

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 12 June, 1956.

Questions without Notice—Electric Light and Power Supply Corporation Limited: (Ministerial Statement)—Governor's Speech: Address-in-Reply (Ninth Day's Debate)—Adjournment.

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

The opening Prayer was read.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

NEWCASTLE: COAL-LOADING PLANT.

Mr. BOOTH: I ask the Minister for Transport whether serious discontent has been caused by the unsatisfactory coal-loading arrangements in Newcastle Harbour? Is it a fact, also, that the coal owners have made a straightforward, definite offer to supply new coal-loading plant at their own cost? If these are facts, will the Minister inform the House whether negotiations are proceeding between his department and the coal owners in relation to the construction of that plant? If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister send to Newcastle at once a senior officer of his department to meet the coal owners with a view to overcoming any difficulty, so that the work of providing the new coal-loading plant for Newcastle Harbour might begin?

Mr. ENTICKNAP: It is a fact that difficulties are associated with the loading of coal in Newcastle Harbour, but the remedy is not so easy as it looks on the surface. Negotiations are being conducted between the Department of Railways, the colliery proprietors and the shipping authorities. An officer of my department was in Newcastle last Friday and I have not seen the results of his conference with the parties concerned. Everything is being done to expedite a decision in the matter.

NOXIOUS WEEDS: GOVERNMENT GRANT.

Mr. CHAFFEY: I ask the Minister for Local Government whether in the past five years no increase has been made in the Government's allocation towards the cost

of control of noxious weeds throughout the State? Is it a fact that there have been continued and substantial representations to the Minister and the Government for an increase in the Crown's contribution to the cost of dealing with this problem? Will the Minister give an assurance that, in his consultations with the Government on the preparation of next year's Estimates, he will do his best to see that the allocation for the control of noxious weeds is increased?

Mr. RENSCHAW: Allocations to councils for the control of noxious weeds have been made annually on the advice of my colleague, the Minister for Agriculture. I take this opportunity to say that, even within the ambit of their allocation, a number of councils have done an excellent job. For instance, the New England County Council, with its present allocation, has done a remarkable job in the control of noxious weeds. However, because of the nature of their areas, other councils have found difficulty by virtue of the extent of the infestation, and they need added funds. Basically, noxious weeds are plants that know no boundaries. Together with some of my colleagues, I recently made an inspection of the Central West, on which I inspected properties and adjacent public roads and reserves. The line of the dividing fence indicated clearly the owners who had carried out their responsibility for the eradication of noxious weeds and those who had done nothing about it.

Control of noxious weeds is not only the responsibility of those who control our public roads, but also is the responsibility of the landowners themselves. The primary responsibility of the landowner is, not to hand on to his heirs and successors a big bank balance, but to bequeath a property capable of much greater production than when he acquired it. Then, he would be handing on a heritage. Action against noxious weeds and animals cannot be half-hearted. The experiments carried out by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization in the use of myxomatosis and other

means of pest eradication are a good illustration of the effect of proper scientific measures. Owners of properties that previously were breeding grounds for these noxious animals now realise the extent of production of which their properties are capable following the rabbit extermination campaign. Noxious weeds may be put in a similar category.

We have found councils who have done the job within the limits of their resources and of supplementary government assistance. Some councils have almost completely succeeded in eradicating these pests in reserves and roads under their control. However, other councils need financial assistance, and this need is recognised by the Premier and by me, but the Government has been unable to increase the present grant. As soon as it is financially able, the Government will be only too happy to do so. Not only is an increase of funds necessary, but also there must be a will to get on with the job and, without fear or favour, to carry it out impartially.

ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER SUPPLY CORPORATION LIMITED.

Mr. McMAHON: I ask the Premier whether for some time negotiations have been under way to acquire the Electric Light and Power Supply Corporation Ltd.? Is it a fact that both parties decided to take the Land and Valuation Court's determination of the value of compensation for its acquisition? Is it a fact, also, that there appears to be the prospect of extensive litigation regarding the amount payable to the corporation by way of compensation? If these are facts, can the Premier give any intimation whether the Government has come to any decision on the acquisition of these assets?

Mr. McCaw: On a point of order. I submit that, on the face of the question itself, its subject matter is *sub judice*.

Mr. SHEAHAN: On the point of order. I submit that a point of order based on a matter's being *sub judice* only goes to a question in dispute before the court, and that any independent administrative act or determination by the Government or

any proposed legislation is not a matter that comes within the purview of the court, but is the property of this Parliament and the government of the day. In these circumstances, it cannot be ruled that the subject-matter of a question is *sub judice* when it relates to possible legislation on a particular matter, although a question of compensation is before the court. The litigation before the court is relevant only to one particular aspect, namely the amount of damage. I submit that the question asked by the hon. member seeks information as to the intentions of the Government in respect of both the litigation and any action the Government might take in determining the matter.

Mr. J. J. CAHILL: On the point of order. For your information, Mr. Speaker, the subject matter raised by the hon. member for Balmain was considered this morning by Cabinet. I have a copy of a statement to be issued to the press this afternoon. Cabinet in dealing with this matter in no way considered that it was an infringement upon the matter now before the court.

Mr. McCaw: On the point of order. I respectfully submit that you will have grave difficulty in the light of what has been said on behalf of the Attorney-General by the Minister for Health in allowing the question, since on your many rulings, if the exact matter in dispute becomes the subject of a question by an hon. member or the subject of the answer a Minister is asked to give, then you must rule the matter is *sub judice*. In point of fact, the amount of compensation payable is the very matter upon which a case is now to be stated by way of an appeal to the Full Court, which is now pending. This is the exact matter of the question and it will be involved in the Premier's answer. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier's statement that Cabinet has not regarded the matter as *sub judice* does not help you; it is your decision and not that of Cabinet. It does not help either that the Premier has already prepared a statement to hand to the press, if the giving of the contents of it verbally to this House offends the *sub judice* principle. I submit that this principle is one that you, as Speaker in this House, will guard with the

utmost jealousy. The question asked by the hon. member suggests that the rule would be infringed if the answer were allowed. For the Premier to read the statement, even though it has been approved by Cabinet, would be a gross infringement of the *sub judice* rule if the statement deals with the exact matter that is now the subject of litigation.

Mr. McMAHON: On the point of order. The hon. member for Lane Cove has raised the question of the litigation concerning compensation. This House determined, because of its policy, to bring under the one head, the Electricity Commission of New South Wales, the whole of the State's electricity generating equipment. This Chamber is trying to ascertain for the people of Balmain whether this company is to be joined with the network of power stations under the control of the Electricity Commission of New South Wales.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is your question?

Mr. McMAHON: The matter associated with the litigation is that His Honor, Mr. Justice Sugerman has arrived at a determination; the shareholders of the company have appealed as to the amount to be paid. That has nothing to do with the acquisition of the Electric Light & Power Supply Corporation Ltd. to bring it within the electricity network under the control of the Electricity Commission.

Mr. SPEAKER: I should like to ask the Minister for Health a question. You represent the Attorney-General?

Mr. SHEAHAN: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is any matter contained in the question the exact matter that is the subject of litigation? It is the practice of the House that the Speaker is always advised by the Attorney-General on the facts of *sub judice* submissions.

Mr. SHEAHAN: I am in somewhat of a difficulty. I do not administer the department and I have not a particular knowledge of all the facts of the department concerning the litigation. I do know that this matter came before the Land and Valuation Court, one of the rules of which is

that its determination shall be final. From a decision of the Land and Valuation Court certain proceedings were taken by way of injunction, I think, to the Full Court; the Court gave a ruling, and an appeal was lodged to the High Court. As far as I know, that is the only matter that is the subject of litigation at the moment—whether an injunction lay or not. That has nothing whatever to do with the legal principles that may be applicable to the decision of the Land and Valuation Court; it is quite foreign to them. It goes only to a question of jurisdiction; not to the merits of the case or to the merits of the particular matter that might be litigated at some later stage. I am able to say that at the moment the only litigation relates to that particular matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is as to compensation?

Mr. SHEAHAN: Yes. Any litigation as to the merits of the matter as regards compensation must be the result of a later application after the decision on this matter has been made. Consequently, there is nothing before the court at the moment except the legal question whether an injunction lay, and this does not touch the question asked by the hon. member for Balmain or referred to by the Premier.

Mr. TREATT: On the point of order. I submit that the Minister for Health in his statement to you, Mr. Speaker, has intimated quite clearly that the matter is *sub judice*. When I heard the question by the hon. member for Balmain I was in some doubt about this, but it now appears that the Minister has been misinformed. However, he has stated, as has the hon. member for Balmain, that there was a binding agreement. The High Court has intimated that a case should be stated to the Supreme Court to determine the basis of compensation. To the extent that the matter may be re-opened, and in view of the reference by the hon. member for Balmain and the Minister for Health to a binding agreement to accept what His Honour Mr. Justice Sugerman found, it appears that there is a substantial dispute whether there was a binding agreement precluding the company from adopting a different basis of

assessment. Both the hon. member for Balmain and the Minister for Health have clearly said that this debatable point is wrapped up in the question that has been addressed to the Premier. I submit that it is quite clear that, if the Premier replies to the question, he must tread upon that highly debatable ground; and that is wrong, because it is *sub judice*.

Mr. McCaw: On the point of order. The Minister for Health, in reply to your invitation, Mr. Speaker, said quite frankly that he no longer administers the Department of the Attorney-General. He suggested—I hope that I do him no injustice—that he was not in a position to give an assurance, but that he could state certain facts. Perhaps you, sir, will accept from me, as one who has recently had the opportunity of reading the High Court judgment, a statement of the position. On 30th May, the full High Court of seven judges unanimously held that there had not been a determination by Mr. Justice Sugerman of the Land and Valuation Court. It is true that on 16th December last, Mr. Justice Sugerman made a pronouncement. The High Court found that no certificate of that pronouncement had yet issued, and held that until a certificate did issue, there had been no determination. The High Court ordered Mr. Justice Sugerman to state a case for the opinion of the State Full Court, and that stated case comes on for settlement on Friday next. In those circumstances, I submit that the fundamental question of law that the High Court referred back to the State Full Court—the basis of calculation of compensation—is the very question that is *sub judice*. The exact question that the hon. member for Balmain has asked must involve any statement that the Premier may make in reply.

Mr. SPEAKER: The whole matter hinges on the point of order that the hon. member for Lane Cove has taken. I ask the hon. member for Balmain to repeat his question.

Mr. McMAHON: Mr. Speaker, I shall reframe my question. Is it a fact that the Government has prepared legislation to acquire the Balmain Electric Light and

Power Supply Corporation Ltd.? Is it a fact, also, that, following a claim by the shareholders of this company, there is litigation over the amount of compensation to be paid? Is it further a fact that the Government intends to merge this company's activities with those of the Electricity Commission to make it part of the network of the Electricity Commission in New South Wales? If these are facts, can the Premier give any indication whether the Government has arrived at any decision about the acquisition of this company, or has it prepared any legislation to bring the company within the scope of the Electricity Commission?

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member for Balmain prepared to amend his question by eliminating all reference to "compensation"? If the hon. member for Balmain does not do so the point of order must be upheld.

Mr. McMAHON: I shall amend my question by deleting all reference to "compensation", because the people of Balmain and I want to know whether the company is to be acquired by the Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: As the hon. member for Lane Cove has said, the matter that is before the court is *sub judice*. The hon. member for Lane Cove has said, and he has received some support from the Minister for Health who is acting for the Attorney-General, that the matter before the court is the compensation to be paid. Since all reference to "compensation" has been deleted from the question, and provided the Premier when answering does not infringe the *sub judice* rule by referring to "compensation", the question is in order. It would be quite in order for me to uphold the point of order and also to dismiss it. I assume from what the Premier has said that he intends, some time during question time, to make a ministerial statement on this matter. He said that this morning Cabinet agreed upon the statement to be made by him. If it were a ministerial statement and made reference to litigation concerning the determination of compensation that is now before

the court, obviously the statement must be ruled out of order. As the hon. member for Balmain has amended his question by deleting all reference to compensation to be paid, I rule that his question is in order, and I will allow the Hon. the Premier to answer it provided that no reference is made to compensation.

Lt.-Colonel ROBSON: Mr. Speaker, I am not dealing with the point of order, but in the light of your direction to the Premier to delete all reference to "compensation", will you also direct that he shall not refer to the acquisition of the company because at this moment that matter is *sub judice* as it is before the Equity Court, which has already granted an interlocutory injunction.

Mr. McCaw: On the point of order. Mr. Speaker, that is the fact.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is this a further point of order?

Mr. McCaw: It is on the same point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already given a ruling. Has a further point of order been taken by the hon. member for Vacluse?

Lt.-Colonel ROBSON: Mr. Speaker, I will put it as a further point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is a further point of order.

Mr. McCaw: On the further point of order. The fact is that an interlocutory injunction was applied for and granted in the Equity Court. The matter was adjourned until the High Court gave its decision on 30th May, to which reference has already been made. Mr. Justice McClelland of the New South Wales Equity Court then continued the interlocutory injunction, which was an injunction to restrain the Electricity Commission from nominating a day to take over the undertaking. I support the hon. member for Vacluse in asking you, Mr. Speaker, to direct the Premier not to refer to the acquisition, which is the exact subject matter of the interlocutory announcement.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Every hon. member will appreciate that I have ruled that the Premier may answer. To my mind the point of order now taken by the hon. member for Vacluse anticipates something that the Hon. the Premier might say. The Premier will be quite in order provided that he does not make a statement that prejudices the case—for that is the basis of the rule. Of course, it would be competent for an hon. member to take a point of order during the Premier's remarks if it were considered that there had been an infringement of the *sub judice* rule. It would be a matter for me to decide at that stage.

Mr. J. J. CAHILL: I have just been informed that the following statement has been examined by the Crown Solicitor and that he believes it to be properly issued. The Government has decided to introduce amending legislation as soon as practicable to provide for the acquisition of the Electric Light and Power Supply Corporation Limited at a date to be set out in the legislation.

Mr. McCaw: On a point of order. I submit that the Premier has already infringed the *sub judice* rule by reference to the acquisition of the company, as that is the subject matter of the interlocutory injunction that was granted by the Equity Court.

Mr. LANDA: On the point of order. The Premier has said that the Government intends to introduce legislation to cure some defects that may have arisen. There is precedent for this practice. The Leader of the Country party, when in office, introduced legislation to amend section 100b of the Railways Act although litigation was then pending before the Privy Council in what was known as Benson's case. He brought down that amending legislation although, as it happened, the Government settled the case. I submit that this Parliament cannot, by some ruling affecting a judgment or possible judgment of the court, prevent itself from bringing in legislation to cure any defect which becomes apparent in the law.

Mr. SHEAHAN: On the point of order. The subject of the appeal by the company concerned was a matter originally mentioned by the hon. member for Lane Cove and was not the subject of the remarks by the hon. member for Vacluse. The setting down of a day for the take-over is a matter for determination, not by any court, but by the Government, which does so by way of proclamation. No court has any power over executive authority. Supplementing the remarks of my colleague, the Minister for Housing, I mention another relevant precedent in this State. Hon. members opposite will recall that when they were in government on the last occasion, they brought down legislation to deal with a matter relating to the basic wage which was then before the court. When a government determines to bring in legislation, the authority of Parliament is exercised, with which no court, subject to the Constitution, has any right to interfere. This is a sovereign parliament and it is immaterial whether the proposed legislation deals with a matter that is the subject of an appeal to the courts. If the Government believes legislation is the only way by which a defect may be cured and effect given to the will of the people and of Parliament, then that legislation, provided that it is not constitutionally unsound, may be brought down. Acquisition of property of this nature is entirely within the Constitution of the State Parliament—for which there is ample precedent.

Mr. CHAFFEY: The Minister is canvassing Mr. Speaker's ruling.

Mr. SHEAHAN: I am not doing so. Mr. Speaker ruled only that the Premier could not make any reference to compensation. He made no ruling with respect to the acquisition of property, and, indeed, he could not do so because it is not within the power of the Speaker to direct the government of the day on the acquisition of property which it is within the right of this sovereign Parliament to acquire. Therefore, I submit that the Premier is entitled to refer to the intention of the Government, acting within its constitutional powers, to acquire property, no matter whether a question is before the High Court or the Privy Council.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have listened closely to the lawyers, but cannot allow my mind to be confused by legal technicalities. I propose to deal with the matter from the standpoint of common sense. I agree with the submission that Parliament, as the governing body of this State, can legislate on any matter that it likes. The Premier has said that he has been advised by the Crown Law authorities that a statement that he wishes to make will in no way infringe the *sub judice* rule.

Mr. J. J. CAHILL: I said that this statement has been approved by the Crown Solicitor.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it that the Crown Solicitor would have regard to the *sub judice* rule and that the statement does not infringe it.

Mr. J. J. CAHILL: The Government has decided to bring down legislation to deal with the matter that has been raised in this House. I remind the Leader of the Opposition that he has already made a statement on it.

Mr. MORTON: What did I say?

Mr. J. J. CAHILL: The Leader of the Opposition made a statement the other day. It is well known that every member of this House has been circularised by the company. The matter was investigated by the Attorney-General, the Crown Law Office and myself and it was decided on Friday last to issue a statement that the Government would consider this matter to-day and intimate to all concerned what it proposed to do. All that I am saying this afternoon is what will be said when the bill is brought down in the House, and it is only fair that if the Government intends to take certain action it should be made known to hon. members as soon as possible.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot make up my mind that anything the Premier proposes to say will prejudice the matter before the court. My mind is concerned with the question, "Could the case be prejudiced in any way?" I am not convinced that it will be. The Premier wants to give notice that he intends to bring down legislation, and for that reason I should allow him to make his statement.

ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER SUPPLY
CORPORATION LIMITED.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Mr. J. J. CAHILL: As I have said, the Government has decided to introduce amending legislation as soon as practicable to provide for the acquisition of the company at a date to be set out in the amending legislation. The statement reads:

Shareholders would receive debentures equal to the value of shares held, such value to be equal to that determined by the Land and Valuation Court. The debentures would be issued at par, with the rate of interest $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., the current rate applying in New South Wales to public loans of semi-governmental bodies. Accrued interest on the debentures would be at the same rate of interest. The original intention of the legislation was that the value of the Balmain Company's shares would be decided by the Land and Valuation Court and that both parties would accept the Court's determination as final and binding on both the company and the Crown. A period of some $5\frac{1}{2}$ years had elapsed since the agreement to refer the issue to the Land and Valuation Court was reached between the Company and the Crown, and a further prolonged period could elapse if litigation challenging the finding of the Land and Valuation Court were to proceed. As shareholders had received no return on their shares during the last five and a half years, the Government had decided that the matter should be brought to finality. The rate of three and a half per cent. interest set down in the original legislation would, if it applied now to the debentures to be issued, result in such debentures having a sale value at a very substantial discount. The Government considered this inequitable and the rate would be raised to the current semi-governmental rate. The Government had decided that the rate on accrued interest should also be five and a quarter per cent. because it considered that from the point of view of equity to shareholders an accrual at five and a quarter per cent. would provide a measure of compensation for the fact that income from the lower rates which applied during most of the period had not been available to shareholders for such a lengthy period.

Mr. McCaw: Mr. Speaker, is that a ministerial statement?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think so. However, it is a statement of government policy.

Mr. McCaw: Do you rule, Mr. Speaker, that it is a ministerial statement?

Mr. J. J. CAHILL: No! I answered a question.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Premier says that it is not. If it were a ministerial statement, what would the hon. member for Lane Cove seek to do?

Mr. McCaw: I want to reply on behalf of the Opposition.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a ministerial statement. The Premier said that he merely answered a question.

Mr. MORTON: May I ask you, sir, for a ruling? Cannot you rule that it is a ministerial statement? You said yourself that it is a statement of government policy?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! It would be quite competent for me to rule that it is a ministerial statement. I have already said that it is a statement of government policy on a certain matter. If the Leader of the Opposition wishes the hon. member for Lane Cove to reply to it on behalf of the Opposition, I shall permit him to do so.

Mr. MORTON: That is my wish.

Mr. McCaw: I shall make my reply on behalf of the Opposition as brief as the statement of the Premier which you, Mr. Speaker, have ruled is a ministerial statement. The Premier said, as I understood him, that it was agreed several years ago that the decision of the Land and Valuation Court on the matter submitted to it by prior legislation was to be final and binding upon the parties. I say through you to the Premier, and to every other hon. member, that that statement is quite incorrect.

Mr. J. J. CAHILL: It is not incorrect.

Mr. McCaw: I am replying to the Premier. I say, first, that that is a completely incorrect interpretation of the agreement prior to the passage of the Electricity Commission (Balmain Electric Light Company Purchase) Act. The Premier knows by reference to his own remarks in *Hansard* made during the passage of that bill that what he just said to the House is not correct; that it was never agreed. The

word "final" did not appear in the correspondence upon which the Premier bases his assertion that the decision of the Land and Valuation Court was to be final and binding. In certain correspondence it did appear that the determination of the Land and Valuation Court was to be binding upon the parties; I repeat, was to be binding—not final and binding. It appears by reference to the legislation of that time that the determination of the Land and Valuation Court meant the determination in due course of law and in application of the procedure of that court.

Under section 17 of the Land and Valuation Court Act, the judge of that court has the right at his own discretion to refer a case stated for the decision of the Full Court. In addition, the section imposes an obligation on the judge of that court, when required by either party to litigation, to state a case for decision to the Full Court. The judge refused to do that, as has already been pointed out during the discussion on the point of order. The Full Court of the Supreme Court by two to one upheld his refusal. The High Court—seven judges—unanimously said that the judge was wrong in refusing to state a case and ordered him to do so. Further, the High Court held that there had been no determination yet by the Land and Valuation Court. In the first place the Premier is incorrect—I do not say deliberately incorrect—in placing the terms "final and binding" upon the determination of the Land and Valuation Court. That was never agreed to. Secondly, the Premier is incorrect in assuming, and stating to this House, that there has been a determination by the Land and Valuation Court. Upon both those grounds the Opposition joins issue with the Premier's statement of policy.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE. (Resumed.)

TRANSPORT SERVICES: INVESTIGATION.

Mr. MORRIS: I ask the Minister for Transport whether it is a fact that State Government policy does not allow any outside investigation of its business undertakings? If this is so, will the Minister

consider allowing an efficiency survey to be made by an independent firm of experts working from top to bottom in a given section of the Government Transport Department, and use the result of such an examination to determine whether the whole of the Government's transport undertakings should be so examined?

Mr. ENTICKNAP: The hon. member's statement of government policy is incorrect. This has been clearly demonstrated by the Government's authorising an investigation of transport services by an independent body, Ebasco Services Inc., from the United States of America. The Government has agreed that Ebasco shall investigate the affairs of the transport services from top to bottom.

GOVERNMENT TRANSPORT: FINANCE.

Dr. PARR: I ask the Minister for Transport whether the capital value of the metropolitan and Newcastle tramway and omnibus services is approximately £14,000,000? Is it a fact that in the last three years the Consolidated Revenue Fund has supplied about £12,000,000 to maintain the solvency of these services? Is it a fact, also, that the Government could give these services to private transport authorities and companies and thus save consolidated revenue over £3,000,000 a year, and that it could at the same time provide £1,000,000 for interest and the funding of the debt? If these are facts, will the Minister inform the House whether the Government is aware of them?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is making a statement.

Dr. PARR: In order to save the drain on consolidated revenue, will the Government consider this particular aspect of the problem, so that hospital subsidies can be improved?

Mr. ENTICKNAP: It is a fact that the Department of Government Transport has a capital debt of nearly £14,000,000. It is not a fact, however, that if the Government gave its transport services to private enterprise, they would show the profit envisaged by the hon. member. In the years to come the Government would still have to pay the debt

charges on the whole of the capital cost, unless the Commonwealth Government were willing to forgo them. It is true, also, that charges on railway debts amounting to £233,000,000 have to be met each year. These payments must be made to the Commonwealth Government, no matter what comes or goes. This year they were increased by £700,000 because of the increased interest rate approved by the Commonwealth Government. Payroll tax, which is payable to the Commonwealth Government, is increased from £1,000,000 a year to over £1,250,000 for the coming financial year. These charges on capital indebtedness and sinking fund would still have to be met if the transport services were given away.

COMMONWEALTH SHIPPING LINE.

Mr. COADY: I ask the Premier whether his attention has been drawn to a report of proposals by the Commonwealth Government to control expansion of the profitable Commonwealth Shipping Line? Is it a fact that expansion of this line is essential to Australia's expanding economy? If these are facts, will the Premier consider protesting against any move to curtail this national asset?

Mr. J. J. CAHILL: I have merely read in the press that the Commonwealth Government contemplates taking action in this direction and I should be aware of all the facts before I make a pronouncement. I need say no more at the moment than that the Commonwealth Shipping Line seems to be the one transport service that is returning a dividend and, if the Commonwealth Government gets rid of a transport service that is doing this, it will show up in bold relief the transport services that are not doing so. The hon. member may rest assured that I will look into the matter and, if any action is required, I will consider taking it.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

NINTH DAY'S DEBATE.

Debate resumed (from 7th June, *vide* page 400) on motion by Mr. J. J. Cahill:

That the following Address-in-Reply to the Speech which His Excellency the Governor had

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 NORTHCOIT, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, 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, express our thanks for Your Excellency's Speech.

2. We are greatly honoured to receive the Message from Her Majesty on the occasion of our celebration of the Centenary of Responsible Government in New South Wales and we ask that Your Excellency convey to Her Majesty our deepest appreciation of her warm congratulations.

3. We ask also that Your Excellency convey to Her Majesty an assurance of our unfeigned attachment to Her Majesty's Throne and Person and inform Her Majesty that the people of New South Wales cherish warmly the recollection of the occasion in 1954 when Her Majesty visited this State and graciously opened a Session of the Parliament.

4. We join Your Excellency in the hope that, under the guidance of Divine Providence, our labours may be so directed as to promote the highest welfare of the people of New South Wales.

Mr. DICKSON (Temora) [3.18]: Before I obtained the adjournment of the debate last week, the last speaker on the Government side was the hon. member for Sturt. Almost his opening remarks were that the hon. member for Tamworth, in his contribution, had misled the House. The hon. member for Sturt referred to the fact that the hon. member for Tamworth had informed this Chamber that when the Stevens-Bruxner Government took office in 1932, it inherited from the Lang regime 250,000 unemployed, a record Budget deficit and a state of utter chaos.

Mr. WATTISON: The hon. member for Tamworth compared the record of that Government with that of the present Government.

Mr. DICKSON: The hon. member had his full hour to speak. Most amazingly, the hon. member for Sturt said that the

hon. member for Tamworth had misled the House and that, instead of inheriting all those things, the boot was on the other foot. He went so far as to say that when the Stevens-Bruxner Government in 1941 was displaced by a Labor government the incoming government inherited a deficit of £16,000,000—even more than the record of the Labor regime. When I interjected that that was not true he replied that I should make a check, and I have done so. I have here the last Budget introduced by the Colonial Treasurer of the Mair-Bruxner Government, the Hon. A. Richardson. The deficit for 1939-40 was £2,288,685 and the estimated deficit for 1940-41 was £1,539,000. The only conclusion I can come to is that when the hon. member looked at the record he thought the £1,500,000 was £15,000,000.

Mr. WATTISON: The Deputy Leader of the Country party should check again.

Mr. DICKSON: I have made a check in order to satisfy the hon. member for Sturt. I have also the estimates for 1941-42, and the first budget introduced by the Hon. W. J. McKell as Colonial Treasurer. The deficit then was not so great as the estimate made by the Liberal-Country party Government before it vacated office, but was almost £1,000,000. The income of the railways in that year was £4,000,000 more than that for the previous twelve months. This was due solely to the extra traffic resulting from the war and to the fact that the transport system left by the Mair-Bruxner Government was so efficient that it could handle it. All hon. members surely must feel privileged and honoured to be present in this Chamber at this time of celebration of the Centenary of Responsible Government in New South Wales. We should do all in our power to uphold the prestige and dignity of Parliament. It is the greatest institution yet evolved to provide responsible government for the people. We in this Chamber have a heavy responsibility and the press and the general public have an equal one. The public relies on the press for the facts of legislation and for the presentation of criticism levelled at it. Every government must be willing to accept legitimate criticism, no matter how vicious

it may be. Some people seem to think that hon. members should be made a butt for everything. Many of the benefits achieved by people in other parts of the world have resulted from the opportunity afforded them to criticise their parliamentary institutions.

I am sure that all of us were pleased to hear from the lips of His Excellency the Governor, the message of congratulation from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the celebration of our hundredth anniversary of responsible government. We are delighted to have this opportunity to reaffirm our loyalty to the Throne and to the British Commonwealth of Nations. We should remind ourselves of what it means to be a member of the British Commonwealth. No cast-iron bonds bind us to what once was the British Empire—to me it still is; instead we have the golden thread of the Crown. Her Majesty is now Queen of Australia; she is our Queen. That is the sole link which binds this extraordinary Commonwealth of Nations. It is not bondage. We have a common sovereign. Sovereignty as we know it in the British Commonwealth did not come easily; it came by evolution and, over the years, has been adapted to circumstance. All of us should be proud of this sovereignty. That is why I interjected when the hon. member for Fairfield became heated about General Motors-Holden's Limited and said that any country outside Australia was foreign. Nothing could be further from the truth. Any country linked with the Crown of Great Britain, to me is not foreign. I care not whether it is India, Canada or some other part of the great British Empire. No one can exaggerate what it means to possess a constitutional monarchy such as that of the Commonwealth of Nations.

We are inclined to boast about having established responsible government a hundred years ago. It must be remembered that since Australia was a penal settlement all development has been achieved only by virtue of the protection afforded by the British Navy. Without it we certainly should not have developed as a British country. We should remember, too, that two world wars have been fought to preserve the right of the British people to

enjoy their freedom and their constitution. We fought with the other members of the Commonwealth of Nations for that, not for conquest. Of this we should be proud and should remind ourselves of it on an occasion such as this.

In his opening speech His Excellency departed from the usual procedure, as befitted the occasion. It was not a time for His Excellency to give us a mere outline of the Government's legislative programme. He confined himself to tributes to the early pioneers and those responsible for gaining our self-government; and gave a brief history of events leading up to and following the granting of responsible government. Another departure from practice was the moving and seconding of the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply by the Premier and Deputy Premier respectively, instead of by two newly-elected members. That also befitted the occasion. In his speech in this debate the Premier, having dealt in the way that he thought fitting with the advent of responsible government, related a brief history of the party that he has the honour to lead. I intend also to relate the history of the party to which I have the honour to belong. As one would have expected, the Deputy Premier confined his remarks principally to the department over which he presides. Before I have exhausted my time I hope also to say a few words about education.

The Premier referred to his original idea that this debate should be confined to four speakers, as was the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the speech of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The Premier tried to put the blame on the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country party for the fact that this has developed into a full-blooded debate. It is just as fitting that this should be a full debate as it was for His Excellency to do what he did and for the Premier and Deputy Premier to do what they did. I am sure that the Premier will now agree that it would have been a tragedy if an agreement had been made stifling debate in this House on the basis of a precedent when Her Majesty opened Parliament. There is

a great difference between that occasion and this. The reason that the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to Her Majesty's speech was regarded as more or less formal was that in the early stages of the arrangements it was hoped that hon. members would be able to present the Address-in-Reply to Her Majesty in person, and it was only because something went awry with the programme that this was impossible and eventually it was presented to the Governor as her representative.

However, on this occasion His Excellency is at Government House and there is no reason for curtailing debate in any way. This Parliament was elected on 3rd March, and until 22nd May no opportunity had been given to hon. members to air their views in this Chamber. It was fitting that the House should proceed with a normal Address-in-Reply debate. Neither the Leader of the Opposition nor the Leader of the Country party had any right to exercise his will in a matter of this sort. The question was whether the forms and procedure of the House should be observed. If an hon. member wanted to jump to his feet to get the call, that should remain his prerogative. Now that the debate has gone so far, the Premier must agree that the course adopted is in the best interests of the House and of democracy, because to have prevented hon. members from speaking would have been a complete negation of responsible government.

Because of the facts to which I have referred, the maiden speeches were delayed until a little later in the debate than is usual. Nevertheless all hon. members will agree that, though there may have been exceptions, the maiden speeches of hon. members on both sides of the House have been on a high plane. When the legislative programme is dealt with hon. members can look forward to full-blooded debates; and, goodness knows, this Chamber needs an expression of views. We do not want legislation put through in a formal manner, and it looks as if hon. members during this session will have something that they will all enjoy. Older and more experienced members of the House have

made outstanding speeches during this debate. This is another thing that hon. members would have missed had the motion been regarded as formal. It would not be fair for me to pick out the most outstanding speeches, because unfortunately I was absent for the second and third days' debate and I did not hear them all, and also because to do so would be only an expression of my own opinion. However, all hon. members must agree that my leader made one of the best contributions to this debate. He has had vast experience in this House, he is the father in this Parliament, and it is fitting that I should make reference to his outstanding speech. His remarks of the struggles by what are now the other States of the Commonwealth—particularly Tasmania, Victoria and Queensland, and by New Zealand, to free themselves from the domination of Sydney were a lesson in what can happen with proper decentralisation of political power. His description of the development that took place after those people got away from the clutches of Sydney will live in our memory for a long time. It forcefully reminds us that if ever this country has unification to the extent of having only one Parliament, the dead hand will spread itself over the land, and will end any chance of further development. All hon. members must be convinced by his evidence that the key to decentralisation and development is the decentralisation of political power.

His comments on some of the losses of the sovereign rights of this Parliament give ground for most serious thought, and I shall have something more to say about that before I conclude. My leader mentioned also Labor's policy to abolish eventually the State parliaments and to have one parliament in Canberra, with the powers to set up small States of some other sort, with delegated powers. This prospect is most frightening. Although hon. members on the Government side have subscribed to Labour policy over the years, I am sure that some of them did not previously know what was in the policy to which they had subscribed, or they did not appreciate the significance of it. During this debate the Minister for Health quite openly told this Chamber that he believes that governmental

powers should not be centred in Canberra. All of a sudden he has become a State-righter. The Minister for Housing also made no bones about it. In his speech he said in effect, "I was once a great unificationist; I believed in it; I subscribed to it, and I even fought elections on it. But now I am a convert!" Surely, if two Ministers are converted, the remainder of the Labor party can be converted and these obnoxious things can be taken from its platform.

Mr. R. J. KELLY: No hope.

Mr. DICKSON: If that is so, those who have expressed opinions in opposition to Labor's policy do not occupy a very nice position. They have said openly in this House that they are against Labor's policy, though now it is said that there is no hope of altering it. If that is so, they ought to get out of the party. If they have been converted they ought either to take action to remove these things from Labor's platform and policy or get out of the party and do the right thing. Labor's platform and policy are the greatest danger to this country that I can imagine. In my room I have a photostat copy of it. Reading through it I found compulsory unionism, the abolition of State Parliament, unification—all these things have been part of the Labor platform for years. Yet hon. members on the Government side say, "It does not matter; we do not believe in it really, and we will never do it." The same applies to the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange. That plank of their platform lay dormant for many years, and hon. members on that side said, "Do not worry about it. We know that is was put into the Labor platform, but we will never implement it." However, during a short period in Australia's history a Labor Prime Minister, without warning and with no prior mention of it at the previous election, stated that it was Labor's policy to nationalise the banking system of Australia.

Mr. FERGUSON: It would not have hurt.

Mr. DICKSON: There is no need for me to state the history of that. We were protected by the High Court and the Privy

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Council, and Labor's policy was not implemented. At the next elections the public did the right thing and put into office a government that would not nationalise the banking system. During the last two election campaigns I notice that no Labor candidate has stated on the public platform that banks should be nationalised. But it is still hidden in their platform. I remember when the legislation to introduce compulsory unionism came before this House. My best effort to stop what I knew was wrong and contrary to the charter of human rights of the United Nations proved too feeble. I charged hon. members who sit opposite with having no mandate to introduce such legislation and with not mentioning it from the public platform during the election campaign. They replied: "It has been in our platform for years. We were elected by the people. Therefore we have a mandate." Accepting what they then said for what it is worth, they would have a mandate to do all the things that are in their platform—to abolish the Legislative Council, the Senate, and State parliaments as sovereign bodies. We shall all go. There seems to be some hope for the Labor party; two of its Ministers have now said that they are converts, and no longer believe in unification.

Mr. T. V. RYAN: Is the hon. member aware that the Communist party agreed with him that there should be no compulsory unionism?

Mr. DICKSON: I do not know that the Communists have agreed with me on that matter. If they have, it is the only thing on which I agree with them, or they with me. My interests in politics were slight up till the outbreak of World War I, as I was just reaching the stage where, under normal circumstances, I would have been able to record my first vote. The outbreak of World War I caused me to miss that opportunity. However, I was interested enough to realise that in my own part of the country the feeling was rife that the country people were a forgotten race, that they had no voice in politics, and that they were being ignored completely in the framing of the country's

legislation. I am very much convinced that had it not been for the outbreak of World War I, the birth of the Country party would not have been delayed until 1920; that instead it would have been launched many years before. Until then, the country people were represented in this Parliament by men who had no local interest, whose only interest was to have a seat in Parliament. Many representatives did not know personally fifty people in their electorates. The country people were represented by those who had not the faintest interest in them. The feeling was that it was time for the country people to have a voice in the Legislature of this State. But it had to be delayed. World War I began and, of course, many of those who thought in this way went to the war. Those who stayed behind did not interest themselves in this problem because they had more pressing problems. Before the advent of the Country party the country people looked on members of this Chamber as they looked upon Santa Claus; they knew that there was some such being who put something in—or took something out of—their stockings, but country people very rarely saw their representatives.

The Premier is proud of his party. I too am proud of mine. Since my return from World War I, I have been interested in and have watched the development of the Country party. I was one of those who supported my predecessor, the Hon. Hugh Main. He and I have represented the Temora electorate for the past thirty-six years. Our combined period of service equals that of my revered leader. The development of the Country party has not been easy. If anyone feels disposed to start a new political organisation he will find just how difficult it is. The only spur to the formation of the Country party was the need for such a party if the country people were to have something done for them. After all, they were earning most of what was making this country tick. So, in 1920, a group of men who formed what was known as the Progressive party were elected to this Parliament. Many overtures were made to them, and all sorts of glittering promises, to break down those who

dared to have the courage to bring the voice of the country people into this Parliament.

Until then there were only two political parties. Some have said that they were protectionists and free-traders; others have said that they were Labor and the United Australia party or the Liberal party. Whatever they were called, these two parties had the feature in common that they were dominated by city interests. The offers that were made to those first elected representatives of the Progressive party were so tempting that many succumbed to form a national government. I am happy to say that there were seven true-blues who, when elected to Parliament, stuck to their guns. They were the basis of the Country party as it has been known over the years. They brought into New South Wales politics something that has amounted to a political revolution, and has proved of benefit to all.

Those seven true-blues were my leader, my predecessor Hugh Main, Ernie Batten-shaw, David Henry Drummond, Matt Kilpatrick, R. A. Price and I think the other was Thomas Rutledge. These seven men were not tempted to do anything that would side-track them from the job that they had set themselves to do. Thus was born the Country party which became a political force. It was first thought that the new party would play the part that Labor representatives boasted they had played. Originally it thought that it would use its influence politically by sitting on the cross benches and holding the gun at the head of any party that held the reins of government. Soon it was realised that to exercise a political influence the party would have to accept full responsibility in the government of the country, so the Country party agreed to form a coalition government with a party that had many similar ideals. In 1922, two years after the birth of the Progressive party, it was re-named the Country party and joined in the first coalition government.

I want to give hon. members some of the history of coalition governments, because many do not know it. If an hon. member could imagine that there was a £16,000,000 deficit in 1941, what would he know of

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these things? The first of these governments was the Fuller Coalition when the Country party held the balance of power. It lasted from 13th April, 1922, until 17th June, 1925—three years and two months, and was followed by a Lang Labor government which, lasting only two years and four months, did not even run its proper term. Then from 18th October, 1927, until 13th November, 1930—three years and one month—the Treasury benches were occupied by the Bavin Coalition Government for its full term. The Lang Labor Government that followed lasted only for one year and six months. On 16th May, 1932, the Stevens-Bruxner Government was elected to this House. With the exception of the last few months, when it was known as the Mair-Bruxner Government, this coalition ran the full term of nine years. Therefore it will be seen that the Country party has participated, over the past thirty-four years that I am reviewing, in coalition governments that have lasted for fifteen years and three months. During the same period Labor governments have been in office for eighteen years and ten months. There can be no doubt that but for the two redistributions of boundaries, the elimination of four country seats and the creation of four additional seats in Sydney, the Country party's record would have been much better.

I want to remind hon. gentlemen opposite that under the old electorate law, Labor and non-Labor governments have shared almost equally the reins of office. Coalition governments did more for the development of New South Wales than was done before them or will be done by Labor governments, Hon. members have never known a coalition that had Country party representatives that did not serve its full term. The Country party brought stability to the Government. It has been able to emphasise the importance of the primary producer. The people who produce the wealth of the country deserve a high standard of living, and under Country party administration they get the benefits to which they are entitled.

Before outlining some achievements of the Country party, I invite the attention of the House to the extraordinary record of a man who entered politics in 1920 and has

thirty-six years of public service to his credit, for thirty-two of which he has been Leader of the Country party. I refer, of course, to Lt.-Colonel the Hon. M. F. Bruxner, D.S.O., whose record is worthy of quotation. As the hon. member for Byron has said, my leader served for 108 consecutive months as Deputy Premier of this State. He was Minister for Local Government from 18th October, 1927, to 3rd November, 1930; Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport and Local Government from 16th May, 1932, to 17th June, 1932; and Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport from 18th June, 1932, to 16th May, 1941. In that time he was Acting Premier from 11th March to 2nd October, 1936. I believe that the Leader of the Country party is the only member of this House who is a member of the Institute of Transport. He was responsible for many outstanding achievements and much of the policy by which this country has developed.

My leader was responsible for the introduction of the 30-miles-an-hour speed limit, which did so much to prevent accidents in Sydney. At the time he was derided and ridiculed by the city press: and I recall that *The Sydney Morning Herald*, or some other metropolitan newspaper, published a cartoon depicting a man with spurs and leggings astride the roof of a city tram, with a caption to the effect that the country boys had come to run the city transport. The Leader of the Country party had certainly come to do that, and he put the metropolitan transport on such a sound basis that money was available for replacements and sinking fund payments. He reduced fares and freights! Who reorganised the Main Roads Board and created the Department of Main Roads? Who authorised the building of Transport House in Macquarie-street, and Railway House in York-street? Who authorised and completed the railway line to Cronulla? Who authorised and began construction of the new railway bridge over the Hawkesbury River? These were the achievements of the present Leader of the Country party as Minister for Transport. Yet Labor supporters constantly accuse my colleagues and me of being members of a "sectional" party.

The same Minister for Transport authorised and began work on the Quay railway. Perhaps the greatest achievement of this man was his freeing of the railway administration from direct political control. He put men in charge of the undertaking who could do the job without constant interference from the Minister. Those are but a few of the achievements of the Leader of the Country party.

A Country party Minister, the Hon. D. H. Drummond, administered the Department of Education in this State from 18th October, 1927, to 3rd November, 1930, and again from 16th May, 1932, to 16th May, 1941—a total period of twelve years. He was responsible for the first mobile technical units, which visited towns such as Junee, Cootamundra and Temora to test the need for local technical education. The need for technical classes in many country districts became apparent and subsequently those classes were established. The Hon. D. H. Drummond began that work, and of course the Labor Government has continued it. He was responsible for the introduction of the free public libraries legislation, of which the present Minister for Education is so proud. Who established the first teachers' training college outside the metropolitan area, and the first rural university? Who granted the first subsidy on the transport of country school children? The Hon. D. H. Drummond was the man. In addition, he sponsored the junior farmers movement, which has done so much for the rural education of our youth and has amply repaid the State the cost involved. The present Labor Government is starving this fine movement of funds.

I invite hon. members' attention to the record of the Hon. R. S. Vincent, whom most hon. members know, as he retired only recently. From 18th June, 1932, until 16th May, 1941, when he was Minister for Mines and Minister for Forests, he established the first soil conservation station in New South Wales and implemented our first reafforestation programme. He gave outstanding service in his administration of the Mines Department. Three worthy members of the Country party, the late Hon. E. A. Batten-shaw, the late Sir Colin Sinclair and the Hon. A. W. Yeo all left their mark on the

Lands Department. No one would question the ability of these men, who were responsible for the first measures taken to relieve World War I soldier settlers of burdens that would have precluded them from staying on the land. I should know, because I was one of those ex-servicemen. These three gentlemen began the rehabilitation of the marginal areas in the south-western part of New South Wales. They introduced a Western Lands Act that did nothing that was improper, and supported the only government of this State that made land available for civilian settlement. Labor supporters constantly prattle about what the Country party did not do for land settlement; but I remind them that no Labor administration has ever made available one acre of freehold land for settlement except under soldier settlement schemes for which it specifically obtains money from the Federal Government. It is true that on the outbreak of World War II the government of the day could not press on with its policy of civilian land settlement.

Other members of the Country party have made great contributions to the work of this House. I refer to such men as the Hon. H. V. C. Thorby, the Hon. Hugh Main—my predecessor—and the Hon. A. D. Reid, who served in this State as Minister for Agriculture. Those gentlemen reorganised the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. The Area owes more to the Hon. Hugh Main, who put it on a sound basis, than to any other man. When the Country party was in office with a coalition government there was no stoppage of water conservation schemes—they were begun and finished! The Country party was responsible for beginning many major water conservation schemes which, over the past fifteen years, the Labor party has failed to complete.

Mr. BLACK: It has not nearly finished those works.

Mr. DICKSON: That is so. The coalition governments developed and implemented a water conservation policy. Their Labor successors took the torch but did not carry it any farther. My party was responsible for building up the Department of

Agriculture to a high standard of efficiency, from which Labor, when it came into office, gained political kudos. My party brought in the first home-consumption price for wheat; and, as the hon. member for Byron has reminded the House, his predecessor, Mr. A. E. Budd, was the father of the Paterson butter scheme. Nobody can deny that the Country party, working in coalition with the Liberal party, has brought to both the State and Commonwealth the greatest stability ever known in politics. While the Country party has been part of a composite ministry there has been better rural development than ever before. My party was responsible for the beginning of rural electricity schemes. I can remember when in towns such as Cootamundra, and Temora, because of the shortage of water, there was a notice on the hotel doors, "No Baths".

The part that the Country party has taken in politics has resulted in the State's being transformed from a desert into a garden. Every town of reasonable size now has its own water supply, sewerage and swimming pool which were provided when the Country party participated in the government of the State. I had served in this Chamber for three years before Labor was elected to govern at the 1941 elections and I represented an electorate in which almost every country town had been provided with a domestic water supply. Since Labor has been in office, a period of fifteen years, only one village in my electorate has been provided with a water supply. The influence of the Country party in politics did not end in what it was able to do directly. Did anybody dream several years ago that because of the influence of the Country party the two major parties in politics would have a rural policy speech as well as one for the State generally.

When selecting candidates for election to this Chamber all parties now look for a man who has some local background and who will know what he is talking about. The policy of the Country party, which has never been changed and has been implemented as quickly as possible, has been taken over by the Labor party, which has boasted that it has done this and that for people in the rural areas. The Country

party has been the indirect cause of anything that has been done by the Labor party for country dwellers. The great stalwarts of the Country party, such as my present leader the hon. member for Tenterfield, Sir Earle Page in the Federal sphere and other older members of this House will be followed by able and conscientious men. Anybody who thinks that when we go out of politics the Country party will die should come to the Country party rooms and see the talent from which a full ministry could quite easily be chosen. One could mention the service rendered by many hon. members in this Parliament, but that would be merely giving a list of people. However, I do not think that I should allow the occasion to pass without mentioning the service rendered to this State by Sir Bertram Stevens, who took over the Premiership when the State was at its lowest ebb. Sir Bertram was long associated with a Country party coalition government and must rank among the giants of the immediate past. I do not suppose that any Premier in the history of New South Wales has ever had to take over the leadership of the Government in more difficult circumstances. He did a magnificent job. When he took over the reins of government there were 250,000 unemployed and utter chaos prevailed. Sir Bertram should never be forgotten by the people of New South Wales. Hon. members opposite may laugh, but I am speaking of one whom the people should revere. When he has gone from this earth they will pay him a tribute, but it will be too late. We do not defame great men when they are dead, as has happened in Russia, but praise them. While Sir Bertram is still alive somebody should say that his service to the State is greatly appreciated.

It is not my intention to traverse the history of 100 years of responsible government, but I should mention some of the members who represented the south-western part of the State where I was born and have lived all my life, and portion of which I now have the honour to represent. First is the Hon. W. A. Holman, who was member for Grenfell for six years and then represented the electorate of Cootamundra from 6th August, 1904 to 20th March, 1920; a total of twenty-two years. He was

Attorney-General and Minister of Justice from 21st October, 1910, to 1st April, 1912; Attorney-General from 1st April, 1912, to 29th June, 1913; Premier, Colonial Secretary and Attorney-General from 30th June, 1913, to 20th January, 1914; Premier and Colonial Treasurer from 29th January, 1914, to 30th October, 1918; Minister for Public Instruction from 6th March to 15th March, 1915; and Premier from 30th October, 1918, to 20th March, 1920. It was my predecessor, the Hon. Hugh Main, who defeated him and took his place in this Chamber as one of the three members for Cootamundra.

The Hon. J. J. G. McGirr, more familiarly known as Greg and the Minister for Motherhood, represented the electorate of Yass from 5th March, 1913, until 20th March, 1920, and Cootamundra from 20th March, 1920, to 25th March, 1922. He then transferred to the electorate to which he really belonged, that of Sydney, which he represented for one term from 25th March, 1922, to 30th May, 1925. He was Minister for Public Health and Motherhood for two years. The Hon. James McGirr took his brother's place as one of the three members for Cootamundra, which he represented from 25th March, 1922, to 30th May, 1935. He transferred to the electorate of Cumberland, which he represented from 13th May, 1925, to 8th October, 1927. He then represented the electorate of Bankstown from 8th October, 1927, to 17th June, 1950, and the electorate of Liverpool from 17th June, 1950, until his retirement in 1952. The Hon. James McGirr was, at different times, Minister for Health, Minister for Local Government and Transport, Minister for Local Government and Housing, Minister for Housing, Colonial Secretary and Secretary for Mines, and Minister for National Services. He was Premier and Colonial Treasurer from 30th June, 1950, until his retirement in April, 1952. He ended his career almost as an Admiral—as head of the Maritime Services Board.

Then there was the Hon. P. F. Loughlin, who not only served my district, but also was Minister for Lands when I was settled on the land at Dirnaseer. He also gave great service and he always did what

he thought was right and in the interests of the State. The Hon. P. F. Loughlin was member for Burrangong, which included part of the Young district, from 24th March, 1917 until 20th March, 1920. Then he represented the electorate of Cootamundra from 20th March, 1920 to 8th October, 1927, for some time in company with Mr. J. J. G. McGirr and Mr. Main. I do not suppose many hon. members were here when Mr. K. O. Hoad represented Cootamundra. I remember him well because he was the member for the electorate adjoining the district in which I live. He served the electorate, as one of the three representatives, from 30th May, 1925 to 8th October, 1927, and for a further two parliaments as a one-member representative. Mr. Ross then won the Cootamundra seat and held it until it was abolished by redistribution in which, because of movements of population, a new seat was established at Wollongong-Kembla.

The Hon. E. A. Buttenshaw was a member of this Parliament before the Country party was formed. He came to this House on 24th March, 1917, and served until 20th March, 1920, as the representative of Lachlan; subsequently he represented Murrumbidgee from 20th March, 1920 to 8th October, 1927. When the three-member electorates, which included Murrumbidgee, became single-member constituencies, he won his former seat of Lachlan, and served that electorate from 8th October, 1927 until 26th March, 1938, when he resigned. The Lachlan seat was then won by G. P. Evans, who was affectionately known to hon. members as "Griff". Mr. "Griff" Evans, Mr. Gordon Wingfield and I became members of this House in the same year—1938. Following Mr. Evans' term the seat was temporarily lost to the Country party, but after one parliament it was regained by Mr. "Bob" Medcalf. The Hon. A. E. Buttenshaw was Secretary for Public Works for three years, Minister for Railways for one year and seven months, Acting Premier for a month in 1929, and Secretary for Lands for six years.

A review of hon. members with whom I have been privileged to be associated must include the name of Mr. R. H. Hankinson,

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who represented the Murrumbidgee electorate from 11th June, 1932 to 10th May, 1941. He was a lovable man who gave everything he had to the service of his constituents, and was revered by all hon. members who knew him. The hon. member for Murray is still serving in this Parliament after twenty-four years. He was first elected a member of the Legislative Assembly on 11th June, 1932, and has given service second to none. Mr. "Mat" Kilpatrick represented the Murray and Wagga Wagga electorates for twenty-one years. He came here on 15th December, 1920 and left on 10th May, 1941. The Hon. Hugh Main was first elected to this Parliament on 20th March, 1920 and served through seven parliaments until he retired from politics in March, 1938. He was Minister for Agriculture for six years between 1932 and 1938 and I have already mentioned some of his outstanding achievements while he held that portfolio.

The Hon. Hugh Main represented first the electorate of Cootamundra, which included the present electorate of Temora. His service in this House for eighteen years, and mine for the same period, gives us joint parliamentary representation of the Temora area for thirty-six years! I am glad to inform hon. members that Mr. Main is in good health. He retired for personal reasons and I was fortunate to take his place. I remind the House that the Country party has no fixed pre-selection of candidates. Indeed it still has multiple endorsements and when I was elected to this Chamber I had to win my spurs against an opponent from the Country party who was just as vigorous a candidate as would have been the nominee of any other party. I am fortunate to have had, whenever I sought it, the guidance of Mr. Main. He lives near me, and has always been able to withstand a temptation that most men find irresistible—the offering of unsolicited advice. When I was elected he said to me, "I am not going to tell you what to do but if you have a problem on which you want my advice, come over and get it." No advice could be more valuable than when it is given in that spirit, and Mr. Main never gave counsel that was unsound.

I am greatly concerned about the lack of education for country children. As an example, let me tell hon. members of the Wyrra-West Wyalong school bus service, which covers a distance of 56 miles daily. In 1955 the average number of children carried was thirty-seven, from fifteen families. The tentative average number of children to be carried to school on this service in 1956 is thirty-six pupils, from fourteen families. The bus run began in 1950 at a contract price of 1s. 9d. a mile, which was paid by the Government. The Government subsidy was increased by increments of 1d. to 2s. a mile. Last year the parents increased this rate by another 4d.—making a total payment of 2s. 4d. a mile. At the end of 1955 the bus contractor gave notice that he would terminate his contract because the price of 2s. 4d. was not economic. Fresh tenders were called in January, 1956, and the only one received was from the previous contractor for 3s. a mile. The secretary of the Bus Committee interviewed officers of the Department of Education at the Western District Office, Bathurst, and was informed that the maximum government subsidy on this bus run could not be increased beyond the 2s. a mile that was paid last year, as all bus subsidies are now determined by an economic rate subsidy.

Therefore, if this "free" bus service for country children is to operate, the parents must pay a sum equal to 50 per cent. of the Government subsidy. This will be £535 a year, to be shared by fourteen families. This payment must cause hardship for many of them and I hope that the Government will examine this service, not only as a special instance of hardship, but also as a typical example of the situation of country school children. It is unfair that country dwellers in giving their children an education should be compelled to pay exorbitant transport rates. The bugbear of country people is getting their children to school, and this sort of treatment gives no encouragement to people to go on to the land. The situation of the Wyrra-West Wyalong bus service is an example of the need to review the economic rate subsidy that applies to bus services for country school children.

Mr. MALLAM (Dulwich Hill) [4.18]: We in New South Wales are now celebrating one hundred years of parliamentary government, a most important landmark in Australian history. During this debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, I have listened to eloquent speeches dealing with the events of this century of responsible government and I was specially impressed by the able contribution of the Premier who set a standard difficult to emulate. The speech of the hon. member for Byron, also, was excellent. He traced the history of the far North Coast where I spent most of my youth. The hon. member brought me pleasure by his tribute to the service given to this House by the late Mr. R. Greig, who represented Drummoyne, and Mr. R. O'Halloran. Both these gentlemen have been dear friends of mine for years.

I look back sixty-five years to 1891. In that year the political Labor movement of this country was born out of the injustices and oppression that accompanied the collapse of private enterprise in the early 'nineties, its disastrous bank failures, vicious attacks upon working conditions, and the subsequent unsuccessful struggles of the trade unions to maintain living conditions for their members. Defeated on the economic field, Labor turned seriously for the first time to parliamentary action and at its first attempt succeeded in electing no fewer than thirty-five members to the 1891 Parliament. What were the prevailing forces that carried the Labor movement with such tremendous effect into Parliament? They were many; let me mention a few.

First the influence of those men who, many years before, had been hounded from Ireland, Scotland and England because they had battled for freedom; men who inspired the Eureka Stockade and the important shearers' and transport workers' struggles. There was the Christian determination to preserve the dignity of the family and to improve the depressing working and living conditions then prevailing; determination to remove the slums and the ill-lit factories where women and children were sweated for profit; determination to

remove the constant threat of unemployment that brought fear to most workers' homes. There was a demand for political reform; the cry of "One man, one vote"; the demand for votes for women and no property franchise. Finally animating and giving vitality to all these demands for more of the world's leisure, pleasure and treasure for workers, was a surging idealism that is found sadly lacking to-day; idealism with spiritual background; idealism partly the result of revolt against the shocking working conditions of the nineteenth century; but it sprang also from deeper sources, similar to those animating great religious movements of the past and linked with the Christian injunction—to do unto others as you would be done by.

So arose the far-reaching demand that the community as a whole, through parliamentary control, should take over monopolies, and play an ever-increasing part in the ownership of production, and the management of distribution and exchange. So the spirit of the Labor movement was able to add inspiration to its day-to-day demands for shorter hours, higher pay and better conditions for those who work by hand and brain. I now mention a few of those who, for their early inspiring efforts for Labor, deserve to be remembered. George Black, who was elected in the first parliamentary team, edited, in 1898, the *Barrier Truth* of Broken Hill and was subsequently sub-editor of the *Sydney Bulletin*. Jabez Wright was a Broken Hill member of this Parliament and the world's first Labor mayor. W. G. Spence was one of Labor's first Federal members and the founder of the Australian Workers' Union in this State. Arthur Rae was another builder of the Australian Workers' Union and one-time Senator. Harry Holland, who later became New Zealand Prime Minister. William Lane, who inspired Labor industrially and politically in those all-important early 'nineties; and others who, in their early days of unspoiled idealism, paved the way for their subsequent appointments as Prime Ministers or Premiers. I refer to the Hon. J. C. Watson, the Hon. W. M. Hughes and the Hon. W. A. Holman. Let us not forget the women who pioneered for Labor in

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those hectic days—Rose Scott, Louisa Lawson, Kate Dwyer, Bertha McNamara, Annie Golding and Lena Lynch whose inspired efforts to abolish the sweating of women workers, to reduce long working hours, and to improve women's status generally through widows' pensions, child endowment and other reforms, are remembered when we give tribute to their tireless energy.

Mr. H. E. JACKSON: And Lilian Fowler?

Mr. MALLAM: The hon. member may include Lilian Fowler. I know that this recital of the deeds of Labor stalwarts hurts the Opposition. However, I want their names recorded because they have played an important part in this democracy over the past 100 years.

Some of these pioneers are still living—Dame Mary Gilmore whose pen as well as voice has contributed so much; Mrs. Lucy Cassidy; and Mrs. Gertrude Melville who to-day graces our New South Wales Parliament. Thirty-five Labor members were elected on that historic election day of June, 1891, and I should like to mention their names. Mr. Thomas Bavister, second member for Canterbury, who was born near Barnsley, York, England, on 18th June, 1850. Mr. George Black, second member for West Sydney, who was born in Edinburgh on 15th February, 1854. Mr. John Henry Cann, who was returned unopposed for Sturt, was born in Lorrabridge, Devon County, England. Mr. Joseph Cook, senior member for Hartley, who was born in North Staffordshire, one of the great mining districts, in December, 1860. Mr. Frank Cotton, senior member for Newtown, born in Adelaide in 1858. His sons were prominent on the professorial staff of Sydney University. Mr. C. J. Danahey, third member for Canterbury who was born—of Irish parentage—in Detroit, Michigan, United States of America, in October, 1856. Mr. E. Darnley, fourth member for Balmain, who was born in Birmingham, England, on 29th January, 1859. Mr. T. M. Davis, fourth member for West Sydney, who was born in Redditch, Worcestershire, on 21st January, 1856. Mr. Dennis C. J. Donnelly, senior member for Carcoar, who was born in Cork, Ireland, in 1833. Mr. John

Lionel Fegan, second member for Newcastle, who was born in 1862 at Chelmsford, Essex. Mr. John D. Fitzgerald, senior member for West Sydney, a native of the Illawarra district, New South Wales, who was born in 1862. Mr. Albert—"Gupp"—Gardiner, senior member for Forbes, who was born in Orange, New South Wales, in 1865. Dr. Hollis, member for Goulburn, native of that city, who was born in 1865. Mr. T. J. Houghton, junior member for the Glebe, who was born in Manchester, England, in 1862. Mr. Alfred Edden, third member for Northumberland, who was born at Tamworth, Staffordshire, in 1850. Mr. William Henry Sharp, fourth member for Redfern, who was born in London, 26th October, 1844. Mr. Andy Kelly, third member for West Sydney, who was born in Dublin, 1854. Mr. John Kirkpatrick, who was born in Lockely, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, in 1840. Mr. J. S. McGowen, third member for Redfern, who was born 16th August, 1855. Mr. J. Morgan, second member for the Bogan, a native of Tasmania, who was born in Hobart, in 1853. Mr. W. H. Newman, senior member for Orange, who was born in 1839, at Nantes, France, where his father was the Vice-Consul. Mr. J. Newton, senior member for Balranald, who was born in Lancashire, England. Mr. G. D. Clark, third member for Balmain, was born at Colchester, England, 30th July, 1848.

Time does not permit me to deal with this distinguished band personally, but, having in mind the strength of spiritual values in those days, I should mention that Mr. Thomas Bavister was an active man in the Methodist Church; that Mr. J. L. Fegan was a Wesleyan lay preacher for nine years and superintendent of the Wesleyan Sunday School; Mr. Danahey and Mr. Andy Kelly were prominent members of the Catholic Church; Mr. Alf Edden was a lay preacher among the Primitive Methodists; Mr. H. J. Sharp was the son of a minister and was himself a distinguished member of the Church of England; Mr. J. Newton was active in the Oddfellows and the Masonic orders—in 1889 he was the Grand Master of the Oddfellows and he was a Past Master in Masonry; Mr. G. D. Clark was active in the temperance

movement and was the editor of the *New South Wales Good Templar*. I mention the wide range of nationalities of these men and the branches of the Christian Church that they represented to indicate the broad and liberal basis of the Labor movement in those early days. I mention also the great proconsul, Sir George Grey, ex-Governor of New Zealand, South Australia and South Africa. Sir George was a man of radical views and gifted with great eloquence. He helped more than any man to bring into existence Labor's parliamentary party. Mr. T. J. Houghton, secretary of the General Labor Electoral League, when interviewed after the election, paid tribute to Sir George Grey's visit to New South Wales and quoted the advice he tendered when leaving for New Zealand: "Ponder over my last words—do everything by gentleness and perseverance with true Christian dignity and true manly courage and in the end you will prevail. Assert your rights with dignity and power and you must triumph. Do not bully anybody. Return kindness for wrong, whatever is done. These are the principles to act upon. You have the power in your own hands by the ballot box. By that you can control everything".

Cardinal Moran, speaking at a guild breakfast soon after the meeting of Parliament, is reported to have said: "Apart from all political considerations of party character, I feel I can say that to Australia, as the youngest of the nations, belonged the glory of being the first to return Labor representatives to Parliament to help speak to the world in the name of Australia. Morally speaking, it was a triumph for Australia that the representatives of the working classes have been elected to Parliament to urge the claims and defend the rights of Labor and to assist in making the laws." I shall quote only one more prominent man of that day—the Earl of Onslow, ex-Governor of New Zealand, who was interviewed in Sydney on his way back to England by the *Daily Telegraph* reporter. Dealing with Labor representation, he said:

I have made the acquaintance and learned the views of many Labor Members who are the most conscientious and straightforward Members of Parliament I have ever come across. I can only tell you generally what I said

at Dunedin the other day—that I have no fear for the future of the Empire because of Labor Members taking a share in directing the counsels of the Empire.

I have dealt at some length with the beginnings of the Labor movement and with the courageous and sturdy personalities who first represented organised Labor in this Parliament, for I believe this to have been a glorious period in the history of the democratic life of this country. I wish only to add that they were men and women of vision and courage whose initiative brought great hope to the mass of the working people. To-day we bear living witness to the achievement of many of their ambitions for social justice. The current celebration of 100 years of responsible government gives us an opportunity to check the progress of this State during the century of time in which we have governed ourselves. I think that the Premier highlighted the situation when he emphasised the great work done by the men of the past. From the lesson of history he read the plan of the future. I agree with his every word. In fact, the plan of the future is the theme of the speech I make to-day.

There is an old popular hymn called "Let us now praise famous men". Nothing could be more appropriate. In praising them let us not forget the signposts that they have left us pointing the way to the finishing of the job they had so gloriously begun. The pioneers, whom we now honour, were the modern thinkers of their day—in many ways men ahead of their time; men whose minds looked ahead into the present century. It is our job to match this patriotism and foresight of the past with the plans and performance of to-day.

Just as those of the past saw problems that admitted of no easy solution in their lifetime, so too must we of to-day grapple with the problems and perplexities of our time, perplexities made enormous by the very progress planned by our forefathers. The greatest tribute we can pay to the fathers of the Constitution and creators of responsible government is to add our contribution to national progress. Great problems face the Parliament and the community—housing, development, land settlement, conservation, markets for our goods

and goodwill towards our neighbours, the question of wages and inflation, automation and the serious day-by-day problem of transport. I have always been interested in transport and I shall speak on this matter as the main part of my address. Apart from defence, transport is our greatest national problem and of course, it is bound up with defence. Projected increases in tram, bus and rail freights and fares, has put public transport much in the public mind. No one regrets the necessity for these increases more than I do. They hit hardest the section of the public least able to bear the burden—the workers of this State. Coming hard upon the heels of vicious tax increases imposed by a wasteful Federal Government under the recent supplementary budget, they are a blow to the worker already burdened beyond his capacity by post-war inflation. It is an understandable reaction for members of the public unthinkingly to blame this Government for these transport increases, but the Government is as much a victim of circumstances as are the people themselves. Some of the reasons for these grievous imposts go back into the colonial days of the State. The increases, in all the circumstances, are inevitable and inescapable.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have to advise the hon. member that to-day notice has been given of what is tantamount to a censure motion. It reads:

(1) That because—

- (a) its failure to manage public transport has and will continue to prejudice severely the welfare of the people of New South Wales; and
- (b) its policy of imposing staggering fare and freight imposts without adequately taking into consideration their impact on production and living costs will lead to a lowering of living standards and unemployment;

the Government no longer possesses the confidence of this House.

Standing Order 110A, at page 88, on that question is definite and specific. It reads:

Anticipation.

In determining whether a discussion, including a discussion on a motion under Standing Order 49, is out of order on the ground that a motion already on the business paper will

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be anticipated, regard shall be had by the Speaker to the probability of the matter so anticipated being brought before the House within a reasonable time.

Notice of that motion has been given and is therefore already on the business paper. To speak on fares and freights at this stage is to anticipate debate on that motion. Therefore no hon. member will be allowed to discuss transport matters, fares and freights, management, or anything that affects the motion, until it has been disposed of.

Mr. MALLAM: I accept your ruling, Mr. Deputy Speaker, though the main theme of my speech was transport. I should have known better; my transgression was due to inexperience. Since I first entered this Chamber I have devoted most of my time to transport matters, and I had intended to speak on the benefits that would accrue to this State from the co-ordination of transport. In the circumstances I refer any hon. member interested in these matters to my maiden speech, in which I dealt with this problem at length. Let me now turn to another subject that is close to my heart—one that I feel should be freely discussed whenever a politician is on his feet. I have taken the trouble to go closely through the old records of speeches of hon. members in this House and I find that running through all of them is the theme that finance is government and government is finance. New South Wales has slipped a long way. I was pleased to note that the Premier in his policy speech at the recent State elections referred to finance. He said that he would appoint an advisory council to examine hire-purchase agreements. I have listened time after time to members of the Opposition reminding Labor that they believe in the arbitration court. I believe in it too, but do hon. members opposite believe in low interest rates or stability in finance? That is where the arbitration court cannot work, because learned judges sit on the bench and tell the worker how much profit he shall have, and how much he shall take home to his wife and family. No hon. member opposite deals with the hire-purchase racketeer. Every worker in this community must at some time or other owe money. This is a Federal problem.

Mr. H. E. JACKSON: It is entirely in the hands of the Labor Government.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MALLAM: I visit Gosford on many occasions and hear a lot of cackling as I pass the farms. My remarks hurt hon. members opposite, but I know this subject well. Instability of finances hurts the worker. I hope that the Premier, when he seeks a convention of State parliaments, will do something about the matter. A former Premier, the Hon. W. J. McKell, did something about hire purchase, but the present Premier is the first to enable the public to consult the Public Solicitor on hire-purchase agreements free of charge. The real problem is the interest rate and a convention should be called immediately to see that workers are dealt with fairly. Everyone knows that it is useless to send a worker to the arbitration court and not say how much profit the financier makes on a Saturday morning. The worker has no money, unless he has had a wealthy father; he must get on his feet as best he can and buy on terms. The hire-purchase racketeer takes overnight all the profit from the worker's wages. I see that an hon. member opposite is smiling about this. It is a sore point in the community, and the Federal Government is doing nothing about it. One of my relatives recently asked me for a small loan to help him buy a refrigerator. He said that he could buy one for £111 cash, but that if he bought it on his electric light account it would cost him £175 or £180. This is a most serious state of affairs. That man would thus lose the equivalent of four weeks' wages on the purchase of only one household article.

Mr. HUGHES: From whom would he be buying it?

Mr. MALLAM: The electricity authority—on his electric light account—but that is not the point. This sort of thing is happening every day. When Holden cars were scarce I asked a friend in the motor trade whether he could get one for me. He said, "I can let you have one, but you are playing on our friendship a bit". When I asked why, he replied, "If you pay cash for it, that is no good to me. It is worth £700

to me if I can find someone who will trade in a car." The worker is told that he must go to the arbitration court, where he is told how much he is allowed to have above what it costs him to exist. Apart from that no one worries about him. Under the Menzies-Fadden regime, the worker who buys a home has to work for an extra three years to pay the increased interest.

Mr. HUGHES: That is not so.

Mr. MALLAM: The hon. member for Armidale has been lost for a long time at the back of Yugilbar and has missed many opportunities. Although I should not say so, it has been said that the party he represents is the last of the hill-billies. I am not referring personally to the hon. member or to anyone else. I have been to Yugilbar, which is such a quiet place that one would not know what goes on there. I drove cattle there in my youth, and then I did not know what was going on. I had to come to Sydney to find out, and then I immediately became active in the Labor party, because I realised that to get anywhere the people would have to support a party with its policy. I heard the hon. member for Armidale praise his predecessor, Mr. James Cahill, and his comments made me wonder why the electors of Armidale did not re-elect him. However, I know that occasionally they are influenced by the propaganda machine of the Opposition parties. I am sure that Jim Cahill will be back in this House again. He needs only to quote from the speech of the hon. member for Armidale to make known his achievements during his term here. The hon. member for Armidale will have played a great part in the re-election of his predecessor. However, I do not want to get away from the issue, because I feel very keenly about it.

Mr. H. E. JACKSON: What issue?

Mr. MALLAM: The issue of interest rates. The hon. member would know nothing about that. If he looks after the poultry farmers at Gosford he will be doing all right. The hon. member for Ashfield knows a little about the furniture trade, and he knows what happens when a worker wants to buy furniture, and how difficult it is for

him to meet payments at such high rates of interest. Is it fair that the worker in times of full employment, should be asked to go to the arbitration court to be told how much a week he shall get, and how much he shall have over and above his living expenses, then to be robbed unmercifully when he buys household necessities? It is all wrong. We as legislators must examine the problem and ensure that he is given a fairer deal. I sincerely hope that in the near future there will be a real conference of State Premiers and a real Loan Council meeting, at which people such as Fadden will not be allowed to wander in and say, "Take it or leave it". The problem must be examined in the interests of the worker so that there will be a realisation of the ideals of the Labor men of earlier days, men who sincerely believed that finance was government and government was finance. I am sure that the Premier will do his utmost to handle this matter effectively. If he did not intend to do so he would not have said in his policy speech that he would look into hire purchase, nor would he have made it possible for the public to seek the advice of the Public Solicitor on hire purchase matters.

Mr. MURDEN: There is no mention of that in the legislative forecast.

Mr. MALLAM: It will be there; I do not doubt the sincerity of the Premier, though I have many doubts about the sincerity of hon. members opposite, and particularly of members of the Commonwealth Government. The hon. member for Ashfield, too, would have doubts about the sincerity of his colleagues in Canberra if he were interested in the welfare of the community because, as every hon. member knows, depressions are caused by increased interest rates. It is said that every increase of 1 per cent. in interest means that the worker has to work another eighteen months to pay his normal debts. If no one will do anything about relieving him of this burden, what is the use of talking about arbitration? Why not let the worker run riot and stand the boss up for as much as he can get from him? Over the years

Labor has believed in cheap money and that finance is government. Federal Labor governments have realised that the best way to give the worker a fair deal is to keep interest rates low. Hon. members to-day heard the Minister for Transport say that the increased interest rates meant a further burden on the railway system last year of £700,000. The Minister for Conservation, when Minister for Transport, informed the House in answer to a question by me that increased interest on the railway debt then amounted to £600,000 a year. The Leader of the Opposition, who is smiling, knows what increased interest rates mean to the motor trade.

Mr. MORTON: There is no law against that. One must retain one's sense of humour.

Mr. MALLAM: It is time there was a law against it, because the second-hand car firm that the hon. member has would not be so wealthy to-day if there had been in existence a law relating to interest rates on hire-purchase transactions. I know the position in the motor trade. It is running riot. I defy the Leader of the Opposition, even with his experience, if I put a hire-purchase agreement in front of him, to inform the House in fifty minutes how much interest a worker pays on a second-hand motor car. Such things as this cause much discontent and instability in the community and prevent the worker from getting a fair deal. These problems should be tackled by every person who is interested in seeing that the worker gets a fair share of the world's leisure, pleasure and treasure. That is what the Labor men of old believed in. They believed, and I, too, am convinced, that the only way the worker can receive a fair share of the wealth of this country is by the introduction of legislation to limit the rates of interest on goods bought under hire-purchase agreements. That would strike a balance with the decisions of the arbitration court, and prevent the economy from going awry. It is no good talking about anything else until this problem is solved.

Mr. BRAIN: Who will lend the money?

Mr. MALLAM: The Federal Government has approved a policy of increasing interest rates. It has caused investors to expect the highest return on money invested. If the Commonwealth Government caused the Commonwealth Bank to make money available for loan at $3\frac{1}{8}$ th per cent., interest rates generally would drop rapidly. If interest rates are increased, down goes the living standard of the worker. That is exactly what is happening now, and hon. members opposite know it. The Commonwealth Government must stand up to its obligation and fix the maximum rate of interest.

Mr. MORTON: The only people who will give the worker a "fair go" are on this side of the House.

Mr. MALLAM: I know the "fair go" that hon. members opposite will give the worker. We on this side have been observing the attitude of Liberal supporters in Canberra for quite a few years.

Mr. MORTON: Have you really?

Mr. MALLAM: Yes; and that of your "great leader". I heard the Leader of the Opposition, over North Sydney way, praise his great leader. He called him, "The Great Prime Minister of Australia". This "great man", who was returned to Canberra because of his ponderous speeches and his eloquence—

Mr. H. E. JACKSON: Did the hon. member understand what he was saying?

Mr. MALLAM: I understood him. He was returned to office, at the time the Hon. J. B. Chifley had been lending money at $3\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. and he has increased the rate gradually to $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

Mr. HUGHES: And the hon. member's Premier agreed to it; he voted for it.

Hon. members interjecting,

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am sure that everyone will agree that interjections have been far too frequent. It is hardly fair to interrupt a member so consistently. I ask that the remainder of the hon. member's speech be heard in silence.

Mr. MALLAM: Hon. members opposite know what they are defending. They know why they have become so heated and why they have interjected so often. It is because they are doing a job for their masters. Those in this city to-day who lend to the workers at 12 per cent. and 14 per cent. are their masters. There is no doubt that the Rt. Hon. R. G. Menzies has done a very good job for his masters.

Mr. GREEN: Where is he?

Mr. MALLAM: He is overseas, probably getting more instructions on how still further to increase the interest rate. It is reliably reported that the Bank of New South Wales, and others responsible for increasing interest rates, following the last rise reaped a record profit of £1,500,000. It is well known that these institutions, by backdoor methods, have been financing hire-purchase companies. This is contributing to the indebtedness of the State. One needs only to study this State's water conservation and irrigation schemes to appreciate the debt that has been thrust on this State. The Department of Railways alone last year had to meet an increased interest bill of £750,000. What must high interest rates mean to other government utilities? The Commonwealth Government is now responsible for a 6½ per cent. interest rate on loans. Had this "great leader" of Liberal supporters announced to the worker the week before the last Federal elections that interest rates were to be increased, he, and his followers, would not have been returned. The information came too late.

Dr. PARR: Now that the people know what this Government is doing they will throw it out.

Mr. MALLAM: The hon. member and his supporters could never do that. The workers of this country will never believe that he and his supporters are sincere, because every time they have been in power they have allowed increased interest rates to make the workers' burdens heavier. Any one who remembers the last depression knows as well as I do that it was caused through interest rates of 8 and 9 per cent. upsetting the efficient functioning of public utilities. There was then plenty of money

available on 2nd mortgage at 9 per cent. and 10 per cent. The supporters of hon. members opposite in that way caused the depression; and they will cause another unless they acknowledge the necessity for financial control. The only way to deal effectively with the matter is to call a conference of State Premiers, the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer.

Mr. STEPHENS: What about the return of taxing powers to the States?

Mr. MALLAM: It is useless to send the worker along to the Arbitration Court to be told how much return he shall get for his effort without the other fellow being told how much profit he shall earn. To-day one finds luxury goods on the market that can be purchased on terms at 8 and 9 per cent. interest. In my suburb solicitors are lending money for the purchase of farms just outside the boundary of the metropolitan area at rates of interest as high as 13 per cent. or 14 per cent. No effort is made to control these high rates. The Federal Government condones them. It is re-directing finance from the Commonwealth Bank to private banks, which are responsible for sneaking up interest rates on workers' deposits. They now pat their chests and are praised for doing so.

Mr. HUGHES: What about section 92 of the Constitution?

Mr. MALLAM: I have often told hon. members about that iniquitous section which is causing so much trouble. At Canberra there should be a government with enough fortitude to tackle these problems. I remind hon. members of the names I mentioned earlier of thirty-five Labor men whose one aim was to see that the working class received fair treatment. I referred to men like "King" O'Malley, Andrew Fisher, and Sir Denison Miller. They believed that finance was government and that government was finance. Until there is at Canberra a government that believes in this principle, all State governments will continue to show deficits. Towards the end of last year I asked the Minister for Public Works what effect increased interest rates would have on the Treasury. He said that they would mean an increased Government

deficit of £2,600,000. How can a government budget when this state of affairs continues? It is beyond my comprehension. The same problem faces the worker when he tries to budget for the purchase of a home. If someone in Canberra increases his interest rate, how can he budget? This stresses the need for a government at Canberra with enough courage to legislate for low rates of interest to stabilise the country's economy. Much talk is heard of money flowing in and out. I have heard various economists speak in that vein, but it means nothing unless interest rates are kept down.

Dr. PARR: How would the hon. member get money if interest rates were so low?

Mr. MALLAM: That is the type of argument the hon. member for Burwood was not game to debate when he came into the Dulwich Hill electorate. He and his supporters never talk about such things.

Dr. PARR: The hon. member cannot answer my question.

Mr. MALLAM: I did not hear the question.

Dr. PARR: I asked the hon. member how could he raise money—

Hon. members interjecting,

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MALLAM: That was the question asked of Sir Denison Miller, Andrew Fisher and "King" O'Malley. Their answer was, "What have you a Commonwealth Bank for?" They did not print additional notes. How did the late Hon. J. B. Chifley reduce interest rates? In 1940, just after the beginning of World War II, I went to a private trading bank at Hurstville to obtain a loan to build a garage. The manager said, "Yes, I will lend you money to build your garage—at 7½ per cent." Although I said that I could not pay it he replied that I would have to do so because a clause in the Commonwealth Bank Act prevented me from taking my banking business elsewhere. Anyone who knows about banking is aware of that restrictive provision. However, I withdrew my small

savings from the bank, and quietly deposited them in the Commonwealth Bank, from which I received the loan at 4½ per cent. interest, and was able to go ahead with my arrangements. A few month later when Labor had gained office in the Federal sphere I journeyed to Canberra with Bill Taylor, who was a member of the Bank Board, and the present Deputy Governor. I discussed my personal experience with these gentlemen and told them that when I was in Orange campaigning for my friend, Bob O'Halloran, local farmers who had only a few hundred pounds owing assured me that they had to pay up to 10 per cent. and could not transfer their accounts from one bank to another. Subsequently I had a telephone call from Mr. Taylor that that restrictive clause had been eliminated and soon afterwards instructions were issued as to the maximum rate of interest which could be charged.

The Federal Government, if it wants to help the workers and to enable State governments to balance their budgets, must reduce the interest rate. The recent increase which it sneaked in, upset the calculations of the Premier and Colonial Treasurer by £2,600,000 last year, and probably more this year. The Department of Railways cannot continue to bear its crippling interest burden. This is a problem of figures, and it is the duty of Labor to explain the position to the people. I hope that before long a Labor government will be in office at Canberra. Already I can detect the "tunnelling" in that city. Some time ago, when the Leader of the Opposition accused me of "tunnelling", I reminded him that he himself was busy doing the same thing. As *Hansard* will show, a few weeks later he deposed the Leader of the Opposition. The same sort of "tunnelling" is going on in the ranks of the hon. member's Federal colleagues.

Mr. H. E. JACKSON: What about the "tunnelling" in the Labor party?

Mr. MALLAM: If the hon. member had listened carefully he would have heard me say that the Labor party was founded on Christian principles. Labor believes in a fair share of the world's wealth for all.

Labor members are idealists. Labor believes that there should be a reduction in the interest rate. State governments throughout the Commonwealth are piling up deficits and workers are becoming entangled in hire-purchase commitments. They cannot buy homes because of the high interest rate. But within the next few years the chickens will come home to roost. Legal men who have to do with agreements must wonder whether many borrowers will be able to meet their commitments and continue to pay interest rates of 8 and 9 per cent. The other day a solicitor from Cronulla telephoned me to ask whether I had any money in the bank. As he is a keen punter I was somewhat suspicious of his motives, but he explained that he had a client wanting to buy a block of land who was willing to pay 14 per cent. interest for the loan for twelve months.

Mr. H. E. JACKSON: I am sure the hon. member "hooked in".

Mr. MALLAM: I did not do so because I have some scruples. Unless the interest rate is lowered the country will suffer a recurrence of those troubles which years ago brought Labor to the forefront. The last depression would have created even greater chaos had there been no Commonwealth Bank. Hon. members will recall that, despite the chortles of the hon. member for Burwood, it printed and issued money. It was said that Lang was mad and criticism was levelled at Theodore's fiduciary issue, but before the depression was finished £41,000,000 more than the amount suggested by the ridiculed Theodore was in circulation in this State. The Liberal Government at Canberra issued a total of £78,000,000 in bank credit. The worker who goes to the Arbitration Court for a fair weekly wage must not be exploited. These are reasonable issues, which must be resolved. No help is forthcoming from Canberra at the moment.

Mr. H. E. JACKSON: They are the problems also of Dr. H. V. Evatt.

Mr. MALLAM: That gentleman put forward a sound policy on home finance—loans at 3 per cent. That is Labor policy. Irrespective of Dr. Evatt, I believe in it, as

does every other Labor supporter from the days of Fisher, King O'Malley and the late Rt. Hon. Wm. Morris Hughes, when he was a member of our party. The means adopted to finance Australia's part in the last two world wars demonstrate that the Federal Government can control the interest rate of money and keep stable bank finance by means of the Commonwealth Bank. I hope that before the end of this session the proposed conference of State Premiers with the Federal Treasurer will be held in Canberra, and that they will come to an agreement on interest rates for the benefit of the workers, many of whom are paying exorbitant interest rates and cannot afford to be out of work for even one week.

The hon. member for Maitland had something to say about the imminent problem of automation. That problem will materially affect the Opposition. According to a recent American journal, the introduction of automation in factories in the United States has created a problem for the manufacturers. Manufacturers and retailers are conferring to discover why they are not selling their goods. A survey disclosed that the average worker in America was paying in interest £3 10s. a week, the equivalent of one week's rent. In that country legislation was introduced to lower the interest rate so that the manufacturers could sell goods that had been manufactured by their automatic machinery. If hon. members on the Opposition side want to move with the times, they should read about these things. It is inevitable that in the future hon. members on that side of the House will be asking for a reduction in interest rates so that the people can buy some of the things that are manufactured by the interests they represent. An investigation of the economic affairs of the people in this State would show that they also are paying weekly interest bills that are equivalent to their rent commitments, and there is no doubt that this position needs rectifying. I hope that this conference will be held in Canberra and that something will be done to stabilise the economy. If this is not done we shall have another depression that will make the depression of the early 1930's look small. However, this conference cannot be

held until the Prime Minister returns from tripping all over the world, having a good time and making pretty speeches.

Mr. CLOUGH (Parramatta) [5.12]: I enter this House with a sense of pride and humility and in a spirit of fellowship towards all hon. members. I am grateful to the electors of Parramatta for electing me to this place of distinction. I acknowledge my debt to them and hope that even if I am unable to maintain their continued electoral support, I shall at least comport myself and discharge my duties in such a way as to earn and retain their respect. I pay tribute to my predecessors, who have rendered praiseworthy service to my electorate, and I shall strive not only to emulate them but indeed to surpass their achievements.

Henry Watson Parker and George Oakes were the first elected members for Parramatta to the first Parliament, having been elected simultaneously under proportional representation on 29th March, 1856. I am the twenty-fifth member to represent Parramatta in this House. Some of the better-known representatives were Thomas Robert Moxham, 1901-1916; William Thomas Ely, 1920-1922 and 1925-1927; Thomas Howard Morrow, 1922-1925; John Thomas Lang, 1920-1927; the Hon. Albert Bruntnell, 1916-1929; Brigadier-General Herbert William Lloyd, 1929-1930; and the Hon. George Charles Gollan, 1932-1953. During his term of office the Hon. George Gollan was at various times Minister without Portfolio, Colonial Secretary, and Minister for Labour and Industry and Social Services. He possessed a lovable nature and is revered in Parramatta, where he will long be remembered. The citizens of Parramatta have erected in Alfred Park a splendid memorial clock to commemorate his outstanding service to them.

I should like to join with the hon. member for Drummoyne in extending my thanks and appreciation to my colleagues, certain members of the Government and the officials of this House for the kindness and helpful assistance they have shown me. One cannot sit in this imposing Chamber without realising that one is sharing an exclusive privilege. Indeed it was a

privilege to listen to the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the Opposition giving such informative and soul-stirring résumés of the first century of responsible government in this Mother State of New South Wales. I listened, with interest and with some humour to the speeches of other hon. members, especially the humorous rhetoric of the hon. member for Canterbury; the aggressiveness of the hon. member for King; the eloquence of the hon. member for Croydon; the poignancy of the hon. member for Drummoyne; and the factual and purposeful discourses of the hon. members for Maitland and Sutherland.

Our centenary year gives us an opportunity to recollect and celebrate. I have the honour to represent the oldest constituency in this Parliament; Parramatta is the cradle of Australia. Therefore I feel that it would be not only appropriate but indeed, incumbent upon me to recount to hon. members something of the growth and development of this famous electorate, mellow with age, and redolent of historical events. Parramatta is a great and ancient settlement. There was a time when to all intents and purposes it was not only New South Wales but Australia, with Sydney as its seaport. Never let it be forgotten that it was a great settlement. On the morning of 24th April, 1788, Governor Phillip and his little party of explorers discovered the site of Parramatta; at first it was named Rose Hill in honour of George Rose, one of the Secretaries of the British Treasury. If Phillip had made his visit to this locality earlier, Parramatta instead of Sydney would have become the principal settlement and might to-day be the seat of administration of the State of New South Wales. Writing in June, 1790, the Governor said, "Had I seen the country near the head of the harbour I might have been induced to make the settlement there." The town was renamed Parramatta by Phillip in June, 1791. Parramatta is said to mean: "The place of eels", but Mrs. Macarthur writing in 1795 says that it signifies "The head of the river."

Parramatta is remarkable for the number of first things to which it holds claim—the first real wheat harvest in March,

1789; and the first land grant issued in our history, made at what is now called Harris Park in 1791, to James Ruse, whose wife Elizabeth Perry was the first woman convict to gain her freedom in Australia. The first plough used in this country was put into the ground on John Macarthur's historic holding, Elizabeth Farm. The first ferry in our history ran to Parramatta, as did the first road out of Sydney and the first railway construction in New South Wales. The first Vice-regal country residence in Australia was built at Rose Hill in 1790. Parramatta was the first planned town in Australia and was laid out in 1790. The first fair, the equivalent of the modern agricultural show, was held at Parramatta in March, 1813, and the first horse race in our history was run there in 1810. It was natural that Parramatta, being the centre of a farming district, should form the first agricultural society as early as 1822. The first man elected in New South Wales under a system of semi-representative government introduced in 1843 was Hannibal Macarthur, member for Parramatta. The first woollen goods fabricated in Australia were woven at Parramatta by convict labour, and the first public brewery in Australia was built there in 1800. The first native-born Australian to qualify as a medical man, William Sherwin was born in this town where he later practised his profession. In more recent times William Hart, a native of Parramatta, was the first Australian to hold a flying licence.

Parramatta is the home of the merino sheep breeding industry, which has brought great wealth to Australia. Associated with this important development is the name of John Macarthur, who will be honoured as long as sheep are bred in this island continent. Between 1791 and 1800 a considerable body of settlers, consisting of ex-convicts, marines, seamen and free people occupied the land around Parramatta. Settlement began at Prospect and Toongabbie in 1791 and at Baulkham Hills in 1799, so that by 1800 Parramatta was ringed with farms. A regular ferry service seems to have been established between Sydney and Parramatta in 1793. The fare was one shilling a passenger, but those who were sufficiently affluent could hire the boat for

six shillings. The first attempt to build a road between Sydney and Parramatta was made in 1794. In 1797 a new road was formed which followed almost exactly the route of the present highway. There were constant complaints about the Parramatta-road for well over a century, and it was not until the advent of the motor car that a really good highway was made.

Many notable men connected with every phase of our early history lived in Parramatta or its vicinity. Some outstanding names are Blaxland, Lawson, Wentworth, Caley, Hume and Cunningham; also John Batman, the founder of Melbourne, David Lennox, our earliest bridge builder, and Captain James Kelly, whose most spectacular exploit was the circumnavigation of Tasmania in a small five-oared boat, during which he discovered and named Macquarie Harbour and Port Davey. The first train from Sydney to Parramatta was run on 26th September, 1855. It consisted of eleven carriages, and the Governor, Sir William Denison, travelled in the first carriage. The fares on that occasion were 4s. first class, 3s. second class, and 2s. third class. After the opening there were six trains each way on week days and four on Sundays. The time of the journey was fifty minutes—it is not much better to-day. The line terminated at what is now Granville, and it was not until July, 1860, that it was continued through to Parramatta.

Parramatta became a municipality on 27th December, 1861, and a city on 27th October, 1938. The law that provided the Government with the necessary authority to create the new city was entitled the Local Government (City of Parramatta) Act and the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. E. S. Spooner, said that Parramatta was the first city established by Act of Parliament in New South Wales or, as far as he knew, in Australia. In 1948 the Local Government Act was amended and the municipalities of the City of Parramatta, Granville, Dundas and Ermington and Rydalmere were amalgamated to form the Municipality of the Greater City of Parramatta. To-day this municipality covers 17 square miles, and has a population of 78,000 and an annual

income of approximately £600,000. The total improved capital value of all its land and buildings is £88,000,000. Great and illustrious as is the City of Parramatta, it is suffering a grave and wicked injustice at the hands of statisticians and governmental authorities. It is a city in its own right and its retail sales are the second largest in the State. It is and always has been strongly individual, but in recent years both the Commonwealth and State governments have statistically and in all other respects grouped it with Sydney. This swells the importance of Sydney and at the same time destroys the individuality of Parramatta. It is hoped, therefore, that this state of affairs might not be allowed to continue.

Parramatta has much to remind the visitor of the past, and the ancient and the modern are curiously intermingled. Old George street is almost a museum piece where one may see roomy cottages of the colonial type of architecture, which is timeless, as well as examples of all the building styles of a century and a half. The City of Parramatta and the electorate of Parramatta have, of course, different boundaries. Apart from the city area, the electorate includes the industrial Rydalmere, the residential Ermington and Dundas, and portion of the shire of Baulkham Hills, which covers the rural areas of the electorate, including the beautiful strip known as The Hills District, as well as Kellyville and Rouse Hill, which are both situated on the historic road to Windsor. My electorate is studded with a large complement of diverse industries of almost every conceivable category—rural and industrial, light and heavy industry, and wholesale and retail commerce. Many well known industrial firms have moved into the electorate, some of the better known retailers have established branches and several other similar concerns have indicated their intention to follow suit. There are also two mental hospitals and a large gaol.

Parramatta is the location of the famous King's School. This great public school was founded in 1832, in a building that still stands in George-street, near the gas works bridge. In 1886 it was moved to

its present site, which was formerly the location of the first horticultural society in Australia. The building was built by free labour—stonemasons from Scotland—and the stone was obtained at North Rocks, in the electorate. The King's School was closed in 1864 and reopened in 1868. Its cadet corps was formed in 1866 and its famous uniform was introduced in 1869. Some famous men who passed through the school were Sir Francis Bathurst Suttor, Sir Charles Gregory Wade, Sir William Windeyer, General Sir Granville Ryrie, and Major-General Sir Baker Creed-Russell, who was at one time A.D.C. to Queen Victoria.

Australia's future, like its past, is closely allied with Parramatta. In this industrial age, the people of our young and vigorous nation are becoming more and more dependent upon many of the products provided by the development of Parramatta. Foodstuffs, textiles, clothing, knitted goods, pharmaceutical supplies, building materials, furniture, rolling stock for railways and tramways, diesel engines, industrial and agricultural machinery, and rubber tyres and goods are just a few items that roll off the production lines every day of the year. While speaking of the historical background of my electorate and the major advances that automation will bring to it, it is appropriate to mention that as well as the mechanical side of industrial development there is always a human side—the factor that makes events and history. One hundred and thirty-three years ago history was made in Parramatta at a dinner attended by Sir Thomas Brisbane, the Governor of New South Wales. That occasion proved to be the foundation of the Royal Agricultural Show Society. Three weeks from to-day, on 3rd July, history will be repeated when His Excellency the Governor will attend the inaugural dinner of the Industries Fair Society at the Parramatta City Hall. Just as the Royal Agricultural Society has, for more than a century, organised shows that have played such an important part in the agricultural and economic progress of New South Wales, so also the Industries Fair Society, in assisting the development of the district of Parramatta, will play a

major part in the advancement of Australian industry. It is fitting that Parramatta, the birthplace of the colony, should, in a year that marks the Centenary of Responsible Government, once again take a vital step forward in staging the first Industries Fair at the Parramatta Show-ground from 27th September until 1st October.

I am reminded of the occasion when a well-known, pompous person on being introduced to Napoleon was quick to inform the little General that he was the descendant of "so-and-so." Replied Napoleon, "Therein lies the distinction in our greatness—you are a descendant, I am an ancestor!" Therefore, at this historic time let us be reminded that, though every succeeding generation will make its contribution, we are ancestors. We should, indeed, be proud of our situation and do everything within our power to ensure that our descendants will be proud of us. To-day we are at the crossroads—at the sign post, as it were—looking back with pride and with gratitude to those who have served so unselfishly in the past—sometimes successfully, sometimes in vain—and looking forward to the future with hope and great expectations.

I turn now from the past to the present. In my electorate there is still a shortage of homes, and of school and hospital accommodation. There has been some alleviation during the past three years but still there are not enough homes, schools and hospitals to cope with acute demands. Parramatta in the near future, because of the tremendous expansion that is now occurring between there and Penrith, will be a huge city. Within a few years the city will need a 600-bed hospital—one providing nearly three times as much accommodation as the existing hospital. Another problem that is causing concern in my electorate is the Cumberland County Council scheme. Most people agree that some form of orderly planning is necessary to provide for future development, but many persons are, with very good cause, critical of the Government's Cumberland County Council Plan.

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The scheme contains many anomalies and is causing much hardship and even injustice. A complete review of it is essential. Parts of my electorate—the Kellyville, Rouse Hill and Kenthurst areas, in particular—are suffering the disadvantage of not being connected to the city water supply.

Poultry farmers and orchardists in my electorate are, in the main, in poor financial circumstances as a result of unfavourable seasons, high working costs and poor returns for their produce. Many are compelled to seek supplementary employment and some are disposing of their properties at a capital loss. I urge the Government to give consideration to making available to the men in these industries, long-term loans at low interest, so as to preclude the loss to consumers of many basic primary products and also the loss to the nation of much national income. So long as capital expenditure is met out of revenue instead of from loans, enough money will not be found for hospitals and schools. I have first-hand knowledge that annually considerable sums in loan subscriptions are going out of this State into government and semi-government undertakings in other States of the Commonwealth, though interest rates obtainable there are no greater than here. Interest rates offered by government and semi-government bodies in all States are the same. The importance of loan funds in our financial operations is beyond question, and I suggest that the Government examine the serious flow of investment funds from this State.

Consequent upon the renaissance and tremendous development of Parramatta, street parking and traffic congestion are serious problems. The local council has, by the provision of some free parking space, contributed to a solution, and some commercial parking space is available. The position nevertheless remains grave, and though further provision is essential, a complete solution obviously can never be found to meet the main shopping periods, which are usually Friday and Saturday, when the great majority of car owners

shop on wheels—unless, of course, a tremendous expansion of home delivery services is initiated. Traffic congestion can be relieved only by the creation of new main thoroughfares extending northwards over the Parramatta River. These are practicable and have been long sought by the local authorities. It remains only for the Department of Main Roads to plan and make financial provision for the project. O'Connell-street is now an alternative route between Windsor-road, or Church-street, and the Western Highway. Vehicles travelling this route are required to cross the Parramatta River on Rings Bridge, but this is narrow and totally inadequate for the heavy flow of traffic and should be replaced in the immediate future.

The financial position of the Parramatta and District Ambulance Station warrants some comment. Its total expenditure for the year ended 30th June, 1955, was more than £26,000 and the Government's contribution through the Ambulance Board was only £2,350. At the moment there is no suggestion that the station is insolvent, but the salient point I wish to make is that it is solvent only because of the voluntary efforts of its staff in their off-duty periods, and of some honorary workers who conduct guessing competitions and chocolate wheels. The gross income from these sources for the year ended 30th June, 1955, was £10,695, and the net income £6,250. The station has a staff of twenty-five and an annual wages bill of more than £20,000. It runs ten vehicles, eight of which are models of the years from 1941 to 1949 and have done big mileages. One has covered as many as 340,000 miles! My information is that these eight vehicles should be replaced. The estimated cost of replacement is £18,800—£2,350 each. In view of these circumstances it is hoped that the Government will give sympathetic consideration to increasing the subsidy to the Ambulance Board for allocation to ambulance stations generally, and to Parramatta station in particular.

While the Government adheres to its policy of "state landlordism" I am unable to see any effective solution to the problem of providing homes for the people. The owner, who will live in his home, is

the man who should arrange the building or purchase of it and he should be helped to do so. State housing activities should be confined to slum clearance and to the housing of persons who require special consideration. The provision of rental housing by private investment should be encouraged, and confidence in property as a sound investment should be restored. The Government could increase considerably the number of homes available to the people by amending legislation to assist co-operative building societies to engage in project building schemes. Builders would be interested in such schemes if they knew that finance would be available through a society to all prospective purchasers. Many large firms would be encouraged to develop large subdivisions for home construction if it were possible for building societies to be formed in association with the projects for financing the purchase of the houses when the project was completed.

A better distribution of existing accommodation could be effected by correcting the rental housing position. The long period of rigid control has caused an unhappy situation, with enormous numbers of people living in unsuitable homes from which they are unable to move. This has been a fruitful source of illegal and improper practices, such as demands for key money, and has reduced the number of dwellings available for rental. Many buildings are now occupied by only one or two people, who, if they could move freely, would gladly go to smaller premises and make way for larger families now living in crowded conditions. That this situation is real is proved by the fact that in Sydney in 1939, when there was no shortage of houses, only twenty-five dwellings existed for each 100 people, whereas to-day there are thirty. Therefore, while rent control must be retained for the present, because immediate abolition would cause hardship and confusion, it should be relaxed in planned stages, and the effect of each relaxation studied before moving to the next. New buildings are now exempt from control, and this principle should be extended to premises that become vacant. The rental limit of occupied dwellings should be increased by annual steps, and

rentals still under control gradually adjusted to accord with current economic conditions.

The Landlord and Tenant Act has become unwieldy by additions and amendments over the years and requires a complete overhaul to remove injustices and anomalies. The building trade could be assisted greatly by the recruitment of skilled labour from overseas and by offering more attractive inducements to apprentices to enter the building trade; the latter could be aided by schools inculcating in their pupils an appreciation of the advantages of training in a skilled trade. Much has been said both inside and outside the House concerning the improvement of human relations in industry. With the principle, I most certainly agree. However, we should have some clear thinking on this important and vital issue. It is both desirable and proper that those engaged in employment, whether they be hewers of wood and drawers of water or responsibly placed white-collar workers, should have suitable and pleasant working conditions and comfortable amenities. But I am of the opinion in regard to amenities that excesses are being indulged in by the bigger employers to the ultimate moral and financial detriment of employees. In certain quarters the amenities provided are so high class that when the employee returns home he becomes depressed by the environment of his sub-standard home, and what is the result—an inferiority complex; escapism—to the hotel or some similar place, till 10 p.m. in order to lose himself. The same applies to women employees. The cost of amenities is high. Many of them are not an allowable income tax deduction. Obviously, too, expenditure on them must increase the price of consumer goods.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that improved human relations in industry could and would be better achieved if employers, instead of going to excesses with staff amenities, were to supply only what was fair and reasonable and to give the resultant saving to employees in the form of "take home" money, either by bonus or straight out higher wages. The big employers might well give consideration to making loan

funds available to staff for home building instead of indulging in excessive expenditure on tiled bathrooms and perfumed toilets. Further an amendment of the Federal Income Tax Act should be sought to permit deductions by way of amortization to employers who felt disposed to build or buy homes for employees, and an amendment of the Federal and State gift duty legislation to exempt from duty any home acquired by an employee under a deed of gift from his employer.

Staff amenities, staff socials, golf days and other recreational activities are useful and desirable, and are all right in their place, but they are only supplementary and are not enduring. I am sure that the great majority of employees would prefer a little more grime at work if it meant more "take home" money to use in and about their own homes. To have it both ways, of course, would be ideal, but to date we do not seem to have devised an economic system to carry it, and until we have I am in favour of the expenditure of more in direct wages and less on lavish amenities. My theory is that employees cannot be happy at their work and in their daily lives while they are required, or compelled, by reasons of economy to live in homes that are inferior to the amenity blocks at their place of employment. I am in favour of good wages and conditions, and amenities, but not of the latter to the extent of depriving the employee of more real money.

We should put first things first. A man's home should be his castle and we should help him not only to get it but also to own it as his own private property. To man's existence the owning of a suitable home is second only in importance to a firm and proper belief in Divine Providence. With a forty-hour week and the possibility of a still shorter working week, leisure time is increasing and it is therefore more important than ever to pay at least as much attention to the amenities of home life as to those provided at the place of employment. I am a keen exponent of free enterprise, and I well remember that Abraham Lincoln said:

You cannot further the brotherhood of man by encouraging class hatred;
you cannot help the wage earner

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by pulling down the wage payer; you cannot help the poor by destroying the rich.

Private ownership of property is a fundamental right in a democracy, and we should foster and encourage this principle to ensure that our democratic way of life remains inviolate. To-day, the term "automation" is being used increasingly, and newspaper reports indicate that both unions and managements have become concerned about its effect on such matters as employment, wages and plant obsolescence. The importance of the subject to all sections of the community is illustrated by the following "modern parable" which has been circulating in the United States of America recently: C.I.O. President, Walther Reuther, was being shown through the Ford motor plant at Cleveland. A company official proudly pointing to some new automatically controlled machines asked Reuther: "How are you going to collect union dues from these guys?" Reuther replied: "How are you going to get them to buy Fords?"

It is likely that automation will develop over a long period and that its development will be impeded in many countries by a lack of capital, a shortage of skilled technicians, the absence of a large mass market, or by a combination of all three. There are some industries in which the highly individualistic nature of the product, the need for personal services, the advantages of small-scale units or vast space requirements preclude any significant application of automatic controls. Such industries, examples of which are primary production, trade, service, building and construction, mining and the professions, employ a little over 60 per cent. of the Australian labour force. Nevertheless, the remaining 40 per cent. are enough to be of vital importance.

If automation results in shorter working hours, industrial communities such as ours will be faced with real problems. Most of our people are far from competent in the use of their leisure. The tendency to-day is for men to take less interest in community and cultural activities, and their reliance on professionally-provided, non-participatory sport and entertainment, makes the problem of leisure, boredom and

idleness a serious one. The increasing importance of automation will probably result in greater attention being paid by our educationists to the training of technologists and technicians. Technical education must be greatly expanded and included in general education. Education in physics and mathematics will be a universal requirement. The earning period of life will have to be extended and provision made for the continuation of education as a normal practice after entry into industry. Fears have been aroused that automation will result in mass unemployment. It should be realised however, that technological progress does not result in general unemployment; this is caused by trade conditions.

The attitude of the unions to automation will vary, but sustained opposition to sound development is likely to arise more from motives of politics and self-interest than from genuine industrial inequities. Given adequate sociological progress it is likely that many unions may tend to become more like the present professional associations. We have been concerned with the problems likely to arise though the spread of automation. But what of the benefits? Likely benefits are the production of more goods and a greater variety of them at less cost; the production of better quality goods; the abolition of much laborious routine and its replacement by more interesting work.

This is indeed an important time in our life and in our history. So important is this occasion that Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth II bestowed upon us her warmest felicitations and expressed her sincere hope for our continued happiness and prosperity. The people of New South Wales still have vivid and happy memories of Her Majesty's visit two years ago, and I am sure that every member of this Chamber is deeply conscious of the compliment that Her Majesty has paid us on the memorable occasion of our centenary celebrations. In her own person she is the tie that unites the most diverse races, religions and forms of government. Through her are linked the great independent nations of the British Commonwealth.

Let us pass from the traditions of the past to the promises of the future, in loyalty and affection for our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth II.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (Paddington) [5.52]: I offer my congratulations to the hon. member for Parramatta on his most interesting speech. It was well delivered, and I am sure that all hon. members enjoyed every moment of it. I congratulate, too, the Premier and the members of his Cabinet on their having the privilege to be the leaders of this Government at a most remarkable period in our history. To celebrate 100 years of responsible government and to take part in the celebrations, whether as an ordinary member, a Minister, or as Premier, is something of which we all should be proud. It is fitting that a party which has done so much for the people of New South Wales should occupy the Treasury benches on this historic occasion. I congratulate my leader and his deputy for their speeches, and also the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country party. Each delivered a most interesting speech. It is fitting, too, that on this occasion Her Majesty should honour this Parliament by sending a message of goodwill.

All Ministers but one were returned to office, and the one vacancy was filled by the Minister now at the table, the hon. member for Lake Macquarie. He will acquit himself in a manner of which all of us will be proud. I congratulate all the members of the Ministry. The hon. member for Concord made a suggestion that might be worth consideration, that some permanent token of remembrance of this memorable occasion should be provided. If hon. members look at the book prepared by the Premier, they will see a picture of the first Cabinet to preside over the Parliament of New South Wales. I gave a copy of a picture now in the corridor nearby to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. I believe that we should have a picture of the Cabinet that is in office at the time of these centenary celebrations. It does not matter which side is in office; what matters is that Parliament has some record. On the Friday

that the House was open for inspection, the Leader of the Country party and myself, as well as other hon. members, accompanied many members of the public round the building. They were most interested in the portraits in the passageways and in the Clerk's room, where hang the portraits of past Speakers. It would be a pity, irrespective of party politics, to allow an occasion such as this to pass without having provided something that can be shown to people in 150 years or 200 years' time.

Mr. MALLAM: What about a public relations officer?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I make my suggestion with all sincerity, irrespective of what party holds the reins of government. Governments hold office by the will of the people, and we should leave future generations some memento. When the Leader of the Country party showed a visitor a picture, the visitor, pointing to the portrait of a former Minister, said: "That is my grandfather". He will go away and say that on the occasion that Parliament celebrated the 100th anniversary of responsible government he saw that portrait. Action should be taken now; not a month or so hence. Thus we could leave something that would be a record of achievement. I have listened with interest to all hon. members who have spoken. I, too, feel proud that I represent an electorate that has been represented by some remarkable men. The hon. member for Parramatta said that his electorate was the oldest in the State. That is true; I think Bathurst was next and that Paddington ran third. As I look under the Paddington electorate, in the *New South Wales Parliamentary Record*, I find that the first member was Sir Daniel Cooper, who was elected on 10th June, 1859. Later he became Speaker of this House. The last member for Paddington to represent a party other than the Australian Labor party, Sir Daniel Levy, also was Speaker. Paddington supplied two Speakers, the first member and the last non-Labor member before I represented the electorate. The list of members reads: John Sutherland, William Hezlet, William Joseph Trickett, Robert Butcher, John Cash Neild, Alfred Allen, William Johnston Allen, Robert

John King, John Shepherd, John Henry Want, James Marks, William Charles Shipway, and Charles William Oakes.

That is where I take up the thread. I knew only Charlie Oakes, who left his mark on this Parliament, on his electorate and on his State. He held many responsible positions; he had a jeweller's shop in Oxford-street, opposite St. Francis' Church. I lived ten yards away round the corner. Charlie was admired and loved by all sections of the community in Paddington; Labor, Liberal and free-traders, because he was a decent and honest citizen. He was Colonial Secretary and Minister for Public Health. He was defeated by "Jack" Osborne, who often comes to this House. That was the first time that Labor had won the Paddington seat. He remained the member for Paddington until the Hon. W. A. Holman appointed him to the Meat Board. Then came a great tragedy for the people of Paddington and for the Labor movement. Lawrence O'Hara, who won the seat on 24th May, 1919, died on 14th June—three weeks after his election, before he had taken his seat in the House. Lawrence O'Hara and I were close friends, although there was a gap in our ages. He was a brilliant man and it was a great pity that he should have been taken by an epidemic that took so many others.

[*Mr. Speaker left the chair at 5.59 p.m. The House resumed at 7.30 p.m.*]

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: At the adjournment I was dealing with the members who had represented Paddington from the inception of that electorate, and I mentioned the tragic passing of a good Australian, Lawrence O'Hara, who died in June, 1919, less than a month after he had been elected to Parliament. He was followed by Mr. Jack Birt who, strange to say, suffered almost the same fate. He was elected to represent Paddington and held the seat until proportional representation was introduced. He served one term in Parliament under proportional representation, won his seat at the next election, but died before the opening of Parliament. Paddington had then lost two of the most brilliant members of the Australian Labor party.

When Mr. Birt died his place was taken by Mr. Patrick Joseph Minahan, representing the electorate of Sydney.

By the time of the next elections there had been a redistribution of seats and New South Wales had reverted to single-seat constituencies. Sir Daniel Levy contested Paddington and won it. I contested Woollahra, and won it—certainly by the narrow margin of about 300 votes. Sir Daniel Levy was not very happy in Paddington; so at the next election we swapped! Sir Daniel won Woollahra easily, and held it until his death. I have been a little more fortunate; I still hold Paddington. The history of the members of this House who have represented Paddington is a remarkable one. Though it is not the oldest, my electorate has had fewer members than any other. Some remarkable men have represented it, and I am proud to follow them, probably not as brilliantly as most of them but with just as much sincerity, and I am proud to be able to share in these centenary celebrations.

When I entered Parliament on 8th October, 1927, it is worth recording that twenty-one new members came into the House. Their names and electorates were as follows: Arthur Budd, Byron; James Butler, Hurstville; Robert Cameron, Wallsend; Harry Carter, Liverpool Plains; Daniel Clyne, King; Peter Connolly, Newcastle; Carl Glasgow, Waverley; Hamilton Knight, Hartley; Joseph Lamaro, Enmore; Ernest Marks, North Sydney; James McDicken, Ryde; Bernard Olde, Leichhardt; Alfred Pollack, Clarence; Albert Reid, Young; John Ross, Albury; Thomas Shannon, Surry Hills; Fred Stanley, Lakemba; Bertram Stevens, Croydon; Philip Tresidder, Randwick; Bryce Walmsley, Lane Cove; and myself. Of those twenty-one members who entered the House at that time, twenty have left—I alone remain. Fortunately they have not all died—a number of them are taking an active part in the affairs of this city—but that illustrates the change that takes place in a short span of twenty-nine years. All of us were delighted to represent our constituencies and we formed a firm friendship. We have had lunch together on every anniversary of our election, but little by little our numbers have

dwindled, until last year there were only three of us, the Hon. Daniel Clyne, Bob Cameron and me. The last election left only "yours truly".

Mr. SHEAHAN: I hope the lunch next year is a good one.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I hope so too. It is a privilege to serve in this Parliament, and although hon. members regret that members of their respective parties are defeated from time to time, this is inevitable. Government members regret that Parramatta and other seats were lost, but I sincerely offer my congratulations to the new members and to those, like the hon. member for George's River and the hon. member for Coogee, who have been re-elected. I congratulate also the new members on my side of the House. My colleagues and I regret to see the defeat of a man who has been a loyal and devoted member of our party, but that is the will of the people. I congratulate also the new members on both sides of the House who have made their maiden speeches during this debate. I heard most if not all of them. They were a credit to them and their electors should be proud of them. I will not mention their names for fear of omitting one, but every new member who spoke made a valuable contribution to this debate.

We all regret that various members have been defeated, and I should like to offer a suggestion that might be worth while. It is not original; it has already been put forward by the hon. member for Earlwood, who said that there should be a way of protecting a person who sacrifices a profession or calling to enter Parliament. The hon. member for Auburn would have been a member of this Parliament long ago—he could have won a seat that might have changed at the next elections. Because of the position that he held in the railways he realised that it would not be wise to surrender what he had to enter Parliament. Hon. members need only consider the situation of Mr. R. S. Jackson, the previous member for Drummoyne. He contested two elections in three years, and then was

defeated. No one in this House will believe that he improved his financial position—no one who serves only one term does so.

Mr. Cross: The public thinks so.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That is true. When a person is employed as a school teacher, or in the railways or tramways services, on election to this House his position should be protected for him for a period. An hon. member who represented an Opposition party, Mr. J. C. Adamson, a school teacher, served in only one Parliament. Such members often have to draw their superannuation to help pay their expenses. If their positions were preserved in the departments or instrumentalities from which they came, for say ten years, and their superannuation remained intact and interest-bearing, and they retained their long service leave rights, they would have an incentive to stand for Parliament. If they were defeated they should be able to return to their positions without any loss of standing or status. I once spoke to a bank manager about an hon. member on our side of the House who was in rather bad straits, and I put up a good case for him. The bank manager said, "It always worries me when I find that a man who is doing a job for the State is in financial difficulties." No one could grumble about reserving the rights of a man who left a good position to enter Parliament. Although that suggestion came from the hon. member for Earlwood, I know that he will not mind my pursuing it.

Some of the new members, such as the hon. members for Hartley, Auburn and King, are old friends of mine whom I have known for about thirty years. They have entered this Parliament, and I am happy to be associated with them again. It is regrettable that a man who retires from politics should leave without recognition of his services. If a member of Parliament dies the House carries a resolution of sympathy to his relatives and records his passing with regret. Members of all parties pay tribute whether he has been a member of the House for ten months or

thirty years. However, if a member is not returned at an election, irrespective of the length of his service, not one word is said about him. The House should pay tribute to such men. One such member was Mr. Joseph Jackson who represented the electorate of Nepean. At one time he was the representative of the electorate in which I was living. On 25th March, 1922, he entered Parliament as member for Sydney, which was a five-seat constituency, and he served for thirty-four years.

No reference was made to his long service when he retired from this House. Hon. members may have honoured him in the party room or at functions, but here, where he served not a word was said. A motion should be moved by the Premier and supported by the leaders of all parties, to place on record appreciation of the member's service; or perhaps he could be presented with a certificate of service as is done in local government. If the president of a football team retires from office, his team pays tribute to him. Joe Jackson, after thirty-four years, was allowed to leave this Chamber without acknowledgment. His length of service has been exceeded only by that of Lt.-Colonel the Hon. M. F. Bruxner, who came into this House on 20th March, 1920, and has now completed thirty-six years' service. Joe Jackson was a Lord Mayor of Sydney, and later became Minister for Local Government. Though he did not contribute much to debate in later years, his earlier contributions to debates were always interesting. Another member who rendered fine service was the Hon. Dan Clyne, the member for King, who served for twenty-eight or twenty-nine years and in two parliaments occupied the post of Speaker.

Mr. PELL: He set a high standard in his electorate.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I hope that his successor will emulate him by setting a similarly high standard.

Mr. PELL: Several hon. members have paid tribute to him during this debate.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That is true. No member has been more useful to his constituents, this House and his party than

Dan Clyne. For six years he occupied the chair as Speaker, and during his membership contributed to most of the contentious industrial legislation that was introduced. For many years he was a member of the executive of the Labor party. His experience in the industrial and political fields added much colour to his contributions in debate. Another hon. member who retired recently from this House was Mr. Arthur Howarth, who served from 11th June, 1932. At one time he was Deputy Leader of the Liberal party. No hon. member was more respected, and he is another to whom we should pay tribute. Another who did not take a prominent part in the debates in this House, but nevertheless was a splendid representative of his constituents, was Bob Cameron. Not one member of this House or anyone in the Wallsend electorate would fail to pay tribute to his enthusiastic work. Another who did not contest the last election was Mr. Jack Williams, who entered this Chamber on 17th September, 1940. The five hon. members to whom I have referred retired together. Should there be similar retirements I suggest that the Premier, supported by the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country party, should pay appropriate tributes.

Mr. PELL: Such action should be spontaneous.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Yes. I have been privileged to be the member for Paddington for a long period. I have had the privilege also of having been a Minister of the Crown. I am proud to have been a member for many years, to have been a Minister and then to take part in the celebrations of the Centenary of Responsible Government. To retire from Cabinet is not easy. It leaves a gap in one's life that is difficult to fill. However, one must reconcile oneself to it.

Mr. DICKSON: The hon. member was not put out; he voluntarily relinquished his post.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Nevertheless, I am no longer a member of Cabinet and there have been some amusing incidents since my retirement. One gentleman used to meet me every morning and say, "Good morning, Mr. Minister". In return I used to bid

him, "Good morning". Last week I met him and he said, "Okey-Doke"—that was all!

Without infringing on the resolution of which the Leader of the Opposition has given notice, I refer to problems associated with transport and also with health. I pay tribute to Lt.-Colonel the Hon. M. F. Bruxner, who was a splendid Minister for Transport. He served for nine years continuously and twelve years in all as Minister. When he left I stepped into the shoes of a man who had done a splendid job and I was Minister for Transport for nine years. Hard though it was, I found that post easy when compared with that of the Minister for Health. At times I am perturbed when I read or hear of attacks made on administrators who are doing their best. When I became Minister for Transport Mr. Neale was the departmental head and he was followed by Mr. Shoebridge. Mr. Winsor, served for a short time after Mr. Neale, but then became Commissioner for Railways. Mr. Hartigan as Commissioner, was succeeded by Mr. Garside, who still occupied the position when I relinquished the portfolio. Do hon. members think that these men enjoy submitting reports showing deficits every year? No! Do not hon. members think that they would rather submit returns showing profits? I am most upset when these attacks are made against competent and reliable officers. The present Minister should receive all possible assistance in his task, because it is a difficult job. I was most happy in my position as Minister for Transport. Then I became Minister for Health.

I should like to thank the present Minister, Mr. Sheahan, for his gracious remarks the other night. One must feel pleased when one's successor pays such a tribute. I hope that he will receive the same co-operation that I had from the Under Secretary to the most junior member of the staff and I am sure that he will. Mr. Cameron and the officers in charge of the various sections are a splendid team. I do not doubt that the Hon. W. F. Sheahan will make a success of his new portfolio. I listened with much interest to the speech of the hon. member for Parramatta. He said that Parramatta had an interesting history and

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referred to hospitals. It may interest him to know that the first nuns' nursing home to be set up in this State, if not in Australia, was that of the Sisters of Charity at Parramatta. Five members of this Order arrived in this country on 31st December, 1838. After they had been at Parramatta for some time they transferred their activities to the electorate of Paddington in 1857. These five nursing sisters were the nucleus of the wonderful organisation that is now at Darlinghurst and known as St. Vincent's Hospital. The hon. member for Parramatta and I have something in common—the first nursing nuns to set foot in Australia went to Parramatta first and then to Victoria-street, Darlinghurst, the present site of the hospital that will celebrate its centenary next year. This matter might be worth recognising at the appropriate time.

We celebrate on this occasion the Centenary of Responsible Government representing one hundred years of parliamentary life in this State. No hon. member, of course, can carry his recollection so far, but many of us can recall events that have occurred over half that time. I can go back to the year 1900, fifty-six years ago. I have seen changes of which we should all be proud and all political parties have contributed to them. It may seem parochial but I have never lived out of my electorate. I live only 100 yards, or three minutes' walk, from the house in which I was born. In all my life I have shifted into only four or five houses, all within a radius of a quarter of a mile. If one remains in the one place one sees and appreciates changes better than if one were to reside in Paddington, then move to Stanmore and then on to North Sydney, for example. The chances are that each new place is already well established and the continuing changes are not so noticeable. Of course, some parts of Paddington have never altered—the same paint was on the walls of some houses fifty-six years ago!

My father was a coachman who drove for a doctor. He, my mother and the four children of the family lived in George-street, Paddington, on his wages of £2 a week, from which he paid 8s. rent. When I see young kiddies with 6s. and 7s. pocket money each week I wonder

how we got by on 1d. a week. I used to run messages for the people in the street. If Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Smith wanted some meat from the butcher's I would never do the messages together. I did them separately because the butcher gave me a slice of German sausage with every message! In those days he opened on Sunday morning. Refrigeration was unheard of and the local people could not afford ice chests. If they could meet the price of a block of ice, it was simply put in a tub outside and butter placed in a container alongside. The butcher opened on Sunday morning so that the people could have fresh meat from his cooler. Every shop in Oxford-street remained open until eleven o'clock at night on every day except Sunday.

Shops were fitted with shutters and it was the task of the smallest boy or junior in each establishment to arrive at about 7.45 or 8 o'clock in the morning, take down the shutters, put them inside, sweep out the shop and the footpath, open the shop and then stay in it until the boss said, "We'll call it a day"—whether it was nine, ten or eleven o'clock at night. There were no set hours of work, conditions of employment or prescribed wages. It was not that the boss was mean; he did the best that he could for his employees on the profit that he was making. That is what happened in the first two or three years of this century. At the close of the day all the shutters would go up, only to be taken down the next morning at the start of a new day. Do hon. members ever stand in Martin-place, George-street and Pitt-street and look at the young people passing by? Not one young woman or man, exclusive of money in their pockets or handbags, is worth less than £50 or £60. Look at their stockings and shoes, their outer garments, their hats, gloves and handbags, wrist watches and so on. How different were our parents! My father had a best suit that he wore on Sunday to church and stored for the rest of the week. The young people of to-day go to work dressed better than their parents were when they went to church.

Mr. MURPHY: Nowadays, they get undressed on Sunday.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That is so; they don sports clothes. Hon. members can go back fifty-six years in their own memory to compare the great advance in the living standards of the young people. Many of the younger generation do not appreciate what they now enjoy. I do not say that the Labor party can claim credit for all these wonderful changes. Hon. members opposite and their colleagues gave much assistance. Agitation in the trade union movement and in this House, following conferences between political parties, wrought progressive changes in the lives of young people so that to-day they are better dressed than their counterparts in any other part of the world. That fact is a tribute to our constitutional government which began in this House. I hope the advance continues—though I do not know how these young men and women can become better dressed! I am proud that I have played a little part in this wonderful development. In 1908 the Premier and I were apprentices together on the railways. Our association was subsequently broken at one period but later renewed and I have been closely allied with him ever since. He and I have been close personal friends. We have seen bad times and good together. Personally, I am happy to know that he is the Premier of this State on this historic occasion of the Centenary of Responsible Government. But if the hon. member for Mosman, or anyone else had been Premier I should have offered my congratulations in the same way.

My party, Labor governments and the Parliamentary Labor party have been generous to me. I put all I had into the movement and I received much back. Five times I was returned to Cabinet. I am grateful to my constituents for allowing me to represent my constituency for so long and to enjoy that other privilege of Ministerial rank. I repeat my congratulations to all hon. members, both new and old, who have the privilege of being here on this historic occasion. I hope that the celebrations and the proceedings of this House on this occasion will be properly recorded in print and photograph for future generations.

Mr. MURDEN (Ashfield) [7.59]: On this historic occasion of the Centenary of Responsible Government debate on the Address-in-Reply has produced some unusual addresses. I congratulate those hon. members who made their maiden speeches in this debate. No doubt they may be wondering, from the tenor of some contributions, what type of place this is. The Premier, the Deputy Premier, my own leader and the Leader of the Country party have made fitting remarks on this occasion. The hon. member for Paddington is one of those who has made a human contribution with a wealth of knowledge. I am sorry that circumstances beyond his control necessitated his relinquishing voluntarily his position in the Ministry.

When the hon. member for Paddington was a Minister he came to my electorate on many occasions and was always most generous and gracious to me as the local member. His courtesy was always above politics. Members go to much trouble to arrange for Ministers of the Crown to visit their electorates and it is gratifying when their work is graciously acknowledged, whatever might be their politics. In this respect the hon. member for Paddington was never found wanting; he unfailingly observed the niceties. During the hon. member's term as Minister for Health the elected representatives and the people of the western suburbs went far in their efforts to have a hospital established on the Walker property and raised a considerable sum of money towards this project. Their efforts were about to bear fruit but the change in the Ministry might cause a setback. I do not know whether those who seek a new Western Suburbs Hospital will have to start work again to educate the present Minister for Health who, whatever might be his ability, has a lot to learn about the administration of this most important department.

Since I have been a member of this House I have noticed frequently that when an hon. member presents statistics to justify his arguments, an hon. member from the other side of the Chamber replies with a completely different set of figures to support the contrary view. Indeed,

sometimes the same figures are used to support with equal force arguments that are in direct conflict. This subject is discussed in a most interesting book, *Lying with Statistics*. Another feature of Parliament that has become clear to me is that Opposition members in some respects have more to do in the determination of the affairs of this State than have Government supporters. When legislation is being debated the Opposition finds the imperfections; Government supporters take the attitude that all Government legislation is good. Of course, the present Opposition will soon be able to take a rest and hon. members on the Government side will be over here doing the work. I noted with interest the remarks of the hon. member for Paddington in connection with the decline in the past two years in the numbers of hon. members elected to the Legislative Assembly with him. I need not mention the forbidden subject of debate to emphasise that this is an opportune time for an even more marked decline in the numbers of hon. members on the Government side.

Most contributors to this debate have given interesting and informative speeches. I join the hon. member for Paddington in paying special tribute to the hon. member for Parramatta, who made his maiden speech to-night. All hon. members understand the nervous tension one suffers from speaking in this House, even when experienced. Despite this natural feeling the hon. member for Parramatta was most assured and constructive, and I am certain that he will be a fine representative of the electorate. The hon. member for Waratah also made an outstanding contribution to the debate, and his electors have cause to feel proud of him. He has already proven his ability in local government, and his maiden speech in this Chamber stamps him as one who has an intimate knowledge of Newcastle. Even though he belong to neither side, he is a welcome addition to this Parliament, and the people of New South Wales will benefit from his presence here. The speech of the hon. member for Croydon was outstanding. He dealt with the centenary celebrations effectively without introducing any political atmosphere.

'The hon. member for Maitland by his fine contribution to this debate showed that he will be a worthy successor to Mr. Howarth.

Most hon. members who have joined in this debate have mentioned their personal "hobby horses". For example, the hon. member for Sturt spoke of the failure of the Government to develop the Menindee Lakes area. The party that the hon. member supports has been in office in this State for the past fifteen years, and its failure to complete the Menindee Lakes Storage Scheme in that time does not promise a bright future for the district. Also, whatever might be done now to exploit the fertile soil and favourable climate in that area would be too late, because rail freights have risen so much as to put produce from the Menindee district beyond the reach of any but local consumers.

The "hobby horse" of the hon. member for Phillip, who is the Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney, is enlargement of the boundaries of that city. He said that the inner suburbs that were incorporated in the municipality of the City of Sydney have benefited from the work that has been done in their areas by the enlarged city council. The interests of the residents of the suburbs can properly be guarded only by efficient planning of local representatives who are in close touch with the needs of the people. The people of the suburbs travel to and from the city and make it what it is, but during the past four or five years the city has been undergoing a change. Fare increases foreshadowed during the past week will result in a further change and in greater development of such places as Parramatta, Burwood and other suburbs.

Though the main topic in this debate is the Centenary of Responsible Government in this State, hon. members should neglect no opportunity to press the needs of their electorates and of the people of New South Wales. Hon. members may speak of matters concerning their electorates during the debates on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, the Budget and the Estimates, but otherwise their opportunity to remind the Government of the needs of the people whom they represent are limited. Of course, hon. members may raise matters

of importance during question time, but as so many hon. members wish to speak then one must be fortunate to catch the eye of Mr. Speaker. Indeed, the recent additions to the ranks of the Opposition have reduced the chances for hon. members on this side of the House to get the call. Anybody who, in a further 100 years, reads the *Hansard* report of the remarks of some hon. members concerning the progress of this State during the past 100 years, will be pardoned for mistakenly concluding that we are now living in Utopia. This is, of course, far from the fact. The experience of the past 100 years should have enriched us and equipped us better for the task ahead of New South Wales, which is a serious one. Hon. members know only what they read of foreign affairs, but they know the situation in New South Wales at first hand because of what they see and suffer.

Every year for the past three years I have made representations to the Commissioner of Police for additional police to be allotted to the Ashfield electorate. Also, I have missed no opportunity to speak of matters concerning the Western Suburbs Hospital. I pay tribute to the police, without whose vigilance the community would not be safe. Nowadays little is seen of the policemen who used to walk about the streets and who were frequently helpful. Most policemen now ride about in cars and on motor cycles, and are chiefly concerned with apprehending offenders of one type. The policeman on the beat has virtually disappeared. Undoubtedly mobile police can be quickly informed by radio of what is required of them, but when one goes to a local police station for help at night one finds that the sergeant at the desk is so busy writing down a list of stolen cars as to have little time to attend to other requirements.

Ten years or more ago the strength of the police force in Ashfield was twenty-two. Every time I have asked the Commissioner to make more police available in my electorate he has said that only so much money is given to him by the Premier and that the number of police cannot be increased. I found recently that the strength

had dropped from twenty-two to twenty and included in this number were a probationary constable who will, of course, later become a first class officer, and a motor cyclist who, though on the strength of Ashfield police station, had not been there for about three months. He was working in the city. This reduced the effective strength to eighteen. I made representations on the matter and ascertained that further assistance had been provided. An efficient sergeant was transferred to Ashfield police station but, unfortunately for the district, he was a valuable member of the police band. When he was at Ashfield, he performed his duties to the best of his ability, but he was seldom there! Therefore, the station's police strength has been nominally increased but it has been saddled with a considerable share of responsibility for manning the police band. The official figures for local police strength will not bear analysis and I ask that additional effective police be made available in the Ashfield area.

The Government's principal pre-election promise was that it would make a super-human effort to house the people of New South Wales. I await with interest the introduction of the Budget to see how the Government intends to honour its promise—not because I believe that the Government will do so, but because housing is one of the most important needs in our community. Lack of money will be no excuse for failure. This is not a responsible government; responsibility is borne only when a government imposes its own taxation. For four years hon. members have heard from this Government the excuse that it has not enough money for its purposes but was the promise to the electors who need houses made in the knowledge that the Government has not the money to fulfil it? It is up to the Government to find ways and means of overcoming the housing shortage. Notices of resumption of lands for housing development are tabled regularly in this House, but I suggest that the Government should for a time restrict its spending on resumptions for the future and instead devote its funds to providing houses for the present. The Government can resume land when it needs it; it should

Mr. Murden.]

not resume land that it might never require, especially if circumstances alter. The hon. member for Parramatta said that in 1939 more persons were living in each available house than now and this was the result of effective distribution of housing. This Government specifically promised to make a special effort to improve housing, and all hon. members wish to see that promise kept.

I have in my electorate, in common with many other hon. members, worthy members of parents and citizens' associations. As one visits schools and mixes with these people, who are doing a wonderful job for the Department of Education, one realises that they are being exploited. One association in my electorate, at a recent fete, raised over £500 and, as it had already raised another £300, it now has £800 to spend—on things that the Government should buy! These parents and citizens' associations have come into operation because the Department of Education does not supply necessary materials for schools and they do the department's job. The schools are antiquated and general repairs are overdue. If some school drainage systems were on private property, local councils would compel the owners to renew them at once, but as they are on school property, the department escapes acceptance of its responsibilities. As the defects are in government buildings, protests are ineffective.

Though parents and citizens' associations contribute much to the comfort and education of the children, their reasonable requests to the Department of Education are often not met. The Minister for Education should give and take; if these associations are to continue their good work, the department itself must "play ball." In 1946, when the present Minister for Education took office, he said that the schools were a legacy of the past and that he would work to make them what all hon. members would like them to be. Fifteen years have passed since this Government took office, and ten years ago World War II ended, but the schools in my electorate are nothing like what I should like them to be. In 1952 the excuse for the Government's failure was that labour and materials were not available to rebuild schools. I was a member of deputations that were told before 1952,

"The Government has money that it cannot spend. If money were the difficulty the department's troubles would be over. We cannot get labour and materials". Now the excuse is lack of money, though labour and materials are plentiful.

The worthy members of parents' and citizens' associations in my area should be encouraged by a practical demonstration of the Government's interest and appreciation. Two years ago, after the Minister returned from a world trip, he was good enough to visit the Ashfield electorate and I accompanied him through all its schools. He was reasonable and agreed that something should be done, and expressed his hope that it would be done the next year. Though the Minister saw for himself the clamant needs of these schools, his inspection has borne no fruit. Before the last election the Government "slugged" the sick by increasing hospital charges to a vicious extent and placed a heavy burden on those who were least able to bear it. A large hospital is under construction at Sutherland, another is being built at Bankstown, and the hon. member for Parramatta mentioned yet another that is building. I am concerned to know the Government's plans for these buildings. I believe that it started them with the idea of spending small sums only, just to keep the people quiet. The Government has been on these jobs so long that when they are completed it will be unable to find the staff or money to operate these large hospitals.

MR. H. E. JACKSON: The Government will close them down.

MR. MURDEN: Perhaps it will close them before it opens them. No nursing staff will be available. I spoke earlier about people lying with statistics. Thirty years ago Western Suburbs Hospital could meet the needs of the area, but no improvements or additions have since been made. When hon. members ask about hospitals they are told that the Government must meet the needs of areas with a growing population. As these develop the Government must give some thought also to bringing up to date

and improving within the reasonable requirements of surrounding districts the established hospitals that year by year have greater demands made on them. It must examine these matters and should not fob off hon. members who make representations on behalf of their electorates and ask that the needs of the community be met. At the rate the Government is spending money on projects, none of them will be completed, but none of them is so big that it could not be finished in eighteen months if the Government would put its shoulders to the wheel. Instead, these projects take up to six, seven or eight years to complete. Money lies idle and is not put to good use. The State faces troublous times. Tributes to the past are fine, but they will not make it any easier for to-morrow. As soon as this debate is concluded and the last tributes to 100 years of responsible government have been uttered, we must accept the challenge of all our current responsibilities.

A week ago the press, which often heralds approaching difficulties, reported that the Colonial Treasurer had said that margin increases and basic wage adjustments, totalling from 1951 to the present time about £3,500,000, were responsible for some of the State's financial difficulties. It is time the Government showed some foresight. The hon. member for Burwood made an excellent contribution to this debate. I join with him in criticising the Federal Government for its failure to make this the 100th year of government truly responsible. Much cross-talk goes on in this Chamber, but the only persons who have been genuine in their attempts to have the taxing power returned to the States have been the Liberal men such as the Premier of Victoria, who has begun litigation, and my leader, the hon. member for Mosman, who has made a number of journeys to Canberra to try to correct this state of affairs. Hon. members opposite smile at these suggestions. We have heard the Premier assure us that he wants his taxing powers back. Dare he associate himself with the Premier of Victoria when the policy of the Federal Labor party is unification? I know little about the machinery of the Labor party but I

believe that the Federal party is all-powerful and is the governing body in Australia. Its policy is single taxation. How can the Premier give such lip service to the State's sovereignty? Events in Melbourne to-night are a good reason why this Government is not anxious to put some sincerity into its attitude. Members of the Government say that they want the State's powers restored. Recently we listened to the Minister for Health giving his opinion on the viciousness of section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

Mr. STEWART FRASER: He became quite eloquent.

Mr. MURDEN: Indeed he did. Section 92, in his opinion, was vicious. From my experience of single taxation and other matters I hope that the convention that might be arranged later to deal with the constitutional problems will not alter section 92.

Mr. SHEAHAN: It will never be interfered with.

Mr. MURDEN: I hope that the proposed convention does nothing with section 92.

Mr. SHEAHAN: What is it about?

Mr. MURDEN: The Minister has held the Transport, Lands, and Health portfolios, and has been Attorney-General! Does he invite us to suppose he does not know section 92?

Mr. HAWKINS: The Minister is testing the hon. member's knowledge.

Mr. MURDEN: I listened to the Minister. I thought that he did not like section 92 in its present form.

Mr. SHEAHAN: I spoke on it last week.

Mr. MURDEN: I know that the Minister did. I hope that this country of ours will never go back to the days of the toll gates that the Minister mentioned.

Mr. SHEAHAN: I did not mention them.

Mr. MURDEN: Some other hon. member did. Perhaps the Minister for Health said customs barriers. Why haggle over a word?

Mr. SHEAHAN: There is a difference!

Mr. MURDEN: It all depends who is on the gate. I have invited the attention of the

House to the matters in which I am particularly interested, such as schools, additional strength for the police force, the need for the Government to honour its promise on housing, and the need for more foresight in hospital administration. The Premier should put his shoulder to the wheel in an effort to have taxing powers returned to the State, and people who are doing a job in the Department of Education should be encouraged by some evidence of the Government's interest in their work. Like the hon. member for Dulwich Hill, I had hoped to say something about transport, but I am pleased that notice has been given of a motion dealing with this matter. I hope to make some contribution to the debate on it, and perhaps I shall be able to help the Government to straighten out the troubles that it has not been able to overcome during the past fifteen years.

Hon. members have given glowing accounts of their electorates and related their interesting histories, but I urge them not to imagine that we live in a garden of Eden. I disagree with the suggestion of the hon. member for Paddington that something should be done for hon. members if they are defeated after serving one, two or three terms in this House. The best contributions, not only to the affairs of this Chamber but also to the well being of the whole community, spring from interest and sacrifice. What a poor state of affairs it would be if a person were elected to this House expecting that if he were defeated within a short time he would make material gains by his being away from his employment. I like to think that a man who submits himself for election to this House has been willing to pay some price for the risk of being here to-day and gone to-morrow. If he is gone to-morrow, he should look back with pride on the days when he made some contribution to the welfare and betterment of this State.

Mr. ROBERTSON (Dubbo) [8.44]: I feel privileged to take part in this debate, which commemorates 100 years of responsible government in this State and in Australia. I compliment the Premier and Deputy Premier on the excellent speeches that they made in opening the debate,

and I congratulate the new members on both sides of the House upon their fine maiden speeches. Old as this Chamber is, I believe that it has not previously been privileged to hear such a number of excellent maiden speeches, and if that is a pointer to the future, this Chamber in its debates and in the conduct of its business will be the richer as a result of their membership of it. Mention has been made during the debate of noted people who lived during and even before that hundred-year period. Although I do not detract from the virtues and worth of those people, the paintings of some of whom grace the walls of this Chamber and other parts of the House, too little has been thought of the lesser individuals in the community—the little men and women who go towards making up the nation that we are to-day. Without them—just as without its leaders—this country could not be what it is.

My mind goes back to my infant days, a comparatively short time ago, when I saw and knew the living conditions of the people in the hinterland of this State. A good house by to-day's standards was to them a mansion, and it would be occupied by someone with a huge income. The average citizens dwelt in all manner of places: bark huts and slab huts, some with bark roofs, some with thatched roofs, and some a little better with shingle roofs. These were the places in which people lived—or should I better describe it as existed? Most of them have gone, and to-day throughout the countryside homes are common that could be classified as mansions compared with places of even half a century ago. This would not have been possible but for the will and determination of the mass of little men and women in this country in the early days right back to the days of slavery—some call them the convict days, but I prefer the harsher term—when people were actually flogged to death in this country. This nation was cradled in those conditions but became what it is to-day—a place of which all of us, no matter who we are, can be proud. I believe that it was the creation of the nation in those days, with all their adversities, hardships and brutalities, that made the Australian

people what we know them to be and what the world recognises us to be, which is important.

I want to pay tribute to the newspapers of the country, and I do not say this just to be nice. The newspapers, particularly the metropolitan press, can be damnably nasty, sometimes without very much reason or thought. They have never inflicted any punishment on me personally, and it can be justifiably said that I have no right to complain. However, I refer specifically to the country press. Were it not for the battling of the country press, the inland of this country would not be nearly so well off as it is. I say this seriously because I have noticed over the years that, if something is missing in a community, if something is needed, or if something needs to be initiated, almost invariably the local newspaper is first in the firing line. Almost invariably they stay there until the fight is either lost or won. I pay tribute to them. I have here a little booklet prepared by the New South Wales Country Press Association to commemorate its fiftieth annual conference in 1948. Glancing through it I noticed that it contains some most interesting items of information, such as this:

On March 5, 1803, George Howe, a convict, secured the permission of Governor King to establish *The Sydney Gazette*.

By stretching one's imagination one could regard that as a country newspaper. This publication refers also to a newspaper that was started by a man named George Arden on 20th June, 1842, at a place called Molly Morgan's Plains, now known as Maitland. I understand that a hotel business is carried on in the premises that were—as the journal describes them—the cradle and the tomb of the first country newspaper. Apparently it did not live very long. The journal points out that country newspapers received their first important impetus almost concurrently with the period of the gold rush. With the surge of population those who were so minded were presented with an opportunity to enter the business of publishing newspapers to keep the people in their areas informed and enlightened. It is most interesting to note

that the staff of many early newspapers consisted of assigned convicts; skilled labour was almost non-existent.

Often the responsibility of all the printing fell on one individual. One can imagine what happened during the rush to go to press, especially as many of these printing presses were turned by hand with a handle like that of a windlass. The publishers were beset by many difficulties in both establishing and running their country newspapers. In 1857, ninety-nine years ago, it took 15½ days to convey goods, including newsprint, from Sydney to Goulburn, at a cost of £12 5s. a ton. It took as long to convey goods to Bathurst. In those days the consensus was that reading and writing were somewhat laborious and not too many had the opportunity to interest themselves in doing either. At the beginning of the first gold rush decade only 27.3 per cent. of the population of New South Wales lived in Sydney. The disposition of population has shown a reversal of form since then. In 1875 no more than fifty towns in New South Wales had a local newspaper, but with the increase in population came the development of local newspapers. I shall read an extract from the booklet of the Country Press Association, which says:

Another force was now increasing the demand by an enlightened populace. From the 209 schools in 1841, education was being dispensed by 1,450 schools in 1871. This grew to 3,666 in 1900. Between 1870 and 1890 there was a marked decline in illiteracy.

Looking back over this period one can see that the education of the children was accepted in the early days as a matter of vital importance. By 1890 illiteracy among the adults of this State had been reduced to 23.4 per cent. The journal gives a series of figures to show the trend over the years. On this occasion it is well to dwell on events over the first 100 years of responsible government to see how this country, an infant nation, has progressed. It has come far indeed. In material things this country has developed as a nation far more rapidly than any other over a similar period. Even the United States of America, when it had some semblance of responsible government after 100 years, was still in

the colonial stage of its development and was clearly still a farmyard nation! We have already emerged from that stage and have become a nation of primary and secondary industries.

I suppose that no one complains more than I about the lack of development. However, despite frequent charges in this Chamber that the Government is not doing sufficient to develop the inland, I remind the critics that in fifteen years this Government has achieved more than those supported by the Opposition parties in fifty years or longer. I shall refer to some of the more recent developments in the country—such as country killing. How often over the years have hon. members heard it said that the meat industry would never develop fully until country killing became established. Opposition members have talked glibly about what they were going to do for years and years—years without end. I suppose that they would leave it to private enterprise. That is their stock excuse. This Government, with the guidance of the present Minister for Agriculture, established country killing. Three country abattoirs are in operation and a fourth is expected to open within nine to twelve months. That is an accomplishment—not idle chatter. Labor prefers to do things.

MR. PELL: All those country killing establishments have been established in cities at the expense of country districts.

MR. ROBERTSON: That is a new one! If the hon. member wants to have them established in the middle of the Nullabor Plain, or in some other idiotic place hundreds of miles from a country town, without available staff and other operational needs, let him start his own campaign. It will not be successful. I pay a tribute to the early work done on wheat storage by members of the Country party. But for their efforts I doubt whether any arrangements would have been made to store wheat in this State. Extraordinarily, the Country party which began the work, allowed it to lag until finally it ceased. That party was content to rest on its laurels, oblivious of the fact that the wheat industry was developing rapidly through mechanisation

and to some extent, through closer settlement. Labor, mindful of its responsibilities, has done all that it could to increase wheat storage. At the rate of progress over the past fifteen years, there will be adequate storage facilities for all normal requirements within the next five or six years, subject always to no appreciable increase in acreage under cultivation.

For many years I have heard hon. members of the Country party and of the Liberal party—when it was known as the United Australia party and by other names—tell fairy tales about soil conservation. For 99 per cent. of the time they talked, lectured and prophesied; for only 1 per cent. did they do anything. They did not know how to tackle the problem of soil conservation. The Labor Government has demonstrated that it knew what was required. What is more, Labor has done it. Following the establishment of a soil conservation research station at Wellington, millions of acres in my own electorate, which was formerly subject to rapid soil erosion, have been corrected, and in many other places from Queensland as far south as the Victorian border action has been taken to prevent soil erosion. In the past few months I have visited many places in New South Wales and everywhere I have seen evidence of the valued work of soil conservationists, who have been spurred on by the Government's determination to preserve the heritage so vital to our existence—the first six inches of soil. Previously, this invaluable topsoil found its way down the creeks, rivers and gullies and out to sea. Had it been left to the tender mercies of speech-makers New South Wales to-day would have been as barren as the Sahara Desert.

Fifteen years ago the Forestry Commission was doing a fairly good job. However, Labor accelerated its activities and produced results. In fact, a Labor government has shown that Labor, as a political party, has a greater stake in the country than have those who claim truly to represent rural interests. Look at what has been achieved in the great forestry areas throughout the State! In the early days of Labor's present rule of this State it was confronted with the problems of war, followed immediately by the shortage of labour

and materials in the post-war period. It could be said that though Labor has been in office for fifteen years, only in the past five years has it been able to function normally.

The Australian people have played a large part in the development of this country. This State has 124,000 miles of roadways, highways, developmental roads, trunk roads and the like, and between 6,400 and 6,500 miles of railway lines. Those arteries of communication stretch over so vast an area that, on a *per capita* basis, their mileage would be greater than that of any other country in the world. Our roads may not be so smooth and billiard-table-like as we should wish them to be, but they have been built in a comparatively short period. I have no doubt that a concentrated drive to develop our roads by means of various agencies will keep them, as far as possible, abreast of the times, so that they may play their part in the further development of the country. During the past ten or eleven years, because of record breaking rainfalls, roads have tended to disintegrate at a faster rate than ever before. Road hauliers, following a recent Privy Council decision, drive heavily laden vehicles in swarms at speeds of 60 miles an hour and more. I have a booklet containing the Prime Minister's policy speech in 1949. He gave this clear undertaking:

Over a period of five years we shall raise loans totalling £250 millions, the interest and sinking fund on which will be provided out of the Petrol Tax. The amount to be raised and spent each year will be conditioned by the availability of men and materials. Its general administration will be under the National Works Council. The work will include feeder roads; soil conservation; the development of rural housing, embracing the construction of groups of workers' homes in seasonal labour areas; flood prevention; the provision of water, light and power; vermin and noxious weed destruction. We will aim to improve carrying capacity, reduce costs, and increase productivity generally.

It is now apparent that he forgot all about those promises immediately he made them, and his actions are in keeping with every statement he has since made. The Prime Minister has lived a political lie from 1949 to 1956, and will go on like that until he ceases to be Prime Minister and takes

up residence in Surrey. Two hundred and fifty million pounds would have worked wonders in the services that he mentioned; but he had no intention of implementing his promise, and took the people for fools who would soon forget. Australia has 124,000 miles of roads, and had the Prime Minister raised the promised amount and made provision for interest and sinking fund payments from petrol tax, which has been thieved from the States, we might think more kindly of him. Not only has he failed to honour his promises, but he has acted in a despicable way by increasing the tax and giving the States crumbs from the rich man's table.

This Government has worked wonders having regard to its financial resources. The State has progressed quickly from the bullock wagon to the motor car, and it is a wonder that there are any roads at all. The present Government can face its responsibilities despite the unjust criticism that has been levelled at the Premier because of his alleged reluctance to restore the taxing powers of the State. If this State were to exercise its taxing rights, it would not have to beg for crumbs from the Commonwealth table to carry out its essential services, while members of the Federal Government are globe-trotting. The Prime Minister is at present on a Cook's tour at public expense, yet he bemoans how much he has to pay to States. I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on his forthright statement that he favoured the return to the States of their taxing powers. No one could object to this course, unless he were a political buffoon in Canberra.

Mr. PELLY: I thought that the Labor party wanted the abolition of the States?

Mr. ROBERTSON: I am not speaking about abolition; I am concerned to see that the States receive justice from dogmatic people who shelter inside the walls of Parliament House at Canberra. The States have not had their taxing rights restored, and if this is not done within a measurable time, an agitation will grow that might unstick federation. I would not be sorry, in certain circumstances, to see it.

Mr. PELLY: That is the policy the hon. member supports.

Mr. ROBERTSON: The hon. member for Wollondilly seems to know all about it. If it is written somewhere, it does not mean that I have to be a fool and come along here—

Mr. PELLY: But the hon. member has pledged himself to it.

Mr. ROBERTSON: That is the opinion of the hon. member. I shall say what I consider to be right.

Mr. CHAFFEY: The hon. member will not deny that he signed the pledge?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ROBERTSON: I did that voluntarily; and I can unsign it just as easily. I am not controlled by these queer gentlemen in Ash-street. I do not have someone walking up here—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Wollondilly will be the next speaker. I ask him not to interrupt until he is called. Hon. members must observe standing orders.

Mr. ROBERTSON: I have never been handed a written speech or question. I cannot say that for some members of the Opposition, because I have seen some of their screeds. Quite often letters prepared in Ash-street appear in country newspapers. I have seen some of them weeks before they are printed.

Mr. CHAFFEY: Did the hon. member write them?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ROBERTSON: I might sometimes do foolish things, but I would not be likely to write some of the circulars sent out by the party to which the hon. member belongs. I know a number of newspapers that will not publish them. During the debate the hon. member for Tamworth referred to the amendment of the Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act in 1949, and said that certain people living in country electorates had been denied the right to vote. I have taken the trouble

to analyse polling figures for the three election periods from 1947 to 1953. In 1947 the percentage of persons casting a vote in the electorate of Albury was 93.29. In 1950, following the amendment of the Act about which the hon. member for Tamworth complained, the percentage of voters to persons on the roll was 94.03 and in 1953, 93.61. It is interesting to note that in that electorate a higher percentage of people voted after the amendment of the Act. In the electorate of Armidale the percentage of voters in 1947 was 92.79 and in 1950, immediately after the Act was amended, 93.11. In the electorate of Barwon 85.63 per cent. of the people voted in 1947, and 96.06 in 1950. In the electorate of Bathurst the percentages were 94.72 in 1947 and in 1950, 95.93. In almost every electorate the percentage of people voting after the amendment was higher. The hon. member for Tamworth said that many people were denied the right to cast a vote.

Mr. CHAFFEY: Many people were prevented from voting by the amendment.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call the hon. member for Tamworth to order for the last time. If he interjects further the standing orders will be applied.

Mr. ROBERTSON: I was endeavouring to illustrate that the hon. member for Tamworth was wrong when he said that people were denied the right to vote by that amendment of the Act.

Mr. BLACK: I am sure that he was right.

Mr. ROBERTSON: The figures clearly indicate that a higher percentage of people voted after the amendment than before it. Many other hon. members opposite have frequently said that people have been denied the right to vote, but I have found that people in my electorate are not much concerned about postal votes. The electoral visitor system is acceptable to them. I do not propose to mention the name of the person concerned, but in 1947 a returning officer came to me and said that he was worried about his work. He took me to his office and produced a bundle of applications for postal votes. They had been filled in and there was nothing wrong with

them so far as I could see, but he pointed out that every application had the same address to which the ballot paper was to be sent. It was the address of the political representative of a certain party in the area. That is a sound and fundamental reason for the alteration of the Act. Those votes could be viewed with suspicion. I formed the impression that dishonest practices were being indulged in, and I believed that it was my responsibility to let the Government know. The people of my electorate are not worried about the 1949 amendment to the Act.

Mr. STEWART FRASER: Did the hon. member look at what happened at Ryde?

Mr. ROBERTSON: I have never been to Ryde in my life and have no intention of going there. The policy speech of the Prime Minister is a most amazing document, one passage of which reads:

Perhaps our greatest charge against the financial and economic policy of the present Socialist Government is that while it has paid a good deal of attention to increasing the volume and circulation of money, it has largely neglected the problem of what and how much that money will buy. Every housewife knows how grievous this problem is. The statistician will conservatively allow that the pound of 1939 is now only worth 12s. 2d. in purchasing power. But on the true cost of household requirements it would be nearer the mark to say that it is worth only 10s. The greatest task, therefore, is to get value back into the pound, that is, to get prices down.

What a record. On the Prime Minister's own admission the Chifley £ in 1949 was worth 10s. Having some regard for the increase in costs and the devaluation of money as a result of the meaningless muddling by the author of this statement in Canberra and those who support him, I should say that, conservatively, the Australian £ is now worth 2s. 6d.

Mr. TREATT: That is a drop of only 7s. 6d. compared with a 10s. drop in the Chifley £.

Mr. ROBERTSON: Quite often the Opposition, and sometimes their friends outside, charge Labor with being unable to provide more schools and hospitals and better roads and bridges. Do not forget that Mr. Menzies, when he assumed office, on his own assessment could get 10s. value

out of every £, but this Government gets only 2s. 6d. Is it any wonder that the right hon. gentleman has gone on a long trip prior to his retirement? I do not know whether those at Canberra who hold the nation's purse strings believe that the governments of New South Wales and other States are composed of magicians. I cannot imagine anyone getting reasonable value out of the £, especially in view of the valuation placed on it by Mr. Menzies himself in 1949.

Mr. STEWART FRASER: I cannot imagine the hon. member doing it, anyhow.

Mr. ROBERTSON: The hon. gentleman who is interjecting so much is probably more worried about the two-and-six-penny £ than I am.

Mr. STEWART FRASER: It could be.

Mr. ROBERTSON: And he will probably be more worried about it in the measurable future. I know that he is interested in the building trade, which must suffer because of the extent to which the £ has depreciated. Unfortunately it is still losing its value. The problem is not one of getting more £'s to balance the accounts; it is one of getting more from these devalued £'s. The hon. member for Gordon knows that as well as I do, and so does every other person in the community who is interested in business. As a result of the extraordinary attitude adopted by those who are charged with collecting the nation's taxes and therefore control its economy, the States find themselves, when Australia should be enjoying abundant prosperity, developing into some sort of poor relations who have to beg from the panjandruns in Canberra.

If ever a case were made for taking fiscal control away from a centralised force, the present Prime Minister has made it. I suppose that numerous copies of his 1949 policy speech are still in existence. It is an extraordinary document and presents the strongest possible case for breaking away from a centralised form of government, particularly when it has an economic stranglehold on all the States. It seems to me that

parliamentarians at Canberra from the Prime Minister down have but one ambition—to strangle the States.

Mr. TREATT: That is unification!

Mr. ROBERTSON: The hon. member may call it unification if he wishes; privately I should give it a different name altogether. The administration at Canberra is struggling to achieve its end by deliberately choking the States economically, and it seems determined to continue. As an illustration of its intentions, look at the Ministry. The Federal Cabinet has a Minister for Agriculture, a Minister for Education, and a Minister for Health—all portfolios that are duplications of State offices that have stood for the 100 years of responsible government in this State. This policy of duplication is costing a great deal of money and it is pertinent to ask why Federal Ministers are given such portfolios. Federal politicians are looking not to something in the dim distance but to the immediate future. They seek a breakdown of responsible government in the States so that they can then walk in like the bailiff and take possession. I deprecate that attitude, and any Australian worthy of the name will resist it with all his power. It has been said that when the Federal Government gets control it will set up subordinate organisations like county councils. It would be the legislative body and the councils the administrative bodies. This arrangement would be highly unsuccessful, because it could never logically and reasonably be made to apply to Australia with its scattered population, its long distances, and its empty inland spaces that can never be filled.

Mr. STEWART FRASER: How does the hon. member line up that statement with his party's policy?

Mr. ROBERTSON: I am quite entitled to say that. I shall not be sidetracked merely because the hon. member feels uncomfortable, and I assure him that soon he will be uncomfortable about something else. This afternoon the hon. member for Dulwich Hill had much to say about the application of an increased interest rate as it affects the workers of the community

and all other persons except those who collect it. Probably one of the greatest threats to the economy of this State to-day—and it applies on a governmental as well as on an individual basis—is the threat of a rising interest rate. This worries people more than anything else has done since the war. They have a justifiable fear that the loss of value in the £ may, because of rising interest rates, plummet. If that happens everyone will have a torrid time. In 1951, the Commonwealth Treasurer decided to apply provisional taxation. Many people were satisfied that they could manage and all was well; others received harsh treatment and all was not well.

At the same time thousands of people in Australia could not find sufficient money to pay their income tax assessments. Following their normal procedure, they went to the banks for advances to meet their tax requirements, only to be told in no uncertain terms that the banks, acting under instructions, could not lend money for the payment of taxation. Many of them borrowed privately and some in 1951 paid up to 9 and 10 per cent. interest. On occasions the money lent to them was black market money! They were forced into that situation because the banks, following the dictum of the Commonwealth Treasurer through the Commonwealth Bank, were forbidden to lend money for the payment of taxes.

A second matter of Commonwealth policy has come under my notice on four separate occasions in one month. Ex-servicemen applied to the War Service Homes Division for an advance to buy a home. In these four instances they preferred to purchase existing homes that had been inspected and valued. The Division told them that it would accept those homes and everything would be alright, but they would have to wait two years for the advance. No one has ever been able to determine why that two years' wait is necessary. When the two years are up and the time of allotment approaches the War Services Homes Division often informs applicants by letter that the money is not yet available, but that it will be available

by a certain date, and that they may make arrangements for temporary accommodation in the meantime.

The normal applicant being anxious to get a home does exactly that, but he has to go to a private money lender and pay up to 12 per cent. interest. He has no redress against this usury. Hire purchase, which was mentioned by the hon. member for Dulwich Hill, is bad enough but the Federal Government and its Treasurer, who know that these other things are happening as surely as they know that night follows day, lack the ordinary decency and courage to stop them. One wonders to what low levels those in control at Canberra will stoop. I regret that I have found it necessary to raise some of these issues. I realise that this might not be the appropriate occasion to do so, but many things are being done that are not proper and reasonable, and I feel that I should not lose this opportunity to voice an objection in the hope that someone in a responsible position somewhere might realise that New South Wales has had responsible government for 100 years and that we are able to tend our affairs in a statesmanlike manner so long as we are not subjected to interference from the meddlesome "medicine-men" of Canberra.

Mr. PELLY (Wollondilly) [9.43]: I congratulate those hon. members who have spoken for the first time in this House during this debate. I was most impressed by what was said to-night by the hon. member for Paddington who, in an interesting speech, told hon. members of his impressions after his membership of Parliament for many years. I was particularly interested in his suggestion that more recognition should be given to hon. members who have served in this House but have been defeated at an election. He said, quite rightly, that we are apt to forget them. He mentioned hon. members who recently have left this Chamber, such as the former hon. members for King, Maitland and Nepean, all of whom served for many years in this House and are still alive. He pointed out that we are greatly indebted to them, and I join with him in paying tribute to them. I congratulate, also, the only new Minister

who has been appointed to Cabinet. Hon. members on this side would have liked to have seen the Ministers chosen from our side of the House, but as that was not possible I for one, and most, if not all, of my colleagues, are particularly pleased that the hon. member for Lake Macquarie has been chosen as the new Minister.

All hon. members feel tremendous pride in the achievements of this State during the past 100 years. If we are not new Australians of this generation, then our fathers, grandfathers or possibly great-grandfather were. At some time or other we or our families have been new Australians. I am one of the more recent for I became a new Australian nearly twenty years ago. Perhaps it might not be out of place to say briefly why I decided to change completely my life and settle down in Australia. The reason is simple and easy to explain. When I first came to this country I had no intention of settling here; the thought never entered my head. I came here on work that took me all around New South Wales. I visited people in all walks of life, in every corner of the State and travelled to more districts possibly than most people ever have the opportunity to visit. I found in Australia, but in this State in particular, an understanding of humanity and a value placed upon human relationships that I had found nowhere else though I had travelled far and wide.

Therefore I look back over the twenty years that I have been here, and the eighty years before them that make up the 100 years, at this country's achievements with pride equal to that of anybody else in this House. My connection with Australia extends beyond my short span; my father was here nearly seventy-five years ago. In the family album is a photograph—a bad one—of Canberra. The city of Canberra is represented by only one building, a small tin-roofed hut that was a little store. I believe it was on the site of what is now Duntroon military hospital. It was one of the Campbell properties. That very interesting photograph is of great value to me, because I looked at it for many years never imagining that when I came here in 1937 I should adopt this country, and would

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be saying nearly 20 years later, on the Centenary of Responsible Government, how proud I am to have become an Australian.

Australia's development is something of which we all really can be proud. That it has been astoundingly rapid is clear from the example I have given of the little hut that was once Canberra's only building. This rapid development has brought in its train many difficult problems. One of the more important of them is the transport bottleneck in the city and the suburbs. It is becoming more and more impossible to move about, to park one's car or to come to the city for shopping or business. There is only one solution to the congestion in a city of this size, with its rapid growth in the small area available for expansion. The experience of countries all over the world is that congestion can be relieved only by the rapid development of towns outside the suburban radius. In this city traffic congestion will not be relieved until people are attracted into towns that must be developed within a 30 or 40 mile radius of the centre of the city.

Cities in other parts of the world such as London, Berlin, Vienna and Rome have found that the relief of traffic congestion by the development of satellite towns requires two essentials, first, houses in those towns outside the immediate suburban area and second, fast, cheap rail and bus services. As I am most familiar with my own electorate, I shall take as an example the town of Campbelltown, which is typical of those that I contend should be developed to relieve congestion in Sydney. Campbelltown is on the main southern line, between 30 and 40 miles from Sydney. It has all the potential advantages that one could wish for. Quite apart from the fact that its development is justified by the need to expand its local industries, Campbelltown is ideal for expansion as a satellite town to relieve congestion in the metropolitan area of Sydney. If it is to serve this purpose it must have a large number of houses and a fast, cheap train service to the city.

What is the position in Campbelltown? In the past couple of years a large number of houses have been under construction. Some

hundreds have been completed and an additional 400 are in course of construction. Plans have been drawn for a further 200 or 300. In fact, it is planned to build within the next three years between 500 and 600 new houses in the area. If Campbelltown had fast, cheap rail and bus services to Sydney it would be able to play its part in relieving much of the congestion in the outer metropolitan suburbs and in the city itself. However, the proposed staggering increases in rail fares have brought the whole development of Campbelltown to a standstill. Let me illustrate my point. A woman's season rail ticket from Campbelltown to Sydney now costs £20 14s. 8d.

Mr. BLACK: For what period?

Mr. PELLY: For one year. With the proposed increases, the cost of that ticket will rise to £43 10s. 0d.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Already it has been ruled this afternoon that hon. members may not anticipate what might be dealt with in the debate on the censure motion, notice of which has been given. Therefore until the motion has been disposed of any reference to transport matters is out of order. I ask the hon. member not to deal with fares in particular or the transport condition generally, even by way of example.

Mr. PELLY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, may I ask a question? I understand that the motion mentioned would appear on the notice paper for to-morrow, and that until then it is in order to discuss it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not so.

Mr. PELLY: I shall confine myself to the generalisation of saying that this town is typical of those where some fares have increased over 100 per cent. I use that as an illustration to show that by increasing the fares the Government has——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member cannot continue in this strain. I have given a ruling on this matter.

Mr. PELLY: The development of that town has been dealt a death blow by the circumstances I have mentioned. Another

great danger brought about by rapid development is that the administrative control of the various departments by the Minister is lost. The danger goes even further than that; the control of the department slips from the hands of even the senior officers, and, through no fault of their own but because of the size of the administration, junior officers have to make many decisions. This they must do by rule of thumb—by the book, as it were. Initiative is eliminated, and all humanity is lost in the handling by these people of the problems of the individual. That may sound like a generalisation, but I can illustrate it. In giving this example I take the opportunity of bringing this matter to the notice of the Minister for Transport. The other day a young man, Mr. Allan Gene Coleman, who is about 20 to 22 years of age, told me that on 14th December, 1950, he broke his leg. Fifteen months ago he went to the Department of Railways in Sydney and applied for the position of assistant engine-driver. When he was medically examined he was told that he could not be accepted for that position because, as a result of the leg fracture some years before, he had a slight arthritis. As an assistant engine-driver he would be on his feet a lot, and his medical unfitness in this respect would render him unsuitable. The young man was so keen on becoming an assistant engine-driver that he re-applied a short while after. He was told again that, owing to the slight arthritic condition, he could not become an assistant engine-driver; but he was asked whether there was any other job in the railway service for which he would like to apply. He said at that time that there was none. When he was medically examined he was not told that there was any other medical reason that would preclude his becoming an assistant engine-driver. Six months ago this young man decided that he would like to join the railway service, even though he could not be an assistant engine-driver. He went to Mittagong, applied for a job as a labourer and was accepted. He has been working for six months with a pick and shovel on the permanent way—and there is no work harder than that. Also, for three years after he recovered from his

broken leg he was a member of the Mitta-gong Rugby League football team. So, apparently, this man is perfectly fit. Having given satisfactory service for six months, he was required to report for examination to determine his medical fitness for appointment to the permanent staff. The department was so keen that this should be done that it paid him his day's wages, gave him a free return pass to Sydney, an allowance to cover his expenses and instructed him to go to the Pitt-street office for examination. He attended, keenly expecting that he would be appointed to the permanent staff. The previous week his first superannuation payment had been deducted from his wages—an indication, he thought, that he was to become a permanent employee. On 29th May, after arrival at the employment office he waited two and a half hours to see the doctor—

Mr. J. H. ROBSON: Who was responsible for his waiting two and a half hours?

Mr. PELLY: The hon. member may draw his own conclusions. He waited two and a half hours for his appointment and finally a junior clerk came out and said, "I am very sorry, but the medical officer refuses to see you because you are unfit for work." Coleman protested and said, "There is a mistake. I have been summoned to attend for medical examination. For six months I have been working with a pick and shovel as a labourer, have given satisfaction and have a good report from my ganger. I must be examined by the doctor, for I want to be taken on permanently." The clerk said, "I am very sorry, but the medical officer will not see you; you are unfit for work." Coleman went to his union and the union did its best for him but could get nowhere. He spent the day going to and from his union's headquarters and the railway employment office. From 29th May until last Friday he worked without question on his former job as a labourer. However, after completing his work on Friday Ganger Duffield told him that he was sorry but he had received an instruction from the Programme Engineer, Ways and Works Branch, Prince Alfred Sidings, Sydney

Yard. The instruction, which is addressed to Extra-Ganger Duffield, Gang 131F, reads:

Please note the abovenamed reported for examination for the position of labourer, Class 4 on 29-5-56, but the director of medical services minuted: "He is totally unfit for employment." In the circumstances Coleman cannot be retained in employment in this department and there is no alternative but for you to dispense with his services. Please arrange accordingly.

Then follow details about the date he goes off pay, and so on.

Pass attached to enable him to return to his home station, which is to be returned if not required.

This is a monstrous thing. This man was never examined by the doctor—he had not been examined by a doctor for fifteen months. I have had him examined by two doctors, and I repeat that if there were some reason not revealed why he should be described as totally unfit for employment he should have been told. The former Minister for Transport, the Minister for Conservation, would be the first to agree that he should have been told. He has now been examined by two doctors; they did not send out a clerk and refuse to see him. I have their reports, which I shall make available to the Minister for Transport. The first is from a doctor of high reputation in Bowral. I shall not mention his name, but it is available to the Minister. His report reads:

Mr. Coleman was injured on 14/12/50 and suffered a double fracture of the Right leg. He was treated by me, and union of the fragments ultimately was sound and in good position. There remained some slight disability in the right ankle joint, inasmuch as dorsiflexion was limited by a few degrees. Mr. Coleman was re-examined by me on 30/5/56.

This was after he was rejected at the so-called examination in Sydney.

There is no swelling in the right ankle joint and he states that he has had no pain during the past few years. Movement of the joint is free in all directions, but dorsiflexion is limited—he cannot flex beyond a right angle. An X-ray, taken 30/5/56, shows very slight lipping of the inner malleolus and the anterior edge of the tibial articular surface, and slight calcification of the talo-tibial ligament.

Mr. Coleman, since the original injury, has played football and done heavy work, and has had no difficulty in so doing; and it is my

opinion that his ankle disability presents no real bar to the performance of heavy work.

I have here a certificate from a second doctor, who says that he entirely agrees with this opinion and there should be no bar to his doing heavy manual work.

Mr. J. H. ROBSON: The hon. member is a master at splitting straws.

Mr. PELLY: I cannot understand what the hon. member is saying—

Mr. J. H. ROBSON: The hon. member for Wollondilly could understand me recently. I am an ex-coal miner.

Mr. PELLY: I produce the X-ray taken in Bowral of this man's leg. Both doctors are in agreement that there is very slight arthritis that prevents his bending his ankle at more than a right angle. This is what I mean when I speak about the danger of a big administration's losing all initiative and humanity, because it must stick to the book when dealing with individuals. Coleman came to see me last Friday and I asked him searching questions and checked his story. He had been instantly dismissed as a result of the letter and had come to see me. At five to four, while he and his wife waited, I telephoned Sydney and asked for Mr. Winsor. I was told, and I accept it, that Mr. Winsor was busy; he was in conference and could not speak to me. I spoke to Mr. Cush, his secretary, who did his best, but, he said, "A decision of this sort from a medical officer cannot be gainsaid even by Mr. Winsor himself." I said, "What do you mean by a decision from a medical officer? There has not been an examination for fifteen months." He said, "I will put you on to a senior officer in the programme section", and he put me on to a Mr. Matthews, who also was most helpful.

I told him that all I was asking was that this man be put back on his job at Mittagong pending an investigation of the matter, and that I would take full responsibility. But this was not done; Mr. Matthews, who was doing his best, said that he would go into the whole matter and ring me back within half an hour. I am sure that he did everything he could; but he had not the power,

he was not given the initiative, to make a decision, and he could not get anyone else in the department to make a decision. I asked him the name, address and telephone number of the doctor, but he could not give those particulars to me. Perhaps he was wise in not doing so. By this time I was becoming desperate. This man's wife is pregnant and will probably be confined tomorrow or the next day. He is not insured, and he has no money. He had only his job and his pay, but he was put out on five minutes' notice without a medical examination.

At twenty-seven minutes past four, Mr. Matthews—whom I am not criticising, because I am sure that he did all he could—said that the department would write a letter to me on Monday morning when it had considered the matter. He said that in three minutes' time everybody would be knocking off for the week-end. I said, "In my opinion the wrongful dismissal of one man is more important than any officer's week-end", and the Minister for Conservation who was formerly Minister for Transport would be the first to agree with me. However, Mr. Matthews said that though he would like to help me and the case sounded bad, he could do nothing. Nothing was done, and Coleman is out of a job. As my colleagues can verify I have been waiting all day to speak and I have taken this first opportunity to bring this matter to the attention of the House. Hon. members heard the Minister for Transport say recently that morale is low in the Department of Railways. No wonder it is low, when this sort of thing can happen! I spoke on the telephone to every officer in the department who I thought might be able to help me.

Mr. J. H. ROBSON: It was very low in the early 'thirties when the party that the hon. member supports was in office.

Mr. PELLY: I might be simple, but I cannot understand the hon. member's implication, and I dismiss it as irrelevant. I ask for what I believe to be the only fair thing—that action be taken immediately to put Coleman back in his job, without loss of privileges or pay, pending an investigation. If something is wrong,

let us hear about it. If there is a different medical reason from that to which I have referred for his being suddenly told that he is totally unfit for employment, although he is a Rugby League footballer and has done six months' satisfactory work with pick and shovel, let him be told, and let him be given a week's notice or whatever is fair; but do not turn the man out on the streets at five minutes' notice under circumstances like these, when his wife is to enter hospital at any moment to have a baby. In addition, his father is sick!

I leave that most painful subject. Every hon. member who has heard me will agree that such a thing should not happen again. Let there be in administration a little humanity, a little human understanding, a little of human relationships. Let it be remembered that we are dealing with Allan Coleman—not with just a railway fettler. This situation is the result of an over-expanded administration in which all human contact is lost, and everyone becomes like a machine. When a machine takes charge all control is lost—Ministers and senior officers lose control and inevitably things like this happen. On 29th May I asked the Minister for Agriculture why the Milk Board recently entered into contracts for the supply of milk from outside the milk zone. As far as one can do so in a question, I pointed out—and I shall enlarge on my question now—that the Chairman of the Milk Board in particular has for the past few years urged throughout the milk zone that there should be a big increase in the production of milk. He rightly said that he does not want a recurrence of milk rationing in Sydney.

The Chairman said that he wanted producers in the milk zone to make a tremendous effort to increase milk production so that when long-term contracts for the supply of milk from outside the zone terminated, as they did only the other day, the producers within the zone would be able to show that they could meet all requirements of the Board. The Minister was good enough to answer my question a few days later and the Chairman of the Milk Board agreed to come into my electorate and give his views to a large meeting of dairymen. However, I am still most

(Mr. Pelly.)

uneasy in my mind. The Chairman said, in effect—and I accept his word—that the contracts for the weekly supply of an extra 84,000 gallons of milk were entered into by the Board because suppliers from outside the zone during the period of their contract did not supply Sydney for one month voluntarily because there had been over-production in the zone, and for another month or a month and a half involuntarily because of floods. The Chairman said—and I accept his explanation—that the short-term contracts into which the Board has entered for another three months are to compensate the suppliers outside the zone in some degree for the losses that they incurred. This is only fair. However, I know that the milk producers are as worried as I am, because the Chairman of the Milk Board repeats certain phrases wherever he goes and one sees the same trend in the Milk Journal. We are beginning to gain the impression that though the producers in the milk zone have increased their production, they will continue to be confronted with milk zone block days. Moss Vale now supplies 96,000 gallons of milk weekly to the local factory, and only 58,000 gallons are accepted by the Milk Board. No one will deny that dairymen have increased production, for they can now meet all requirements in the milk zone. They believed that upon the expiration of the long-range contracts they would become again the sole suppliers to the metropolitan area and would be able to dispose of all their milk. They now feel that a different policy is being adopted and that it is being "broken to them" gently.

I do not want any milk producer, whether in the North outside the milk zone, or within the zone itself, to be unfairly affected. Neither should be expanded at the expense of the other. However, every one who has had anything to do with farming—and I have had almost twenty years' experience—will agree that one cannot produce milk, lambs, pigs, wheat or anything else on the land unless the Government pursues a stable policy over a long period. In farming one thinks in terms not of three or five years, but of one, two and three

generations. Following the passage of the Milk Act the Milk Board was set up and the milk zone established. The intention was that the zone should be an area in which all producers would maintain a specified standard in cleanliness and equipment, and would supply milk to the metropolitan area. As the demand for milk grew with the expansion of Sydney, so the milk zone was to be extended, unless the producers already in the zone could expand their production. No one objected to that policy.

The concept has changed. A few years ago the Government allowed the Milk Board to enter not into short-term contracts to overcome a temporary shortage but into long-term commitments of five years for the supply of an enormous quantity of milk from outside the milk zone. This destruction of the whole concept in the milk legislation brought strong protests from milk zone producers who were later disposing of only a fraction of their supply to the Milk Board and wasting hundreds of gallons a week or selling it at much lower rates to local factories. The Government bowed to the storm and sent representatives of the Milk Board to these producers who said, in effect, "We agree with your protests. Raise your production again so that you are able to meet the metropolitan demand and when these long-range contracts expire we will start all over again with you as the only suppliers of the metropolitan area." Once again policy has been changed: I can see it in every statement that is made. The Minister for Agriculture should ensure that the policy is constant; otherwise there will be unstable movements in the industry. People become fed up and leave the industry. Then conditions change and they or others rush back into it. Instead of having stability in the industry, the policy changes create chaos and discontent.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion (by Mr. Wetherell) agreed to.

That this House do now adjourn until to-morrow at 2.30 o'clock, p.m.

House adjourned at 10.26 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 13 June, 1956.

Leave of Absence—Presentation of Address-in-Reply—Closer Settlement: Acquisition of Estates—Personal Explanation (Electric Light and Power Supply Corporation Limited: Resignation of the Hon. H. D. Ahern)—Special Adjournment—Adjournment (Retail Stores: Private Inquiry Agents).

The ACTING PRESIDENT took the chair at 3.45 p.m.

The opening Prayer was read.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

The ACTING PRESIDENT reported the receipt of a communication from His Excellency the Governor intimating that leave of absence had been granted to the Hon. W. E. Dickson for six months from 23rd May, 1956.

PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

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

• That the Council do now proceed to Government House, there to present to the Governor their Address-in-Reply to the Speech His Excellency had been pleased to make to both Houses of Parliament on opening the Session.

The House accordingly proceeded to Government House.

The House having returned,

The ACTING PRESIDENT reported that the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's opening speech had been presented, and that His Excellency had been pleased to make the following answer:

Government House, Sydney,
13th June, 1956.

Mr. Acting President and Hon. Members of the Legislative Council,—

It gives me much pleasure to receive your Address and to express my appreciation of your declaration of unfeigned attachment to the Throne and Person of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second.

I will convey to Her Majesty these sentiments and your deep appreciation of her congratulatory message on the occasion of your celebration of the Centenary of Responsible Government in New South Wales.

I will inform Her Majesty that the people of this State cherish warmly the recollection of