding work this year.

RAILWAYS: LEVEL-CROSSING SIGNS.

Mr. ROBINSON: I ask the Minister for Transport whether an offer has been made by the Lions International Club to meet the cost of pavement marking at the approaches to level crossings in certain country towns, especially Casino? Is it a fact that the Department of Main Roads refused to consider this proposal, despite the fact that similar signs already exist in Queensland and Victoria? If these are facts, will the Minister examine the possibility, first, of allowing these signs to be provided, and second, of bringing about uniformity in level-crossing signs throughout Australia?

Mr. MARTIN: The problem of level crossings is receiving a great deal of attention and later I hope to be able to inform hon. members of the way in which we intend to attack it. Indeed the position at a number of level crossings cannot be regarded as satisfactory. Certain overseas advice has just come to hand and hon. members may rest assured that the problem is not being neglected. I do not know whether the Department of Main Roads refused to accept the proposal mentioned by the hon. member. I will certainly investigate the possibility of adopting it.

Considerable advances are being made towards uniformity of traffic signs in Australia. I represented this State at a recent Australian Transport Advisory Council meeting which lasted two days and advanced a long way towards the attainment of that ideal. An Australia-wide committee is working on the task now and within a few months I hope that a great deal will have been accomplished.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION: WOLLONGONG.

Mr. CONNOR: I ask the Minister for Health whether the optimum ratio of hospital accommodation to population is of the order of eight beds for each 1,000 persons? Is it a fact that in the area served by the Wollongong District Hospital the ratio is

only five per 1,000. Is it a fact, also, that sixty beds can be made available there for the use of patients when the nurses' quarters are extended? If these are facts, can the Minister say what will be done to expedite this extension?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The conditions described by the hon member are not peculiar to Wollongong. In some towns beds are not available because there are either no nurses or no quarters in which to accommodate nurses. However, Wollongong, because of its great industrial activity, has a special claim to hospital accommodation. I shall let the hon. member know as soon as possible when the extension of the nurses' quarters at the Wollongong District Hospital can be completed.

ROAD SAFETY: GRAFTON BRIDGE.

Mr. WINGFIELD: I ask the Minister for Transport whether His Excellency the Governor, in opening Parliament, stressed the need for greater safety on our roads? If this is a fact, does the Government propose to take any further measures to safeguard the travelling public? If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister have Mr. Russell of Grafton appointed to the very important post of inspector?

Mr. MARTIN: It is true that the Governor in his speech stressed the need for greater safety. The Road Safety Council, which is one of the activities under my control, is, in conjunction with the police, constantly addressing itself to this problem. It is appropriate that I pay a tribute to Colonel Youden, its secretary, who has just retired, and to the police generally for the work that has been done. A considerable number of measures are contemplated. I am examining ideas almost every day and have had the advantage of a report by Mr. Pittman, who recently, when abroad, made a summary of all the devices that he saw. Those are being examined one by one. Safety measures during the last six months have increased considerably and I have reason for saying that they will advance substantially during the next twelve months. I am not certain that Mr. Russell should be appointed but I will look into the matter.

DIABETIC COMA.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: On 13th August the hon. member for Burwood asked a question without notice following the unfortunate death of a diabetic. I immediately got in touch with the Commissioner of Police and assured him that Dr. Wallace, Director-General of Public Health, would be willing to confer with him to find ways and means of preventing a recurrence. At the same time I received two letters, one from Miss Ruby Board, president of the Diabetic Association, and another from Miss Delmer, the secretary, who enclosed for the information of the House a card that may be carried by a person suffering from diabetes. It reads:

I am a diabetic.

(I am not intoxicated.)

If I am found unconscious or behaving abnormally, my condition probably is the result of an overdose of Insulin.

On the back of the card instructions for simple treatment are given as follows:

I am a Diabetic. Place sugar or candy in my mouth, but if this fails to revive me in fifteen minutes, call my physician or send me immediately to a hospital.

Then there is room for the name and address of the sufferer and the physician's name, address and telephone number. These ladies are to be congratulated and I pay them a tribute for acting so promptly. A copy of the card is being sent to the hon. member for Burwood. Miss Board stated that her association was at present having a number of cards printed which were to be given to all diabetics with the suggestion that they be carried at all times as a means of identification. There would be no charge for such cards. Miss Board added that the association was considering having a badge made for diabetics to wear on or under the lapel of their coats or frocks. The badge would be sold to the sufferers at cost price.

TYPHOID: INOCULATION.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: On 12th August the hon. member for Blacktown requested that I ascertain whether the mass inoculation of citizens against typhoid should be undertaken, as a safeguard against the possibility of further epidemic. I have

consulted my departmental medical officers and am advised that the source of the outbreak in the Newcastle district has not yet been definitely determined, though intensive inquiries are proceeding and have been continued over the last two months. Two possible sources are infected prawns or infected coconut. No evidence has yet been obtained that prawns are infected with typhoid. However, as hon. members are no doubt aware, the Commonwealth Director-General of Health recently announced that typhoid germs have been found in a certain brand of desiccated coconut.

Hon. members will recall that, since desiccated coconut was first suspected as being typhoid-infected, much press publicity has been given to the matter and warnings issued to the public that they should refrain from eating such coconut for the time being. When definite epidemics of typhoid occur, as in the Newcastle district during the present outbreak, it is advisable to offer protection to the public through vaccination. Such vaccination in some people causes severe reaction and fever, and it is therefore not suitable for such persons, especially if they are debilitated from other causes. Vaccination on a voluntary basis has therefore been arranged through local public hospitals in the Newcastle district, the Royal Newcastle Hospital having been the first to establish a public vaccination clinic.

The effect of vaccination diminishes after a year or so, and must be repeated at intervals to give maximum protection. Vaccination therefore is recommended by my department only when there is an increased risk of infection, as in certain districts during epidemics, and in the case of doctors, nurses and hospital attendants who may be brought into close contact with persons suffering from typhoid. In the circumstances it is not proposed to introduce mass inoculation at Newcastle, other than as previously mentioned. In Sydney, there is no epidemic at present and no reason to consider opening mass vaccination centres in the metropolitan area. Hon. members may rest assured that this matter will be kept continuously under attention.

GOSFORD DISTRICT HOSPITAL.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: On 13th August, 1953, the hon. member for Gosford asked me a question in relation to the Gosford District Hospital. I have had inquiries made and have been informed by the Hospitals Commission that under recent conditions it has been essential to give priority in the allocation of loan funds which have been made available to the Commission to complete those works which were in various stages of completion and were the subject of contract. The Commission has advised that it can give no indication when it will be able to proceed with any extensions to the Gosford District Hospital and unfortunately, though the need is recognised, such extensions cannot be undertaken within the loan allocation already determined for the current financial year.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE: REPORT.

Mr. HEFFRON: Regarding the question asked by the hon. member for Tamworth on 18th August, concerning the report of the Public Accounts Committee, the position is that the Committee for the Thirty-seventh Parliament has not yet been constituted. Action to this end will be taken as soon as practicable and the question of when the report of the Committee will be available will naturally be a matter for the chairman and members of the Committee to determine.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS-IN- REPLY.

FOURTH DAY'S DEBATE.

Debate resumed (from 18th August, *vide* page 159), on motion by Mr. Morgan:

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 JOHN NORTHCOOT, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Member of the Royal Victorian Order, Lieutenant-General on the Retired List of the Australian Military Forces, 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.

Mr. MORTON (Mosman) [3.25]: I join with the Acting Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country Party in congratulating new hon. members who have contributed to this debate. It is always an anxious moment when one speaks in the House for the first time. A great deal of preparatory work is necessary and I recall that I was happy indeed when my first speech was completed. All hon. members will agree that those recently elected hon. members who have spoken have acquitted themselves remarkably well and I wish them well in the task that lies before them. We who are elected to this honourable Chamber accept great responsibilities. Many persons who do not understand the difficulties misunderstand the work that a member of Parliament must do. It is impossible to please everyone and we can only do our best.

Except for one day, this is the first time that Parliament has been called together this year. In February, 1953, a State election was held and the Government was re-elected with an increased majority. During the campaign the Government successfully misled the electors as to the real position, and refused to fight the election on State issues; it directed attention to the Federal arena. At that time the Federal Government had courageously taken unpopular measures to stabilise the economy, which had got completely out of control. A Labour government had occupied the Treasury benches at Canberra for many years and had successfully sold to

the people the philosophy of something for nothing. Any sensible person realises that such a philosophy does not work for any length of time. The Menzies-Fadden Government was charged with the responsibility of restoring sound government to the Commonwealth and this it has done successfully. For a time its actions were misunderstood, but during the last six months a vast political change has taken place. The electors are beginning to see the results of this sound administration and though a Labour government is in office in New South Wales to-day and has an increased majority, its supporters should not consider that they have a mortgage on the Treasury benches. I am astonished that State Ministers are still blaming the Federal Government for the hopeless mess we see to-day in New South Wales. After twelve years of Labour government chaos is at hand. Unfinished public works are littered all over the State and the transport undertakings are almost bankrupt. This Government must accept full responsibility for such a state of affairs. In a desperate attempt to hide its tragic record, the Government, until a short time ago, successfully blamed the Federal Government but no longer will the people accept that complete misrepresentation. I am delighted to know also that no longer will the Federal Government "cover up" for the States. Too long has it been the subject of the unfair charge of levying high taxes for its own use. The truth is that record sums of money have been received by the States, and in the case of this Government record sums have been shockingly wasted. Many of the public works it has started will not be finished in my lifetime. If the Government had had the welfare of the State at heart and had not played politics many of these works would have been completed and a commencement could have been made on the others. Perhaps newly elected members can be excused for some of their misstatements concerning tax reimbursements and loan funds because they may not have taken the trouble to ascertain the truth, but older members are aware of the facts. Members on this side have often pointed out the true position, but the matter is so serious that I propose to traverse some of

the ground in order to expose what has been a successful but wicked misrepresentation.

Before I go into details of tax reimbursement and loan funds I shall refer to some of the statements contained in the speech of the hon. member for Drummoyne. For a new member he made a good contribution to the debate, but some of his remarks were completely out of focus. He complained bitterly that hon. members on the Opposition side had not made reference to the outstanding record of the State Dockyard. I shall not speak disparagingly of that enterprise because I am informed that the management is efficient and that the manager is a most capable person. It is so unusual to find a State instrumentality successful that virtually every member on the Government side has eulogised its marvellous achievements. I offer my congratulations to Mr. McLarty on his success but I direct attention to the achievements of private undertakings also engaged in the same type of work. Does the State Dockyard enjoy a monopoly of work from the Public Works Department? Is the set-up there similar to that which obtained in the Federal arena with T.A.A. and A.N.A. during the Chifley regime? Does the State Dockyard receive all the dredging work connected with the Public Works Department without calling for tenders?

Mr. HEARNshaw: At unpublished prices.

Mr. MORTON: I am not suggesting that improper prices are being paid. I do not know all the facts because I have had only this morning to examine the matter. I should not have mentioned it but for the speech of the hon. member for Drummoyne. It is reasonable, however, to make comparison with private industries of a similar nature. Over a period of ten years the State Dockyard made an average yearly net profit of £46,710. Last year it reached the substantial sum of £98,489. The Dockyard employs 1,332 hands and, according to the Auditor-General's report, during the year, £92,061 was spent on the acquisition of fixed assets. The Treasury provided working capital of £210,000 from consolidated revenue and £174,000

from general loan account, thereby increasing the capital liability to £1,243,348 after a deduction of sinking fund repayments. The State Dockyard, like the Electricity Commission, has no trouble in obtaining additional capital. It is a Government instrumentality. It pays no income tax. I invite hon. members to examine the records of private undertakings, and the first to be mentioned is Mort's Dock. That company is financed with private capital and is listed on the Stock Exchange. I have obtained my information from public records that are available to any hon. member. I have no technical knowledge concerning shipbuilding, but I know something of the principles on which this company is founded, and it is a sound concern. Mort's Dock employs 1,500 workers and the capital available to it in one way and another amounts to approximately £2,000,000. Over the past six years that company has made a net profit of £497,000, a yearly average of £82,000 as compared with the State Dockyard's yearly average of £46,000.

Mr. BRAIN: And that, after providing for taxation.

Mr. MORTON: That is so. The company has paid taxation amounting to £275,000 over the six-year period, a yearly average of £46,000, and it competes on the open market for its work. In addition, the profits that are distributed are again in the hands of the shareholders. Hon. members need not for a moment think that the State Dockyard is the only successful undertaking of its kind. I am not saying that it should close down and dismiss its employees as the hon. member for Drummoyne suggested last night that hon. members on this side might advocate. It would be a good thing, however, if the Government transferred or sold the dockyard to private enterprise. The Government should encourage free enterprise because that is the only way to achieve efficiency. The next company I wish to refer to is the Broken Hill Proprietary Limited. The hon. member for Drummoyne said that he had been to Whyalla and was of the opinion that the shipbuilding works there are the best in the world. I was pleased to hear him say so.

I believe that the hon. member for Drummoyne is a fair man. He has a good sense of humour and an hon. member who has that quality will last longer in this House than one who has not.

There is no doubt that if any company has contributed to industrial progress in this Commonwealth, it is the Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd. I have heard some supporters of the Government suggest that this magnificent organisation should be socialised. What happened when war menaced this country and it needed the best brains to direct its munitions effort? Essington Lewis was called upon! He is the man who gave a great deal of his life and energy to the progress of the Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd. and its establishment in the forefront of Australian industry. This free enterprise has achieved wonders under extraordinary and difficult conditions. During the eight years since 1946 it has made a net profit of £14,521,803. In the same period it has provided for taxation the staggering sum of £18,133,000. It employs 50,000 Australian men and women. The people to-day are rightly demanding that the burden on taxpayers and industry generally be lifted and it is about time that this Government awakened to its responsibilities and reduced government expenditure. The declamations of Ministers in this Chamber that if the Federal Government would give them more money they would do this and they would do that, afford no solution. The Federal Government will not cover up for the States any longer and I am glad that this is so.

Mr. MATTHEWS: The Federal Government will go out, too!

Mr. MORTON: The hon. member should not count his chickens before they are hatched. I am prepared to make a side wager with him that the Menzies-Fadden Government will be returned at the next election. The real issue is that the people to-day want some relief and it is futile for this Government to blame the Federal Government for its own default. The people have to get relief and the States, like the Commonwealth, are expected to cut down their expenditure. The States, too, have to get on with their job

without rushing about the country and making false statements about the Federal Government.

The hon. member for Drummoyne referred also to Sydney Ferries Ltd. I know a little about this matter and when the legislation for the Government's acquisition of the company's assets was being discussed in this House I said quite frankly that I did not consider that the management of Sydney Ferries Ltd. in recent years was alive to its responsibilities. I was quite fair in my assertion. The hon. member for Drummoyne declared that when Sydney Ferries decided to close down everyone wanted the Government to socialise the undertaking, but is he aware of the treatment that Sydney Ferries Ltd. had from this Government for years before it was taken over? Does he know that the Government starved the company of passengers? Does he know that Government transport services filched passengers from the ferries? The hon. member for Leichhardt laughs but he does not know the facts. I should not mind his laughing if he knew the real situation. As soon as the Government took over the fleet of Sydney Ferries Ltd. it directed the travelling public back to harbour transport—the very thing that it should have done when free enterprise operated the ferries! The problem of harbour transport is not yet solved but if free enterprise had got that undertaking at the price that the Government paid for it, and had been given encouragement to get on with the job, including the diversion of travellers to its runs, it could have provided an adequate service for the people and, I venture to say, would have made it pay.

The Leader of the Country Party informed hon. members that the Chifley administration on all occasions adhered rigidly to the tax reimbursement formula that it evolved, except once when there was a coal strike and £3,000,000 was given to New South Wales as an *ex gratia* payment. Why did the Chifley administration cleave unswervingly to that formula? Because Labour believes in the destruction of the States! That aim is in the Labour platform—the abolition of State Parliaments. The Acting Premier went to Canberra and challenged the Prime Minister to hand

taxing powers back to the States, but the governing body of the Australian Labour Party—the same persons who told Mr. Chifley to “ease-off” in his opposition to the Communist Party Dissolution Bill, when he had said that he would fight it to the last—are opposed to this principle. The demands that the Acting Premier made upon the Prime Minister are in conflict with the policy of the Australian Labour Party, which is the retention of uniform taxation. How long will the people tolerate this humbug? They are being deluded, might I say successfully, by Labour.

I am afraid that a large section of this community is not worrying in the least about what will happen to-morrow. The people in that group want everything to-day, and supporters of the Government subscribe to the same view. They have no regard for the future. Had they any thought for to-morrow they would accept the fact that what has been done in the Federal sphere in the last year or two has been a sincere and successful attempt to stabilise the economy of this country. Of course mistakes have been made, but the overall result has been benefit to the nation. I am associated with industry and I am certain that had import restrictions not been applied some businesses in this country that are still functioning would have had to go into liquidation because they did not have the money to meet the imports that they had ordered. Those are facts. Even those persons who were critical in the first instance now agree that things are turning out right. Let us be honest about the situation.

During the five years that the Chifley administration held office in the Commonwealth sphere New South Wales received the sum of £83,090,000. In the next four years, in which the Menzies Government held office, this State received the staggering sum of £212,000,000. These figures are taken from the records of this Parliament and hon. members opposite cannot deny them. Yet they had the colossal effrontery to go on the hustings and completely misrepresent the facts. I should not be able to sleep at night if I had done such a thing. What has been the borrowing of this State under the Commonwealth-State

Housing Agreement? During the five years that the Chifley administration was in office, New South Wales received some £26,000,000 under the agreement. During the next four years it received from the Menzies Government £41,000,000. The hon. member for Kogarah, who has some knowledge of the housing problem, last evening gave the House a discourse about what should be done, but what do hon. members know about the question whether the Housing Commission should build brick, timber or fibro homes? It is the Commission's job to build the right type of house, and if it is not doing the job efficiently something should be done. I am not an authority on the details of building construction. All I want is to ensure that houses are built for the many thousands of families that need them. But this Government will never build them. The former Premier, the Hon. J. McGirr, said, “We are going to build 90,000 homes in three years.” What happened to that airy promise?

I assure hon. members opposite that the only effective way of accelerating home building is to remove the shackles from free enterprise and give it a fair go; it will then do the job. If the Government wants to build homes for the people why does it not do the sensible thing and remove rent control from new premises. What is wrong with a tenant's paying, say, £4 10s. a week rent for a new home if he knows what he is getting? If those who are willing to pay higher rents for new homes were allowed to do so investors with capital would undertake the building of dwellings for rent. To-day, with the rental return at 3½ per cent., 4 per cent. or even less, people will not invest their money in building when they can buy readily negotiable shares in very reliable trading undertakings that will return 6 per cent. or 7 per cent. The Government is not acknowledging the facts of housing, but is merely prevaricating. The electors of Mosman are reasonably well housed, but, nevertheless, I know of a number of tragic cases among my electors, and I can well imagine the difficulties of some hon. members in whose electorates this social evil is much more troublesome.

What is the position in respect of tax reimbursements from the Commonwealth? In the five years that the Chifley Government held office £101,000,000 was received by this State, and in the last four years it has received from the Menzies administration £195,000,000. What has been happening to the capital indebtedness of this State? Some of the figures that I am now about to give the House are old, but they must be repeated if the complete picture is to be seen clearly. In the ten-year period from 1940 to 1950 New South Wales received £121,000,000 of loan money. In the next three years it received from the Menzies Government the staggering amount of £171,000,000. In the twenty-year period from 1926 to 1946 the public debt of this State increased from £222,000,000 to £353,000,000, a yearly average increase of £6,500,000. From 1947 to 1953 the debt increased from £362,000,000 to £580,000,000, a yearly average increase of £30,000,000. In the last seven years the loan indebtedness of New South Wales has been increased by £218,000,000 compared with an increase during the previous twenty years of £181,000,000.

Mr. BLACK: And there is nothing to show for it!

Mr. MORTON: I appreciate the interjection. What has happened to these vast sums of money? It is about time that there was established in New South Wales a body similar to the Public Accounts Committee of the Federal Parliament, which works so sensibly. Such a body would be able to tell the people where their money goes. I shall now tell the House something of the cost of a pedestrian subway under College-street, but I do not want my remarks to be misunderstood.

Mr. MATTHEWS: The hon. member should be careful.

Mr. MORTON: I will be careful. All my life I have been careful and that is why I am here. The legislation authorising the construction of the subway was not opposed in this House, and members of the Opposition make no criticism of the principle of building it. I want the House to be clear on this, so that hon. members

opposite will not misrepresent me. The public perhaps do not know that the estimated cost of the subway, and the amount voted by Parliament for the purpose, was £23,000. Hon. members know that only about twelve months elapsed between the voting of the funds and the completion of the work, but the ultimate cost was, not £23,000, but £49,000—more than twice the estimate. Hon. members opposite might be able to tell me—and I should like to know—who calculated that the cost would be £23,000.

Mr. MATTHEWS: Ask Arthur Fadden!

Mr. MORTON: The hon. member has not finished reading *Comic Cuts*. The House and the people should know what is happening to public money, though the hon. member for Leichhardt will never know.

I congratulate the hon. member for Mudgee on his maiden address to this House. In the course of it he urged that the Sandy-Hollow-Maryvale railway line should be completed. He said in his policy speech in Mudgee at the time he defeated my friend, Mr. Fred Cooke, that he would urge the Government to finish that railway line. Does he know when it was begun, and does he realise that the Government has been in power for twelve years and has not spent one penny on it in that period? If the hon. member for Leichhardt, in twelve years, cannot persuade the Government to finish the job, the hon. member for Mudgee has no chance of doing so. Reference to some of these vaunted public works of the Government in the last year's Loan Estimates is most revealing. I understand that the State is committed to an expenditure by way of public works in the vicinity of £400,000,000. Where are we to find the money to finance them? The people will not stand being taxed heavily by the Federal Government to cover up for the States, which, when they receive the money, waste it about the country and completely misrepresent the facts. What is the story of the construction of the Keepit dam?—and I regret to tell my hon. friend, the member for Tenterfield, that it now looks as though that scheme has gone with the wind. The estimated total cost when the work was authorised was £1,340,000. As at 30th

June, 1952, the amount voted was £3,255,000 and the expenditure £2,873,286. The amount required to complete the dam is £4,100,000! And now the Government has closed down the work entirely. The construction of the Glenbawn dam on the Hunter River surely takes first prize in these examples of Government mismanagement. The estimated total cost of construction of this dam was £1,500,000; the amount voted to 30th June was £2,950,000 and the expenditure to that date was £2,804,529. Only a further £6,000,000 is needed to finish the job! Hon. members opposite are silent because they cannot answer these charges.

Mr. MATTHEWS: What about the decreased value of money?

Mr. MORTON: Of course one must take that into consideration, but the fact is—

[*Interruption.*]

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Mosman is quite capable of making his own speech and he needs no assistance from hon. members on either side. For the rest of his remarks I ask that he be heard in silence.

Mr. MORTON: If the Government had established some kind of sensible priority for the construction of these public works, the Sandy Hollow-Maryvale railway line would have been finished; so would Keepit dam, the next in order, and so on. Instead, for purely political purposes the Government has presented a blueprint of schemes to the people at election times. It is only natural that the local residents should be pleased when they hear that it is proposed to build a dam in their area: they think they are going to get something. But if a man wants a suit of clothes, he goes to the tailor and buys one: he does not put a deposit on six suits and not get any of them. The Burrendong dam on the Macquarie River is another example of the point I am making. The estimated cost of this project was £2,000,000. The amount voted to 30th June, 1952, was £2,511,000 and the expenditure to that date was £2,308,351. The amount required to finish the work is £5,900,000! These figures are compiled by the Government's own officers.

They are accurate and cannot be refuted. Of course, one must take into consideration the difference in the value of money, but I repeat that all these works have been begun and none completed, and now the Federal Government is being blamed for everything. The people are beginning to wake up to this foolish yarn spun to them by the Government. As a matter of fact, they have already awakened, for the result of the recent Dulwich Hill by-election was most satisfactory.

I regret that I cannot share the view of the Minister for Transport that the deficits as disclosed by the transport departments under his control are "magnificent". To most questions put to him at question time in this House, the Minister replies that nothing can be done until he gets more money from the Federal Government. That is a complete admission of defeat, and if he really regards the deficits of the transport departments as magnificent, he is hardly fit to occupy the position of Minister for Transport. According to the Auditor-General's report for the year ended 30th June, 1952, the combined deficit of the Railways and the Department of Metropolitan Transport Services for the preceding eight year period was £26,453,308. The deficit of the metropolitan transport services was £10,426,581 and for the railways the staggering sum of more than £16,026,727. I believe that the Commissioner for Railways is trying to carry out his duties according to the high traditions of the office. At one time, indeed, he perhaps had a different view, but then he did not have to run the railways. I do not speak in any personal way on this matter, but I am sure that Mr. Winsor realizes now that if a Railways Commissioner is to discharge his duties effectively he must be entirely free from political control.

In the face of this staggering deficit of over £16,000,000, what happened when the Commission made a real attempt to face up to the situation. He was told "where he got off." If ever a government was condemned out of its own mouth it is this Government which instructed the Railways Commissioner not to make an approach—only an approach!—to the tribunal established for the purpose of considering the equity of the terms and conditions of

employment of the 60,000-odd railway employees in this State. A log of claims was lodged on behalf of the railway employees, and the Commissioner, apparently, felt obliged to lodge a counter claim. As the Arbitration Court had granted penalty rates which it thought at the time were fair and reasonable, he no doubt thought that the court might like to review these rates. Obviously, he was bound by any judgment of the court. Was the Government afraid! Why should it prevent a man from attempting to do his job? So long as the Government interferes politically with the transport services there is no hope for their successful operation.

This is what the Auditor-General says in his report for the financial year ended 30th June, 1952, regarding the metropolitan transport services:

The number of passengers on trams and omnibuses became progressively greater in each of the war years, rising from 378.3 millions in 1939-40 to 545.9 millions in 1944-45. In every succeeding year, however, patronage has fallen off and the total transported in 1951-52 varies only slightly from that of 1939-40.

The services are not carrying any more people now than they were twelve or thirteen years ago, yet the Minister states that the deficit is "magnificent"! The public made 34,000,000 fewer first section journeys in 1951-52 than in the year 1950-51. The Government is not encouraging business but is chasing passengers away. If it took the shackles off those charged with the responsibility of operating these great public utilities and did not interfere politically, instead of fares being increased there would be a tendency to reduce them in an endeavour to attract people to the services. It is astonishing that an undertaking with a capital indebtedness of £11,893,000 should be carrying virtually the same number of passengers now as it did twelve or thirteen years ago. It is a shocking state of affairs. The Government has a great responsibility. If it does not stop interfering politically, the position will become even worse. I, personally, have no criticism to offer against the officers of the department, who have given me every consideration. I have my problems, just as have other hon. members. Private undertakings in my electorate have been taken away from the returned

soldiers who established them. Bus services were operating from two areas in my electorate to Wynyard. One operator built up his business so extensively that he was making in the vicinity of £100 net profit a week. The Government took over the service and ran it to Mosman Bay, and in the first month it was losing £200 a week. There was a similar occurrence in another part of my electorate. It is my opinion that, if the Government is going to manage the affairs of this great department in such a way, it would be better for the services to be given away. If the Government could find some persons with the necessary capital to operate the services, gave them a franchise, and left them alone, it could be done, but I know that the difficulties are great, because the present Government will not give them security.

Government members are endeavouring to cover up the hopeless mess that exists in this State to-day. Two government departments alone have lost £26,000,000 in eight years, yet the Government is blaming somebody else. If that loss could have been cut in half a great number of homes could have been built for the people, schools could have been erected, hospitals built and roads constructed. What happened when the Commissioner for Railways made a proper and business-like approach to an authority and asked it to review the situation? A trade union official issued a statement to the press that he had seen the Minister for Transport, and that Mr. Winsor was to be told "Where to get off". What would hon. members opposite feel if they were in the position of the Commissioner for Railways and a union official made such a statement? The Government is not sincere in its approach to this problem.

I shall give an indication of the depths to which some people will sink to achieve an advantage. During the last State election campaign there was a contest in Ashfield, and I am happy to say that the electors of Ashfield returned to this House a pleasant and outstanding personality—the hon. member for Ashfield, who sits on this side of the House. I have in my hand a copy of *The Western Standard*, a local paper distributed throughout the Ashfield

Mr. Morton.]

electorate. The retiring member for Ashfield, Mr. J. F. Richardson, saw fit to insert in *The Western Standard* certain advertisements, to which I shall now refer. In one, which appeared in the issue of 15th January, 1953, there is an advertisement which reads:

Judge J. F. Richardson, M.L.A., your Member for Ashfield, by all the work he has done for the Electorate.—Vote for him on February 14.

I am not saying that hon. members opposite had anything to do with this advertisement, but they ought to make sure that this sort of thing does not occur. All hon. members are aware why it was done. Mr. Athol Richardson, the previous member for Ashfield, was appointed by the Government to the Bench, and J. F. Richardson, in an endeavour to jump on the band wagon, inserted an advertisement of this nature. I say sincerely, and I do not indulge in personalities, that had Mr. J. F. Richardson been elected he would not have been a fit and proper person to occupy a seat in this House. On page 1 of the same issue there is another advertisement, which reads: "He's back again. J. F. Richardson, M.L.A. Your Ashfield Member. Vote for him on February 14." I am indeed happy to know that the electors of Ashfield were fully aware of this trickery, and am delighted that we on this side again have with us a worthy representative of the Ashfield electorate.

I wish the new members who have spoken during this debate the best of luck.

Mr. DALTON (Sutherland) [4.21]: I am conscious of the honour conferred on me by the residents of the electorate of Sutherland in sending me as their representative to this honourable Parliament. I assure them that I will do everything in my power to ensure that the wants of the people of the important electorate of Sutherland are attended to with despatch. I wish to be associated with the expression of loyalty that has come from hon. members to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. I congratulate the hon. members for Parramatta and Mudgee upon the compliment paid them by the Government in selecting them to move and second the motion for the

adoption of the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's speech. Those two new members did a remarkably good job in explaining the needs of their electorates.

A number of matters that affect my own constituents are causing me great concern. The Sutherland electorate is part of the shire of Sutherland and has a housing problem that concerns many thousands of people. In 1951 the council issued permits for the erection of 2,900 dwelling-houses and last year for the erection for 2,046. This decline of one-third in home-building is evident all over Australia, but especially in my own electorate. The people simply cannot afford to build houses to-day. Twenty years ago, during the depression, accommodation was the first thing on which people retrenched. Food was given first place and, as a result, many lived in crowded surroundings. Twenty years ago the people of Australia were inadequately housed, but no one now thinks of that period. They are certainly inadequately housed to-day.

The present Federal Government has also curtailed housing by increasing the interest rate. If a man borrows £2,500 to finance the building of an average-sized home, he must, if repayments are to be made over a period of thirty years, repay at a rate of £2 9s. a week if the interest rate is 3 per cent.; £2 16s. if the rate is 4 per cent., and £3 2s. 6d. if it is 5 per cent. If the interest rate is 5 per cent. he will pay during thirty years twice as much as he borrows. That is one reason for the decline in home building.

One of the gravest acts of the present Federal Government was the repudiation of clause 6 of the Commonwealth-State housing agreement which it made with the six States in 1945. The State has done everything it can to provide homes, but the Federal Government has tied it foot and hand financially. That was a piece of political trickery intended to bring about the downfall of this Government, which has done so much for the people since it was elected in 1941. The appreciation of the people has been shown at succeeding elections, especially that which took place

in February last when this Government was returned for the fifth time and with a record majority.

In 1945 the Hospitals Commission prepared its post-war reconstruction programme. It included the erection of a hospital in the Sutherland shire near the Cronulla railway line, between Caringbah and Miranda. It was to have 100 beds and be capable of extension to accommodate 200 to 250 beds. During 1946, £250,000 was placed on the estimates for this work. Subsequently it was decided that the capacity of the hospital should be 280 beds. Tenders were called in August, 1949, but there was a serious shortage of labour and materials and the commencement of work was delayed. The main difficulty was to obtain local steel. In order to expedite the work the Government approved the importation from England of the required steel. This was done despite the additional cost involved.

Because of rising costs, the amount required in 1950 for this work was £800,000. It was included in the Commission's loan programme for that year, but unfortunately it had to curtail severely its current works programme and defer calling tenders for other work. A complete review of the Commission's programme was made and each project considered in the light of the progress that had been made, and the amount that could be spent upon it during the financial year. The Commission had no option but to advise the Public Works Department to suspend work for the next twelve months. This regrettable occurrence precluded any possibility of proceeding with the work on the Sutherland shire district hospital.

When the Federal Government last year raised an additional £2,300,000 by floating loans, the Sutherland Shire Council requested that sufficient funds be made available to erect the steel already on the site. In May it received a reply from the Federal Treasurer to this effect:

Whatever the level of loan raisings in 1952-53, the Commonwealth will not contemplate making a grant for the erection of the Sutherland Shire Hospital or any other hospital in the Australian States.

Mr. Dalton.]

In the same month, in a letter to one of the weeklies in my electorate, the President of the Cronulla branch of the Liberal Party said:

At least there is some reason to believe that the State Government will help us. There is no hope from the Federal Government. . . . Menzies won't help us and we all know it.

Knowing how serious is the position, I approached the Minister for Health and requested him to treat the matter as urgent, and I shall read a letter which I received from him. I express my gratitude and that of my constituents to the Minister and the Government. This is the letter:

Dear Mr. Dalton,

In reply to your personal representations, I am now pleased to inform you that loan funds to the extent of approximately £70,000 have been allocated this financial year to enable the contractor for the erection of the Sutherland hospital to proceed with the work of erecting the structural steel framework to a stage somewhat similar to that shown in the accompanying photograph.

I may add also that the structural steel which, as you know, was imported from England at a cost of roughly £90,000 has been paid for.

I am particularly happy to be able to communicate the foregoing information to you and I am sure the local people will be pleased that such progress is to be made towards the erection of a hospital which will, no doubt, be a great acquisition to the residents of Sutherland and district.

The Federal Government's attitude towards the States at the Loan Council was such that one wonders whether it is in power with the object of improving the lot of the people or whether it is endeavouring to subjugate them, without any thought of the health and well-being of the ordinary man. It is so extravagant in its own sphere that one wonders where the country is heading and it is to be hoped that it will realise its obligation to the sick and readjust its attitude.

In my electorate an oil refinery is to be established by the Caltex Company. This world-renowned organisation with its great wealth is preparing to spend the huge sum of £25,000,000 to establish the refinery at Kurnell, and all right-thinking people appreciate its action. This will benefit not only that locality but also the whole of the State. The more companies of this sort that can be encouraged to establish

their works in this fair land of ours, the better it will be for the State and for the prosperity and happiness of the people. My constituents resent the attitude of those who tried to prevent the Caltex Company from building its refinery at Kurnell. The establishment of this industry will provide employment for thousands of people, and the State Government is to be congratulated for giving an assurance of all possible help. I remind hon. members of the assistance of the State Government to the firm of Courtaulds in establishing its works at Tomago near Newcastle. The Government built railway sidings, a bridge over the river and other necessary facilities to enable that concern to be established, involving an expenditure of more than £1,000,000. The Nuffield organisation is another overseas concern that is building a factory in the metropolitan area and again the State Labour Government has given it assistance which it has greatly appreciated.

The proposal to establish an oil refinery at Kurnell led to action being taken to plan the development of the Kurnell peninsula. The County of Cumberland planning scheme reserved part of the peninsula for parks and recreation grounds and zoned another part as a rural area. The rural area embraces the village of Kurnell within which normal urban development is allowed. The remainder of the land was neither reserved or zoned for any particular purpose under the planning scheme.

Approval for the establishment of the oil refinery was associated with a proposal to prepare a revised planning scheme for the whole of the Kurnell peninsula, zoning an area for industry sufficient to allow for the establishment of diverse industries and harbour facilities. The revised planning scheme will include also provision for the zoning of the land for living, recreation, and special purposes, including education and public requirements. It will provide for the decentralisation of industry and population and will involve consideration of the use of Botany Bay as an auxiliary port to the Sydney Harbour.

The Cumberland County Council was directed by the Minister to prepare a town and country planning scheme for that part

of the Shire of Sutherland generally described as the Kurnell peninsula and the adjoining waters of Woollooware, Weeney and Quilbray Bays. A period of two years has been allowed for the preparation of the scheme. The provisions of the Cumberland County Council planning scheme have been suspended, and the granting of an interim development permission in respect of the land was referred to the Minister. The land which is the subject of the amended planning scheme is an area of approximately 6,000 acres, 1,500 acres of which is privately owned. The balance is held by the State Government as Crown land or reserves, or by the Commonwealth to meet the requirements of the Department of Civil Aviation at Towra Point. The village of Kurnell will form the nucleus of the proposed living area of approximately 250 acres. That area will be subject to detailed planning and provision will be made for shops, recreation areas, public halls and other buildings. The oil refinery will have a reserve of 400 acres and other land will be set aside for industrial purposes. The particular extent of that area cannot be indicated at this stage. Consideration will have to be given to the reclamation of portions of Quilbray Bay and the association of the industrial areas with deep-water facilities. The opportunities for extractive industry must be kept in mind and land zoned for that purpose.

The Commonwealth Government now holds approximately 700 acres at Towra Point for civil aviation purposes and may resume other land in that area, and also at Weeney Bay. The Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board has acquired 73 acres for sewerage works and approximately 70 acres will be acquired for sanitary depots for the Sutherland Shire Council. The Cumberland County Council has been asked to consult the Sutherland Shire Council in the preparation of the amending planning scheme for the Kurnell peninsula. The scheme is, however, at an early stage and much investigation has to be made particularly in relation to the use of Botany Bay, possible reclamations, and industrial development.

The plan, when prepared by the Cumberland County Council, will be publicly exhibited and representations on any provision of the scheme can then be made to the County Council. The planning scheme must also be approved by the Minister before it can take effect. Before that stage is reached particulars of the scheme must be advertised so that any person affected might object to the scheme or any part thereof. Those objections must be determined by the Minister and, if allowed, the scheme must be amended accordingly. Kurnell Peninsula until 20th June this year was desolate waste land. The only access to it before that date was by ferry from La Perouse or across the sand dunes by Land Rover or other four-wheel-drive vehicle from Cronulla. Even with those vehicles it was a matter of luck whether one reached Kurnell or not. The New South Wales Government ordered that an access road was to be constructed to the standards of the Main Roads Department. I am pleased to inform hon. members that a bulldozer operated by none other than the Premier turned the first sod on 28th February, 1953. Full-scale construction of the road from Cronulla to Kurnell began on Monday, 9th March. Hundreds of cars now visit the village of Kurnell, the birth-place of Australia, and that is made possible only because this State Government was far-sighted enough and big enough to see that the oil refinery was established at Kurnell.

I ask the Government also to give consideration to the development of the district of Menai. Menai is only 17 miles from Sydney but the poultry farmers and market gardeners there have been battling against great odds for years because they have to depend on rain-water tanks and wells for water. If city water were made available to those people, Menai could become the greatest egg producing district in the State. It would be able also to produce much-needed vegetables for the people in all parts of Sydney. Menai is sorely in need of not only a permanent water supply but also a better access route. The transport of the people's produce to market is by road through Woronora and over the George's River by the bridge at

Mr. Dalton.]

Tom Ugly's Point, or by the obsolete ferry-punt at Lugarno, which is run by the Hurstville and Sutherland councils, in conjunction. What is needed is for the George's River to be bridged at Lugarno. The County of Cumberland scheme calls for the bridging of the George's River at other places such as Taren Point and Como. Those crossings are necessary to relieve the pressure on traffic between the cities of Sydney and Wollongong, but I ask the Government to give first consideration to a bridge at Lugarno, which would be an essential link in the direct route to the South Coast. A bridge at Lugarno not only would complete that route but also would open up the wonderful Menai district.

The Government realises that the future of the nation depends upon the education of its young people. Having the future of New South Wales in mind, it has set out to build schools in all parts of the State but again its efforts have been retarded by the Federal Government's narrow-minded policy. In the year preceding the Labour Government's election to the Treasury benches in 1941, the Liberal-Country Party Government that was then in office spent on education in New South Wales a miserly £5,000,000. This year the Labour Government will spend almost £30,000,000 and it does not consider that this sum will be anything near an adequate allocation to meet needs. I assure the people of my electorate that every consideration will be given to keeping schools in proper order and to providing the teachers who are needed for the education of their children. This Government will ensure that the citizens of to-morrow are given the education that they need to safeguard the future welfare of Australia. What Labour promises, Labour will do.

Mr. DICKSON (Temora) [4.46]: In offering my contribution to this debate I feel that I am almost making a second maiden speech because it is two years since I have been able to exercise my privilege of speaking in this Chamber. The first portion of the delay was caused through a very serious illness that I suffered. Unfortunately I was not even allowed to forget it after I had passed through it because

during the last election campaign some of my political opponents made capital of the fact that I had not joined in a major debate in this Chamber during the last session.

Mr. MORTON: Their statements had no effect.

Mr. DICKSON: They had an effect throughout the electorate but they did not have sufficient effect to achieve their purpose. I got here in spite of their statements. The rest of the delay in my exercising my privilege arose because Parliament has sat only one day in the last nine months and that was only for the swearing in of members. Therefore, what would have been a shorter silent period for me personally was extended considerably by the inaction of this Government. Neither of the delays was to my liking. A recess of Parliament for so long a period is not good for democracy. Of course it is an effective method of gagging Opposition members. When the Government keeps Parliament in a protracted recess, all that Opposition members are able to do to put their point of view is to seek space in the press, while the Government of the State is effected by regulation. While Parliament is in recess members of the Opposition do not have their democratic right to criticise and to make suggestions for the better government of New South Wales.

I was delighted to hear early in the speech of His Excellency the Governor the very excellent references that he made to our gracious Queen, Elizabeth II. I was particularly gratified when His Excellency said at our meeting for the opening of Parliament—the first such meeting since the coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II—that all of us were profoundly moved by the spontaneous expression of loyalty and devotion aroused by this great event. Those spontaneous expressions of loyalty and devotion were felt not only within the British Commonwealth but also throughout the world. The free world outside the Iron Curtain and, I believe, even some of those behind that Curtain must have been impressed by the ceremony and its significance. This young woman has been crowned Queen not only of the United Kingdom but also of Australia, and of her

other realms and territories, after she had on her twenty-first birthday dedicated her life to our service. As she has pledged herself to us, we should pledge ourselves to her, and pray for her so that she might have a long and peaceful reign.

I was delighted to be associated with the message of congratulation and loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen that was passed by this Assembly. I am sure that the people, I represent fully agree with the sentiments that were expressed in the resolution of hon. members of this Chamber, and had my constituents been so privileged they would have been glad of an even more personal opportunity to pay homage to the Queen on her coronation. I congratulate the new members of the House who moved and seconded the motion for adoption of the Address-in-Reply. My own situation as a new member who seconded the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's speech fifteen years ago was in strange contrast to that of the hon. member who has seconded it on this occasion. The mover fifteen years ago was the present Leader of the Opposition. I cannot help but think how much more fortunate than the hon. member for Parramatta I was, for I entered this House at a time when the government which I supported—the Stevens-BruXner administration—had been in office, not for twelve years, but for six years. That government came into office at an extraordinary time when the affairs of this State were chaotic. But in six short years the greatest transformation ever seen in this State had been wrought by that virile and capable administration.

In my maiden address I was able to speak, not of the many needs of my electors and the State generally, but of the government's record of achievement, which will never be equalled. The Stevens-BruXner administration came to office with an inheritance of 250,000 unemployed and a deficit in the public accounts of £8,000,000, but in the next six years amazing development took place. What was the condition of the transport system when I entered Parliament fifteen years ago? Metropolitan transport not only was paying its way but also was meeting interest and sinking-fund charges and making

provision for the replacement of equipment. The financial position of the New South Wales railways was infinitely better than it is to-day and they were giving much better service to the State and to my constituents in particular.

The Stevens-BruXner Government had established a record of water and soil conservation works and assistance to primary producers that I challenge anyone to say could have been surpassed, I came to Parliament as a comparatively young soldier settler, and, therefore, had first-hand knowledge of the benefits that rural citizens had received from sound administration. I had battled through the depression, when the lowest export prices ever known were paid for primary produce, and through the years immediately following, when many problems were encountered by the Government in its desire to serve the people of the State to the best advantage. Seasons then were not so bounteous as they have been recently and we did not enjoy the advantage of the astronomically high prices that primary exports have brought in recent years. The Stevens-BruXner Government gave productive work to the huge army of unemployed that it had inherited, and it was not long before the people were enjoying the rich rewards of the capital expenditure that that administration had undertaken.

What a sharp contrast there is to-day, when we hear so much talk about the "horrible" Federal Government that is supposed to be starving everyone of loan funds and of the proceeds of taxes. This New South Wales administration has spent many millions of pounds received from the Commonwealth, but the people have nothing to show for the extravagant and wasteful expenditure. Let us not forget that the Stevens-BruXner Government introduced the Farmers' Relief Act, amended the Small Debts Recovery Act, and embarked upon schemes for the provision of water supplies, swimming pools, electricity, and many other things that make life worth living in country towns. It is true that the present administration has taken up where the former government left off in the extension of electricity services, and I am glad that it has followed the lead it was given.

Mr. Dickson.]

But let us not think for a moment that this Government was the first to think of providing subsidies for rural electricity. The principle was established by the Stevens-BruXner administration and the present Government has merely carried on the good work. But can the people see anything for the countless millions of pounds that it has spent on other things? Startling development would have taken place if the Government had spent the loan money that it has received over the last twelve years on completing productive works rather than on beginning works and laying foundation stones on so many undertakings that it has had to abandon numbers of them, with the result that the country-side is littered with a jumble of half-finished projects. Any business man or primary producer who conducted his affairs in the same manner would soon find them in the chaotic condition in which the affairs of New South Wales now stand.

The hon. members who moved and seconded the motion mentioned some of the difficulties being experienced by their constituents and, generally, they gave sound support to the cause of the party on whose ticket they were elected. I well remember that in my maiden address I referred to my ideas on democracy. The then Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. J. T. Lang, said that the young man from Temora had made a good speech and had expressed some fine sentiments, but warned me that after I had been in this Chamber for a time the Country Party whips would begin to crack and I should be compelled to forget the ideals that I had expounded. The point is, however, that I belong to a party that does not crack the whips over its members, and I find, after being fifteen years in this House, that I may still freely express my ideas about democracy without hearing the Country Party whips loudly cracking about my head.

Last Thursday I asked the Acting Premier the following question:

I ask the Acting Premier whether some members on the Government side of this House have made statements to the effect that it is of little use making representations to the Government by the elected member of the district concerned, if he happens to be a member of

the Opposition? Is it a fact that some Ministers of the Crown have made similar statements? If these are facts, or in any case, will the Acting Minister make a clear statement refuting the suggestion and thus correct any wrong impression which may have been created?

The reception that it received surprised me. I in no way implied that any representations I had made to a Minister had not received consideration. I merely referred to an insidious whispering campaign that had been conducted in country electorates, particularly at the time of the last general election, to the effect that it would be no use electing someone who would sit in opposition, because he would be unable to get things done for his constituents. I am sure that my mentioning this matter cannot and will not harm me. I am jealous of the democratic Australian way of life and of this ancient institution of Parliament, and my purpose was merely to get from the Premier a statement that would refute the suggestion that had been made. The Acting Premier gave the reply that I expected, and I am sure that everyone will thoroughly agree with it. He said:

I should be very shocked to think that any member on this side of the House or any Minister in the Cabinet would make a statement that if representations were made to the Government by a member who did not happen to be on the Government side, no attention would be paid to them. If the suggestion is that some political gain might be made by the Government's failing or refusing to pay attention to representations from the Opposition side, I know of nothing which, in the long run, could have a more damaging effect on the Government.

Neither do I. I had some basis for my question. A Minister, in the electorates of some of my colleagues, publicly stated during the last election campaign that if the electors wanted their electorates to receive attention they should vote for a Labour supporter, because Labour would be returned to office. Some two months ago I read in the *Coolamon Ganmain Farmers' Review*, which is published at Coolamon, a report of a meeting of the combined branches of the progress associations at Ardlethan, Ganmain and Coolamon, held in Coolamon. I can vouch for the accuracy of the report, because I have since spoken to persons who attended the meeting. The publication, in its issue of 8th May of

this year, reported, among other things, the following remarks made by the president of the Coolamon Progress Association on the question of putting a resolution to the meeting:

After what had been said he thought it was in order and that the letter could be signed and sent to Mr. Graham.

Mr. Kingdon: And Mr. Dickson.

The President: No! I have been advised by Mr. Graham, Mr. Dickson is not in power and we want to get somewhere. Mr. Dickson is a great fellow and I vote for him.

And so the article continues. I complained to the Minister for Agriculture that this was not correct, and that if it was true, the Government should hang its head in shame. The Minister assured me that he did not make the statement alleged, but he did not deny it in the press. However, the article has already had repercussions in my own electorate and I have received a number of letters from constituents asking whether, in view of what Mr. Graham had said, they should put any representations to the Minister as well as to me. Perhaps enough publicity has now been given to the matter, but some of my colleagues might feel disposed to give other examples of what happened in their own electorates at the last election. This is an annoying and stupid way of trying to implant into the people's minds something that is not true. If it were true, it would be tragic. I cannot imagine the existence of only one party in this State. Russia is the only country in the world with only one political party. In Australia a publication called *Who's Who* records the names of most men who have given some public service to the country. It is a large book, but in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics such a book, if it existed, would contain only one page inscribed with one name. No one wants that sort of thing to happen here. In a British democracy Her Majesty's Opposition is just as important as is the Government. The Prime Minister of Australia may be the Commonwealth's leading citizen, but the second position in the land is held by the Leader of the Opposition.

Lt.-Colonel BRUXNER: And he is going to retain that position for a long while yet.

Mr. DICKSON: That is so. Hon. members on the Government side of the House have been swelling their chests like turkey cocks and asking questions of Ministers obviously designed to draw attention to the fact that their numbers are large. I remind the House that the last general elections were held at least five months before the Government need have approached the people. Normally, Labour governments do not go to the country before their time has expired, unless they are sent to the people, but on this occasion the Government chose to have an early election in the hope that the temporary unpopularity of the Commonwealth Government would persuade the electors to return Labour to office. Unfortunately, its plan succeeded. The Government knew perfectly well at the beginning of this year that already the tide had begun to turn and the community had begun to appreciate the merit of the Federal administration. It realised that, if it went its full time, the people by then would be wholeheartedly in accord with the Federal Government's policy and would oust Labour from office in this State. In my own election campaign all supporters of the Government did nothing but repeat misstatements about the Commonwealth Government's preventing the State Government from doing this and that because of its financial policy. Not one of them talked State politics, which they all avoided like the plague. Such a campaign would not be successful to-day.

I remind hon. members that, at the last elections, the franchise was seriously circumscribed by the Government's amendment to postal voting legislation. The Government might as well have abolished postal voting, for what now remains of that system is of little use to anyone. Hon. members will recall that the elections were held last February, a time when most people in dry country areas try to get away to cool watering places on the coast for holidays. Unless such a person resided over 5 miles from the nearest polling booth in his electorate, he was not able to lodge a postal vote. If he was holidaying in an electorate where there was no political contest, he could not lodge a vote at all. Similarly, a country dweller who happened to

be in another State on election day was denied a postal vote unless his place of residence was more than 5 miles from the nearest polling booth. The effect of all this upon narrowly-won electorates such as Armidale and, indeed, Temora, must have been great.

By law a man must exercise his franchise or suffer the penalty of a fine, yet anyone who explains to his Returning Officer that he did not vote in the last elections because he was in another electorate where no contest was held or was absent from the State, has made a reasonable excuse for not voting. The whole thing is a farce. Every one should be encouraged to exercise his right to vote. The facilities provided at polling booths in holiday centres for absentee voters were inadequate and some of my constituents who were on vacation at Narooma last election day have told me that they had to wait up to 1½ hours in a queue to cast their votes, because only one polling clerk was available to record their votes. Some of them were either not inclined to endure this long wait or were unable physically to do so, and did not vote. These facilities should be improved. Nobody should be denied a vote because at election time he happens to be on holiday outside his electorate, or is unable to endure a wait in a queue for such an inordinately long time.

I had hoped that as this debate developed, the House would hear the last of this cry from the Government that the Commonwealth Government is refusing loan money to the States and that the States are starved of revenue. I expected this because the Leader of the Country Party clearly explained to those who were ignorant, the functions of the Loan Council, its constitution, and operation. He said that the representation on the Loan Council is such that the Commonwealth Government is in the minority; that when the Council sits, it simply allocates loan funds for the various States, and the State Government supporters complain when the Federal Government will not make available to this State the difference between its loan allocation from the Council, and what it thinks it should get, although it knows that this excess is not available on

the loan market. This Government wants the Federal authorities to get this money by increased taxation or the issue of Treasury Bills, yet at the same time it criticises the Commonwealth for heavy taxation. There is a good deal of truth in the old saying that "finance is government and government is finance." If the Government had spent wisely the millions of pounds that it has received as tax reimbursements—more than that allotted to any previous Government—it would not now be complaining of lack of finance for essential works in this State. In 1948-49, the last year that the Commonwealth was governed by representatives of the Labour Party, the Loan Council allocated £16,000,000 to New South Wales. In the year 1952-53 the sum so allocated was £51,000,000!

There has been much reference by Government members to uniform taxation. Who introduced it? Why is the Commonwealth Liberal-Country Party Government blamed for it? Uniform taxation was introduced by a Labour government. The New South Wales Labour Government gave away the rights of this State. When uniform taxation was introduced, a formula was prepared by the late Mr. Chifley, which provided that each of the States would get its share of taxation. As the hon. member for Mosman and the Leader of the Country Party have pointed out, the only occasion during the regime of the Federal Labour Government on which New South Wales received more than its quota was when about £3,000,000 was given to it because of a coal strike in New South Wales, whereas the Menzies-Fadden Government has on every occasion given New South Wales much more than the quota provided for in the formula. That Government also made available money from taxation to prevent State works from going to the wall, yet again and again hon. members opposite attack the Commonwealth Government. It is often said that if an incorrect statement is made sufficiently often people will believe it, but hon. members on the Government side cannot even convince themselves. They do not know how the Loan Council operates. They now honestly believe the propaganda that they utter.

The Governor in his speech states:

My Ministers are concerned that financial considerations beyond their control have necessitated the temporary curtailment of some important developmental projects which could contribute to increased primary production. They are concentrating available resources upon those works which can be completed and brought into use within a reasonable period.

A somewhat similar statement has appeared in every Governor's speech during the past twelve years. I can only express the hope that on this occasion the statement of the Governor, prepared for him by his responsible Ministers, is "fair dinkum", and that the Government will at least complete some public works on a priority basis. Another sentence in the Governor's speech reads:

It is the Government's view that along with the need for greater and more efficient primary production, two major problems which require to be solved are the necessity to increase the home-building rate throughout the State and the need to improve the efficient working and economic position of the metropolitan and country transport services.

Let me examine that statement. As I have said previously, when I came into this House fifteen years ago, after the Stevens-Bruхner Government had been in office for six years, the metropolitan transport services were paying their way. I am glad that railway finance improved a little during the past year, but the metropolitan transport services are continuing to lose millions of pounds a year. If these services could be made to pay, there would be a great improvement in the solvency of the State. The finances of the railways have improved because increased fares and freights have been imposed upon the country people.

Lt.-Colonel BRUXNER: Railway freight rates have been increased by as much as 300 per cent.

Mr. DICKSON: That is so, and it must not be forgotten that the man in the country must pay freight charges both ways. There has been an increase of 300 per cent. in the rates on his primary produce, and, in addition, he has to pay high freight charges on the goods that he obtains from the city. That is why there has

been an improvement in the finances of the Department of Railways. It is almost impossible to run a rural railway system in a country that is so sparsely populated without some assistance from the Government, because its passengers are not at its door, as are those who patronise the metropolitan transport services. The Department of Railways must maintain thousands of miles of permanent way. The railways in an undeveloped State cannot be expected always to pay their way, and should receive assistance, but the metropolitan transport services should be placed on a sound financial footing.

When the Acting Leader of the Opposition referred to the forty-hour working week the Acting Premier chided him and inquired whether hon. members on this side would introduce a forty-four-hours working week by legislation. Of course we would not, because we believe in arbitration. The New South Wales Labour Government introduced the forty-hour working week by legislation, and it was that Government which refused the Commissioner for Railways permission to apply to the Arbitration Court for a revision of penalty rates.

It is of no use members on the Government side saying that they support the arbitration system, for they have ignored it on at least two occasions. It must not be forgotten that the difficulties of many government undertakings began with the introduction of the shorter working week, particularly the railways, which have to run day and night, and the hospitals, which have to provide a twenty-four-hours service. I ask hon. members to consider the added costs immediately imposed on such undertakings upon the introduction of the forty-hour week. The forty-hour week would not be so bad if the employees gave value during the whole of the forty hours. When hon. members on the Government side ask whether a Liberal-Country Party government would interfere with the forty-hour working week, they know very well that the answer is "No", because hon. members on this side believe in arbitration. However, we would not refuse any departmental head permission to apply to the appropriate tribunal for an alteration in working conditions.

Mr. Dickson.]

I support the sentiments expressed by hon. members on this side of the House who to-day said that, in their opinion, the Housing Commission would never effectively build homes for all the people. One hon. member said that it was never intended that it should do so. I believe that the Government is responsible for the almost complete cessation of the construction of homes by private enterprise because if a man is a landlord he is, in the eyes of the Government, almost a criminal. To-day nobody will build homes to let to tenants as an investment, because all the legislation passed by the Government has been against the landlord. If the Housing Commission is to be retained in its present form—and I presume that it will be, because the housing needs of the people are so urgent—a large proportion of the homes it builds should be erected in country districts. Too large a share of them is being built in the city. The Government says that it believes in decentralisation. The first question asked by anybody who wants to establish an industry in a country town such as those in my electorate is, "What is the housing position? Can we house our employees?" When such people are told, "No, not unless you can do it yourself," they think twice before establishing their industry away from the city.

A few homes have been built by the Housing Commission in Wyalong and Temora, but compared with what has been done in the city the Housing Commission has done very little on a population basis throughout my electorate. That is quite wrong. The Housing Commission is using State money and materials, and if it is to be continued it should do the right thing by the people in the country areas.

I touched on the problems facing the railways. His Excellency said:

My Ministers feel that the main problem now to be faced in regard to the railway service is the bridging of the gap between expenditure and income.

That is surely a profound statement, and doubtless occurred to the writer in a moment of inspiration. His Excellency went on:

The Budget for the financial year now current will shortly be placed before you and you will be asked to provide for the public

services of the State. A carefully planned programme of public works and other services has been drawn up . . .

I daresay that when the Budget and Estimates are presented we shall be better equipped to discuss the Government's proposals, and that in due course we shall have before us the bills that were referred to in His Excellency's speech. Many of them, are obviously only chicken feed.

I should like to congratulate maiden speakers on both sides of the House, in addition to the mover and seconder of the Address-in-Reply, for the contribution that they made to this debate. I have not heard many maiden speeches from my own side of the House, though last night I did hear that of the hon. member for Ashfield. I was especially interested in the speeches of the hon. members for George's River and Kogarah. One does not ordinarily interrupt a maiden speech, but those gentlemen seemed to have been among us for so long that I was afraid I should have to leave the Chamber lest I interjected in the belief that they were old members. They had become as familiar to us as the table of this House. Few men make a maiden speech without displaying signs of nervousness, but they were not evident in either of those hon. gentleman and I can only attribute it to the fact that they were so much at home in these surroundings that they did not suffer from the strangeness felt by most new hon. members. I will not say that I hope their stay here will be a long one, but I do hope that they will enjoy continued health and prosperity.

Mr. EARL (Fairfield) [5.24]: I am deeply conscious of the honour of representing the Australian Labour Party in this Parliament, and of belonging to a Government that has had the distinction of being elected to office for a fifth consecutive term—this time with a record majority. I should also like to express my confidence in this Government's ability to legislate and govern in the best interests of the people. I know that my confidence is shared by many thousands of citizens in this State. Clear evidence of that was to be found in the record majority won by

the Government at the polls. Hon. members opposite do not seem to relish that fact and there has been some discussion of it.

I believe that the basic reasons for this Government's success are three in number. The first is its great record of achievement, and the broad vision that it has shown in its long-range planning. For the first time in the history of New South Wales there has been a plan embracing new hospitals, schools and great conservation schemes. Unfortunately, the Federal Government has sabotaged not only those plans but also the plans of many a private industrial undertaking. The people do not forget these things. The second reason is the Opposition's want of a positive and practical approach to modern problems. The third is the ruinous and punitive legislation that has been enacted by the present Federal Government. It is crippling not only State works but also many private industrial projects.

Hon. members opposite were obliged to suffer the reflected ignominy of their Federal colleagues. It was most unfortunate for them and of no little advantage to us, but the crushing defeat of the Liberal-County Party coalition cannot be laid at the door of the Federal Government alone. The Acting Leader of the Opposition tried to explain away the defeat by saying that the campaign had been fought not on State but on Federal issues. That was hardly sporting of him, and will not be greatly appreciated by his Federal colleagues, who must face the electors in the near future. Only a political bigot would deny that Labour's record and policy won it countless votes. It may very well be that hon. members opposite have been on that side of the Chamber for so long they have gone stale. The same argument might be applied to my colleagues but I think that the freshness of their approach to new problems will give the lie to that.

Many aspects of His Excellency's speech are worthy of comment, but I want to say something about education in particular, because I have had some experience in that field. The proposals which I shall lay before the House may not be stated in the way that I intended but it is the duty

of Parliament to have a more intimate knowledge of education. I do not subscribe to the view that the only time a member of Parliament should be interested in a school is when the toilets need fixing or a new fence should be erected or the teachers are pressing for an increase in salary. Hon. members should not be mere puppets who respond to the jerks of people outside of Parliament. They should have an intimate knowledge and take a practical and intelligent interest in the schools and the policy adopted for them.

I pay tribute to the great job that has been done for education by the Government. Never before has such emphasis been placed upon education, or such strides made in the building of schools, the training of teachers and the improvement in teaching technique. The recent phenomenal natural increase in population together with the arrival of large numbers of immigrants has cancelled out much of the benefit of additional school buildings and the provision of more teachers. According to information received from the Teachers' Federation many school problems cannot be solved unless further financial assistance is given by the Federal Government. Until that "reluctant dragon" brings State finances into line or itself is disposed of, a solution will not be found. But despite many difficulties, it is possible, factually, to say that within recent years so magnificent has been the work done under the able and sympathetic control of the Acting Premier, that he is universally regarded as the greatest Minister for Education that this State has ever known. Only for the fact that the distribution of loan money has been deliberately tightened, the progress would have been much greater.

The first item to be considered in education is the environment in which the school child lives and works. It must be remembered that he spends a great deal of his time at school and it is most important that the school building should be a pleasing place. The rooms must be light and airy and the colour schemes stimulating but not exhausting. It is possible for a child to find that a colour eventually exhausts him. Fortunately, education policy is paying close attention to these aspects but sometimes an occasional prod is needed

because trends can slacken. Colour is playing an increasingly important part in our lives and it is our duty to see that it is exploited in the schools. For many years the classroom in which the child spends most of his impressionable years has been a dull and depressing place and only the alert and imaginative child has been able to survive its doleful influence. If the classrooms are attractive the child is in an atmosphere in which he will thrive. He will be encouraged to take an interest in his work and a pride in his school. The result will be twofold. The first is the cultivation of a healthy social attitude towards the property of other people. Because he takes a pride in his classroom he will look after its furniture and equipment. One practical effect will be a lowering of maintenance costs because of less damage. Often school playgrounds are more depressing than the classrooms, and generally speaking they are the most barren places in the district. The effect is to arouse in the child's mind a feeling akin to horror.

The development and improvement of playgrounds should be a purely local responsibility. The Education Department cannot be expected to be entirely responsible for them. The headmaster with his staff and the local parents and citizens' association can do a great deal to beautify a playground. Trees and shrubs can be planted to provide not only a pleasing decorative effect but also shade for the children and a break from the wind. The mind of a child is always stimulated by things of beauty and this has its effect upon his actions. If a child is placed in beautiful surroundings his behaviour is entirely different from what it would be if placed in a barren enclosure. In dismal surroundings he acts like a dog let off a chain and careers about madly. If he is used to beautiful surroundings and decent behaviour in his childhood he will naturally carry that attitude into his adult life. That is the second important aspect of proper school environment.

I appreciate, as do all hon. members, that the school is supplementary, or complementary to the home, but unless the wherewithal is available to provide the proper environment the goal cannot be reached. Every effort should be made to

make this possible. An important influence in the child's environment is the school teacher. Environment is not confined to physical surroundings; it includes association with fellow beings. The way a person acts and speaks has a tremendous influence on the company in which he moves. In some company, men are decorous and gentlemanly, but when moved into another group they become rough and ready. That illustration emphasises the important part that teachers can play in moulding the characters of children, and the aim should be an influence of refinement. Generally speaking, teachers are of a splendid type. It would be difficult to find a body of people with higher professional ideals, and every safeguard should be taken to prevent the standard from being lowered. Fortunately, the Government has established several teacher-training centres, from which highly-trained personnel are sent out. It is not possible, owing to lack of finance, to provide all the facilities needed for them to put into practice the technique which they have been taught and that is a difficulty which must be overcome. There is a tendency at times on the part of some teachers to indulge in showmanship and that is one of the fruits of the promotion system.

When a new inspector goes into an inspectorate the word may go around that he favours a particular type of teaching. The head teacher of a school will urge his teachers, almost frantically, to concentrate on that technique so that when the inspector visits the school he will conclude that the head teacher and his staff are doing an excellent job. The head teacher may overlook the fact that the inspector's ideas are not the best, and selfishly aim only at receiving a good report. It may not suit the headmaster at all to get out of step with the inspector.

The same difficulty arises to a lesser degree in the relations of headmaster and teachers. A headmaster may be after his mark and get on to some scheme that he has seen used effectively by another principal. It may be nothing but pure showmanship and have no great educational value attached to it. Nevertheless, he may put on a show and the whole school must fall into line with his point of view.

Teachers may find that it does not matter whether the headmaster's idea is sound, they have to do what he wants them to do, so that he can get the credit that he seeks. This matter of personal ambition affecting the curriculum and teaching methods has to be examined carefully. The new school syllabus makes this scrutiny even more necessary. That syllabus is, in many respects, a good one, but it has undoubtedly lowered the general standards in our State schools. To my mind the adoption of the new syllabus was a retrograde move.

In any activity, the lowering of the standard aimed at must mean a lowering of the standard attained. That result is inevitable. I should have no objection to the lowering of the standard if it were possible to reach that lower standard, but this can never be the case. Members of this Chamber know from their experience as men of the world that any reduction of standards at which a system is aimed means also a reduction of the standards achieved. This move to lower the standard of the school syllabus is dangerous and will prove bad for education in general. The syllabus is filled with nice phrases, but I feel that the New South Wales Education Department would be failing if it adopted such a proposal unreservedly. The results of general competitive examinations show that already State schools are not attaining the heights of achievement that they should.

I remember clearly that at the beginning of this year there were indignant letters to the press voicing complaints about State school pupils not enjoying the number of bursaries that the writers considered should have been awarded to them. It was even suggested that the private schools were getting preferential treatment because the number of bursaries awarded to private school pupils was in such favourable proportions to the number awarded to pupils from State schools. The Minister, in reply, rightly pointed out that there is no preference whatever. Indeed, preference is impossible because of the way papers are marked. But those of us who are interested in the standards of our State schools see the warning in bursary results. About one-fifth of this State's

school population attends private schools and when those pupils are in competition with pupils from State schools at general examinations, they win a preponderance of the available bursaries. With the present system of grading I.Qs. and other methods of assessing the capabilities of pupils, children who are admitted to high schools are a selected band of boys and girls. Every one is capable of doing the high school course with ease. Yet at the end of the scholastic year, when they are examined, in competition with other children who are not selected nearly so scientifically, they are beaten, in adverse proportion to their numbers. The reason for this situation is to be found, not in the standards that are set, but in the standards that are attained.

Some time ago, the external examinations system was thrown overboard by the Education Department and a system of internal examinations was introduced. The result of this was that from school to school there were tremendous differences in the standards of tests given internally to pupils. When this is so, how can any effective comparison be made between schools and between pupils? Let me put it to the House in this fashion. Here are two schools in which the pupils are for all purposes of educational comparison equal. They come from the same types of suburbs, the same types of homes, and their abilities cover the same ranges of I.Qs. Assume that at one school, the headmaster aims at a very high standard, sets difficult examination papers and marks them with a heavy hand. His school will send fewer children to the high school than the other school at which, for purposes of my illustration, we will assume there is a headmaster who aims at a less exacting standard sets much easier papers, and marks them lightly. I will not say the system is open to abuse because these things are not consciously and callously done, but the very system itself is conducive to weakness.

Children from the different schools are competing for entry to selected high schools through which they will graduate to the University and it is only proper that there should be some sort of examination paper for them that will obviate all the risks

Mr. Earl.]

that I have shown are attaching to internal examinations. A general external examination is the only logical procedure. I know that the Teachers' Federation, to which I belong, is fostering the internal examination system even though it admits the existence of this wide variation of standards. This nation depends on the education of children for sound citizens of the future. Hon. members have to realise that these things are happening and, even if they are not in a position to instruct, they are in a position to ensure that departmental heads do nothing that is damaging to the efficiency of State schools. I know that the Acting Minister for Education and his permanent head, the Director of Education, have joined in discussions of the external examination system and that that system, which was to come into force this year has been postponed for another twelve months. The Minister will, I am sure, want to consider that system more before he makes up his mind and I hope that he comes to the conclusion that I feel is right.

A matter that was brought to my attention when I first came to this Assembly as a member, is sex education in schools. This is a vital subject that touches the Government and the people very closely. It concerns the morality of our State. Sex education can be undertaken according to two concepts. One is that it may be regarded as the veterinary surgeon, or the breeder of stock horses, regards the mating of animals in his charge—as a purely physical relationship. Some persons say that sex education should consist merely of education in human anatomy, but, to my mind, human beings are on a higher plane than stud horses or cattle or meandering tomcats. The most important consideration in human relations is morality. Men and women have a system of ethics and they have to live up to it. They have to be taught those ethics at some stage and they are most receptive to that teaching when they are children.

The communist line in sex education is to concentrate on the physical aspects. Indeed, recently in Sydney, the communists promoted a debate on this question. They are active on this topic and they

have misled some persons into advocating the introduction of sex education on physical lines alone into the schools of this State. They wish to ignore the moral aspect. There is a definite move to have sex education introduced into the school curriculum and, if this action is taken, that education has to be of a standard that has every regard to physical and moral considerations. It is already taught to a degree in secondary schools and we, as a Christian people, should insist that continued sex education will stress the moral, instead of the physical. There is no need for anyone to have an intimate knowledge of anatomy to be a moral being. Indeed, an intimate knowledge of anatomy without training in moral values could lead to race suicide. It could turn some young persons into most undesirable types and lead them to indulge in most undesirable practices. The danger of what could happen if the point of view that stresses physical education only were adopted, and education on those lines were introduced into the schools, is evident. It is amazing that the churches have not interested themselves in this matter. They must know the tendency that is now evident and the type of persons who are trying to have sex education, with the emphasis on the physical aspects, introduced into the schools. Hon. members must take care to prevent this type of instruction from being established almost before they are aware of it. If that happened we should then have all the trouble of trying completely to reorganise sex instruction in schools. It is up to us as members of this House to ensure that if sex education is introduced into the school curriculum the proper thing is done, and I emphasise my warning that at present there are definite moves afoot to introduce it.

All of us are well aware that finance is at present strictly limited and is making the task of the Minister for Education very difficult. The paucity of funds requires careful supervision of their expenditure. Probably all hon. members have access to the journal of the Teachers' Federation, though I do not know whether many of them read it. On the front page of the issue for July of this year there appeared

a photograph of the new gymnasium at the Fort-street girls' high school. The structure cost £25,000, was built of brick and was equipped with hot and cold showers, kitchen facilities, and a sick bay containing three beds, as well as other amenities. That is a fine thing for the comparatively few girls who will use it. The pupils at Fort-street girls' high school are relatively privileged, but the 2,000 children who attend the Chester Hill public school do not enjoy up-to-date amenities. Two years ago there were six teachers on the staff of this school, whereas today there are twenty-three. But even yet there is not a suitable building there. Without being over-critical I think I can safely say that the £25,000 that was spent on the gymnasium at Fort-street was not expended in the best interests of the school children of New South Wales. It would have served a much better purpose had it gone towards the construction of classrooms to accommodate the infants' classes, which are now marched across the road to temporary classrooms at the hall of the local branch of the Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia.

It is obviously impossible for the Minister to watch the spending of every penny of his department's funds, and officers of the department evidently have fallen down on the job in allowing £25,000 to be spent merely to allow a relatively small number of high school girls to stretch their supple limbs, while children are taught at the Chester Hill school in unlined premises and temporary classrooms. It is my endeavour to be constructively critical. No one knows better than I do the fine work that is done generally by the Education Department. However, every organisation has weaknesses, and it is my purpose to focus attention on them and to have them rectified. In my opinion the task of the Minister for Education is too big for one man. I have a suggestion to make that I know will not be popular with the Teachers' Federation, and, perhaps, with many teachers who think that members of Parliament are mere puppets who, at their behest, will press for increased allowances for teachers. If members were nothing better than that they would not be acting with the intelligence of which they are capable.

I suggest that a small committee of perhaps five members who have some knowledge of education be formed to help the Minister in the solution of the many problems associated with our education system. This is a logical procedure and would be most effective, and I am sure that no sensible person would object to it.

In these times it is impossible for the Minister to watch adequately all the trends in education. It is a highly controversial field of activity, in which today there is a great deal of stunting, showmanship and psychological nonsense. Hon. members are no doubt aware of the manner in which so-called expert psychologists will, in a trice, convert a person into an algebraic equation, as it were, and say what he will do next. But when the acid test comes, the psychologists are often found to be wrong, because men have individual personalities, feelings and impulses that cannot be altogether accurately predicted. The committee that I propose would do much to remove the abuses that are likely to occur in education and would greatly improve teaching in our schools. In conclusion, I once again pay tribute to the Minister, the administrative officers of the department, and the teachers for their marvellous work under difficult conditions. I know that they appreciate constructive criticism and it is my endeavour to help them to do a better job for the children of this State.

Debate adjourned.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker left the chair at 5.58 p.m. The House resumed at 7.30 p.m.]

ROYAL COMMISSION: THE HON. JOSHUA GEORGE ARTHUR, M.L.A.

TABLING OF REPORT.

Mr. HEFFRON (Acting Premier) (Maroubra) [7.31]: I table the report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry in connection with various matters relating to Joshua George Arthur and Reginald Aubrey Doyle and other matters.

Motions of urgency and for suspension of standing orders agreed to.

Mr. HEFFRON: (Acting Premier) (Maroubra) [7.32]: I move:

That the report of the Royal Commission in connection with matters relating to Joshua George Arthur and Reginald Aubrey Doyle be printed.

The matters inquired into by the Royal Commissioner are well known to the hon. members of this House. Of the terms of reference, the first of the matters which the Commissioner was directed to inquire into and report upon was undoubtedly the most important. It was:

Whether Joshua George Arthur acted corruptly or improperly in any association or dealing with Reginald Aubrey Doyle.

The findings of the Royal Commissioner on this question are:

(a) In view of what has been said earlier, I find that Joshua George Arthur did not act corruptly in any dealing or association with Reginald Aubrey Doyle.

(b) I find that Joshua George Arthur acted improperly in the following associations and dealings with Reginald Aubrey Doyle:

(i) Mr. Arthur in his dealings with Mr. Doyle, after knowledge of Mr. Doyle's misappropriation of the £1,400 referred to in paragraph (4) (d) above, acted improperly within the meaning of the definition I have accepted as the correct one. Mr. Arthur had, as I have stated above, the knowledge I have referred to as a "background circumstance" in paragraphs (4) (a) and (4) (b) above, and the knowledge of Mr. Doyle's conduct referred to in paragraphs (4) (c) and (4) (e). Mr. Arthur must have realised, by early 1952, also, that Mr. Doyle was not of the financial standing that Mr. Doyle had led Mr. Arthur to believe that he was.

Mr. Arthur knew, very early in 1952, that Mr. Doyle had bought a vehicle from Construction Services Ltd., through the Australian Guarantee Corporation on hire purchase, and that he was quite unable to pay his gambling debts.

By reason of these matters, the veneer of wealth and respectability assumed by Mr. Doyle must have worn thin, almost, if not entirely, to vanishing point, and Mr. Arthur must have realised this and, it must have been driven home to Mr. Arthur's mind that Mr. Doyle was a completely worthless individual, void of rectitude and undeserving of any kind of trust or confidence which might be reposed in him. Mr. Arthur's subsequent acts of commission and of omission in this regard, such as are

mentioned in paragraphs (4) (c) (xx), (4) (d) (xx), (4) (d) (xxiii), (4) (d) (xxiv), (4) (d) (xxv) (omitting therefrom contact of a purely social nature), (4) (f) (v) and (4) (e) (h) above, I find, pass the bounds of mere indiscretion, unwisdom or foolishness, and were discreditable or seriously reprehensible in a person occupying the position of a Minister of the Crown, and constituted a substantial breach of the recognised standards of right dealing to be expected of a Minister of the Crown.

(ii) The dealings and transactions referred to in paragraph (4) (c) above are, I find, such as brings Mr. Arthur's conduct in relation thereto also precisely within the definition of "improper conduct". It amounts to a grave departure from recognised standards of rectitude to be expected of a Minister of the Crown, and is such as would meet with condemnation by right-minded citizens and was dishonourable.

(iii) The association and dealing by Mr. Arthur with Mr. Doyle in relation to Mr. Crowe are, too, on the facts as I have found them, "Improper".

Indeed, Mr. Miller conceded that if Mr. Arthur had known that Mr. Doyle had had criminal convictions, it would be improper on his part to have given Mr. Doyle, in effect, a reference as to character, or to do anything which would have given a cachet or standing of respectability and worth to Mr. Doyle.

There is no real distinction, for this purpose, between knowledge that Mr. Doyle actually had convictions, and the sure and certain knowledge of him which Mr. Arthur at that time possessed.

Mr. Arthur's conduct, in this aspect, also, must be regarded as a serious departure from recognised standards of right-dealing to be expected of a Cabinet Minister, and is such as would undoubtedly meet with general condemnation by right-minded citizens, and was not honourable.

(c) I therefore answer the question propounded in term 1 of Your Excellency's reference as follows:—

Not corruptly, but improperly in relation to the matters set out above.

The hon. member for Kahibah is not now a Minister of the Crown, but the Government has given very careful consideration to the Royal Commissioner's report and to the findings which I have quoted as they might affect his position as a member of this House. In the light

of these findings the Government feels that it should take certain definite action in the matter. However, the hon. member is to address the House a little later and I shall await the delivery of his speech before intimating what that action is.

Mr. HOWARTH (Maitland) [7.40]: I thank the Acting Premier for the privilege he gave of a few minutes' perusal of the report, which he handed to me a little while ago. It is a voluminous document and in the short time I have had at my disposal it has been impossible to examine it thoroughly. However, the Acting Premier has given the gist of the findings. The report has fully justified the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition and members on this side of the House who urged the appointment of a royal commission to inquire into certain disquieting rumours that had been prevalent around the House concerning events on these premises. The approach of the Government to the matter was one of great reluctance, as was indicated by the Premier on March 11th, 1953, when he said:

... members of the Opposition, who, though apparently very jealous of the privileges of the House; are quite careless of men's characters which they tried to destroy prior to the meeting of this Parliament. They are not concerned that a responsible Minister of the Government has had to stand out of the Government because of scurrilous statements made about him. They brought irresponsible people from another Parliament to make damning statements against the character of members of this Government. The Government had no course but to agree to the clamour of the Leader of the Opposition and his supporters for a royal commission to inquire into some of the statements that were made.

Mr. SEIFFERT: He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone.

Mr. HOWARTH: That indicates the attitude of the Premier when he was asked to appoint a royal commission. He created in the public mind an impression that the Government was being forced to set up the commission as a result of scurrilous and completely irresponsible statements by the Leader of the Opposition and members on this side of the House. The persistence of the Leader of the Opposition eventually led to the appointment of the Royal Commission though

the Premier did everything possible to evade it and pilloried the Leader of the Opposition and those who, supporting him, claimed that the allegations were serious enough to warrant inquiry. The findings of the Royal Commissioner have vindicated the actions of the Leader of the Opposition. High standards of political conduct must be maintained in all parliaments and it is vital that the integrity of parliamentary institutions be at the highest possible level. The report indicates a careless and indifferent attitude on the part of the Premier to public opinion and to the responsibility of the Government to maintain a standard of conduct at the highest possible level. I do not labour the question but repeat that the report has justified the action of the Leader of the Opposition and those who supported him in the appointment of the Royal Commission. I was interested to hear the Acting Premier say that the Government had decided upon a certain course of action, and until that is revealed I do not intend to say anything further.

Lt.-Colonel BRUXNER (Tenterfield) [7.45]: My colleagues and I feel no satisfaction to hear that a member of this honourable House and a Minister of the Crown has fallen from grace. At the same time, we realise that this old institution of Parliament must go on and it is incumbent upon all of us who are members of it so to comport ourselves that we do nothing that might bring discredit upon Parliament or lessen the degree of confidence that the people of New South Wales should have in this Assembly. We must recall that the inquiry was started by Parliament itself agreeing to waive certain of its privileges. On that occasion, speaking on behalf of my colleagues and myself, I said that we were only too willing to do that in order that the fullest light might be thrown upon proceedings and upon the actions of any member or official of the House. The inquiry has brought about the result that the Acting Premier has read to us, and it is to the credit of this Parliament that it waived privileges on that occasion and opened the way for a thorough investigation into all the charges that were appearing in the press and statements of public men. Parliament itself cannot be held

responsible for the misdoings of one hon. member. That is a matter that rests upon the shoulders of the member himself and upon those of the Government of which he is a supporter. Parliament must go on; it is a British institution by which the people in a free democracy govern themselves. This should be a reminder to all of us that we have grave responsibilities indeed when we enter this Chamber to serve the people.

Mr. ARTHUR (Kahibah) [7.49]: When the good name and fair reputation of any member are impugned, all just-thinking men readily concede to him the right and opportunity to defend that which is dearest to him. I have been attacked, my good name assailed, and my reputation besmirched. I know that hon. members will not withdraw from me the free and proper exercise of the right to defend myself, and the use and the opportunity to do so. If the pressure of this matter confounds my thoughts and confuses my language, your greatest patience will be available to me in this extremity to alleviate, in some measure, the task which I now undertake.

The occasion is most pitiful and cruel. It is an occasion which neither I nor indeed any member could ever face with complete equanimity or composure. It is the more painful and cruel because the report which has just been tabled has and must be rejected by me.

I do not accept the report, and I do not accept the findings. This I make clear at the outset, because everything I shall say to-night will be based upon the fact that the Commissioner has made fundamental and disastrous mistakes in his misguided approach to the problems before him, and in his findings of fact. He has misunderstood the terms of reference committed to him, and, in the outcome, he has made findings which could not, do not and will not stand the test of proper examination.

Before I deal with this report at all, I feel entitled and bound to remind hon. members of the history of my relations with this House, my electorate and the Government. I came here in 1935, a young man of twenty-nine years of age, fresh from a victory which had changed my life

from that of a teacher in the Education Department to a member of this House. My party was then in opposition. My father and my grandfather before him have been, and, indeed, my father still is, a pillar of the movement which has won and has retained in the judgment of the people a foremost place in the political affairs of this community. I grew up, from my earliest years, in close and active association with that movement in the Newcastle district, and I am proud and always will be proud of that origin and of those activities of mine.

There can be no doubt—and I think hon. members on both sides of the House will be ready enough to concede this—that I have been since 1935 an active member of my party, and that I have made politics and the political principles and beliefs of the movement to which I belong a guiding influence in my life.

It was for these reasons, perhaps, that in the course of time, when my party was returned to power, I became, by vote of my fellow members, a member of the Cabinet. That was perhaps the proudest moment in my life. I became a Minister of the Crown. The nature of my position and the obligations attaching to me as a member of this House and as a Minister were and are proper matters for examination, appraisal, criticism, condemnation, or blame. I have never shirked the necessity of being ready at all times to give an account of my stewardship. Members on both sides of the House will, I hope, concede that, whatever may be said about some of the controversial questions which later arose, no criticism of my integrity as a Minister or as a member, or of my diligence, efficiency, or application to the tasks of my ministry, has ever been made.

It has never been said, and it is not now said, that I have ever preferred private interests to an extent and in a manner inconsistent with the due performance of my duties as a Minister. I have gained nothing materially or in any way from the performance of those duties other than the proper and the normal emoluments of my office. This I say and I know that it is conceded on all sides.

The events which have led to the findings in this report unfolded against the background of an election which was critically important to the Government of which I was a member. That election was of critical importance to both parties—opposite and on this side—not merely for State purposes, but also because of the highly controversial policies and issues which had made such a deep impact upon the people. As events showed, for reasons of Federal as much as of State policy, there was, in fact, in the minds of the people a desire, which it expressed overwhelmingly, that the Government of which I was then a member should remain in office. Cruel and irresponsible allegations were made against me of corruption and criminal wrongdoing with Reginald Aubrey Doyle. I shall not now take up the time of the House with the way in which the allegations were made, or with their details. It is perhaps significant to say that the hon. member for Mackellar had no evidence to support him in the Royal Commission, and gave no evidence. These allegations were made solely in an attempt to defeat this Government.

My right as a citizen at that stage—and even now I suppose—was to sue for libel those who made the allegations. I did so. Had I persisted in the exercise of those rights a jury of my fellow citizens would ultimately have determined the rights and wrongs of this matter. Ranging above those jurors are the various courts of appeal to correct mistakes made in the hearing; but I felt that I had a higher duty to my party and to my Government, and in answer to the call of that duty I voluntarily and personally asked for a royal commission.

I am not a lawyer. You know, Mr. Speaker, that I am, like you, a plain layman. I did not know when I made that decision that I was, in effect, abandoning my rights to have these issues determined by a jury in a civil court. I did not know that I was giving up my fundamental right, as a citizen, to have charges proved against me. I did not know that I was to become a mere witness in an inquiry in which no charges were made and in which there was no onus and obligation

to prove charges before I could be called upon to answer. I did not know that I was abandoning forever the right to have the facts determined by my fellow citizens—by my peers, as jurors. Above all, I did not know that I was giving into the hands of one man, once and for all, the right and opportunity not merely to decide the facts but to make findings which could ruin me politically and bring pain and suffering to my wife, my parents and my family, without any right whatsoever to appeal from these findings, without any prospect whatsoever of having them analysed, reconsidered and proved wrong before a higher court or other judicial authority.

Had I been charged with the foul crime of murder, of moral perversion or depravity, or of defiling a young girl, I should have been entitled to have the charge brought against me in a court of justice, to hear and question the evidence against me, to decide whether or not to step on to the witness stand; but above all, to have the question of my guilt or innocence tried by a constitutional tribunal, namely, a jury of not one but twelve persons, and to exercise my rights by appeal to higher tribunals should the judge presiding at my trial misdirect the jury in point of law, or otherwise vitiate the trial by bias, instability or error on his part.

I was not charged with such foul crimes. I do not wish to pause for more than a moment, before coming to the details of this report, to remind hon. members of the real nature and character of a royal commission. It is a proceeding which perhaps no one can say is unnecessary.

There must be, ready to the hand of a government, some means of inquiry into controversial facts when occasion arises, but it is surely a needlessly cruel and inefficient system which puts the whole life of a man, once and for all—beyond hope of correction or reconsideration—in the hands of a single human being. When charged with a crime a man is judged by twelve citizens. When a man seeks to recover damages his case is heard and considered by four jurors; but when a man's whole political career is at stake this

system allows the mistake of one man to go uncorrected. It prevents any possibility of reconsideration. I did not know of those things when I gave away my rights.

It is too late now, I suppose, for me to complain about giving away my rights, but I suggest that for the sake of others—other hon. members of this Chamber—some consideration must, at some time, be given to the matters I have mentioned so that never again shall a Minister of the Crown, a member of Parliament, or, indeed, anyone, be deprived of the right of appeal when his reputation and his career are involved.

I asked for a royal commission. The electors were so informed and, as might have been expected, the charges that were made had no effect on me or on the Government of which I am a member. We were returned with a resounding victory. I debated these charges with my antagonist, Mr. Wentworth, in my own electorate, and there I maintained my position and I was returned with a majority similar to that of the previous election—a 2 to 1 majority. Before the elections, the terms of reference were settled, and after the elections the Commissioner was appointed. Parliament itself at the time, by resolution of both Houses, gave up—surrendered—its time-honoured and hard-won privileges to permit the Commissioner to inquire into the matters in the terms of reference. I gave up, in addition to the matters I have mentioned, my civil rights, and, as I can see now, I was placed in the position of losing one of my basic and precious rights, a right so eloquently expressed by Professor Dicey in his well-known work on the British Constitution, in the following terms—and I ask hon. members to listen to these words which he propounded:

The right that no man should be punishable or be lawfully made to suffer in body or goods except for a distinct breach of the law established in the ordinary legal manner before the ordinary courts of the land.

I say to hon. members on both sides of this House, "Take those words unto yourselves and examine them."

Upon the advice of the former Attorney-General I withdrew my writs so that there might be no possibility of any question arising as to the right of the Commissioner to inquire into the matters covered by the

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terms of reference. I withdrew my writs and put myself in the hands of the Commissioner.

So, Mr. Speaker, I found myself with all protection, whether of privilege or civil rights, removed—removed—and facing a one-man tribunal to which was allotted a task which may fairly be said was unique in the entire history of British law and of royal commissions. Never before had this been done—a task of such dimensions and responsibility, involving as it did an investigation of happenings in this honourable House; never before in British history had it been committed to a single person, either inside or outside this House.

Reginald Aubrey Doyle is now known, both inside and outside this House, to be a criminal with many convictions; a man whose capacity for trickery, deceit and fraud is, perhaps, unsurpassed in the history of crime in this State. This time last year he was accepted throughout the community, and, indeed, by hon. members on both sides of this House, as a person of good name and reputation, but at the beginning of this year, at the time of the last elections there was a hue and cry for his capture. He had disappeared after obtaining, by fraud and other criminal devices, vast sums of money from astute, able, and hard-headed business men and professional men in this community. Those men had dealings with him, Reginald Aubrey Doyle. Those men were deceived by him. Those men associated with him for the purposes of those dealings, but no judgment has been sought or passed upon them for such association. I do not ask for any judgment of them. I am content to believe that they were decent, honest citizens, and are to be pitied and not condemned. The charges that were preferred against him, and after his surrender were the charges upon which he was convicted and sentenced to ten years' penal servitude, occasioned dramatic interest and caused great public consternation.

The allegations which were then made were made with the intention of implying that in some unspecified way I had been concerned with some of those crimes. They were crimes of

fraud—serious fraud, wholesale swindling. That was the wrong association attributed to me. Those were the circumstances in which His Excellency issued a commission to District Court Judge Amsberg to inquire into my association with Doyle. The allegations against me were then shocking, revolting. They were quite untrue and have been found to be so, but the drama of Doyle's disappearance, surrender and conviction, the nature of his crimes and the sentence imposed upon him have been allowed to colour the whole of the happenings since that disappearance. Hon. members will find when they read the report that four or five lines state my complete innocence—four or five lines in a report of some eighty pages of typewriting!

The Commissioner in his report said in effect that it is easy to be wise after the event and it is terribly important to remember that none of us knew this time last year of any of the things about Doyle that we know to-day. His Honour agreed that it is easy to be wise after the event.

One thing, however, that is crystal clear, and in this the Commissioner agreed, is that there is no evidence whatsoever that I was associated directly or indirectly in any criminal or any other wrongdoing by Doyle. There was no evidence in that regard whatsoever. It is also conceded that I did not know of any of his convictions. But, it is said, I am guilty of association with Doyle—not guilty of any wrongdoing; not guilty of any corruption; not guilty of any crime; not guilty of the wrongful receipt of any moneys; not guilty of participation in his illegal importation of cars; not guilty of association with him in any wrongdoing whatsoever. It simply says that I am guilty of associating with him. That is what His Honour said!

One of the most vicious methods of judging a man guilty is upon the theory of guilt by association. It has been the invariable practice of our courts and of our Legislature never to suggest or assert guilt merely by association. It is conceded that I did not know of any of Doyle's crimes or convictions but the Commissioner himself says that when Doyle failed to pay to my friend, Mr. C. J. Chesterfield,

the sum of £1,400 for a car, after he had practised a trick on me to get me to permit the cashing by him of the cheque for that sum of money, thereafter I must have known—then, from that moment—that he in effect was a criminal; and I should not have associated with him from then on. I was supposed to have the X-ray mind.

It is not suggested that I was in any way associated with Doyle in this trick about this £1,400. Indeed, it is agreed on all sides that I myself was the object of his treachery. It is I who was tricked. I believed that he had failed to pay my friend Chesterfield the purchase price of the car. My friend Chesterfield was willing to extend Doyle further time, and did so. Chesterfield did that. Doyle later, in October of last year, actually paid me to give to Chesterfield, the sum of £700. He still owes Chesterfield £700, which I feel morally obligated to pay myself.

The Commissioner now says that I should not have concluded that that was a failure to pay the purchase price; I should have concluded that it was a misappropriation of the money: I should not have been tricked to that extent.

The Commissioner proceeds then to argue that every association that I had with Doyle after he failed to pay the £1,400 to Chesterfield and after he succeeded in inducing me to permit the cheque of £1,400 to be cashed by him was improper conduct, and he names and specifies each occasion.

It is not suggested that on any of these occasions after February, 1952, I did anything wrong. That is not suggested. He does not suggest that I committed any crime. He does not suggest that I corruptly received any money or any benefit. He convicts me of mere association with Doyle, after something which, he finds, I should have regarded as a crime.

I say with all the depth of sincerity that I can muster on this terrible occasion that I did not regard as a crime what Doyle did in February, 1952, in connection with the cashing of that cheque. I am not a lawyer. The car in question was not my car. The £1,400 was not my money.

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I had told Doyle to pay the money into the bank account of Chesterfield's company. He failed to do this. I did not know of his failure until about five weeks later. When I heard of it, I was oppressed by family worries and alimony proceedings in the Divorce Court. Soon after those troubles broke I went abroad and was absent from Australia for three months. Perhaps, I should, when I discovered what had happened, have taken some advice about the matter, but I did not do so.

I ask, not for mercy, but merely that hon. members take a realistic view. My friend Chesterfield then took over the handling of the matter, as he was entitled to do. It was his concern, for the car belonged to the company of which he was the major shareholder. He pressed Doyle for the money, ultimately received a cheque that was dishonoured, and later engaged a solicitor who threatened Doyle with legal action.

Those are the facts of the matter. All this happened when I was abroad, and when I returned I did my best to get Doyle to pay the £1,400 to Chesterfield. Finally, I succeeded, as I have said, in getting him to pay £700. So there were 700 good reasons why I should keep Doyle on the list, and 700 more good reasons why I should try to get him to pay the rest of the money.

Neither the Royal Commissioner nor anyone else has suggested that I personally gained anything from the transaction. No one could suggest it. From beginning to end, the dealing was no direct concern of mine. Chesterfield owned most of the company and gave the directions. I have said that what Doyle did was monstrous, and, indeed, it was, but I did not know or believe that it was a crime. It was monstrous because it put my friend Chesterfield in an unfair position. Chesterfield's main concern—and mine too—was to get from Doyle the £1,400 that he owed for the car. This is said to have been my basic fault. For this my career is to be wrecked.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exhausted his time.

Motion (by Mr. Green) agreed to:

That the hon. member be allowed an extension of time of twenty minutes.

Mr. ARTHUR: For this error of judgment—and, putting it at its worst, it can be no more than that—I have to suffer the ignominy of a finding of improper conduct. The Royal Commissioner has assumed the right to say that I should have known that Doyle's action was a crime and that, from that time on, I should have broken off association with him. There was, in fact, very little association with Doyle after February of 1952, and it is not suggested that any particular act of association of itself was wrong.

All that is said is that I should have broken off association with him, and, for failing to do so, my career is to be forfeited. Not for any specific wrongdoing, crime, or dereliction of duty as a Minister of the Crown, or as a member of this House, but because of association with Doyle, I have been judged guilty of improper conduct. Could anything be more monstrous than that finding?

This brings me, in all humility, to challenge the definition that the Commissioner has given the phrase "improper conduct". My counsel sought to have him accept the view that in the phrase "corrupt or improper" the word "improper" could be interpreted only to mean a breach of the law or my duty under the law, or under the rules and conventions applicable to members of Parliament and Ministers of the Crown.

There are well-known standards of proper conduct for Ministers of the Crown and members of Parliament that have been evolved over the years in the House of Commons and in the British parliamentary system. It is not suggested that in any phase of my conduct I broke any rule, or failed to observe any standard of conduct proper for a member of Parliament or a Minister of the Crown.

The Commissioner has said that I am not guilty of any crime, of any corruption, of any breach of the law, or of any breach of the rules, practices, standards, and duties applicable to Ministers of the Crown or to members of Parliament. He has found that I am guilty of associating with a man who later and, indeed, only this year, became known to be a criminal and who, at the time, had a long criminal record, but whose

criminal activities and history were entirely unknown to me, except for one instance which I did not believe to be a crime, and which the only man concerned, namely, Mr. Chesterfield, did not believe to be a crime, but which the Commissioner thinks that I should have judged or regarded as a crime.

Even when a man knows that a crime has been committed by another it sometimes happens that, out of motives of charity, the crime is overlooked or forgiven, or the resources of the civil rather than the criminal law are looked to. But the Royal Commissioner has said that I am in some way guilty of improper conduct—of substantial departure from right conduct—in not discovering that a crime had been committed and in seeking by further association in the months that followed to recover the money owing to my friend.

So far as can be ascertained, no member of parliament in British history has been dealt with by the House and no Minister has been called upon to resign from office for improper conduct based upon mere association with another person. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that my counsel and solicitors devoted long days and nights of research seeking some precedent in the records of the Mother of Parliaments and in this House of any cases where such alleged misconduct based upon association was even the subject of any inquiry.

Although the records show hundreds of cases where the conduct of members was inquired into, no case has ever occurred of alleged guilt by association: some wrong act has always been necessary. But Judge Amsberg assumes the right to say that in the absence of any criminal or wrong act I am to be condemned by reason of my mere association with Reginald Aubrey Doyle. This House should acquiesce in no such principle. It should guard the rights of members and of Ministers and not allow the possibility ever to recur that a single man from whom there is no appeal shall be allowed to determine what, apart from a breach of the law or of the law and practice of Parliament, is and what is not improper conduct for a

Minister of the Crown or a member of Parliament. I say to hon. members here: jealously, in the future, look after your rights!

One of the occasions upon which it is said that my association with Doyle amounted to improper conduct—although I had done nothing wrong—was in November last year when Doyle, uninvited by me, brought a man by the name of Crowe to my room. Crowe said in evidence that he had a conversation with me for about half an hour—I barely remember the occasion. Hon. members will all know how frequently introductions are effected with Ministers of the Crown. It is now clear that Doyle tried to impress Crowe with his position—influential friends, wealth and so on. Crowe was a man who met Mr. Wentworth at a political meeting of some half a dozen persons attended by the hon. member for Manly. That meeting was held long after Mr. Wentworth had made the charges which he himself was unable to support at the Royal Commission.

The Commissioner says, as a result of Crowe's evidence, that my conduct on this occasion amounted in some way to conduct improper for a Minister, because I am said to have allowed Crowe to assume that Doyle was a person of wealth, standing and position, when in fact I am supposed to have known that in the preceding February he committed a crime. I have already said that I did not, in the previous February, know that Doyle had committed a crime. I certainly did not lead Mr. Crowe to have any view or opinion of Doyle. He did not say in evidence that he relied on anything that I had said or done in assessing Doyle. He did not say that he understood Doyle to be suggesting that he should join in any illegal or improper activities with me.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, I take the opportunity of saying that I cannot understand—and no one, upon reading the evidence, could understand how what I did in connection with Mr. Crowe can be interpreted as improper. He was never deceived by Doyle: he was nothing to Doyle: he had no business dealings with Doyle. He did not rely on anything that I said and I had no basis at that time for knowing that

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Doyle was in any sense a criminal. Yet, by his Honour I am said to have acted improperly. Hon. members, please read those remarks and that report! If this is a test of improper conduct, who in this House may safely say that the exigencies of politics have not placed him in a position where such a judgment may be made of him?

The Commissioner says that he does not accept my evidence where I said that certain payments which had been made to me by Doyle were in respect of betting transactions. It is, I think, well known among my friends on both sides of the House, that I have frequently made fairly substantial bets at the racecourse and trots—and I still do. And it is the simple truth that I had betting transactions with Doyle, particularly in connection with his own horses, his wife's horses and my own horses. Is there anything wrong with that? The Commissioner regards as improper or as some evidence of improper conduct the fact that I had a betting transaction with Doyle after February, 1952.

I have already said that though I was very angry that Doyle had not paid the £1,400 purchase price in February, I did not consider and never have considered that he committed a crime and consequently I did not break off my association with him completely. The man who owned the car did not do so. It was his job to put the police on Doyle's tracks if he wished, not mine, but I am not a "copper", thank God. He still had some money of mine at that stage outstanding from previous betting transactions and in April, 1952, when I had my last betting transaction with Doyle and we exchanged moneys, we lost. I think hon. members on this side of the House know that house—it should have been a meat pie, I suggest. We did exchange betting information. It is true that he called to see me but we have had no dealings of any character since then.

All betting is lawful in this community and it is a source from which much of the revenue in this State is derived. I find it impossible to understand how the association of one man with another in lawful betting transactions or

in the exchange of information concerning their respective horses can be regarded as improper in any reasonable view of that term.

During the course of the Royal Commission, my counsel, while inspecting documents connected with my account at the Rural Bank, discovered after I had revealed to him that, in September, 1951, Doyle guaranteed my overdraft with the bank for a few months, that he had done so in the name of Stewart and not in the name of Doyle. Though I remembered that he had guaranteed my overdraft at that time I had believed that he had done so in his own name, but the guaranteeing of an overdraft at the Rural Bank was not a matter of importance to me at all.

My counsel revealed to Mr. Snelling, on my instructions and with my full concurrence, the facts relating to this overdraft transaction. Mr. Snelling then called the bank officers concerned and it had become apparent that Doyle had in previous dealings with the bank and its officers convinced them that he was accustomed to trading shares in the name of Stewart, and that he held share certificates in that name.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exhausted his time.

Motion (by Mr. Green) agreed to:

That the hon. member be allowed an extension of time of a further twenty minutes.

MR. ARTHUR: The bank itself had accepted the position and knew him as a person who traded shares in the name of Stewart. The whole of the documents relating to the security arrangement on my overdraft were prepared not by me but by the bank officers. I had no part in their preparation or in the form they took, nor did I have any solicitor acting for me. I merely signed my name to the documents prepared by the bank's solicitor and sent up to me here for execution. The overdraft arrangement made with Doyle was terminated early in 1952 and the document cancelled. They had no further purpose, they had ceased to be operative.

Had I thought that there was any reason to obtain the documents because of some wrongdoing in connection with them I

could have obtained them from the bank at the time of cancellation, as they related solely to me as a customer. There is no doubt that the bank would have given them to me had I asked for them or at my request would have caused them to be destroyed. I did not ask for them nor did I ever seek their destruction.

Not one word of that matter was known to Mr. Snelling nor to his junior Mr. Goran, to the Crown Solicitor instructing him, to Mr. Ashburner, to Mr. W. C. Wentworth or to any person acting for him until I caused the facts to be revealed by my counsel to the Q.C. assisting the Commissioner. I did so because I believed it to be a matter that should be brought to the notice of the Commissioner, but had I any guilty feelings concerning the matter would I have been so foolish as to make a present of the information in that way to the Commissioner? The bank officials had been before the Commission a week earlier and had gone after giving their evidence.

I believed the interests of justice required that I should make the whole of my association known to the Commissioner irrespective of what might be given in evidence by other persons. I acted honourably and believed that my action would have earned the commendation of every judicial tribunal and all right-thinking persons in the community.

A perusal of the report shows how even my action in that regard was used against me by the Commissioner. It should be said by way of final observation on that subject that no one suffered the loss of a single penny over the overdraft transaction and that in the proceedings upon which Doyle pleaded guilty and was sentenced it was expressly stated by Mr. J. R. Stewart, in evidence before the magistrate, that except for the later transactions with Doyle he had no complaint to make against him. Mr. Stewart did not suggest to the police that in respect of those overdraft arrangements anything had been done by Doyle or anyone else contrary to Stewart's rights.

I understand that the complaint made against me in the report is that I should have known that Doyle executed the

document in the name of Stewart and should have made some inquiry about it. The simple answer to that suggestion is that the bank made all the inquiries which it needed to make to satisfy itself. It was satisfied. I knew that the bank was satisfied with the security that Doyle offered. Doyle was known to the bank as a customer. There was and could be no suggestion that I, or anyone, deceived the bank into believing that Doyle was Stewart. They satisfied themselves by their own inquiries. They were my bankers, and I relied upon them as my bankers.

Another matter mentioned in the report that I now deal with is the interview with me on the ninth day of August, 1950, of Mr. Maher of the Department of Trade and Customs. In respect of that, the Commissioner says:

There is nothing in evidence on this point to justify a finding of either corruption or impropriety, but the matters disclosed to him by Mr. Maher were not trivial. They were grave matters and could not have passed from his mind at later relevant dates, and are one of the background circumstances that must be considered later in connection with other dealings, transactions and associations,

His Honour is going back to August, 1950, and taking one interview as a background of association. In another part of the report he says:

There is no evidence at all to suggest that Mr. Arthur had any hand in the improper importation of any cars, nor in the use of any ruse, subterfuge, trick or stratagem to obtain import licences.

I should have thought, and indeed all fair-minded people would have thought that, having been found not guilty of any corrupt or improper association in that way, the report dealing with the Customs matter would have ended on that note. That is a fair assumption. Indeed, I might have expected that, if anything further were said about it, the attention of His Excellency would have been drawn to the sworn evidence of Mr. Maher, who made the following admissions: That I had been fully co-operative with the Customs officers in their inquiries—that I assisted in every possible way—and that they were at liberty to call upon me for any further help they may need in order to clear the matter up—that they were at liberty to visit my room

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at Parliament House and see for themselves what were the arrangements there as to the disposition of rooms, entry of persons not members of the House, and possible use of telephones.

Mr. Maher was the second witness at the inquiry. He gave his evidence on the eighteenth day of May this year. It had already been ascertained from the first witness, Mr. Wentworth, that he, W. C. Wentworth, had seen the Customs files dealing with the importation of cars by Doyle some time towards the end of 1950, or early in 1951, and that he had seen them at Canberra in the office of Senator O'Sullivan, who is the Minister for Trade and Customs.

After Wentworth's admission of having seen the files at Canberra as far back as 1950 or early in 1951, his counsel, Mr. Ashburner, asked for an assurance from my counsel that no suggestion would be made against Mr. W. C. Wentworth arising out of the fact that he had been permitted to inspect those files. Mr. Miller, appearing for me, said he was unable to give such an assurance, that he had not seen the files, and knew nothing of their details. Thereupon Mr. Snelling, assisting the Commissioner, suggested that the matter be allowed to wait until the files had been examined. The Commissioner concurred in that suggestion. Then, when Mr. Maher was later in the witness box, he said he could not produce Commonwealth files without the permission of the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor. Later, there were produced to the Commissioner and made available for inspection by my counsel some documents only, not from the file seen by Mr. Wentworth and mentioned by him in his evidence, but only some of the documents contained in a file in the office of Mr. Maher, in Sydney.

On a number of occasions application was made on my behalf for leave to inspect the files which had been seen by Mr. Wentworth, and upon which the allegations by him had been made against me. The matter was even carried to the extent of correspondence between my solicitors and the Crown Solicitor, as well as application to the Commissioner himself, but notwithstanding these requests and the plea made that common justice required

that I ought to be placed in the same position, from the point of view of inspecting the material, as had been my accuser, Mr. Wentworth, the Commissioner declined even to request the Commonwealth to produce the files, and they were not produced.

Up to this moment they have not been seen, so far as I know, by anyone connected with the inquiry, except, of course, Mr. Wentworth, and that was done in Senator O'Sullivan's room at Canberra, with Senator O'Sullivan's approval.

Although I asked Mr. Maher to let me know of any further matter in respect of which he needed assistance, and I asked him as far back as the ninth day of August, 1950, at the first and only interview he had with me, I never heard a word from him from that day until this, or from any other Customs official, seeking to know from me anything at all further in connection with the matter. Yet, Mr. Speaker, I am to be condemned by the statement of the Commissioner that the matter mentioned to me by Mr. Maher could not have passed from my mind at later relevant dates, and was considered by the Commissioner as present to my mind in connection with later associations with Doyle.

Is there anything more fantastic? You, Mr. Speaker, know, as do all hon. members, that if there is one feature of the life of a member of this House which distinguishes his calling from that of all other persons in the community it is that from day to day and every day he gets inquiries about a variety of matters; that he deals with them; and, having been dealt with, they pass from his mind. If a member of the House, when interviewed by a public servant in the course of his public service, is assured by the public servant that he will act upon the member's suggestion that if there is any further aspect of the matter in respect of which the public servant needs assistance, he will approach him; then the member hears nothing from that public servant, or from his department, or from the Minister—surely, he is entitled to assume that the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of the department. Is that not logical? After all, it is only one incident in a life of a busy member. Of course, had

it been a matter concerning my own department, I would have had files, and records, and if there was any matter requiring further attention, my own officer would have followed it up. This matter concerning the Customs interview was regarded by the judge as a background circumstance, which I am supposed to have kept in my mind or should have kept in my mind.

Another such circumstance is said to be the fact that in my share dealing with Mrs. Doyle—a dealing found to be entirely proper—there were found to be some peculiar features. The peculiar features add up to the fact that Mrs. Doyle made her contribution to the share deal in cash. I am said to be responsible to note and remember that this was very peculiar, and the judge used this circumstance later to assist him to conclude that other acts of association with Doyle were improper. He did not find that any aspect of my share-dealing with Mrs. Doyle was improper; on the contrary. The fact is that my dealing in shares with Mrs. Doyle was a completely open one.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exhausted his time.

Motion (by Mr. Green) agreed to:

That the hon. member be allowed an extension of time of a further twenty minutes.

MR. ARTHUR: The cash that I received from her was paid into my bank account as a matter of routine. The shares were ultimately sold openly to a broker with my written authority given on parliamentary note paper with the letters M.L.A. attached to my name. No suggestion was made that in this transaction that I had concealed anything whatsoever.

The Commissioner thinks it is peculiar that racing people such as the Doyles dealt in large sums of cash. How naive for a member of the judiciary who practised in criminal proceedings prior to his appointment. Hon. members who have had any experience of the activities of those who move in racing circles and bet in a large way will know that in fact large sums of money are kept constantly by racing people. Go to Randwick or anywhere you like, any day you like, and see the transactions that

take place. How naive and stupid can people be to make such infantile suggestions. Is it a fair and proper method of proceeding for a Commissioner—who has said that my account of the transaction fits in with known and established fact, and who is not prepared to disbelieve my evidence on the point and finds that the totality of the evidence does not justify a finding of corruption or impropriety in a share-dealing against me—to insist that I should have remembered these “peculiar” features of the transaction later and for entirely different purposes.

There is one further matter upon which I feel justified in commenting. The Commissioner quotes in his report Mr. Snelling's suggested definition of “improper conduct”. Mr. Snelling defined it as an act which amounted to a substantial departure from right conduct in the circumstances; as conduct which is discreditable, dishonourable, disreputable, or seriously reprehensible. That is the basis of Mr. Snelling's submission. He said it was conduct which was a serious or a substantial breach of recognised standards of rectitude and decency to be expected of a person fulfilling the office of a Cabinet Minister, and such as would meet with general condemnation by right-minded citizens.

My counsel objected to this definition and proposed an alternative definition which I have previously discussed and which the Commissioner rejected, but it is very significant, and of the very greatest significance to all hon. members, to know that Mr. Snelling, who has since been appointed Solicitor-General of this State, did not submit that I had been guilty of improper conduct within the meaning of his own definition. He did, it is true, say that I had been indiscreet and unwise in some aspects, but he did not submit that any conduct of mine was improper. He referred to every fact and circumstance covered in the thirty-five days of the hearing. He dealt with every subject and fact and circumstance and not one of the matters which the judge now finds to be improper did Mr. Snelling submit to be improper.

The judge has taken certain words from Mr. Snelling's definition—words such as

Mr. Arthur.]

“dishonourable” and “disreputable” and has attached them to conduct which the Crown did not submit to be improper. These words are shocking words to apply to conduct of mine which it is considered amounts to no breach of law, rule, precedent or convention. He has, in effect, condemned me and judged me to be guilty of disreputable and dishonourable conduct merely because of some acts of association—not wrong in themselves—with a man who later became known to be a convicted criminal, but was not, he concedes, known by me at any time—at any time—to be a criminal, and this solely for the reason that I misjudged an act of Doyle's—which the judge now says was a criminal act—but which I did not know or believe to have been a criminal act. He does not suggest that after this I did anything wrong in associating with Doyle, but merely that I continued to associate with Doyle.

Mr. Speaker, I say that if a member of Parliament or a Minister of the Crown is to have his political career besmirched and is to be at a risk of having it cut off in its prime, solely because, being wise after an event, someone later says he should not have had any association with a man who was found to be a criminal, all—all—hon. members and Ministers of this Chamber to-night must take very great care that in the hurly-burly of political life they do not come into contact, however innocently, or however unknowingly, with a convicted criminal. Surely hon. members opposite do not ask me to give demonstration of that, because if they do, I shall.

I do not charge hon. members opposite with a dereliction of duty. I do not say that they had any knowledge of the misdemeanours of certain of their members who have sat on the Opposition side and on the Government side of this House. I do not charge them with that. I would be loath to say that—merely because hon. members opposite as a party had in their midst a man who was a murderer and a suicide, and a man who served a gaol sentence for a criminal offence—I would charge any hon. member opposite with this offence of association and they cannot be charged with that offence. It is not their

responsibility; they are not their brother's keeper. The law of association, so far as I am concerned, should not apply to those hon. members any more than it should apply to me in this case, because I am not the only person in this House who knew Reginald Aubrey Doyle. Hon. members on that side of the House knew him, as well as did hon. members on this side. They knew him in another place, they knew him in Canberra, they knew him in the Commonwealth Bank chambers, they knew him down in the Customs House. They knew Reginald Aubrey Doyle, and those who say they did not know him are unmitigated liars, perjurers—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

MR. ARTHUR: I have not named anybody, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member certainly has not.

MR. ARTHUR: I would not do it. I would not take any man's good name from him on the floor of this House, and I have never done it. I have never done it, and the day I ever robbed a man of his good name I should leave this place and never want to return to it. It is not my conduct.

In conclusion, I say that this inquiry lasted for thirty-five days. Every aspect of my life, private and public, was investigated. My bank account and all my private affairs were examined in detail and no single instance of wrongdoing in any legal or parliamentary sense was found against me.

Throughout the whole of this inquiry, legal representatives—senior counsel, junior counsel and solicitors—were provided and paid for by the Liberal Party to make sure that no opportunity was lost for unearthing any really discreditable or illegal deed or act of mine. It is also a fact, as I know, that a private inquiry agent was employed to check all my movements since the last election. It is also a fact—so low did that man Wentworth get—that he contacted my former wife, and to her great credit, she repulsed him—repulsed him—and we had a difference. How low can they get? All this expense has been incurred to no avail so far as criminal dealings or parliamentary wrongdoing is concerned.

I stand condemned by this judge to-night solely because of my association—quite innocent in every respect—with Doyle. It is a very serious matter—a very serious judgment. For any judge to take that responsibility is very serious indeed. This judge is a newly-appointed judge. I have been in this honourable Chamber for over eighteen years now. He is quite a young man—I came here as a young man too—but hon. members will remember that already, even though he has been appointed but a short time, he has made mistakes in his judicial office—mistakes of a very serious nature, which have been criticised by a superior court—by no less a person than the Chief Justice of this State.

I would not mention this fact if it were not necessary in order to make a very simple but fundamental point on my behalf. It is a terrible thing that has been done to me, if there is any possibility of mistake either in law or in fact by this judge. In a case where he made a mistake and misconducted himself in his judicial office the person concerned had the right of appeal. That person had been sentenced to three years' imprisonment. He was granted a new trial before another judge and on the new trial he was acquitted by the jury and regained his freedom.

Earlier in my speech I directed attention to the fact that unlike the foul murderer, the housebreaker, or even the abject traitor to his Queen and country, no man has any right of appeal against the misdirected, ill-founded or erroneous judgment of a royal commissioner. I adverted to the dangers of error and the absence of any means of redress. I have examined the matters upon which a single person of the status of a District Court judge has determined that my conduct was improper.

Hon. members have been generous to me with their patience and forbearance and I should not be justified in detaining them any longer from the discharge of their important duties in this House. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and through you, hon. members, for the tolerance and understanding that you and they have shown to me and the attentive silence in which the House has listened to me.

As I said, there is no appeal given to me in the courts—no appeal. That is so. But there is an appeal open to me and I propose to exercise my right to use it. I am in this House as a representative of the electors of Kahibah. They have the right to say whether my conduct was improper or corrupt. They have a right to say whether or not I am a fit and proper person to represent them in this Chamber. I propose to submit myself to their judgment. I will not delay one moment in taking the steps necessary to enable that to be done.

Mr. Speaker, I tender to you forthwith my resignation in order that I may go to my constituents and ask them to pass judgment on me and in doing so remove from my good name and fair reputation the stigma that has been placed upon them.

Motion agreed to.

MEMBER RESIGNED.

Mr. Speaker reported the resignation of Joshua George Arthur, Esquire, as member for Kahibah.

Seat declared vacant.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion (by Mr. Heffron) agreed to:

That this House do now adjourn until tomorrow at 11 o'clock a.m.

House adjourned at 9.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 20 August, 1953.

Questions without Notice—Governor's Speech: Address-in-Reply (Fifth Day's Debate)—Adjournment.

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at 11 a.m.

The opening Prayer was read.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

ROYAL TOUR: POLICE AND CITIZENS' BOYS CLUBS.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I ask the Acting Premier whether the Police and Citizens' Boys Clubs are doing good work? Is it a fact, also, that No. 11 Division, covering Leichhardt and Petersham, have established a fine Boys' Club band. If the Minister's answer is in the affirmative, will

he make representations to those in charge of the royal tour with a view to this band's being allowed to play before Her Majesty the Queen?

Mr. HEFFRON: I agree that the Police and Citizens' Boys Clubs are doing excellent work. The Police Force generally, and particularly those concerned with the clubs, are to be highly commended for the splendid work that they have done. I have always felt that the Police Boys' Clubs are a monument to the late William Mackay, former Commissioner for Police, who was responsible for their introduction. I regard them as one of the best youth organisations that we have. These clubs, through the co-operation of the police, have done much to improve relations between the police and the public generally. I know of the existence of the band referred to by the hon. member. It is a particularly fine one, and is a credit to those who have been responsible for the training of the boys. At short notice I am not in a position to say whether arrangements could be made for that band to play before Her Majesty. I view the hon. member's question sympathetically, and will ask the committee whether his request can be agreed to.

Mr. HUNTER: I ask the Acting Premier whether the standard of all the bands of the Police Boys' Clubs is high? If so, will he give consideration to a band being drawn from all the clubs rather than from only one club?

Mr. HEFFRON: It is true that the standard of all the bands of the Police Boys' Clubs and of the Police Band itself is high. The hon. member's suggestion that a band be drawn from the whole of the clubs is one that merits consideration. I will see that that suggestion, too, is considered.

FOOT ROT IN SHEEP.

Mr. PELLY: I ask the Minister for Agriculture whether foot rot in sheep has been prevalent in parts of New South Wales in recent months? Is it a fact that this disease is contagious and may be contacted by sheep using yards, railway vans and road transport vehicles previously occupied by infected stock? Is it a fact, also, that